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RESEARCH NOTE

Dysfunctional Management: Narcissistic Leadership: A Case Study

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From the Editor

October 2012

Welcome to this 13th issue of the *International Leadership Journal*, an online, peer-reviewed journal. This issue contains four articles and one research note.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Susan P. Gilbert, dean of the School of Business and Technology at Thomas Edison State College, to the editorial board.

In the first article, Hanson, Ward, and Chin examine the challenges of leading virtual teams, especially when those teams cross national and cultural boundaries. Using Hofstede's seminal cultural dimensions research and Project GLOBE's research on leadership style country clusters, they explain why these challenges are magnified in virtual team settings and provide suggestions for overcoming those challenges.

Wright addresses the very relevant issue of leader succession plans at a time when the vast majority of baby boomers are reaching retirement age. Within the field of human service organizations, he assesses intentions of leaders to develop and implement succession activities, implement leadership development strategies, and, retire or transition out of their leadership positions. Of great interest is his finding that one of the biggest sticking points is the leaders' own mental unpreparedness for retirement.

In the third article, Dai analyzes leadership on a social-constructionist gender basis. She establishes a general framework for further research using gender role congruity theory that suggests leader effectiveness is dependent on the situation the leader faces, who the leader is, and which outcomes are considered to be effective.

Walstrom describes his development of a leadership model with five components—a leader, a group, a task, an objective, and a critic—that can be used to aid in communication between leadership researchers and practitioners, researchers across different disciplines and cultures, and practitioners across generations. Using Ogden's Basic English, the results of his studies provide succinct and accurate descriptors for each component.

In the research note, Cavelzani explores how a narcissistic leader provides dysfunctional management that negatively impacts both employees and the business itself. His case study emphasizes just how dysfunctional that type of management can be.

Please let us know your thoughts about the articles in the journal and feel free to submit articles for review.

Enjoy!

Joseph C. Santora



Editor

ARTICLES

Leading Virtual Teams Across National and Cultural Boundaries

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This article explores the challenges of leading cross-cultural teams and considers techniques available to enhance the capabilities of leaders to effectively lead those teams, particularly when the team members are geographically dispersed. It begins with a review of the landmark study by Hofstede (1980) and the GLOBE Project (1993) on intercultural communication and the effects of culture on individual work values. The potential challenges of misaligned work values in multicultural teams are then identified, and the reasons why these challenges are magnified in virtual-team settings are posited. Recommendations on approaches for virtual team leaders to overcome these intensified challenges are also suggested.

Key words: Asia, leadership, virtual teams

As organizations are increasingly global in their reach, the formation of virtual teams across national and cultural boundaries is increasingly commonplace (Kirkman, 2012). This results in an increasing demand from organizations to effectively manage their virtual teams through better understanding of the cultural backgrounds, motivations, and work values of their cross-cultural team members.

Culture and Its Relationship with Work Values

Research work into culture lacks consensus on its definition (Hall, 2005). Prosser (1985, 40), for example, defines culture as “the traditions, customs, norms, beliefs, values, and thought patterning passed down from generation to generation.” Hofstede (1991, 4) refers to culture as “the software of the mind,” referring to the way in which culture affects the patterns of thinking, feeling, and

behaving throughout a person's lifetime. This article uses the definition of culture from House, Wright, and Aditya (1996, 537), who define culture as the "shared ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting; shared meanings and identities; shared socially constructed environments; common ways in which technologies are used; and commonly experienced events including the history, language, and religion of their members."

At the core of culture's influence is its impact on individual values, which determine socially right from wrong and socially normal from abnormal. Drawing on the results of a global study of IBM staff, Hofstede (1980) developed a model with four cultural dimensions: *power distance*, *individualism*, *masculinity*, and *uncertainty avoidance*. A fifth dimension, *long-term orientation*, was later added to capture Confucian values (Hofstede, 1991). At either end of a dimension, values are starkly different. A low power distance culture, for example, will seek to minimize inequality, whereas a high power distance culture will see inequality as a desirable outcome.

Power distance refers to the degree of inequality in society that members expect and value (Hofstede, 1980, 98). Organizations in low power distance countries foster a non-hierarchical, flat, and participative environment where employees can freely discuss and question their top managers. *Individualism* is the degree to which people associate themselves with their own achievement and welfare (Hofstede, 1980, 217). A culture with high individualism is one in which there are loose ties among members and people value independence and self-reliance rather than interdependence. Hofstede (1980, 265) argues that cultures with a *masculinity* orientation are concerned with display of achievement, progress, and attainment of economic development as opposed to social harmony and personal betterment in femininity-oriented cultures. *Uncertainty avoidance* is the extent to which members of a culture are comfortable with uncertainty (Hofstede, 1980, 155). Individuals from cultures that have high uncertainty avoidance prefer to work with structured guidelines and predictable outcomes and are less likely to take risks. Cultures with *high long-*

term orientation value persistence and thrift and are oriented toward the future (Hofstede, 1991).

While Hofstede has been criticized for neglecting individual differences within a culture due to rigidly quantifying cultural values and a lack of external validity due to small sample size (Bond, 2002; Feng, Peterson, & Shyi, 2006), his work on culture is considered seminal in the area of cultural research. In 1993, the Global Leadership Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Project began an ongoing study of leadership and national culture that served to validate and refine Hofstede's work in terms of accuracy and the longevity of the characteristics. GLOBE's major premise is that leader effectiveness is contextual and embedded in the societal and organizational norms, values, and beliefs of the people being led (Javidan & House, 2001, 303).

In a summary of Project GLOBE, Hoppe (2007) identifies the three phases of the project. The first phase was placing 60 countries into clusters. Cultural similarity is greatest among countries within the same cluster, and cultural difference is greatest among countries in the clusters that are farthest apart. Next, Project GLOBE analyzed responses of 17,300 middle managers from the 60 countries to 112 leader characteristics and grouped the responses into six leadership style scales—performance-oriented, team-oriented, participative, humane, autonomous, and self-protective styles. Based on these groupings, the project ranked the country clusters based on their preference for each of the leadership styles. The results show distinct cluster patterns between some of the different cultures.

Triandis (2004) asserts that Project GLOBE is the most comprehensive study that empirically researches the relationship between culture and leader behavior on a near-global scale. The significance of Project GLOBE lies in its ability to integrate cultural values and work values. Schwartz (1999, 43) defines work values as the goals or rewards people seek through their work. They can be expressed in terms of desirable end states (e.g., high pay) or behavior (e.g., working with people). A review of the literature points to four broad types of work values that are implicitly distinguished by respondents—intrinsic (personal

growth, autonomy, interest, creativity), extrinsic (pay, security), social (contact with people, contribution to society), and power (prestige, authority, influence) (Surkis, 1992).

In 1991, Elizur, Borg, Hunt, and Beck described the influence of culture on work values as follows:

While the different work values remained invariant across several cultural samples, some differences existed in the rank order of importance of certain work-value items. For instance, while job interest was the most important value for Western respondents from the United States, Holland, and Germany, it had only modest importance in the work-value hierarchies of subjects from China and Hungary. Job security was found to be most important in Korea, but it had only marginal importance in China and Israel. Finally, while the Chinese respondents reported that contribution to society is an important value for them, it was among the least important work values for respondents from all other samples. (35)

Schwartz (1994) argues that each type of work value is more compatible with certain cultural value emphases and less with others. The misalignment of work values between cultures can create interpersonal conflict and communication problems. Diverse groups have to confront differences in attitudes, values, behaviors, experiences, backgrounds, expectations, and even languages. When team members have similar profiles, there appears to be less trouble in finding a managerial style to suit all the members. (Stening, 1979)

Challenges of Misaligned Work Values in Cross-Cultural Teams

The collision of conflicting work values generates challenges for leaders of cross-cultural teams; in particular, different cultures have different expectations about the purpose of the team and how the team should operate. Some of these expectations are related to task strategies—how the task is structured; roles, or who does what and when; and how decisions will be made (Javidan & House, 2001). Other expectations are related to process—team building, language, participation in managing conflicts, and team evaluation. In a model of virtual teams (Piccoli, Powell, & Ives, 2004), cultural factors are listed as moderators that exert influence on the other three elements of virtual teamwork, namely

inputs, processes, and outputs. Thus, if virtual teams do not pay attention to cultural issues, they may risk decreasing team effectiveness.

One of the most important elements of successful teams is having a shared sense of purpose (Nemiro, Beyerlein, Bradley, & Beyerlein, 2008). Creating a sense of shared purpose is a challenge for cross-cultural teams. Different cultures can have different assumptions about the reason for teams—to share information and discuss problems, to make decisions and take actions, or to renew contact and build social relationships. This will determine issues such as frequency of meetings and contacts, who should attend, whether the meetings can take place through conference calls or need to be face-to-face, and the time needed to be set aside expressly for socializing.

A risk for virtual cross-cultural teams is that there is a greater potential for frustration and dissatisfaction, which can lead to a higher turnover of team members (Klimoski & Jones, 1995; Webber, 2002). Teams have to actively manage their tasks and processes for more efficient use of time and resources to avoid missed opportunities and disappointing outcomes. Recent research has further demonstrated that, once settled, cross-cultural teams perform better than mono-cultural ones in “identifying problem perspectives” and “generating alternatives” (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003, 219). The challenge is how to resolve differences, improve understanding, and move towards a common ground; these are often not accomplished. In a large study of multinational teams, Davison and Ward (1999) found that most newly formed teams jumped straight into a discussion of the nuts and bolts of the task and did not devote enough time to considering the interactive process through which the task is achieved—what patterns and style of communication are needed, how meetings are to be conducted, how relationships are built, and how decisions will be made. For example, Triandis (1988) demonstrated that collectivists, so-called because they are willing to subordinate their own personal goals to the goals of the collective, achieved lower performance working alone or in an out-group than they do working in an in-group. Earley (1993) also proved that matching individuals who display similar traits and backgrounds with one another could influence group

identification, thereby boosting group effectiveness. Such matching was shown to have a positive benefit, particularly for collectivists.

Setting agendas is one area where cultural differences can be a source of potential confusion and friction. Cultures differ in their expectations as to how people manage their tasks throughout a timeline. In monochronic cultures, agenda items are expected to be dealt with systematically, decisions taken, deadlines respected, and one person speaks at a time. In polychronic cultures, rigid agendas are likely to be perceived as inhibiting creativity in meetings, deadlines serve more as guidelines than unalterable facts, and it is generally more acceptable for several people to talk at the same time (Zrun & Adler, 1983). These findings go on to show that cultural differences, and in turn, work value differences, can have an impact on team performance and need to be taken into consideration in different stages in the team's life cycle.

The Intensification of Challenges in a Virtual Environment

Discussing cultural differences is a high-risk activity for any team as value-laden preferences and prejudices are exposed. This requires high levels of sensitivity and trust and a real commitment to integration (Nemiro et al., 2008).

The challenges of negotiating cultural and work value differences are suggested to be exacerbated in virtual working environments where team members communicate through technologies and rarely meet in person. Qureshi and Zigurs (2001) argue that in computer-mediated environments, the means by which information is transferred is flattened, less dynamic, and, thus, may become less salient and possibly less easy to grasp, retain, and learn. This strongly suggests that virtual communication exacerbates the already complicated issues of intercultural communication and validates the findings of social presence theory (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976). Social presence theory proposes that computer-mediated communication is not conducive to relationship building due to the scant social cues transferred, and, in turn, the lack of "social presence." The authors conclude that technology-facilitated virtual teams are task-oriented and neglect socio-emotional process.

According to O'Hara-Devereaux and Johansen (1994, 243), "trust is the glue of the global workplace—and technology doesn't do much to create the relationship." However, as communication technology becomes increasingly sophisticated, studies have demonstrated that technology is playing an important role in building trust among virtual teams (Malhotra, Majchrzak, & Rosen, 2007; Shachaf, 2008). Malhotra et al. (2007) advocate the use of communication technology to build and maintain trust within virtual teams. In a study of 41 team members across nine countries, Shachaf (2008) found that the use of communication technology mitigated the negative impact of cultural diversity on team effectiveness.

Another concern is that members from cultures that rank high on uncertainty avoidance and are risk averse (Hofstede, 1980) prefer to work in familiar environments and with people they know they can trust (Zakaria, Amelinckx, & Wilemon, 2004). Trust, which is important in teamwork, is pivotal in preventing geographical distance from leading to psychological distance in a globally dispersed team (Snow, Snell, & Davison, 1996). Handy (1995) argues that only geographical co-location is conducive for forming real trust. Some characteristics of virtual teams, such as the lack of face-to-face contact and visual cues, may hinder trust development. This is known as the Handy's paradox of trust in virtual teams, since only trust can alleviate the negative effects on geographical dispersion on virtual team performance. If virtual teams cannot overcome trust-building problems intensified by the communication environment, some risk-averse members may feel uncomfortable in participating in the team process.

The very composition of a virtual team presents potential cultural threats to the team performance. Furthermore, the process of discussing and reconciling cultural differences within teams can be emotion-laden and jeopardize team bonding if not conducted properly.

Therefore, the prerequisite has been changed from learning to overcome cultural differences to strategically selecting team members from diverse cultural backgrounds and personalities that will enable them to cooperate effectively in a multicultural, virtual setting. This means certain pre-employment or pre-

assignment assessments need to be administered to team candidates in order to gauge their future performance with diverse team members.

Approaches for Addressing These Challenges

When cross-cultural teams are performing well, they are able to leverage their diversity to achieve high-quality outcomes. High-performing cross-cultural teams are seen to promote a richer quality of decision-making and encourage greater creativity and innovation (Nemiro et al., 2008). The cultural differences of team members provide a greater range of perspectives and options and contribute to new ways of looking at old problems, creating the opportunity for greater creativity and innovation (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). Cross-cultural groups can also help to minimize the risk of uniformity and pressures for conformity that can occur in groups where there are too many like-minded individuals. Different cultural groups are seen to bring preferences for different roles, strengthening the case for bringing together people with different personal and cultural profiles (Nemiro et al., 2008).

Administering pre-employment or pre-assignment assessments also creates a good mix of individuals from diverse personal and cultural backgrounds who will contribute multiple new perspectives to the team. The reality is that most likely, virtual teams are called upon to draw together geographically and temporally dispersed talents to complete a task. This means that by nature, virtual teams operate by capitalizing on the fortes offered by the diversified backgrounds of the team members. It makes no sense to bring together people from different backgrounds, for the very purpose of capturing differences in expertise and perspectives, and then trying to subdue and compromise their personal and cultural differences. Organizational leaders need to foster a culturally sensitive working environment for the team while making sure that it can leverage the diversified backgrounds of team members. In this challenging process, cultural and personality assessment tools play an important role.

