Full Length Research Paper

Leadership Styles and Gender Role: Internalization among Female Managers in the United States

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The purpose of this study was to examine whether the level of gender role internalization influences female leadership style. A quantitative online survey was developed that included Bass's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (1985) and the Gender Role Socialization Scale (1999), developed at the University of Toronto by Dr. Brenda Toner and her colleagues. One hundred respondents were recruited from Financial Women International, a professional business association of women, and LinkedIn, an online networking community for business professionals. Only respondents who were female and in management positions in the United States qualified for the study. Results indicated that there was no strong correlation between gender role internalization and leadership style in females.

Keywords: female leadership, gender role, transformational leadership, transactional leadership

Introduction

A proliferation of scholarly research on female leadership conducted in the last 30 years focuses on leadership style and how it differs from that of men. Early research on leadership focused on leadership styles such as democratic and autocratic and participative and directive. In 1978, James MacGregor Burns categorized leadership as transformational or transactional. Leaders who lead by "exchanging one thing for another" are transactional leaders and those who create an atmosphere where followers exceed performance expectations because the goals of the organization align with their own goal goals are considered transformational leaders.

According to Bass (2005), the MLQ construct *Transformational Leadership* consists of several sub-constructs: *Idealized Influence*, *Inspirational Motivation*, *Intellectual Stimulation*, and *Individualized Consideration*. In Individualized Consideration, the leader pays attention to the needs of each individual follower and acts as a mentor. The leader creates a supportive environment and provides encouragement for the followers. Previous studies suggest transformational leadership is a more successful type of

leadership. (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubrmaniam, 1996; see also Degroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000). Because of the success of transformational leadership styles, it is worth examining female transformational leadership behaviors and examining how they originated.

Statement of Problem

There have been numerous studies that discuss gender variation in leadership style (Bass, 1996; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Sharpe, 2000). This literature tends to focus on which leadership style men and women adopt, how women are viewed who adopt transformational or transactional leadership styles, and whether transformational leaders are superior to transactional leaders. What becomes readily apparent to this researcher, though, is that there is minimal research into the internalization of society's messages about how females are expected to behave and its influence in leadership behaviors in these studies and related discussions.

Thus, a logical next step for empirical analysis was to measure the level of gender role internalization among females who

adopted a transformational leadership style. If a correlation exists, further analysis could determine whether females who internalized the traditional female gender role behaviors associated with nurturing and support naturally gravitated to a transformational leadership style.

Purpose

The current research study examined the relationship between gender role internalization and transformational and transactional leadership style in female managers. This researcher intended to discover whether the internalization of messages that society presents about female behavior correlates with the adoption of transformational leadership by women in management positions. Specifically, the researcher wanted to find out whether there was a higher level of gender role internalization among female transformational leaders than in female transactional leaders.

Rationale

Minimal investigation regarding the influence of the internalization of gender role messages in women's lives exists in current research (Toner, B. B., Ali, A., Stuckless, N., Weaver, H., Aikman, D. E., Tang, T. N., Quattrochioci, D., & Espen, M. J., 1999). As a result, Tang and Tang (2001) conducted the first pioneering study on gender role internalization in Hong Kong among a sample of Chinese women using Toner et al.'s preliminary scale on gender role internalization, called the Gender Role Socialization Scale, or GRSS, which is covered in Chapter II of this document.

The current research study is the second in line-of-inquiry in gender role internalization and is different because it studied female managers in the United States. The current research employs both the Toner et al.'s GRSS (1999), which measures the extent to which women have internalized gender role messages, and the MLQ, which has been used in numerous studies and has proved a valid and reliable tool (Bass, 1985). The self-rater version of the MLQ was used to test the managers' self-perceptions of their leadership style.

The relevance of the current study lies in the determination of whether internalization of societal messages about women correlate with the type of leadership styles women leaders adopt in the workplace. The study attempts to find whether gender roles influence the leadership behaviors practiced by women in the workplace. The study is exploratory in nature and is intended to uncover any possible relationships.