Nemiro et al. (2008, 246) propose that team leaders consider two questions when selecting members for virtual teams: "Are the skills required for the team tasks represented in those members selected?" and "Are the skills necessary for

effective collaboration and interaction represented in those members selected?” They argue that the emphasis tends to be more focused on identifying task experts than individuals who can also work together well as a team. Webber (2002) considers this a limited staffing strategy, particularly in the case of virtual teams, where geographical dispersion can increase the challenge of engaging effectively in collaboration.

There is a need to increase transferable teamwork skills so there is more fluidity in staffing for culturally diverse teams. These skills allow one to work effectively in any team environment, regardless of the task (Cannon-Bowers, Tannenbaum, Salas, & Volpe, 1995). Teamwork skills reflect fundamental requirements for collaboration and integrated action on team tasks. Among the most pivotal generic teamwork skills are those related to functioning effectively in a multicultural environment: intercultural sensitivity, consideration for others, and cultural intelligence (Ros, Schwartz, & Surkiss, 1999).

Klimoski and Jones (1995) add that in addition to generic teamwork skills, specific teamwork skills play an important role in the final stages of the staffing process. Specific teamwork skills refer to the mix of attitudes, personality, and values that would optimize teamwork effectiveness and group cohesion among a particular set of individuals working within particular contexts. Klimoski and Jones also noted that creating the right mix could also mean controlling for factors that count for interpersonal compatibility. Thus, establishing team requirements would involve the issue of just what personality, style, or values congruence would be necessary. Murphy (2011) conducted a three-year study of recruitment effectiveness in his own leadership training company and found that 46 percent of new hires failed within the first 18 months. Noting that two-thirds of these failures can be traced back to cultural differences, Murphy advocates selecting staff members who possess the relevant attitudes and work values that will fit with and excel within an organization’s unique culture.

Bell (2002) acknowledges that the challenges of leading and managing teams are intensified in international virtual teams because of the different cultures, languages, business practices, and attitudes relating to hierarchy and power. He

suggests that team leaders need to be cognizant of cultural differences of team members and increase team awareness of these differences through individual coaching and mentoring. Bell also recommends that teams conduct the first few meetings face-to-face to effectively build trust, especially among members from uncertainty-avoidant cultures.

Brett and Kern (2006) identify four strategies in managing multicultural teams: *adaptation*, *structural intervention*, *managerial intervention*, and *exit*. *Adaptation* involves acknowledging the cultural gaps openly and working around them. *Structural intervention* means subdividing the team and the task in order to separate team members whose cultures clash. *Managerial intervention* entails setting up new rules and policies to govern the operation of the team and contain the cultural issues. When these options have failed, leaders are suggested to opt for an *exit* strategy, or removing a team member.

Conclusion

Together with increased globalization and the proliferation of new communication technologies, companies are forming virtual teams to overcome the problems of talents being geographically dispersed. As these teams grow in scale and scope, they turn into global virtual teams, drawing together people from all corners of the world to work on shared objectives. Research points to the need for different management practices when doing business in different national cultures (Newman & Nollen, 1996).

As research shows, there are many reasons why misaligned work values in cross-cultural teams can result in decreased team performance. The challenges arising from cross-cultural misalignment are further exacerbated by the impediments to communication and establishment of trust in the virtual team context. Responsibility is shifted to the team leader to manage these cultural issues effectively so the team can achieve its intended results. To do this, the team leader may need to rely on cultural assessment tools and other proven tactics in the field of intercultural communications. We propose using tested

techniques to allow virtual teams to overcome the dual challenges arising from misaligned work values and virtual work teams.

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A Qualitative Look at Leadership Succession in Human Service Organizations

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As baby boomers reach retirement age, there is concern about what this may mean for the organizations they lead. There could be a significant impact on business and resources if this cohort of senior leadership leaves their current positions. Although the need for succession planning and management is acknowledged, succession activities are not always present in most organizations. Consequently, there is a demand to further explore the reasoning behind the actions of organizational leaders regarding succession and leadership development activities. This study utilized qualitative design to examine the intentions of leaders in human service organizations (HSOs) to develop and implement succession activities, implement leadership development strategies, and, retire or transition out of their leadership positions. Results indicate that HSO leaders intend to establish succession activities. However, many of these leaders are not personally prepared for the transition. Further research is suggested on the internal processes of the outgoing leader and its impact on the organization.

Key words: human services, leadership, organizational change, succession, transition

As baby boomers reach retirement age, concern about what this will mean for the organizations they lead grows. If this population of senior leadership retires or leaves their current positions over the next decade, it could have a significant effect on the function of their organizations and may possibly create a “crisis” of leadership (Dym, Egmont, & Watkins, 2011; Frick, 2010). However, there is research asserting that though they may have the ability, many senior leaders will not retire due to internal motivations (Adams, 2010; Cascio, 2011; Kets de Vries, 1988; Sonnenfeld, 1988). Therefore, leaders in the baby-boomer cohort may not be retiring as fast as some predicted, and, consequently, their initiation and participation in succession and leadership development activities may be negligible. The “leadership crisis” moniker could be diverting focus from the opportunity to reevaluate human service organizational structures. As a result of reevaluation, it may emerge that a succession crisis in the human service sector may not exist or may not be as serious as originally estimated.

Human services organizations (HSOs) provide support, protection, and advocacy for society's most vulnerable populations. In many cases, HSOs are founded by individuals who have great passion and a calling for service in a particular genre (Dym et al., 2011; Frick, 2010; Paull & Redmond, 2011). These organizations are critical to the lives of their constituents. Hence, the sustainability of these organizations is of great concern. Seeing that leadership is an essential component of an organization's sustainability, the development and succession of an organization's leadership is equally significant. According to Kim (2012), planned leadership transitions in health care organizations have a cascading positive effect both on the organization and the individuals served by the organization. For example, an organization that has planned for a leader's transition exudes a sense of stability and forward thinking to the members of the organization as well as the community it serves. The positive outcome from this planning necessitates comprehensive succession planning within HSOs. However, although HSO leaders may have succession plans, their attitudes toward the plans and commitment to implement these plans are critical (Cascio, 2011; Harris & Kirkwood, 2011).

Succession planning is part of the strategic function of organizations. Although the need for succession planning and transition management is acknowledged by organizations as best practice, succession activities are often either not initiated or not done well (Bower, 2007; Conger & Fulmer, 2003; Dym et al., 2011; Groves, 2007; McKee & Driscoll, 2008). The succession of founders or long-term executives is significant as this may mark the first major leadership transition in the life of the organization (Adams, 2010; Frick, 2010; Harris & Kirkwood, 2011; Sharma & Smith, 2008; Wasserman, 2003). Insight into this phenomenon is essential to the organization's ability to be sustainable in a changing environment. In the case of founders and long-term executives, their intention to embrace planning and implementation of a succession process has an even more profound effect on the organization.

Using interviews, I conducted the study described herein to better understand HSO leaders' intentions of implementation of succession activities and

transitioning out of their leadership role. In this study, *succession planning* is defined as the process of assessing the current and forecasting the future environment, planning related transition policies and activities, and preparing the organization to meet its current and future leadership needs. The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Do HSO founders and long-term executives have a succession plan in their organizations and do they intend to implement it?
2. What are the intentions of HSO founders and long-term executives toward developing leaders and establishing leadership development activities in their organizations?
3. What are the intentions of current HSO founders and long-term executives regarding retirement?

Method

Design and Sample

A sample of 10 executives was selected from the membership of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), a national organization of human service providers. The executives represented organizations of various sizes and locations as shown in Table 1 on the next page. The participants were evenly distributed as five founders and five long-term executives. Semi-structured interviews were conducted via phone or e-mail or in person. The mean age of study participants was 60 years old (range 53–69). The mean length of time projected to retirement was 3.75 years. Participants had been with their organizations an average of 26.88 years and had been in the executive position an average of 26.75 years.

Table 1: Size and Locations of Participating Organizations (N = 10)

Interview Type	Organizational Size (Employees)	Location
in person	3,000	Phoenix, AZ
in person	987	Philadelphia, PA
phone	500	Chesterfield, SC
e-mail	400	Hope, AR
in person	400	New Paltz, NY
phone	400	St. Louis, MO
in person	350	Louisville, KY
e-mail	310	Portland, ME
phone	270	Pela, IA
e-mail	n/a	Amsterdam, NY

Findings and Discussion

Succession

Emergency vs. strategic succession planning. The results of the study show that participants have a positive attitude towards the formulation and implementation of a succession plan. However, there is no consensus as to what that plan should contain. There were two types of succession processes mentioned. First, the *emergency model* is the plan focused on the transition process due to an unexpected loss of a person in a key position. Participants frequently used the phrase “hit by a bus” to describe this phenomenon. There are unanticipated events that would cause a leader to unexpectedly leave their position and/or duties and consequently hinder or curtail organizational operations. Leaders have developed a plan that outlines the process of how operations would continue in this circumstance. Some executives stop here and deem their emergency plan as a succession plan. Though an emergency plan is vital, it is only one component of a comprehensive succession process (Adams, 2010; Durst & Gueldenberg, 2010; Frick, 2010).

Thus, the second type is the *strategic succession process*, wherein the organization’s succession plan is developed and harmonized with the organization’s overall strategy. Other researchers recommend a strategic succession model because it connects succession to the strategic goals of the

organization (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2001; Chrisman, Chua, & Steier, 2011; Conger & Fulmer, 2003; Rothwell, 2005). As one participant stated, “succession starts with the people you hire,” illustrating how a strategic succession plan impacts organizational decisions. The strategic model provides succession activities that are not merely focused on the executive, but also the “bench strength,” or the ability to replace leaders with competent understudies throughout the organization.

The two models should not be mutually exclusive, but rather combined to provide a comprehensive tool for organizations and their leadership in the succession planning process. In essence, emergency as well as future-oriented plans should be in place to guide organizational decisions. This allows organizations to match anticipated leadership needs and competencies with current and future climates (Gibbons, 2011).

Sharma and Smith’s (2008) research shows that succession plans were often developed for the wrong reasons. This study also revealed that some of the executives developed succession plans after announcing their intentions to retire, at the request of the board, or in answer to the question, “what if I get hit with a bus?” It is presumptuous to say that the previous points are wrong reasons to initiate succession planning; yet, they fall short of the strategic context that emerges as a result of the visionary intentions of a leader. While it is essential for HSO leaders to develop an emergency transition plan, it is vital for leaders to go beyond the emergency paradigm to develop a strategic succession plan and process. One participant reported that he has worked to establish a “culture of succession” in which succession thinking is an element of how things are done in the organization. The results of the study support Sharma et al.’s (2008) and Frick’s (2010) call for continued education for executives and their organizations on meaning and reason for succession planning and related activities.

Culture of development. Study participants unanimously confirmed leadership development as a benefit for their organizations. It is a key component of a comprehensive succession plan (Boyne, James, John, & Petrovsky, 2010; Charan et al., 2001; Conger & Fulmer, 2003; Durst & Gueldenberg, 2010; Kim,

2012; Rothwell, 2002, 2005). The study found that executives and their organizations have made a commitment to consider internal candidates for CEO positions. It was noted that, in some instances, leaders reported that their organization's succession plan specified that only internal candidates would be considered for the CEO position. In other cases, both outside and internal candidates were able to be considered for executive positions. Two participants cited making leadership development part of the organization's culture as an organizational objective. This is congruent with Charan et al.'s (2001) and Labeledz & Berry's (2011) assertion that succession should be ingrained in the organization's culture.

Participants recognized that the competency of those who provide direct care for the individuals served is vital. Schein (2004) posits that there are three levels of organizational culture: artifacts, espoused values, and underlying beliefs. In an organization that has a culture of development, the underlying beliefs will encompass human development and be a reflection of the executive's commitment to developing members of the organization (Adams, 2010; Labeledz & Berry, 2011). This study also showed that many executives are expanding that culture of development beyond the organization to the human services field at large. At least one participant reported being involved in regional and national development efforts. Three participants responded that even if efforts are extended to develop a person that subsequently leaves for another organization, they felt the human services field, as a whole, would benefit from the availability of skilled leadership.

Executive team. The use of an executive team in the succession process was common among study participants. The 10 participating executives were putting together or had in place executive teams that include potential candidates and are utilized for strategic and operational organizational tasks. These executive teams were involved in cross training, action learning, coaching and mentoring, networking, and other activities encouraged in the literature (Adams, 2010; Frick, 2010; McKee & Driscoll, 2008). Some executive teams were previously part of the organization's structure. Others teams were developed as part of the

subsequent succession process from an announced retirement, implementation of a formalized plan, and/or as a leadership development activity. Kur and Bunning (2002) suggest that leadership development should take place in teams, as that is the context in which most leaders will function. They also recommend a shift in focus from the development of individual leaders to the development of the leadership function. Leadership function is not limited to individual performance (Boyne et al., 2010; Paull & Redmond, 2011), but includes the cumulative performance of the team and organization as leadership competencies are practiced at each position within an organization.

Retirement. The intention of the HSO leaders regarding retirement provided interesting findings. As the participants expressed their thoughts towards retirement, the gravity of the decision was striking. Executives discussed the issues that needed to be considered in transitioning out of their positions with some acknowledgment that they had not been as thorough as needed. Nonetheless, all executives (founders and long-term) will, as one participant put it, “face the inevitable” issue of retirement.

An intriguing finding was that although a succession plan may be developed and leadership development activities in place, incumbent leaders still have to reconcile their internal processes about leaving their positions (see Figure 1 on the next page). Some leaders have worked through this internal process prior to making a decision to retire. It appears that those who have gone through this process now have a more positive outlook on the difficult task of leaving something that they have been deeply involved in for retirement. Adams (2010) refers to the ambivalence of founders and long-term executives as “founder’s syndrome” (58). Four participants reported that they were caught off-guard thinking that they were ready because the tangibles were in place. Participants related how, at critical moments, retirement “became real” to them. Events like conversations with family, considering another colleague’s journey, experiencing a serious health problem, and watching someone else do a task that they used to do are examples of triggers that served as a reality check for study participants. The consequences of these types of events include renewed periods of

reflection, consultations with colleagues and significant relations or friends, and delayed transitions (Frick, 2010; Harris & Kirkwood, 2011). Similarly, some leaders recalled horror stories of colleagues who retired and did it “wrong.” It could be assumed that the internal process did not happen or was not completed in those cases.

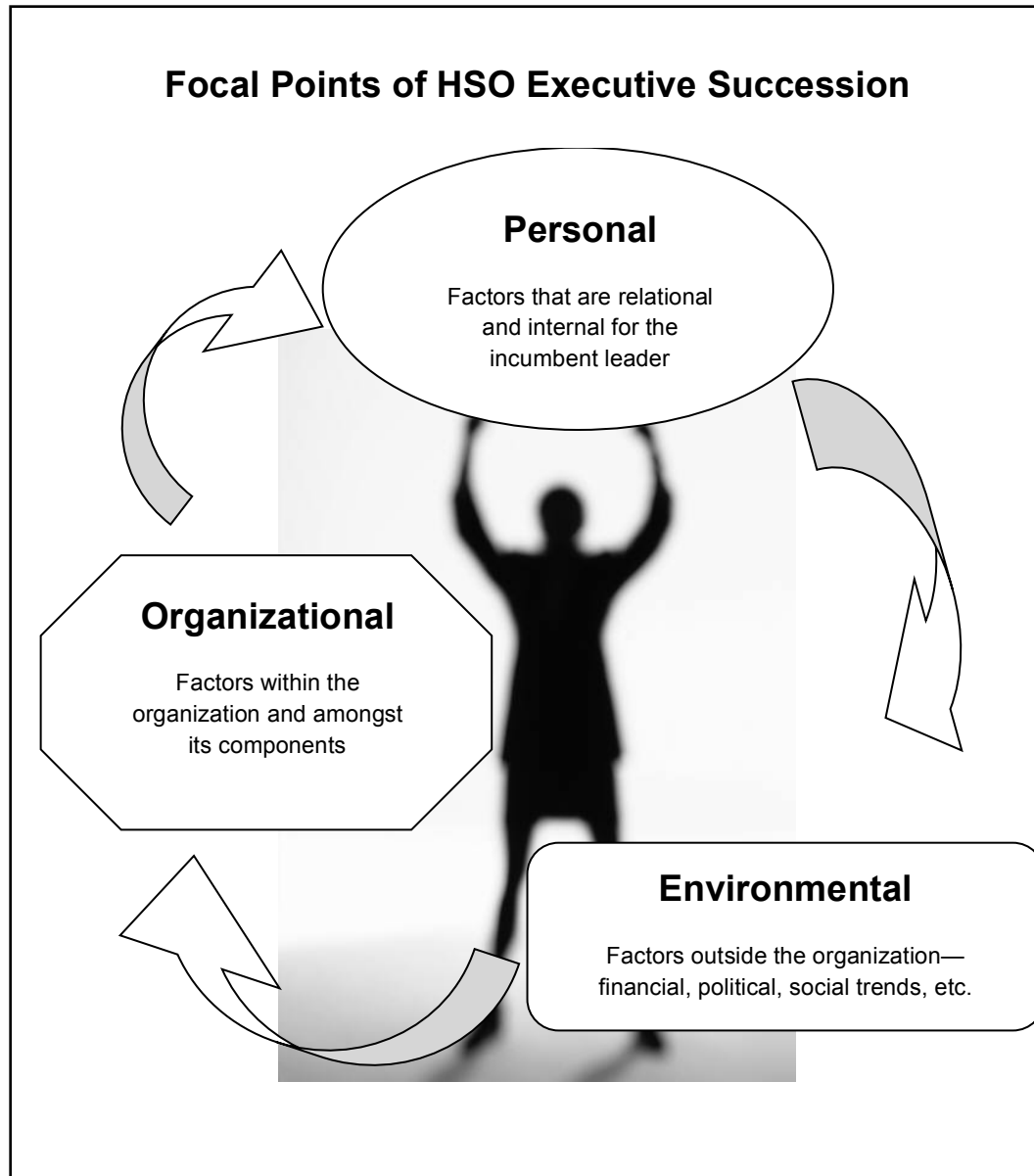


Figure 1. Focal points in the succession process of HSO executives

Founders and long-term executives report how easy it is for the lines between the executive and the organization to get blurred (McKee & Driscoll, 2008). One

leader stated, “this place is my life.” Another said, “I have given all I have to [organization].” Conversely, one participant said, “I have a balanced life.” However, this declaration proved to be the exception to sentiments of the majority of study participants. Consciously and unconsciously, the HSO executive’s life and the life of his or her organization can become blended together. Participants stated that they are the “face of the organization,” or “the corporate identity.” It stands to reason that when a leader attempts to leave that organization, there are internal issues that have to be addressed.

The Process of Change. Succession is the quintessential organizational change. This is especially true when a founder or long-term executive is transitioning out of the organization (Adams, 2010; Paull & Redmond, 2011). The transition of the founder is a critical episode in the life of the organization (Adams, 2005; Labeledz & Berry, 2011; Lester, Parnell, & Menefee, 2009; Santora, Caro, & Sarros, 2007; Shirokova & Knatko, 2008; Wasserman, 2003) and is often the organization’s first executive transition. As Grusky (1961) asserts, leader succession has a traumatic impact on the organization. The impact is experienced as the founder releases leadership to another (Labeledz & Berry, 2011; Wasserman, 2003). Consequently, if this transition event is traumatic for the organization, it is reasonable to conclude that transition can also be harrowing for the founder or long-term executive.

One executive noted that planning for “succession is like planning your own funeral.” That notion of grief/loss was reported throughout the study. The Kübler-Ross (1969) grief cycle has been adapted to reflect the similarities between the emotional stages of grief and those experienced with organizational change. Accordingly, Burke (2002) notes that a grief/loss process is experienced with any organizational change. The stages of the grief/loss process are reflected in the change model (see Figure 2) developed by Jaffe, Scott, and Tobe (1994).

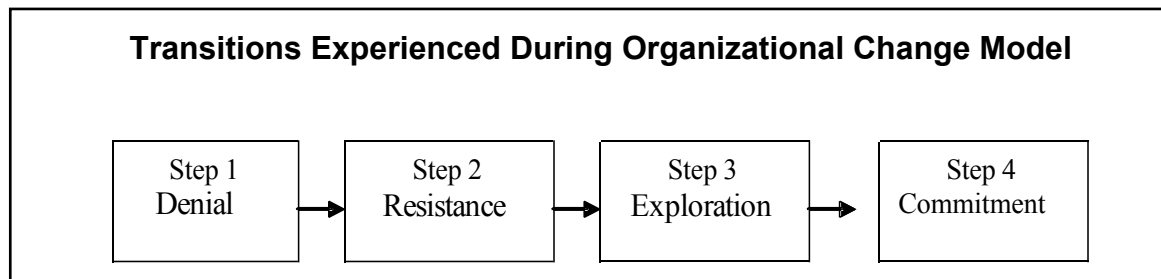


Figure 2: Organizational change model reflecting the stages experienced during a change event. From *Rekindling Commitment: How to Revitalize Yourself, Your Work, and Your Organizations* (p. 167), by D. T. Jaffe, C. D. Scott, and G. R. Tobe, 1994, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Copyright 1994 by Jossey-Bass.

During the retirement process, issues of loss and separation can emerge for both the members of the organization as well as the incumbent executive. The literature describes this phenomenon or some form of it occurring for some executives as they consider transitioning (Adams, 2010; Cascio, 2011; Frick, 2010; Santora & Sarros, 1995). For example, some study participants shared that it was hard for them to let go of tasks they enjoyed doing. Some participants talked about a “seamless” work/life routine with blurred boundaries. A few reported the organization’s heavy dependence on their input and direction. In some cases, this dependence even extended to the boards of their organizations. Consequently, when the long-term executive is planning his or her retirement, it often provokes feelings of separation and loss. Although leaders navigate these issues and feelings in varying ways, this phenomenon appears to be present on some level in any transition process.

According to Sonnenfeld (1988), to understand the motivation of aging leaders to continue working, we must understand the influence of age on work. Generally, work provides more than financial compensation. Similar to family and community, it provides self-identification, a sense of belonging, and purpose. It is possible that the object of loss can be summed up as the forfeiture of what Sonnenfeld calls the “heroic self-concept.” This is one’s identification with leadership stature and the quest for immortal contribution. Hence, leaving can be a distressing experience for the departing executive.

Consequently, the executive is confronted with self-inquiry that may be revealing. Adams (2005) examined previous founder transition studies and found that the founder's challenge begins with the simple question, "do I want to leave?" This simple but powerful question often gets buried under the everyday demands of leading an HSO. Yet having the ability to ask this question and process an answer could benefit executives. Once intentions are formed and goals set, there are moderating factors that move intentions to behaviors. In Burke's (2002) organizational change model, the final phase is the commitment phase. This marks a vital turning point for the executive because he or she accepts the encountered change and develops a commitment to the new direction. Durst and Gueldenberg (2010) propose that the organizational field can tap into the knowledge capital of retired executives, supporting the development of new roles for executives. At this point, intention is formed or reformed and goals are reaffirmed or developed. Ghoshal and Bruch (2003) conclude that motivation is the desire to do something and volition is the absolute commitment to achieving something. After an executive develops intentions to achieve a goal, there are subsequent behaviors needed to reach the identified outcome. For example, many study participants set a goal to retire at a predetermined time. This required subsequent volition to complete certain activities and overcome obstacles in order to meet that date.

As HSO executives begin to consider retirement, it is likely that is necessary for that executive to move through the process Burke (2002) describes . This change model finds its roots in the seminal work of Lewin (1951), with his Unfreeze, Change, Refreeze Model. The foundational concept is that there is a state of equilibrium that is interrupted by some trauma or period of chaos, and, subsequently, there is a return to a new state of equilibrium. In this study, I found this occurrence in varying degrees in both the study participant and his or her respective organization as they advanced through the succession process. If the assertion that leaders engage in some form of psychosocial sequence is valid, then supporting the executive as they navigate the process is warranted.

Leader's legacy. An element of the succession phenomenon of the founder or long-term executive is his or her legacy. According to Kets de Vries (1988), founders see their organizations as symbols of their success and legacy. Galford and Maruca (2006) emphasize that building a leader's legacy starts with current decisions and actions. According to Galford and Maruca, "it's never too early to think about the kind of influence your leadership will have after you retire or leave your organization." When a founder sets a goal to leave a legacy in the organization, there are behaviors that coincide with that aim. Kuhl and Fuhrmann (1998) assert that maintenance of an active goal is called self-control. The method of maintaining one's actions in line with one's self-concept is called self-regulation. As leaders develop a picture of what they want themselves and their organizations to be known for or remembered by, this shapes their behaviors and decisions (Boyne et al., 2010; Chrisman et al., 2011; Heckhausen & Kuhl, 1985; Kuhl & Fuhrmann, 1998). Bandura's (1986) position that there is a reciprocal relationship between internal influences, external influences, and behavior is relevant to this concept. Therefore, as the activity to reach legacy goals occurs, these components are enacted and become critical for overcoming the challenges that emerge.

An important factor for the HSO executives in this study was their activity after retirement. Leaders appeared to search for and then commit to a purpose, even if that purpose is not to work. Davies and Cartwright (2011) posit that the expectations of the new retiree play a significant role in the decision process. This is illustrated in the concept map in Figure 3 on the next page. It was evident that executives had a proactive rather than a reactive approach to their transition, when their planning was more detailed and congruent with their vision and perspective on succession processes. Attitude develops intentions, which lead to behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Intentions, goal setting, and self-regulation come into play in the leadership succession process whenever the leader encounters points of decision and commitment.

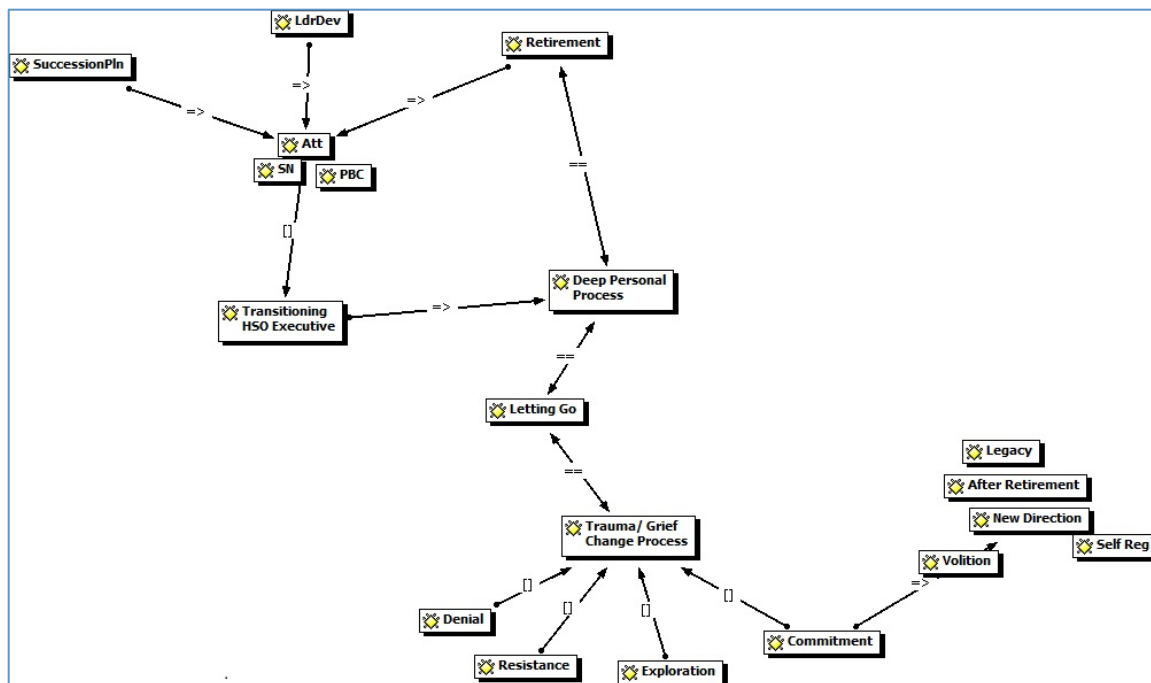


Figure 3. HSO executive succession concept map

Pending Crisis

The results of this study indicate that the concern about a succession crisis may be tenuous. The current economic challenges have had a profound effect on decisions pertaining to succession and transition. Some of the HSO organizations represented by the study participants faced shifts in funding sources, and as a result, a shift in services and service delivery. When facing such challenges, some executives believed it was not a “good time” to leave. When asked about the general feeling amongst colleagues, one executive replied:

. . . from talking to the executive directors around here, they don't feel it's in their immediate future to be retiring because of the economy, so I think they set it on the back burner. . . you know people are trying to keep their agencies open. . . . I think the economy is making everybody stay put for now.

Participants explained how the economic downturn has caused losses in 401(k)s, which had them delaying or at least reviewing the timing of their departure. Consequently, the economy's effect on the organization's and individual's well-being influenced the transition decision. Study participants often

expressed the notion of wanting to leave “on top of their game.” There appears to be a dedication among the study executives to see the completion of current projects and a general desire to leave the organization “in a good position.” For example, one participant pushed his retirement back five years to see a capital project completed. Another executive said, “the board got nervous that I was going to retire so they put together a contract for me to stay. . . . I would never leave when we are in the midst of a capital project.” Another stated about a colleague, “she was my replacement and everyone knew it, but she ended up leaving for a position promotion at her former organization.” In some cases executives reported this meant making special efforts to delay retirement dates, groom potential replacements, and assist boards in preparing for transitions.