The instrument created by Toner and her colleagues (Toner, et. al., 1999) attempted to measure the degree to which gender role internalization occurs. After the Tang and Tang (2001) study, Toner and her colleagues revised the GRSS from 63 items to 30 items and tested the scale for validity and reliability. The revised 30-item scale is used in the current research. In the current study, the *Self-Sacrifice* construct of the GRSS is compared to the *Individualized Consideration* portion of the

MLQ in order to confirm or refute whether a correlation exists between the two. Other survey constructs are also compared in order to uncover any unexpected correlations in the study.

Limitations

Limitations of the current research study include self-reporter bias and cultural values. The inherent limitation of self-reporter bias is that the respondent may not have answered each statement in the survey honestly and may have reported they exhibit behaviors they wished they portrayed rather than the actual behaviors portrayed in their management position. Another limitation is that results from this study were different in the United States and could not be generalized to other cultures because of the differences in gender role and status in Western culture. Even within the United States, the degree of gender role internalization may vary within sub cultures in women in the United States. Finally, it is possible that the survey tools selected to carry out the current research may not be related to what the current researcher is trying to study. One of the survey tools, the Gender Role Socialization Scale (GRSS) is relatively new and has not been replicated in numerous studies yet.

Review of Literature

Extensive research in leadership exists in current literature. Studies conducted on the difference between male and female leadership styles have been examined extensively. Furthermore, there are many theories present about leadership style. One of the most notable examples is Burn's (1978) work on transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leadership involves much more than managing, it involves "transforming" the relationship between leaders and followers into a symbiotic state and inspiring follower to achieve their best. Transactional leadership is more of the traditional leadership style of exchanging one action for another, such as a reward. Several studies have examined the role of transformational and transactional leadership in males and females. These studies include examinations of transformational leaders in traditionally transactional environments. (Friedman, 2004) Still, many conclude that leadership style depends on the situation (Mintzberg, 1973; Bass, 1985) or the organizational culture (Schultz, 1990; Anthony, 1994) and others conclude women often adopt more transformational leadership traits than men (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen, 2003). The current study explores the latter indication that women adopt more transformational leadership behaviors and whether gender role internalization may influence that trend uncovered by previous research.

Manning (2002) examined male and female transformational leaders and did not find significant differences between genders in leadership style. However, Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 45 previous studies that indicated the women adopt more transformational behaviors than males. The advantage of this study over Manning's single study is that it compares the results of 45

studies. However, what is missing in this research is why women tend to adopt more transformational behaviors and whether gender role influences this trend. When looking closely at the behaviors involved in transformational leadership according to Bass's (1985) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, one can see that some of the behaviors are stereotypically female behaviors. In order to see whether women internalize stereotypical female behavior, we need to look at gender role internalization.

Previously, a survey tool did not exist to measure the level of internalization by women about how society as a whole perceives how women should behave. Dr. Brenda Toner developed a tool to measure gender role internalization in 1999 (Toner, et. al). This tool has been used to measure the role of gender role internalization in Chinese women by Tang & Tang (2001). Tang and Tang examined gender role internalization, multiple roles, and Chinese women's mental health. In current Western societies, women play a balancing act between their careers and their traditional roles as wife and mother. This study examined the relationship between multiple roles and mental health among a group of Chinese women, who were employed in Hong Kong. Another important aspect of this study was the degree to which changing societal roles were reflected at the individual psychological level of the participants of the study. The purpose of the study was to examine the degree to which internalization of gender role messages for women affect their mental health, and the relationship between role quality and mental health. The results of the current research study could be affected by the cultural differences between Western and Chinese culture and may not generalize between cultures. Chinese women may internalize gender roles differently than Western women.

Method

The current research study was a quantitative study that assessed the specific leadership style of participants by using an instrument called the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5 X, 2nd Edition, Short Form. The study also measured gender role internalization by using the Gender Role Socialization (GRSS) scale. The sample consisted of 100 female participants who hold managerial positions and titles in U. S. organizations and are members of professional business associations.