Study participants did show commitment to retire or transition out of their current positions. The distinction comes in their commitment to the projected date of their transition. As previously mentioned, that date may be extended for a variety of reasons. Executives were willing to extend their time at the organization to complete activities that assured positive outcomes for the future. The implication of participant responses and their interactions with their colleagues is that a “succession crisis” is not a foregone conclusion. It may be that the question should shift from “will HSO executives retire?” to “how will HSO executives retire?” What are the procedures or best practices recommended for HSO founders and long-term executives as they transition out of their organizations? Over and above preparatory organizational procedures, the focus should lie in understanding how executives process this experience.

Summary

Theoretical Implications

Self-regulation. Kuhl’s work on self-regulation and volition is applicable to developing succession theory. In reflecting on succession and their transition, participants revealed constructs such as agency, self-efficacy, self-leadership, volition, and other cognitive processes. These constructs assist in comprehending what moves an executive from intention to behavior. The pre-

and post-decision factors can prove to be important in understanding how leaders follow through on goals and decisions in the succession process. This provides insight into the gap between organizations having a succession plan and executives actually being committed to follow through on them.

Change theory. This study supports succession as organizational change and especially links theories that suggest some form of staged process in negotiating change. This is not fully reflective of the internal processes leaders experience while contemplating their transition. Nevertheless, there appears to be some staged cognitive/emotional course that occurs. Burke's (2002) adaptation of the Kübler-Ross trauma cycle (1969) and Lewin's change stages (1951) may prove to be requisite in framing the process that executives and organizations move through in preparation and implementation of transition. As a result, there may be a relationship that can be built between grief theory, change theory, and leadership succession.

Implications for Practice

This study sheds light on the internal context of the incumbent leader, and shifts focus away from the external systems involved in organizational succession. Among other things, the study supports the notion that leadership succession is a very personal phenomenon. While a small sample does not provide a strong basis for generalizations, the following implications are offered based on the study results.

Strategic succession. Organizational plans for preparation of the transition of its founder or long-term executive often start and stop with an emergency plan. This study presents the value of incorporating succession into the organization's strategic plan and leadership development, which are closely tied. Both can be placed under the umbrella of the organization's strategic plan. Previous research supports this and suggests that the human resources department participates in strategic planning meetings.

The strategic paradigm is future-oriented and encompasses the internal as well as the external environment (economy, politics, current best practices in the field, technological advances, etc.). Strategic succession reflects on what the

organization wants to be today and what it will be in the future. Based on this, leadership and talent within the organization are acquired and developed accordingly.

Supporting the executive. The way an executive conducts him or herself before, during, and after the transition is determined by intention and self-regulation. Sonnenfeld (1988) posits that the executive's need for "heroic self-concept" determines the retirement plans of many organizational leaders. When participants talked about "letting go" as they transitioned, it was, in most cases, connected to a heroic stature or heroic mission (Adams, 2010; Frick, 2010). Perhaps a renewed self-concept and mission for post-retirement will shape the executive's conduct. This new image will demand self-regulatory behaviors that the executive deems appropriate in achieving that goal and will therefore require self-regulation to behave in congruence with the image he or she envisions.

Additionally, beyond the preparation of the organization for the executive transition event, there is a need for the organization to support its founder or long-term executive as they prepare to leave their positions. A significant finding of the study is the profound personal process that is juxtaposed to preparatory organizational measures. Strategies are needed that allow time to reflect and develop new directions as the executive navigates the external and internal stages of succession. It appears essential that the incumbent and the organization be mutually supportive through the change process in order for it to have the best chance of being successful. Of course, successors also require support to accommodate their transition into position. There is a body of research exploring how this is best accomplished. However, results of this study indicate a need to take a further look at the internal processes of the incumbent and how this impacts the organization.

The outcomes of HSO leadership extend beyond the leader and the organization to the people being served. Longitudinal studies that track the succession planning and implementation, leadership development, and the impact on the greater HSO community are necessary. The uniqueness of the

human services field requires continued development of the body of knowledge concerning HSO leadership and, more specifically, succession.

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Is Leadership Gender-Free? A Social-Constructionist-Feminist Analysis of Leadership

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Rather than debate whether males or females make more effective leaders, this article analyzes leadership on a social-constructionist gender basis. Leadership and other topics in business management are not gender-free. They could all be measured in a masculine-feminine scale. Even leader effectiveness is not judged solely by financial performance but also by other follower-centric measures that have previously been used only as intermediate variables. However, to a feminine perspective, these goals could be the ultimate goals for leader effectiveness. This article establishes a general framework for further research using gender role congruity theory to formulate three propositions to discuss leadership. It suggests leader effectiveness is dependent on the situation the leader faces, who the leader is, and which outcomes are considered to be effective.

Key words: business and society, feminism, leadership, social constructionism

Author's Note: The feminist perspective has challenged much of the previous confusion between gender and biological sex. In this article, therefore, the word gender represents the social gender, and sex represents biological sex.

Traditional management research failed to discuss gender issues in the past. According to Schein (2001), "think manager, think male" (675) when talking about managers, entrepreneurs, and leaders; researchers meant "male" without explicitly stating it. The characteristics of entrepreneurs that were used to describe entrepreneurial spirit were concluded from samples of males (e.g., Collins & Moore, 1969; Kent, Sexton, & Vesper, 1982; McClelland, 1961). This is the so-called invisibility of masculinity, which is argued to be an essential condition for the maintenance of male dominance (Robinson, 2000). The inevitable consequence is that characteristics considered essential for the business world tend to be masculine (Heilman, 2001).

As more and more women around the world gain power in business and politics, interest in the differences in leadership styles between men and women

and the sex role stereotypes of effective managers grows. Many earlier studies found that effective leadership was perceived to require masculine traits (e.g., Brenner, Tomkiewicz, & Schein, 1989, Powell & Butterfield 1979, 1984, 1989; Schein, 1973, 1975), but recent leadership studies provide different arguments. For example, as transformational leaders are found to be more successful (compared to transactional leaders) on aspects such as subordinates' satisfaction (Bass, 1985; Hater & Bass, 1988; Yammarino & Bass, 1990; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993), subordinate perceptions of leader effectiveness (Bass, 1985; Hater & Bass, 1988; Yammarino & Bass, 1990), individual follower effort (Yammarino & Bass, 1990), financial measures of organizational success and performance data (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Hater & Bass, 1988), and superior performance appraisals in later career (Yammarino et al., 1993), women's leadership and influence styles seem to be consistent with transformational leadership (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Druskat, 1994; Rosener, 1990). Using a meta-analysis of 45 studies of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles, Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) found that female leaders were more transformational than male leaders and engaged in more of the contingent reward behaviors that are a component of transactional leadership. They thought the implications were encouraging for female leadership because other research had tended to support male leaders as more effective. These studies call for feminine leaders (actually female leaders) and claim women have an advantage in managerial work because of their femininity (e.g., Grant, 1988; Helgesen, 1990; Lipman-Blumen, 1992).

Organizational improvement may not be achieved by simply letting more women into management, which lacks theoretical reason and reinforces stereotyping (Billing & Alvesson, 2000). Therefore, this study analyzes leadership and its effectiveness on a social-constructionist masculine-feminine basis, rather than describing it as a simple competition between biological male and female. After a review of management research literature for evidence of a widely used gender basis, the article focuses on the concept of leader effectiveness and

suggests applying the gender approach to it. Finally, the article offers a general framework using three propositions to analyze leadership.

Application of Social Constructed Gender in Management Research Literature

Social constructionist and poststructuralist feminist theory believes that similarities and differences between men and women are socially constructed (Harding, 1987). This group of feminists is concerned with how masculinity and femininity is constructed and the consequence of this construction on the social order, rather than what men or women actually are (Ahl, 2006). Gender is independent of one's biological sex, referring to what is considered masculine or feminine. This understanding of masculine-feminine is not rare in management research and has actually been applied in management studies on almost all levels.

On the national level, Hofstede (1980, 1983) defines one of his original four dimensions of national culture as masculinity vs. femininity. His index of this dimension measures national cultures with high masculinity if the sex role division is large and with high femininity if the culture values are more traditionally related to the feminine role. This masculinity-femininity scale describes culture and values, which would therefore be useful to explain people's motivations and decision making, such as consumer behavior (de Mooij, 1998; Milner & Collins, 2000) and ethical decision making (Vitell, Nwachukwu, & Barnes, 1993). Hofstede's work sets the bar for using a masculinity-femininity scale to analyze culture and values on smaller levels like national subculture, industry, organization, and group.

A general scale for comparing industries has not yet been developed, but scholars believe that some industries are more masculine or more feminine. The gender of industries is closely related to career expectations for either sex role in the society. It is partly explained by the nature of biological sexes and jobs (historically) and also a result of perceived sex participation in different positions of the society. It influences the sex ratio of employment and promotion for certain

groups in an industry. Past studies seem to prefer focusing on one particular industry, such as the oil industry (Miller, 2004) or the mining industry (Somerville & Abrahamsson, 2003). Information technology is another industry (Cockburn, 1983; Natale, 2002; von Hellens, Nielsen, & Trauth, 2001;), which, like oil and mining, is considered to be masculine. Garcia-Retamero and López-Zafra (2006, 2009) introduce the ideas of feminine industry, masculine industry, and unspecified industry into their study on the influence of sex role stereotypes on leadership. All of the studies mentioned above may suggest the feasibility of developing a masculinity-femininity scale for ranking each industry on an index.

Organizations are not gender neutral either (Acker, 1990). Organizational culture is strongly influenced by industry, and Gordon (1991) even argues that organizational culture is driven by industry characteristics. Of the three industry variables he identifies as having the potential to create organizational culture, the relationship of customer requirements and societal expectations to gender may be the most apparent. For customer requirements, the relation of gender and consumer behavior has already been discussed at the national level (de Mooij, 1998, Milner & Collins 2000). We might expect to see similar relations to gender in the industry level. Since gender itself is based on societal expectation, the masculinity-femininity index of an industry is therefore probably very similar to the organizations within it. Gendering organizational culture theory (Alvesson & Billing, 2009) is derived comparatively from the innermost circles of the organization. This line of thought (including Leidner, 1991) emphasizes that gender is constructed in the workplace. All this research reflects the notion that some organizations are more masculine/feminine than others and that organizations' masculinity/femininity can be differentiated.

Within organizations, or smaller groups, management practice may have a gender as well. Cliff, Langton, and Aldrich (2005) distinguish masculine/feminine employment relationships by examining human resources policies and their relational orientation toward employees and masculine/feminine organizational hierarchy by identifying degree of bureaucracy.

The individual level is the basis of gender study. Gender identity theory (or psychological androgyny—see Bem, 1974, 1993) describes how people identify their group membership based on sex roles, and is useful for understanding how these identities shape their perspectives and experiences in different settings, especially, for our interest, at work. It is used to understand women's experiences in management (Ely, 1995) and people's aspirations to top management (Powell & Butterfield, 2003).

Gendered Effectiveness of Leadership

The main purpose of leadership research is to explore how a leader influences followers, to evaluate leadership styles and to find the best leadership style, or, perhaps, the most effective leadership style in a situation. The concept of leader effectiveness is therefore crucial in the research. The most commonly used measurement of leader effectiveness is the extent to which the leader's organizational unit achieves its goal (Yukl, 2001). Objective measurements include financial performance such as profits, sales increase, and return on investment. Subjective measurements are evaluations by superiors, peers, or subordinates. Another indicator of leader effectiveness is the attitude of followers toward the leader, measured by absenteeism, voluntary turnover, and similar activities. It is hard to say which criteria should be used when there are so many different measurements of leader effectiveness—and some of them are sometimes contradictory.

Evaluation in business management is never a simple job. When we talk about the performance of a business unit, it usually means financial performance only. Subjective measures are used as mediators for financial performance. A large number of human resources studies contribute efforts to the relationship of other indicators to financial performance, so it is difficult to distinguish, in both practice and research, if people really care about voluntary turnover or job satisfaction, or they only care about the financial implications behind that.

The selection of the appropriate evaluation criteria depends on the objectives and values of the person making the evaluation. From a masculine perspective, it

might be the objective measures of success based on business size or financial performance rather than the more subjective “lifestyle” measures (Walker & Brown, 2004); a feminine perspective suggests evaluating socio-emotional satisfaction derived from interpersonal relations with employees and customers and the pursuit of social goals (Bird & Brush, 2002). The tendency of business evaluation to focus on financial performance, numerical data, and statistics is possibly a historical result of androcentric thinking. To be really gender neutral, it is necessary to rethink the evaluation system.

I propose here a gendered analysis of leadership effectiveness. If the criterion for leadership effectiveness is objective and based on money, it is regarded to be more masculine. If the criterion is more social and emotional, it is more feminine. This is not simply giving new names to existing measures of leadership effectiveness. The key is to recognize feminine effectiveness as the ultimate goal rather than as a mediator between leadership and profit. For example, a leader satisfies his or her followers, creating a happy and family-like working climate. The followers respect the leader and cherish the memory of working with him or her even after they voluntarily leave the organizational unit. Regardless of the financial performance is, this leadership is (femininely) effective. Leadership research should provide more measurement options, recognizing the fact that people have different values and goals. Instead of creating a combined single composite criterion, giving each type of effectiveness in the function a weight, the goal of this research is to show people which leadership style, of which leader, in which situation, is effective by which criteria.

A General Framework

As explained, gendered analysis of leadership effectiveness could cover most leadership variables, including the environment/situation, the individuals (leaders and followers) and the influencing process (for a summary of these variables, see Yukl, 2001, 11). Therefore, I have created a general framework for gendered leadership analysis, which is presented in Figure 1 on the next page.

All the elements in the framework are gendered, and each interacts with the others. An individual could be marked by at least two gender scales, the biological sex—which could also be measured by a masculine-feminine scale using physiological index such as sex hormone—and the gender identity—how he/she defines himself/herself. The two-way exchange between leader and follower includes their interactive behaviors and perceptions. Situational variables are considered in a gendered organization, which belongs to a gendered industry in a gendered nation. The evaluation of leadership effectiveness also depends on the whether the perspective of the follower is more masculine or feminine. For example, from a more feminine perspective, follower attitudes and behaviors can be performance outcomes—not just intermediate variables, but the goals/criteria themselves.



Figure 1. A general framework of gendered analysis of leadership effectiveness

Since gender is an ongoing social construction (Ely, 1995), the gender traits of every element in the leadership process may vary across settings. On one hand, this emphasizes the idea that effective leadership depends on the environment, rather than stating the existence of a dominant type of leadership effectiveness in all situations or an optimal masculine-feminine balance for an organization/industry/nation. On the other hand, the gender traits of these elements also vary over time. Elements interact with the environment. For example, management practice could be an important factor that shapes the organization's gender, or organizational culture could affect individuals' identity (Ely, 1995). Even the scales themselves change over time as social expectations for sex role division change. If we use Bem's (1974) method, which sets the masculine, feminine, and neutral items of personality traits, in different decades, we are likely to get very different or even contradictory groups of items. However, this may not be a big issue for scholars using such a scale, as it takes a long period of time for a society to change significantly. Even if a society has changed, the perception and attitudes may persist as tradition for longer; thus the same scale could continue to be used. Still, it is necessary to note that the framework should also have a time axis.

Gender Role Congruity: Variables and Propositions

The gendered analysis framework may introduce to leadership research the core problem of gender role congruity (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Gender is based on people's beliefs and expectations, which influence their evaluations of women and men in certain positions, including leadership positions (Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006). These beliefs and expectations are embedded within the contexts of nations, industries, and organizations and also evolve over time.

On the micro-level of congruity, an interesting question would be how effective different leadership styles of women or men leaders are, especially when they show an incongruity in the image with their biological sex. The results could vary across industries or nations. We could also do a comparison across industries or

nations, or just examine gendered leadership effectiveness within a given industry in one country.

The model for examining such a situation is shown in Figure 2 on the next page. The self-identity of the leader is replaced by the gender image of the leader. Biological sex and performance outcomes are divided into types but not continuous scales. Situational variables and followers' variables are briefly left out of this discussion.

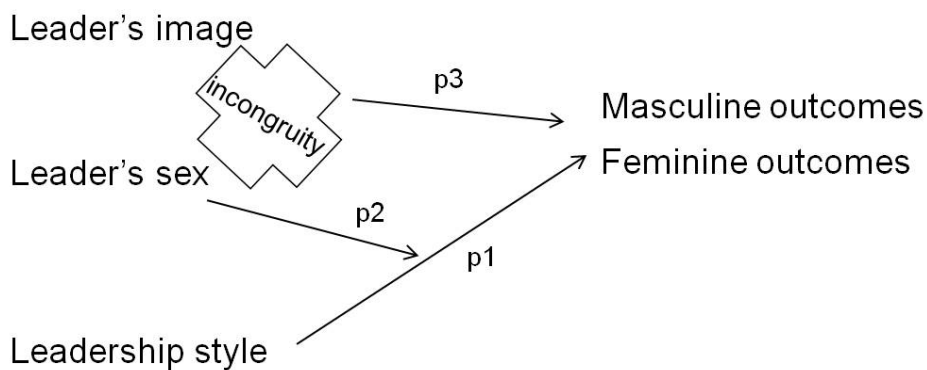


Figure 2. A simplified model of leadership

Biological Sex

In the simplest case, sex is divided into two types, male and female, as the traditional social concepts. However, in today's diverse world, it could be argued that division of people by biological sex is more useful than basing division on sex hormone levels. First, judging people's biological sex by the existence of a certain organ could fail for some individuals, even if they are only a small minority. Second, it does not take into account the number of homosexual people in a society, which could be a significant population. As the society accepts this population segment, more and more homosexual people put their identities on the table, which adds complexity to the classification of (biological) sexes because these identities may differ from traditional male/female gender roles. Additional research on extending the classifications is warranted. In this article, however, I only discuss the simplest case.

Image

Leaders' self-identity is replaced by gender image as perceived by subordinates. Leaders' images are popularly discussed in a broader scope, such as public perception of political leaders (for example, see Stewart & Clarke, 1992) or business leaders (Chen & Meindl, 1991). Fisher and Fowler (1995) argue that images can have a moral or normative dimension and, therefore, women better fit the image of business leaders. However, that is from a general public perspective. On a more micro-level, "new leadership theories" (Bryman, 1992), including charismatic leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988; House, 1977; Shamir, House, Arthur, 1993), transformational leadership (Bass, 1988; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988; House, 1977; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Shamir et al., 1993; Tichy & Devanna, 1986), and visionary leadership (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin, 1988), stress the ultimate importance of followers' perceptions in determining a leader's influence. In this study, image is the followers' perception of the leader's gender, or rather, the extent to which the followers perceive the leader to be masculine or feminine.

Leadership Style/Management Practice

Cliff et al. (2005) discuss the masculinity and femininity of management practice based on organizational hierarchy and employment relationship. The leaders in their study are business owners who determine the structure and policies in their firms. This makes it reasonable to score the gender of management practice as objectively as possible by only exploring organizational structures and policies.

Masculine Outcomes

Masculine outcomes are represented by financial performance. This includes profits, profit margins, sales increases, market shares, sales relative to targeted sales, returns on investments, productivity, cost per unit of output, costs in relation to budgeted expenditures, and so on (Yukl, 2001). Additional research studies could focus on a single outcome, depending on the sample industry. Masculine outcomes of leadership could also be very dependent on setting, which is not included in this simple model.

Feminine Outcomes

The data for some feminine outcomes can be collected through questionnaires or interviews with followers. Some of these are concepts in human resources management, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and loyalty to the leader. Subordinates' perception of leadership effectiveness can also be measured through feminine outcomes such as level of absenteeism, voluntary turnover, grievances, complaints, work slowdowns, and so on (Yukl, 2001).

Masculinity and Femininity

According to Bem (1974), masculinity and femininity are not absolutely contrary. A person (or, by extension, a concept) could be both masculine and feminine. However, in this exploratory work, I simply regard them as opposite. That is, being more masculine means being less feminine. This gender scale could be easily defined using the ratio (or other transitions) of masculinity and femininity in Bem's approach. For management practice, it is even easier to achieve, since the definitions of masculine and feminine practices are opposites. Therefore in this approach, masculinity and femininity are the two ends of the gender scale.

From the employee-oriented aspects of effective leadership, Cann and Siegfried (1987) found that feminine qualities were more highly valued by subordinates, while superiors valued masculine traits more highly. A possible explanation could be that subordinates are primary beneficiaries of employee-centered behaviors and superiors value more directive or structured behaviors designed to make sure task are completed (Cann & Siegfried, 1987, 1990). There seems to be a correlation between masculine leadership and outcome, and feminine leadership and outcome. As discussed earlier regarding transformational leadership—which is considered to bring superior masculine outcomes—masculine leadership may not be always positively related to masculine outcomes because it is less consistent with transformational leadership than feminine leadership. In this study, feminine outcome is defined by the evaluation of followers, while feminine leadership (feminine management practices) means flatter hierarchy and more attention to the specific needs of individual employees. Therefore, the first proposition is as follows:

Proposition 1: Feminine leadership and feminine outcomes are positively related.

Masculine management practice may not surely result in a less-valued feminine outcome, but if it is a female leader who uses it, the subordinates could negatively rate it. One study found that female leaders tend to be devalued by subordinates if they lead with a stereotypically masculine approach (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992).

Proposition 2: Masculine leadership and feminine outcomes are negatively related when the leader is a female.

Considering gender role congruity theory, it is expected to see a negative effect of gender incongruity (conflict between biological sex and gender image) on subordinates' response to the leader. Druskat (1994) found no significant differences between subordinates' satisfaction with transformational and transactional leadership based on their leaders' gender. This might suggest independence of the feminine outcomes of masculine-feminine leadership on leaders' gender.

Proposition 3: Gender incongruity and feminine outcomes are negatively related.

If the three propositions are true, what are the implications? A female leader with a very masculine image, leading with masculine practices, would be the most unpleasant one. In fact, different cultures give similar nicknames to these types of females, such as "dragon ladies" or "iron ladies" in English, and "Nv Qiang-ren" (female robbers) in Chinese. These female leaders are usually heavily criticized.

How would the other extreme fare? A male leader with a very masculine image, leading with feminine practices, would be a popular one. The same effect would happen to a female leader with a very feminine image, also leading with feminine practices. The latter is hard to visualize, with the exception of perhaps Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The possible reason might be that leader emergence theory was not included in this study. Even though some leadership is theoretically effective, it could be impossible to have the opportunity to be the leader. As Kent

and Moss (1994) argue, gender role has a strong effect on leader emergence. If researchers cover additional aspects of leadership, such as leader emergence, this gendered leadership approach may be very useful for explaining the leadership in place and suggesting better solutions.

Does this mean only the two most popular leaderships are valuable? The answer is of course not. This model is so simple that the situational variables are not included and, if they are, the results could be more rich and interesting. The masculine outcomes, which are heavily discussed in other studies, are also excluded here. If all are in consideration, the situation will determine which criterion should be appropriate. The two types of outcomes are also connected. Masculine outcomes may be useful for an organization to maintain the operations, and sometimes positively affect feminine outcomes (for example, the loyalty or job satisfaction). Feminine outcomes could also affect masculine outcomes and the survival of the unit. During a crisis, the goal for the unit can be extreme and totally different from ordinary operations, so that even leaders with gender role incongruity could be effective. For example, if an organization needs to change the culture after a merge, or change the structure after a financial crisis, the extreme “unpleasant” leader we discussed above could be a perfect one to handle that. Her incongruous characteristics may first rearrange the old culture or structure in the organization and then build a new one. This could be further explored in crisis leadership research.

Conclusions

This article proposes a general gendered approach to analyze management. After reviewing management research and analysis of the primary elements of leadership, it seems feasible to formulate testable propositions to study management and leadership in the new framework. The article also provides three propositions for further research. The main theory for these propositions is gender role congruity.

It is also an effort to develop a contingency approach to leadership, which argues that there is no one right style of leadership. It suggests that the best

leadership style depends upon the conditions the leader faces (see Podsakoff, Scott, Ahearne, & Bommer, 1995, for a review of various contingencies that have been studied). This article attempts to focus on what the leader is. This does not simply deny the value of a particular type of leader; instead, it emphasizes person-situation fit. I believe research and practice in management, and in all of society, needs to accept and admire the diversity of values.

Another contribution is the emphasis on the value of feminine outcomes as well as masculine outcomes. It attempts to gain respect for a variety of values beyond the dominant one in business, calling for a change in understanding of business and corporations. Does the only aim of business have to be profit? What happens when we look at this from another perspective? Then the question will no longer be why women-owned businesses are comparatively smaller scale and less profitable than those owned by men. It may not be a situation needs to change or improve—especially if we take note of the total number of women-owned businesses and women entrepreneurs. How much do they contribute to employment? Do the entrepreneurs and employees enjoy their work and life? It should not be a battle between the sexes. Not everything should be judged by dollars.

I have to admit that there is an inherent contradiction within this logic. The aim of this study is to suggest a feminist approach, while the method is still quantitative, which is always criticized by some feminists. It is unavoidable when it is still the most persuadable method in management research. However, I hope that the discussion on methodologies could be integrated into the whole gendered approach and that both masculine and feminine management approaches are improved and applied in the future.

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Toward an Implicit General Systems Model of Leadership

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This article describes the development of a model of the leadership process that can be used to aid in communication between leadership researchers and practitioners, researchers across different disciplines and cultures, and practitioners across generations. Using Shannon and Weaver's (1949) mathematical theory of communication as a framework of general systems theory to help identify leadership constructs, the author constructed a leadership model with five components: a leader, a group, a task, an objective, and a critic. The author then used Ogden's Basic English (1930) to conduct a series of studies to glean the most appropriate descriptors for those five components. Findings indicate that a leader primarily provides knowledge, direction, experience, and discussion. A group primarily provides discussion, purpose, exchange, and relation. A task primarily provides purpose, direction, operation, and how. An objective primarily provides purpose, direction, why, and effect. A critic primarily provides comparison, expert, knowledge, and discussion.

Key words: Basic English, general systems theory, implicit theory, leadership

The quest for a general theory of leadership continues, according to Goethals and Sorenson (2006). Toward that end, general systems theory can be considered. In the 1950s, general systems theory was presented as a body of theoretical constructs used to discuss the general relationships of the empirical world (Boulding, 1956; von Bertalanffy, 1955). This framework allows for communication between specialists in different disciplines. It encourages communication between scientists, enabling them to learn from the entire body of scientific knowledge as well as their specialized area. Applying the principles of general systems theory to the concept of leadership can help people more effectively study leadership. Table 1 on the next page shows several fields of leadership study.

Table 1: Leaders and Leadership Environments

<i>Leader</i>	<i>Environment</i>
Executives	Business, for-profit organizations
Administrators	Not-for-profit organizations
Officers	Military
National politicians	Public service, government
World politicians	Countries, international organizations (UN, NATO)
Coaches, players, owners	Sports
Educators	Classroom, educational settings
Rabbi, priest, minister	Synagogue, church, parish, religious settings
Minority leaders	Civil rights, gender issues, diversity issues
Labor leaders	Organized labor, business, for-profit organizations
Media leaders	Communication forums, public opinion
Financial leaders	Banking, stock market, financial products

The purpose of this study is to suggest a model to simplify the language related to the study of leadership, improve communication, and allow for findings from research to be readily transferred across disciplines.

Literature Review

Implicit Theory

People use their implicit theories to make judgments. Judgments can be predicted once the underlying theory has been identified (Sternberg, 1985). Implicit theories help us understand the individual differences in people's perceptions (Schneider, 1973). Knowing implicit theories exist in the minds of people, researchers can seek to minimize the differences in perceptions about the constructs under investigation. This way subjects would hopefully interpret the characteristics of a particular construct in the same way as much as possible. Researchers would appreciate consistent interpretation across academic disciplines (Middlebrooks & Allen, 2008).

Communication Theory as a General Systems Theory

In 1949, Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver presented their mathematical theory of communication. This model can serve as an example of General Systems Theory. The model can be stated in simple terms. Communication is initiated by an *information source* in the form of a message. The message is

accepted by a *transmitter*, which transforms it to produce a signal suitable for sending via a *channel*. The *channel*, or medium, carries the signal from *transmitter* to *receiver*. The *receiver* performs the inverse operation of the *transmitter*, converting the signal back to a message. Finally, the message arrives at the intended target, the *destination*. Confounding the process, a *noise source* is recognized, which provides a negative impact on effectiveness.

One of the greatest advantages of the communication system model (theory) is simplicity. With a few minor changes in the model units and nomenclature, a number of models can be generated that apply to a wide range of different situations. For example, the original model begins with an information source sending a message to the transmitter to be transformed into an appropriate signal for the channel. In a generalized theoretical model, these might be referred to as *resources* available to initiate the process. On the other side of the system, a signal received from the channel is transformed by the receiver back into a message which is received by the final destination. In a generalized model, these units and relationships might be considered the *results* of the process. In the communication model, the connection between the resources and the results would be labeled the channel. A generalized model would better be served by using a broader term for the medium used. In many cases, an active entity might fulfill this role, rather than a passive one as suggested by the term *channel*. In these cases, the connection between resources and results as might be better labeled using the term *medium*, or perhaps more appropriately, *activity*. These three components—*resources*, *activity*, and *results*—could make up the parts of a theoretical model subject to different states of existence. Figure 1 on the next page illustrates the adaptation to a generalized model.