An online survey was created on Question Pro software (www.questionpro.com) through a special subscription available through Spalding University for currently enrolled students. This survey contained the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), the Gender Role Socialization (GRSS) scale, demographic questions, managerial questions, and an informed consent form. Once the data were collected, correlation analysis was used.

Population and Sample

The subject sample consisted of 100 females who hold managerial titles in their respective organization and who have membership in their respective professional business organizations. Subjects were recruited by posting invitations on LinkedIn, a networking website for business professionals, and by a newsletter circulated by FWI, a women's financial business association. This association has over 700 members and the survey was delivered in an e-mail newsletter exclusive to members only. Demographic information was collected for each participant. This included job title, age, years in current position, education level, and income level.

Reliability of the Testing Tools
Both the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire and the GRSS scale were tested for reliability by using different methods to measure the consistency of each survey instrument. These methods include Cronbach's Alpha and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Although the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has extensive reliability testing due to the abundance of previous studies, the Gender Role Socialization Scale (GRSS) has been tested for reliability by the developer, Dr. Brenda Toner. Further reliability studies would benefit the credibility of the GRSS scale in future studies to reinforce its use.

The multi-factor leadership questionnaire (MLQ). This study compared transformational and transactional leadership styles as operationalized by data on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X, 2nd Edition, Short Form, as developed by Bass and Avolio (2000). For purposes of this study, the original 5X short form, consisting of 45 items, was reduced to 36 questions by removing the last nine items which measured constructs that are not related to this study. The omitted items were outcomes-related and measured effectiveness, satisfaction, and extra effort.

The MLQ is available in two forms: Rater and Leader. On the Rater form, subordinates rate the manager on leadership style and behavior. On the Leader form, the manager himself or herself rated themselves for each of the situations presented. This study used the Leader form of the MLQ as the study's purpose is for the manager to assess their own leadership style.

The MLQ was derived from studies conducted by Bass (1985), which derives leadership style from seven factors: charisma, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, contingent-reward behavior, individualized consideration, management-by-exception and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985). These factors were grouped into three categories: name the specific categories here and then explain what is meant by active and passive. Transformational leadership consisted of the active factors of charisma, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Transactional leadership consisted of the active factors of contingent-reward and active management-by-exception. Laissez-faire leadership consists of passive management-by-exception and an avoidant approach to leadership.

The MLQ utilizes a 5-point Likert Scale to measure leadership styles with 0 (for not at all) and 4 (for frequently, if not always) as the anchors. The MLQ is a copyrighted instrument that was purchased from the publisher (www.mindgarden.com) by this researcher for use in this study.

Reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Avolio and Bass (1999) re-examined the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. The researchers wanted to examine whether the MLQ survey measured the leadership factors it was developed to test. The study included 14 samples with a total of 3786 respondents. All 14 samples contained MLQ rater evaluations of a target leader using the most updated version of the MLQ. The first nine samples were used to test the original six factor model of the MLQ. The remaining five samples were used to reconfirm the model derived from the first sample set.

Three of the nine samples included in the first set were followers of middle-level managers in U.S. business firms. One sample were from followers of supervisors working on North Sea oil platforms. One sample each were followers of administrators in a nursing school and a government research agency. One sample was of junior U.S. Army officers and their raters. Two samples were undergraduates who described their supervisors in their outside work The second set of five samples included two from business firms in which raters described their middle-level managers; one was a fire department whose supervisors were rated by their followers; and the two others were a political organization and a not-for-profit agency whose administrators were rated by their respective followers (Avolio & Bass, 1999).

The MLQ (Form 5X) was used, consisting of 80 items using a frequency scale that ranged from 0 = not at all, to 4 = frequently, if not always. This tool was an update of previous versions, Form 10 and 5R (Bass and Avolio, 1990). New items were developed for the MLQ 5X using recent literature that has distinguished charismatic from transformational leadership. Six scholars in the field of leadership reviewed the MLQ and made recommendations of what items to keep and what items to discard. They also judged whether each item was a behavior, attribute, or impact. These recommendations were included in the final version of MLQ 5X.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to determine whether the data from the first and second sample set confirmed the proposed six factor model of leadership. The confirmatory factor analysis for the first sample was run including all 80 items from the MLQ 5X with 8 items measuring attributed charisma; 10 items for charismatic behavior; 10 items for inspirational motivation; 10 items for intellectual stimulation; 9 items for individualized consideration; 9 items for contingent-reward; 8 items for active management-by-exception; and 16 items for passive management-by-exception and laissez-faire leadership.