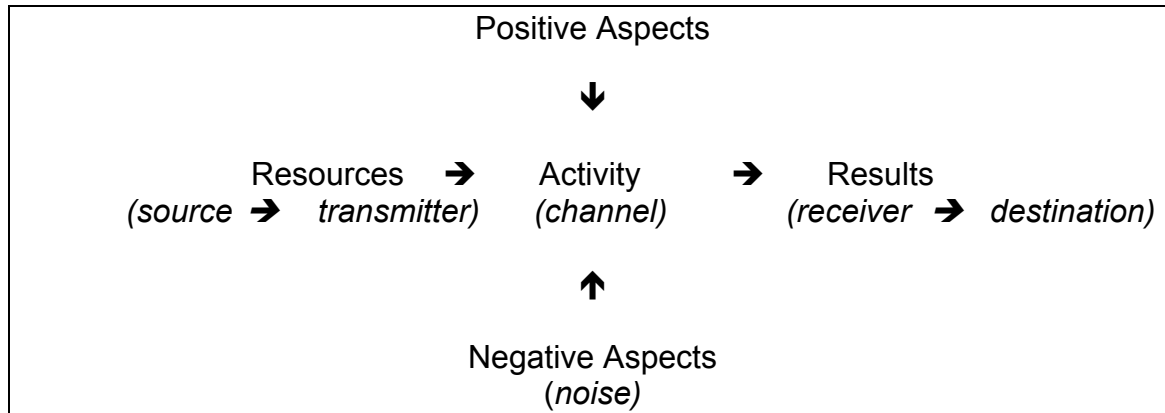


Figure 1. An ad hoc communication model

Some Concepts of Leadership

After a review of several leadership process models, including Bass (1990) and DuBrin (1995), I developed the system communication model in Figure 2 as an extension of the ad hoc communication model in Figure 1. This model contains the components of a leader, a critic, a group, a task, and an objective.

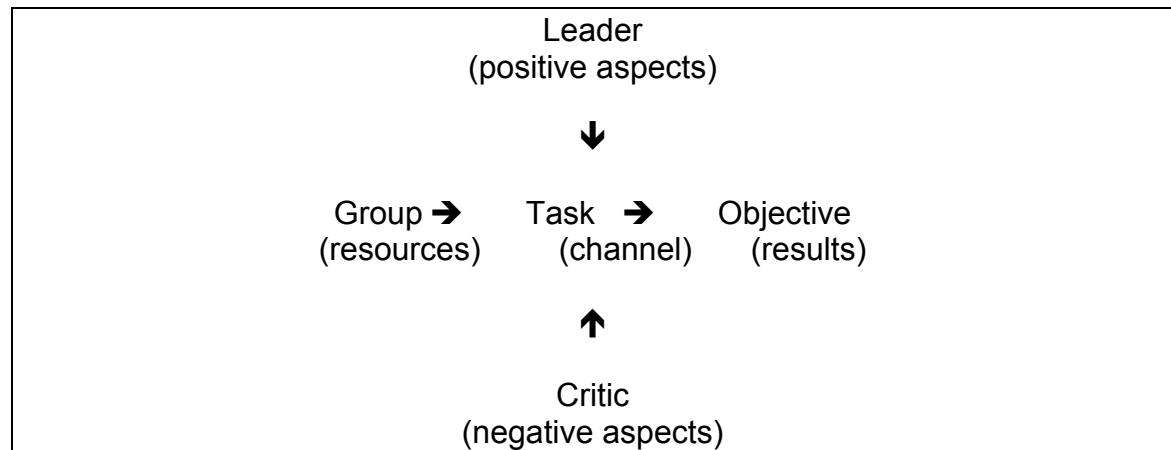


Figure 2. Common concepts model of leadership

Using the work of past researchers, I outlined the basic concepts. The subsequent study attempts to address specific characteristics of these units and the interactions between them. Previous studies of implicit leadership theory have used Rosch’s (1978) categorization principles to segment classifications (Kenney, Blascovich, & Shaver. 1994; Kenney, Schwartz-Kenney, & Blascovich, 1996; Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984; Offermann, Kennedy, & Wirtz, 1994). Using

implicit knowledge of the participants, perceptions were collected at the superordinate level.

For the purposes of this study, leadership was viewed as a property of a social system, rather than as the property of particular individuals (Yukl, 1994). In other words, the the study was an examination of the leadership process rather than the traits and characteristics of the individual leader. The intent was to locate functions and tasks in the leadership process that can be supported by information systems.

Table 2 shows a review of 10 leadership theories and studies that suggest components that perform functions and tasks in a leadership process model.

Table 2: Some Leadership Theories and Studies

Source	Leader	Group	Objective	Task	Critic
Lord, 2000	Leader	Follower		Task	
Stewart & Barrick, 2000		Team Structure	Team Performance	Task	
Ensley, Pearson, & Pearce, 2003	Leader	Team			
Kakabadse, Kakabasde, & Lee-Davies, 2005			Visioning		Divisioning
Wong & Page, 2003	Leader	People		Task	Opponent
Parry, 2008	Leader		Action		
van Ginkel & van Knippenberg, 2008		Group		Task	
Shondrick, Dinh, & Lord, 2010	Leader	Group	Behavior		
Oginde, D. A., 2011	Leader	Follower			
van Ginkel & van Knippenberg, 2012	Leader	Group		Task	

Implicit Theory of Language

It is important when communicating with others to select terms that have the same or similar implicit meanings for all those involved. A recent study on leadership values focused on value terms that required similar implicit meanings across three generations: baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Greenwood & Murphy, 2008). In addition, leadership research needs to be

conducted across cultures as well as across generations. Care must be taken regarding consistency of terms (Middlebrooks & Allen, 2008).

The implicit theory of language would postulate that individuals have self-knowledge of particular concepts and the terms associated with those concepts (Burge, 1988). Unless standard definitions of all terms presented to others are provided, the selected language should be composed of terms that are most likely to be similarly understood by the majority of the audience. Basic English is suitable to this purpose.

Simplifying Language: The Basic English System

The system of Basic English was developed by Charles Ogden in Cambridge in 1930 and consists of only 850 words. The purpose of the system was twofold—to provide a rational introduction to normal English and to serve as an international auxiliary language for use throughout the world in general communication, commerce, and science (Ogden, 1934). The 850 Basic English terms are designed to cover the needs of everyday life for which a vocabulary of 20,000 words is frequently used (Ogden, 1934). Taking advantage of what is known about implicit language theory, I adopted this system for use in this study in hopes that these terms would reduce the semantic (knowledge about meaning) and pragmatic (knowledge about use) distortion likely to result from the use of terms commonly associated with leadership (O’Keefe & Delia, 1990). The Basic English system was selected as a starting set of leadership words because it is believed individuals are more likely to possess similar semantic and pragmatic knowledge of these terms.

Method

From the initial list of 850 Basic English words, I selected a set of 100 words I believed to be most descriptive of the concept of leadership. Three groups of students were given the list of 100 words in a questionnaire and asked to select the 20 words they thought best described the concept of leadership. Each group contained 50 to 100 students. Using the results, a final set of 20 Basic English words was selected.

The 20 words were as follows:

Cause	Discussion	Expert	Purpose
Comparison	Effect	How	System
Decision	Example	Knowledge	Relation
Direction	Exchange	Operation	Why
Discovery	Experience	Power	

I then developed a new questionnaire with the five leadership model components (leader, group, task, objective, and critic) presented above a list of the 20 selected words in random order. Respondents were asked to circle the five words best describing each component of the leadership model. They were also asked their age, gender, and whether or not they considered themselves to be leaders. This questionnaire was pretested on 120 undergraduate students, none of whom had participated in earlier questionnaire studies. After the pretesting phase, questionnaires were administered to 350 undergraduate students enrolled in a College of Business core course, none of whom participated in the earlier pre-tests.

Results

Of the 350 surveys distributed, 330 usable surveys were collected. Table 3 shows the genders of the respondents, of which 59.1 percent were male and 40.9 percent were female.

Table 3: Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	135	40.9
Male	195	59.1
TOTAL	330	100.0

Table 4 on the next page shows that 97.3 percent of the respondents were between 25 and 34 years of age.

Table 4: Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
Under 25	302	91.5
25 to 34	19	5.8
35 to 44	5	1.5
45 to 54	3	0.9
Over 55	0	0.0
Missing	1	0.3
TOTAL	330	100.0

Table 5 shows an overwhelming majority (85.8 percent) of the respondents considered themselves leaders.

Table 5: Respondents by Leadership Self-Perception

I consider myself a leader	Frequency	Percent
Yes	283	85.8
No	47	14.2
TOTAL	330	100.0

Table 6 shows the frequency of response by percentage for each component of the leadership model and identifies, by rank, the four terms selected most frequently for each component. For the critic component, the top four terms selected were: (1) comparison, (2) expert, (3) knowledge, and (4) discussion. For the group component, the top four terms selected were: (1) discussion, (2) purpose, (3) exchange, and (4) relation. For the leader component, the top four terms selected were: (1) knowledge, (2) direction, (3) experience, and (4) decision. For the objective component, the top four terms selected were: (1) purpose, (2) direction, (3) why, and (4) effect. For the task component, the top four terms selected were: (1) purpose, (2) direction, (3) operation, and (4) how.

The term *purpose* was selected most often for both the objective component and the task component and second most often for the group component. The term *comparison* was selected most often for the critic component, but it was not a top term for any other component. The term *discussion* was selected most often for the group component, and it was among the top terms for the critic component. The term *direction* was selected second most often for the leader, objective, and task components.

Table 6: Frequency of Responses by Percentage for Each Component of the Leadership Model

	Critic	Group	Leader	Objective	Task
Belief	40.0	10.3	23.9	16.4	7.3
Cause	17.0	11.5	3.6	30.0	27.3
Comparison	(1) 55.5	30.3	2.4	7.3	3.9
Decision	24.5	38.2	(4) 60.9	29.7	30.3
Direction	8.8	30.3	(2) 70.6	(2) 57.0	(2) 69.1
Discovery	15.8	24.2	3.6	18.8	15.8
Discussion	(4) 42.4	(1) 85.2	10.9	12.1	6.7
Effect	17.3	6.7	11.5	(4) 35.5	36.1
Example	13.0	3.9	36.7	17.6	12.4
Exchange	8.5	(3) 48.2	1.2	5.2	6.1
Experience	38.5	15.5	(3) 66.4	8.8	10.9
Expert	(2) 52.7	1.2	22.7	1.8	4.8
How	17.0	3.6	1.5	29.1	(4) 39.4
Knowledge	(3) 49.7	19.4	(1) 78.8	24.5	23.9
Operation	3.6	30.0	10.0	31.8	(3) 54.8
Power	12.4	5.8	37.3	6.1	3.6
Purpose	18.8	(2) 50.6	38.8	(1) 90.3	(1) 79.1
Relation	17.0	(4) 41.2	12.4	11.2	5.2
System	4.8	38.5	4.2	17.0	31.5
Why	41.8	4.2	3.0	(3) 50.3	31.5

*High-frequency terms for each component are in bold.

**Top terms for each component are ranked in parentheses.

Differences in frequency of selection between leaders and non-leaders were analyzed. Leader or non-leaders were self-reported. Nearly 86 percent of the respondents reported they were leaders. Nine percent of the responses were significantly different at the 0.1 level or better between leaders and non-leaders. Table 7 on the next page shows the significant differences between leaders and non-leaders.

For the critic component, there was significant difference on the importance of *decision* at the 0.1 level, with leaders rating it higher. For the group component, there was significant difference on the importance of *effect* and *exchange* at the 0.05 level, with leaders rating both of them higher. For the leader component, there was significant difference on the importance of *how* at the 0.05 level, with leaders rating it higher. For the objective component, there was significant difference on the importance of *direction* and *experience* at the 0.01 level, with

non-leaders rating *direction* higher and leaders rating *experience* higher. For the objective component, there was also significant difference on the importance of *how* and *knowledge* at the 0.1 level, with leaders rating both of them higher. For the task component, there was significant difference on the importance of *relation* at the 0.01 level, with leaders rating it higher.

Between leaders and non-leaders, two responses were significantly different for the most often selected terms. For the group component, the third-ranked term, *exchange*, was rated significantly different at the 0.05 level, with leaders rating it higher. For the objective component, the second-ranked term, *direction*, was rated significantly different at the 0.01 level, with non-leaders rating it higher.

Table 7: Significant Differences in Responses between Leaders and Non-Leaders (self-reported)

	Critic	Group	Leader	Objective	Task
Belief	.363	.937	.208	.440	.743
Cause	.684	.444	.397	.211	.687
Comparison	.541	.934	.882	.793	.390
Decision	.059*	.738	.609	.988	.371
Direction	.942	.371	.472	.005***	.266
Discovery	.318	.829	.397	.947	.520
Discussion	.209	.333	.539	.333	.933
Effect	.133	.047**	.149	.913	.987
Example	.577	.453	.687	.177	.676
Exchange	.995	.034**	.632	.709	.527
Experience	.172	.759	.950	.006***	.539
Expert	.311	.632	.907	.874	.323
How	.992	.821	.025**	.075*	.437
Knowledge	.911	.736	.704	.059*	.117
Operation	.469	.532	.879	.156	.808
Power	.364	.851	.620	.527	.297
Purpose	.733	.705	.387	.495	.745
Relation	.673	.907	.364	.490	.000***
System	.641	.726	.320	.369	.171
Why	.179	.996	.650	.172	.532

*significantly different at the 0.1 level

**significantly different at the 0.05 level

***significantly different at the 0.01 level

Differences in frequency of selection between genders were also analyzed. At the 0.1 level or better, 16 percent of the responses were significantly different.

Table 8 on the next page shows significant differences between females and males.

For the critic component, there was significant difference on the importance of *power* at the 0.01 level and on the importance of *relation* at the 0.1 level, with females rating *power* higher and males rating *relation* higher. For the group component, there was significant difference on the importance of *direction* at the 0.05 level and *effect* and *how* at the 0.1 level, with females rating *effect* higher and males rating *direction* and *how* higher. For the leader component, there was significant difference on the importance of *purpose* at the 0.1 level, *exchange* and *knowledge* at the 0.05 level, and *operation* at the 0.01 level. Females rated *exchange* and *knowledge* higher, while males rated *operation* and *purpose* higher. For the objective component, there was significant difference on the importance of *belief* and *comparison* at the 0.1 level and *system* and *why* at the 0.01 level between females and males. Females rated *belief* and *why* higher, while males rated *comparison* and *system* higher. For the task component, there was significant difference on the importance of *knowledge* at the 0.1 level and *belief* and *experience* at the 0.05 level. Females rated *experience* and *knowledge* higher, while males rated *belief* higher.

Table 8: Significant Differences in Responses between Female and Male Respondents

	Critic	Group	Leader	Objective	Task
Belief	1.00	.692	.380	.084*	.025**
Cause	.380	.401	.240	.541	.045
Comparison	.976	.792	.841	.081*	.356
Decision	.632	.309	.959	.982	.982
Direction	.233	.013**	.158	.984	.860
Discovery	.307	.272	.226	.115	.264
Discussion	.333	.989	.426	.378	.386
Effect	.925	.092*	.133	.337	.941
Example	.114	.854	.908	.510	.287
Exchange	.828	.510	.045**	.110	.932
Experience	.168	.966	.889	.453	.014**
Expert	.281	.215	.122	.659	.774
How	.978	.055*	.116	.506	.679
Knowledge	.808	.534	.031**	.214	.087*
Operation	.529	.541	.000***	.477	.661
Power	.001***	.380	.699	.114	.226
Purpose	.856	.550	.089*	.677	.629
Relation	.069*	.324	.459	.685	.303
System	.464	.169	.881	.002***	.270
Why	.312	.682	.953	.007***	.391

*significantly different at the 0.1 level

**significantly different at the 0.05 level

***significantly different at the 0.01 level

Table 9 on the next page shows overlapping attributes. The critic overlapped with the group on *discussion* and with the leader on *knowledge*. The leader, objective, and task all overlap on *direction*. The group, objective, and task all overlap on *purpose*.

Table 9: Leader Components—Shared Descriptors

	Critic	Group	Leader	Objective	Task
Belief					
Cause					
Comparison	(1) 55.5				
Decision			(4) 60.9		
Direction			(2) 70.6	(2) 57.0	(2) 69.1
Discovery					
Discussion	(4) 42.4	(1) 85.2			
Effect				(4) 35.5	
Example					
Exchange		(3) 48.2			
Experience			(3) 66.4		
Expert	(2) 52.7				
How					(4) 39.4
Knowledge	(3) 49.7		(1) 78.8		
Operation					(3) 54.8
Power					
Purpose		(2) 50.6		(1) 90.3	(1) 79.1
Relation		(4) 41.2			
System					
Why				(3) 50.3	

Discussion

One of the most interesting findings was that 85.8 percent of the respondents perceived themselves as leaders. If the greatest predictor of creativity is thinking you are creative, then perhaps the greatest predictor of leadership is thinking you are a leader. If their perceptions are correct, this is good news for society. We are always in need of good leaders. Further study is necessary to determine why they consider themselves to be leaders and if today's students truly are leaders using objective measurements.

The top four descriptive terms for each component of the leadership model were identified and mapped to the model. Figure 3 on the next page shows this mapping. The resulting model elements were: a group primarily providing *discussion*, *purpose*, *exchange*, and *relation*; a task primarily providing *purpose*, *direction*, *operation*, and *how*; an objective primarily providing *purpose*, *direction*, *why*, and *effect*; a leader primarily providing *knowledge*, *direction*, *experience*,

and *decision*; and a critic primarily providing *comparison, expert, knowledge, and discussion*.

Shared attributes were *purpose* between the group, task, and objective; *direction* between the leader, task, and objective; *knowledge* between the leader and the critic; and *discussion* between the group and the critic.

Using the top four descriptive terms, each of the five components of the leadership model is connected to at least one other component in the model. The leader is connected to the critic by *knowledge*. The leader is connected to the task and the objective by *direction*. The group is connected to the task and the objective by *purpose*. The critic is connected to the group by *discussion*.

These connections suggest that the critic is viewed as a balance to the leader and a resource to the group. Further, these connections suggest that the leader and the group are seen as being responsible for accomplishing the task and meeting the objective.

Leaders and critics were both perceived to have *knowledge*. This might be a characteristic of the student population used for this study. Students could expect the most knowledgeable people will be assigned or will assume the leadership position.

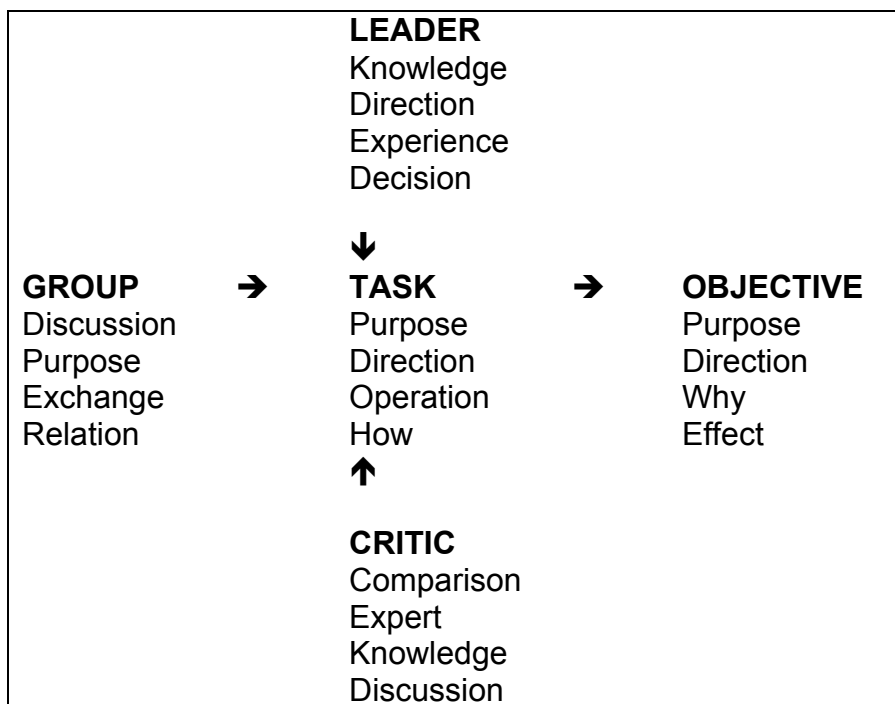


Figure 3. Leadership model with descriptive terms (in order of frequency)

The findings indicate that perceptions of important attributes for leadership significantly differ between leaders and non-leaders on the critic, group, leader, objective, and task. The findings also indicate that perceptions of important attributes for leadership significantly differ between genders on the critic, group, leader, objective, and task. Thus, it can be argued that gender and leadership aptitude impact perceptions about leadership.

Limitations and Recommendations

The concepts of leadership are complex in nature. To attempt to simplify those concepts may result in loss of information. However, dealing with complex language and definitions may also result in loss of information. Using a language such as Basic English may simply not be adequate to study some behavioral constructs of leadership. Further study is needed to examine the adequacy of Basic English for explaining leadership.

Using an academic sample as a starting point for examining this model provides limited results. However, it was believed to be important to examine the model in an academic setting before examining leadership in a business setting.

Future studies should focus on examining leadership across different levels in business organizations and across different industries.

Conclusion

The study of leaders and leadership has become increasingly complex over the decades. The purpose of this study was to suggest a simpler, implicit general systems model of leadership. While any word can hold different meanings for different people, it is believed that the 850 words included in the Basic English system contain less variance in meaning across populations. Therefore, examining whether or not leaders and critics are both expected to bring *knowledge* into a leadership situation can be compared across populations with relative certainty that each population considers *knowledge* to measure the same construct. The same can be said for examining whether or not the group, the task, and the objective all provide *purpose* to the leadership situation.

Having established consistent terminology across populations, efforts can be directed toward managing the expectations of those involved in a leadership situation. If expectations are the leader, the task, and the objective will provide *direction* to the leadership situation and it is known the current situation is structured otherwise, such changes in expectations can be communicated upfront, avoiding the delays and cost associated with miscommunication.

The university system has resulted in silos of knowledge being created. Within those silos, new terminology evolves to assist in discussion and clarification between researchers. The result is the creation of new terms to describe phenomena readily described in other disciplines, but unknown within the silo of the researcher's domain. Information systems technology has made past knowledge more readily accessible to researchers than ever before. But when the terminology is different across disciplines, it's often not possible to locate findings that could further the research agenda of leadership.

The simple, implicit general systems model of leadership developed and tested for this study shows promise for future examination of leadership phenomenon.

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RESEARCH NOTE

Dysfunctional Management: Narcissistic Leadership: A Case Study

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This research note examines the correlation between dysfunctional management and a leader's personality disorder from a psychoanalytic perspective. Specifically, it examines the narcissistic leader and its negative influence on a team and a business. In addition to the popular "superman"-type leaders with very strong and dominant personalities, psychoanalytic literature also notes a very vulnerable and hypervigilant subtype, the "thin-skinned narcissist." A case study in Italy provides an example of a job stress situation derived from dysfunctional management caused by the leader's personality disorder, a vulnerable, hypervigilant, thin-skinned narcissist. The psychoanalytic consultant first deals with the job stress situation, and then examines the leadership style and the relational dynamics between leader and workgroup.

Key words: dysfunctional leadership, dysfunctional management, job stress, narcissism

Business is commonly based on competition, motivation for success, the need for achievement, capacity for leading coworkers, and openness to new challenges. The man—and the woman—consumed by making money and building a career are contemporary models of success to admire and imitate. And books with titles like *How to Succeed in Business* are always bestsellers.

Having narcissistic traits, therefore, seems often to be necessary for business. As the recent world economic crisis has demonstrated, "to produce or perish" has even become more important than ethical and human values like integrity, interpersonal respect, and prosocial attitudes. Consequently, it's hard to determine when these behaviors become pathological and dysfunctional for the business itself, rather than a contemporary cultural adaptation.

In psychoanalytic practice, however, one of the main criteria describing narcissistic personality disorder is interpersonal exploitation. This criterion can also be useful in the business realm to understand the dysfunctional management caused by dysfunctional leadership.

The Narcissistic Personality Disorder

As McWilliams indicates (1994), the “narcissistic personality” and “pathological narcissism” now refer to an excessively big worry about self, rather than to the usual sensitivity for criticism or approbation. In the business realm, narcissistic people and leaders neglect others’ needs, managing people like they are disposable objects; others only exist for them to exploit and dismiss once they are no longer needed (Stolorow, 1975). Gabbard (1994) describes the pathological narcissism of the object relationship: severe lack of empathy, abuse of others, and incapacity for love—these are the main disorder traits. Many narcissists lack competencies such as empathy, concern for the others, the capacity to tolerate ambiguity in a long-term relationship without leaving, and the self-conscious acknowledgement of one’s participation in conflicts, which are all essential qualities for engaging in effective and healthy interpersonal relationships.

The American Psychiatric Association’s fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (1994) reports additional key traits of narcissistic personality disorder, including having a grandiose sense of self-importance (e.g., exaggerating performance results or expecting to be admired without any substantial contribution); being interpersonally exploitative (e.g., taking advantage of others to take to achieve his or her own ends); and being envious of others or believing others are envious of him or her.

These criteria describe one subtype characterized by narcissistic personality disorder: the haughty and invading one who always needs to be admired. This type is the most common among narcissistic leaders in business, as it requires competition and eagerness for success and money, among other business-related goals.

A second narcissist subtype is the bashful one who tends to escape from interpersonal relationships because of an extreme sensitivity and touchiness, and who hides their belief of himself or herself to be exceptional. Kernberg (1970, 1974, 1993, 1998, 2000) illustrated the “strong” narcissistic person, who is greedy and always asking to be admired; Kohut (1971/1977, 1977/1980,

1984/1986) described the “weak” one—with narcissistic vulnerability—tending toward self-fragmentation. Gabbard (1989) defines these very different subtypes as “the oblivious narcissist” and the “hypervigilant” one. These concepts refer particularly to the management style of interpersonal relationships.

Oblivious narcissists seem to be unaware of their influence on others, acting as if they are speaking to a wide audience and avoiding eye contact. They always talk about personal success, complaining about those who are not paying enough attention. Oblivious narcissist personalities are also insensitive to others’ needs, devaluing others’ feedback when it differs from their own.

Hypervigilant narcissists, on the other end of the spectrum, are very sensitive and touchy. These paranoid personalities always pay attention to others in order to detect criticism and negative feedback. They escape from public situations to avoid being refused or humiliated and are dominated by a deep feeling of shame. While an oblivious narcissist tries to impress people by talking about his or her successes and avoids answering questions to prevent injury to his or her ego, the hypervigilant narcissist tries to prevent damage to his or her self-esteem by avoiding other’s feedback. Rosenfeld (1987) describes these two different narcissist subtypes as “thick-skinned” or “thin-skinned.” The case study described later exemplifies the hypervigilant, thin-skinned narcissistic leader.

To sum up, the oblivious narcissist is unaware of his or her impact on others, is aggressive and haughty, is self-oriented, needs to be at the center of attention, and seems to be untouchable by other’s feedback. The hypervigilant narcissist is extremely sensitive to other’s feedback, is shy and inhibited, avoids public situations, is people-oriented in order to detect possible negative feedback, and feels that he or she has usually been injured and humiliated by others.

In addition, Bursten (1973) suggests that several narcissistic people also present paranoid and manipulative traits and deep feelings of inadequacy, shame, weakness, and inferiority. Although the external behaviors may be different, all narcissistic personalities suffer similar anguish.

From a different perspective, Wink (1991) analyzed the main narcissistic traits by the MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory), on two orthogonal

dimensions: Vulnerability-Sensitivity, and Exhibition-Grandiosity. These two dimensions could confirm the existence of two different narcissistic personalities: the “visible” one and the “invisible” one. Although both dimensions show indifference to others and presumption, the Vulnerability-Sensitivity group was more introverted, anxious, defended, and vulnerable, while the Exhibition-Grandiosity group was more extroverted, self-confident, and aggressive. Further research by Hibbard (1992) supports the existence of the two subtypes. He assessed 701 college students on narcissism, object relationship styles, masochism, and shame. The narcissism dimension showed two subgroups: one with a vulnerable style and the other with a grandiose style. Further, shame had a positive correlation with the vulnerable group and a negative correlation with the other.

As McWilliams indicates (1994), idealization and devaluation are usually the most common defenses of narcissistic people, though a variety of mechanisms can also be used. These two defenses are mutually complementary—when the self is idealized, others are devalued, and vice versa. Kohut (1971/1977) talked about a grandiose self to explain the narcissistic feeling of being superior. Such feeling can usually be perceived inside or projected out on others (e.g., by admiring a grandiose other).

Perfectionism is another psychological mechanism of defense. Narcissistic people usually pursue idealistic targets, then pretend to have achieved all of those targets (making a grandiose exit), or blame themselves for their deficiency (making a depressive exit). Narcissistic personalities sometimes try to control their anguish by believing in a perfect other, such as a teacher, a hero, or a lover, but eventually devalue that person when they show human limits. So the search for perfection as a way to control the anguish of narcissism will eventually fail.

Psychoanalytic Models of Understanding Narcissism

Freud (1914/1989a) studied the narcissism personality at length. He derived the word *narcissism* from the Greek myth of Narcissus, the youth who died in the lake while trying to hug and kiss his own image mirrored in the water.

As Lis, Stella, and Zavattini point out (1999), *narcissism*, for Freud, means a type of psychic undifferentiated energy that is first addressed to the ego, creating the narcissistic illusion of being perfect and omnipotent. A part of this energy will later be addressed to objects (called the “object libido”). The mother, or the first caregiver, is the first object invested in by the libido (Freud, 1914/1989a). How much and whether to invest in the ego or the objects, are called “narcissistic investment choices” and “object investment choices.” These choices can be changed throughout anyone’s lifetime. Furthermore, people who permanently choose one or the other are distinguished by Freud as “narcissistic people” rather than “anaclitic people”; the former love themselves as they are or have been in the past, or how they wish to be. Anaclitic people, instead, love their caregivers and those who protect them in the future.