The goal of the study was to determine a "best fit" model for the MLQ (Form 5X) survey. The study was trying to address some of the limitations of earlier versions of the MLQ. The first study and the second study, or replication study, did present a high level of reliability and consistency for the MLQ 5X. This study was conducted on a broad variety of raters in different industries, which improves the generalizability of the MLQ 5X. Also, the MLQ 5X would be more effective in measuring characteristics in leaders whom practice charismatic leadership, which has only recently been given attention (Avolio & Bass, 1999).

Toner's gender role internalization scale. The Gender Role Internalization scale (GRSS) for women was used for studying gender role internalization in the sample. Gender role internalization operates on the premise that there is a contradiction within the modern role for women (Toner, et al., 1999). Women are expected to be both competitive and nurturing, compliant and assertive, and to appear in control, yet be vulnerable (Bepko and Krestan, 1990). Gender roles make up an important part of identity and they define the social behavior of men and women in society. The gender roles begin early in life and role differentiation is maintained through cultural heritage, social norms, attitudes, and beliefs (Tang and Tang, 2001).

The GRSS scale consists of three components: Traditional Ideal Person, Self-Sacrifice, and Competence Without Complaint. Themes included in the items were: women's experience of the conflicting demands of career and family, self-blame, and the value placed on physical attractiveness. Actual items include ("I am torn between trying to reach my own goals and taking care of others"), ("I often apologize for things that I know are not my fault"), and ("I can't feel good about myself unless I feel physically attractive"). These items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) (Tang and Tang, 2001). The first scale of 62 items was used in the Tang and Tang study in 2001. Some samples of these themes and corresponding candidate items included: women's experience of the conflicting demands of career and family ("I am torn between trying to reach my own goals and taking care of others"), self-blame ("I often apologize for things that I know are not my fault"), and the value placed of physical attractiveness ("I can't feel good about myself unless I feel physically attractive"). This instrument is based on a 7-point Likert scale and contains a total of sixty-two items. Dr. Brenda Toner and her colleagues reduced the 62 item scale used in the Tang and Tang study to a 30-item scale which is due to be published in the near future.

Reliability and validity of the gender role internalization scale. Data from 700 female participants, nearly evenly split between university, clinical, and community settings, were analyzed in order to develop the GRSS, the goal being to produce a reliable scale of 20 to 30 items from the original pool of 82 candidate items. In addition to the candidate

items, validating measures were also administered to participants including: (a) Situational Scenarios designed to assess the degree to which participants' behavior correlated with their responses on the candidate items; (b) Bem Sex Role Inventory to test for convergent validity; (c) Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale to test for social desirability contamination.

Toner and her colleagues examined the frequency distribution of the responses to each item and those in which more than 60% of the responses were on a single point of the 7-point Likert scale were eliminated. Items were eliminated if there were a significant proportion (at least 7%) of "not applicable" responses endorsed by participants. Candidate items that correlated greater than .30 with the Marlowe-Crowne were eliminated. Further items were eliminated due to redundancy if they correlated greater than .60 with other candidate items. Items with the simplest phrasing were chosen through group consensus.

Toner and her colleagues performed principal components factor analyses with the remaining candidate items, specifying different rotation methods and component selection criteria. The most parsimonious results suggested two main factors comprising 42 items. Through group consensus additional items were eliminated that were ambiguous, redundant, double-barreled, and thought to prompt dichotomous rather than continuous responses. The remaining 30 items were subject to further principal components analysis and, once again, the most parsimonious results suggested two main factors accounting for 42% of the variance. The first factor reflects a mix of most of the a priori gender role socialization themes and the second factor reflects mostly the theme "be unselfish and of service."