However, Freud (1914/1989a) describes a development process for narcissism, wherein the next step is the choice of an object: the libido investment is transferred from the self to similar-to-self objects (homosexual choice), and finally to external objects. Growing up, a child understands he can’t keep the narcissistic illusion to be perfect and omnipotent, so he looks for an ideal ego in order to preserve that illusion. The ideal ego helps the subject to self-develop and self-realize, and it contains also moral, familiar, and cultural values (Freud, 1921/1989c).

Further, Freud (1914/1989a) also discusses the self-esteem that originates from the narcissistic libido. He suggests that self-esteem depended on a combination of factors, such as primary narcissism (assuming that the child invests first in himself and in others later), pursuing the ideal ego, and satisfying the object libido.

In the Freudian theorization of the sexuality phases in infants, particularly in the phallic phase before discovering the differences between genders, the genitals become the relevant way for the subject to invest in himself as an object of love. In primary narcissism, indeed, a genitals-based autoerotism is still a way to satisfy the libido. In this regard, Freud (1914/1989a) argues that in a subject’s

development, a narcissistic self-investment can be important, but it becomes a form of perversion when absorbing the entire sexual life.

In the later Freudian theorization of the ego structures (Freud, 1915/1989b), the narcissism conceptualization was advanced. First, because of the conflict between primary narcissism and the need for dependence, the ego is forced to internalize pleasure objects while expelling negative ones. Further, when a loved object is lost, the investment in the object will regressively change, returning to the self-centered narcissistic libido. And the object libido's regressive transformation into a narcissistic one leads to the sublimation or renouncement of sexual interests. Consequently, as Lis et al. (1999) indicated, by the "secondary narcissism," the ego is now able to actualize sublimations and instead use that energy for his self-development and projects.

Several authors, however, (see Adler, 1927/1954; Rank, 1929/1972) found that some self-esteem-related disorders could not be explained only by libido unconscious conflicts, and, consequently, they were not successfully cured by applying the classic Freudian "conflict model." Instead, the "deficit model," which defines disorders as caused by lack of care (deficit), was found to be more effective in treating those people.

Furthermore, many other authors have contributed to the study and explanation of narcissism, introducing new concepts such as the basic senses of security and identity (Erikson, 1950/1966, 1968/1981; Sullivan, 1953/1972), the Self and the care-deficit (Kohut, 1971/1977; Stolorow & Lachmann, 1978), and attachment and separation (Bowlby, 1969/1972, 1973/1975; Spitz, 1965/1973).

Also relevant are discussions of object relations theory (Balint, 1960; Fairbairn, 1952/1970; Horney, 1939/1990), which criticizes the Freudian concept of primary narcissism. Instead, the authors exploring this theory focus on the importance of a child's relationship with primary caregivers, considering narcissism a way to make up for neglect, rather than keeping the normal infantile grandiosity proposed in the Freudian theory. At the same time, new therapies like holding (Bion, 1967/1970) and supportive environment (Kohut, 1968; Winnicott, 1971) transformed traditional models of therapy.

The narcissistic symptoms of Freudian times were different and perhaps less diffused than nowadays: many people suffered because of a too strict sense of discipline and morality (a too strict superego), while people today usually complain about feeling empty and inadequate, focusing on ephemeral values like beauty, richness, and appearance.

In the last 30 years, the most relevant debate in the psychodynamic comprehension of narcissism has been between Kernberg (1970, 1974, 1984) and Kohut (1971/1977, 1977/1980, 1984/1986). Their two models present substantial differences, initially because of the dissimilar clinical populations the authors have treated: Kernberg worked in a psychiatric hospital, treating patients with serious personality disorders that presented severe aggressive, primitive, and antisocial traits. Kohut did not work in a psychiatric hospital, instead treating patients with less severe symptoms of depression and relational difficulties.

In his research, Kohut indicates that narcissistic personalities are unable to move forward in the self-development process as they are stuck at a level of needing approval from others, without which they tend to become fragmented. He argues that such disorders are caused by lack of empathy from parents, who were incapable of addressing the child's need for confirmation and praise or of providing mirroring experiences and models to idealize. Because of this neglect, such people tend to present an idealizing or mirroring transference.

Kernberg's research considers the narcissism more similar to borderline personality disorder, though narcissistic people present a more grandiose, pathologic, but integrated self, consisting of a fusion between the idealized, real self and external objects. Consequently, such fusion leads to a disruptive devaluation of the objects. These personalities identify with their idealized self to avoid feeling dependent on others; at the same time, they project their own negative aspects to external people.

Further, Kernberg also provides more details of the unconscious images, defense mechanisms, and internal object relationships resulting from the narcissism, while Kohut presented the narcissistic unconscious as a vague and empty world.

The concept of self also differs broadly between the two authors; for Kohut, while it usually develops, it can sometimes stick at the narcissistic need to be loved. Kernberg instead considers the grandiose self extremely pathological and nearly, if not completely, impossible to cure. Kohut also indicates that a narcissist's aggressiveness derives from frustration from neglect, while Kernberg says it's an innate trait.

In conclusion, the debate between these two authors is still alive today. However, the variety of competing theories requires one to know and choose among different models to properly treat narcissistic people.

The Narcissistic Leader

Based on the literature, at first glance a leader with a narcissistic personality appears very compatible with the world of business, which is based on competition, profit, career achievement, and successful images. Nevertheless, a narcissistic personality disorder makes the leader become ineffective and dysfunctional to business. Through negative management of staff, human resources, and the company's policies and procedures, a narcissistic leader compromises the economic survival of entire enterprise. Because of the need to always be admired, the narcissistic leader tends to divide the staff into "devoted-to-him" and "enemy" subgroups—the employees who do not bow to his or her every whim, or those who provide negative feedback, will be devalued and mistreated. Even those subordinates who suggest constructive feedback or propose new ideas won't be appreciated, and instead will be neglected and isolated because of the leader's unconscious envy and fear of being replaced. Furthermore, the narcissistic leader tends to negatively transform the creativity and the energy of efficient employees into a passive-aggressive obedience and adulation, which is actually dysfunctional for the business. The leader's severe lack of empathy will compromise the leadership efficacy, the quality of the team's performance, and, finally, the business itself.

Narcissistic leaders usually attract young practitioners who are interested in learning from the leader's experience, knowledge, and successes. But as these

followers age and gain experience of their own, narcissistic leaders begin to exhibit aggressive and paranoid traits.

Case Study

The following case displays a job-stress situation that was treated by the author, a human resources consultant with a psychoanalytic background.¹

The consultant's first objective was to understand the reasons for the problem. He then assessed the relational dynamics between the leader and the workgroup.

To do so, the psychoanalytic participant observation technique (Bion, 1961/1971; Kernberg, 1998) was adapted to assess workgroup dynamics during daily work activities for a period of three months. In addition, the consultant conducted separate psychoanalytic-oriented interviews with the leader and employee.

Japanese Fashion Company Background

A Japanese fashion company established a branch office in Rome to import and distribute fashion goods in Italy. The initial team of office staff consists of a Japanese manager, ten Italian salespeople, and three administrative assistants—two Italian and one Japanese. The Japanese manager is responsible for recruiting, retaining, and rewarding the local employees under his supervision.

Headquarters has been pressuring this manager to achieve sales goals and monitor the amount of the goods sold monthly. The manager has been given excellent benefits, including a luxurious residence and company car, a highly competitive salary, full medical and dental coverage for himself and his family, a country club membership, and a tuition allowance for his children to attend private school. Similarly, each salesperson has been given slightly less generous, but nevertheless attractive, benefits: a luxury company car, a personal laptop computer, a mobile phone, and a long-term contract.

¹ This case does not represent either an effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation.

The administrative assistants are as follows: a 35-year-old Italian woman who was hired with a long-term contract approximately six years ago when the company first opened the branch office in Rome; a 35-year-old Japanese woman who was hired five years ago with a short-term, 12-month contract that has been extended annually for the last four years; and a 30-year-old Italian woman who was hired two years ago with a long-term contract. Two years ago, a fourth Italian secretary was brought on board to support the administrative office. She was initially given a short-term, 12-month contract that was then renewed for six months. Before the end date of her last contract renewal, she became pregnant, so when her contract expired, she was not granted any further job extension. The administrative personnel have taken issue with the departure of their pregnant colleague. They contest the company's stated reason for her nonrenewal: that based on an evaluation of the organization's financials, the overall expenditure for four administrative assistants is unjustifiable, indeed fiscally irresponsible, when only three such employees are necessary.

Over the course of four years, the Japanese administrative assistant has raised the short-term contract issue with her manager without satisfactory progress or resolution. The Japanese administrative assistant has been working 13-hour days (from 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM, with a one-hour lunch break but no formal dinner break) in an attempt to prove to her manager that she is a highly capable and motivated employee who is serious about her work and deserving of a long-term position. Nevertheless, she has been granted only a limited contract extension each year.

Now she has developed a medical condition. Approximately six months ago, she made an appointment with her medical doctor, who diagnosed her with serious cardiovascular, digestive, and neurological issues—caused, in his professional opinion, by job stress. The doctor indicated to her that she should stay home for several weeks to recover. The administrative assistant feels that her condition is a direct result of her insecure position at work: the 12-month temporary contract creates an insurmountable degree of insecurity. Furthermore,

because this middle-aged employee cannot claim a permanent job, she is unable to secure a bank loan to purchase a home.

In addition, the Japanese administrative assistant alleges that her manager treats her differently from the other administrative employees; despite the other similarities within the group, her other colleagues all have permanent positions, even the secretary, who is her junior. Moreover, the manager advises this particular employee that he expects her to behave in the traditionally Japanese way: hard-working, submissive, passive, and completely devoted to the company, regardless of personal detriment. In fact, the manager tolerates the way the employee's counterparts behave—they are relatively unproductive and leave the office before 5:30 PM—but he has specifically warned the Japanese administrative assistant that she “should not behave like them.”

Over the last five years, whenever this employee has approached her manager to discuss her contract situation, he has responded with evasive answers such as:

- “I can't give you a permanent position because of the current economy.”
- “Let's talk about this next year.”
- “It's too late now—the budget is already in place. You should've notified me three months ago, when we were preparing this year's budget.”
- “If you work harder, I may be able to give you a long-term contract.”
- “Why do you keep bothering me about this every year?”

After numerous attempts over the years, the employee feels increasingly frustrated and stressed. She has searched—and continues to search—for a new job over the past two years, but has been unable to find an appropriate position. She feels trapped.

During her convalescence, the manager requested the company's medical doctor to visit the employee's home to verify that she was really sick. The company doctor confirmed the severe medical conditions diagnosed by the previous doctor and indicated to the manager that he should assess the working conditions of his team for suspected job stress. To this end, the external human

resources consultant with a psychoanalytic background was asked to deal with the situation.

Case Commentary

At first, this appears to be a case of job stress—after several years of working, the employee has become sick and is feeling frustrated, exploited, and neglected. She is also no longer motivated to work and is searching for a new job. Nevertheless, the difficulty in finding new professional opportunities increases her feeling of being trapped. Despite how hard she has worked for the past few years, aiming to demonstrate her professional value, competence, and devotion, she has not yet received a permanent contract. Such a contract may help her to feel more stable and look toward the future with less uncertainty. She kept working until she experienced a physiological breakdown. This stress can be related to the work conditions and the relationship with the manager leader.

Providing the assistant with a permanent contract might solve her job stress problem. So why doesn't this manager give her one? From a psychoanalytic perspective, his refusal to provide it serves to maintain an "unconscious equilibrium"—meaning he unconsciously kept her in an unstable situation to keep them on the same uncertain playing field.

First, this leader lacks empathy, as he seems to be unable to recognize the other's need—he even recently dismissed the Italian administrative assistant who was pregnant. While he may be able to argue cost-reduction as the reason, it's ethically unfair, and in any regard, it's a sign of lack of empathy. This leader also makes the Japanese administrative assistant work hard, continually promising to provide things he never will—just like the donkey rushing forward to catch a carrot he will never catch because it is attached to his head. In organizational behavior psychology, this is a well-known way of leading and motivating people, derived from Skinner's concept of reinforcement. However, this case study shows an application with sadistic traits that is not a functional one for the business, as it leads to frustration, demotivation, errors, stress-related diseases, turnover, and negative word-of-mouth.

A temporary contract is usually given when the company has a short-time work need, or a new employee needs to be assessed before becoming permanent. Italian law states that the extension of a temporary contract can be a maximum of two years; then the company must decide whether to hire or fire the employee. In this case, five years have so far intentionally passed; the law has been bypassed by firing the employee a day before the contract expires, then hiring back the same employee with a new, yearlong contract. Though this management practice is legally permitted, it appears unethical.

This is also not a case of racism or cultural discrimination, as both the employee and the manager belong to same culture, and at first glance, it would even be simple—although reductive—to consider this as just a “Japanese cultural affair.”

The psychoanalytic consultant identified the unconscious dynamics occurring in this case. During the clinical interview, the manager stated that he has been sent to Italy for five years, will be transferred to France for another five years, and will then move on to another country in Europe. Despite the large financial rewards provided to compensate him for these moves, he expressed that such changes are very stressful for his children and wife, who are forced to start their lives over every few years in a new country, adapting to new language and traditions. Once they finally begin to feel more stable, they have to move again, losing classmates and friends and never truly feeling at home. The manager was also worried about not being able to integrate into the Japanese culture when they return to Japan after so many years abroad. That worry was particularly for his children, who haven't grown up in the Japanese culture—where personal role and position in society and professional careers are established very early, starting in childhood. In the interview, the anguish about being “out of the game soon” clearly emerged.

At the unconscious level, a link between the leader's feelings of pain and instability, and the administrative assistant's feeling of pain and instability can be now noted. Both are in unstable positions that create uncertainty and stress. Though the leader has the ability to help the employee, he is unconsciously blocking it by refusing providing a permanent position that will give the employee

more serenity and stability. Unconsciously, the manager is denying the assistant, or other, what he has not.

Conclusion

The psychoanalytic consultant identified a case of job stress resulting from a leader with a narcissistic personality disorder. The lack of empathy and sadistic traits that are markers of the disorder causes a leader exploit the human resources, causing frustration, job stress, sickness, dysfunctional behaviors, and turnover—all of which negatively affect the entire business.

The consultant's indication was to help both sides—the administrative assistant and the manager. For the assistant, the goal was to provide her with a permanent contract so she will have the desired job stability. Indeed, as indicated by Nohria, Groysberg, and Lee (2008), taking care of employees' needs is positively correlated to better job performance and, ultimately, greater success for the business. For the manager, the goal was to explore opportunities for the leader to return to work in Japan for his own sense of stability, but more importantly, to provide his family with the desired "home stability" in their home country.

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