All missing values and not applicable responses were replaced with the item mean. Seven participants were eliminated from analyses because they had > 80% (at least 7/30) missing data. Thus, the total sample is 693 women (231 university; 278 community; 184 clinical). The mean age is 32.62 ($SD = 11.93$, ranging from 18 to 76 years). Two hundred thirty-eight (34%) are married/common-law; 385 (56%) single, 68 (10%) separated or divorced or widowed. Annual household income was on a range but there are over 200 missing responses because this variable was not asked on the original demographics form at the beginning of data collection. This was also the case with the occupation variable. The sample was educated: 13 (2%) had less than high school; 67 (10%) completed high school; 18 (3%) had some college; 77 (11%) completed college; 191 (28%) had some university; 187 (27%) completed university; 135 (19%) completed graduate studies. In terms of ethnicity 125 (18%) indicated they were "Canadian" and 232 (34%) indicated they were European (there are 12 other ethnic categories which have been reduced from a much larger number of categories based on participants open ended responses but we will want to collapse these even further at a later date).

Cronbach's alpha indicates that both the factors and the overall scale are highly reliable, with alphas of .90 for both factors and .93 for the overall scale. The 30-item scale correlates negatively (-.256) with the Marlowe-Crowne, indicating that higher social desirability is associated with lower endorsement of gender role socialization. Although this correlation is statistically significant, generally a correlation less than .30 with the Marlowe-Crowne is considered acceptable. The scale also correlates with the Situational Scenarios in the predicted directions. Finally, the scale is correlated negatively (-.361) with the masculinity subscale of the Bem Sex Role Inventory and is uncorrelated with the femininity subscale. (Toner, B. B., Personal communication, February 9, 2008)

Results

The scores for each construct of the MLQ and the GRSS were totaled and compared. Two sets of correlations were conducted. First, the scores for all the constructs for *Transformational Leadership*, *Transactional Leadership,* and *Laissez-Faire Leadership* were summed and correlated with *Self-Sacrifice* in order to directly addresses Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. Although *Self-Sacrifice* is only one construct in Toner et al.'s GRSS survey, it is the construct referenced in Eagly et al.'s 2003 meta analysis of leadership styles in men and women. This study concluded that females adopt transformational leadership styles more often than men. A suggested follow-up study was to determine whether gender role internalization is a factor in this. In analyzing the data in the study, this researcher noticed that *Individualized Consideration*, a sub-construct in Transformational Leadership, was high among females who participated in the study. This researcher determined that *Self-Sacrifice*, a construct in Toner et al.'s gender role internalization scale, would best measure the type of caring and nurturing behaviors associated with *Individualized Consideration*. These measures are just a piece of the overall surveys, but if a relationship is established between these constructs, then the other constructs may necessitate further analysis in follow-up studies.

Correlations for Transformational Leadership

A correlation analysis was conducted on constructs of transformational leadership based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire by Bass and Toner's constructs in the Gender Role Internalization Scale (GRSS). All of the constructs included in *Transformational Leadership* on the MLQ scale and the sub-construct of *Individualized Consideration* within the *Transformational Leadership* construct was compared to each construct of the GRSS scale. Results that indicated weak correlations existed between the compared constructs.

Transformational Leadership With Self-Sacrifice: Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis focused on examining whether female managers who scored high in the transformational leadership construct of *Individualized Consideration* also scored high in the *Self-Sacrifice* construct of the gender role internalization

tool. This author hypothesized that participants who score higher in the MLQ -Transformational Leadership construct of *Individualized Consideration* would also demonstrate a higher level of gender role internalization in the *Self-Sacrifice* construct. A weak correlation was found to exist (r= .08).

Transformational Leadership With Traditional Ideal Person and With Competence Without Compliance

The construct of *Transformational Leadership* in the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was correlated to the construct of *Traditional Ideal Person* (r=-.02) and *Competence Without Compliance* (r=.04) in Toner et al.'s GRSS. Although both *Traditional Ideal Person* and *Competence Without Compliance* were weakly correlated with transformational leadership, *Competence Without Compliance* had a positive correlation with transformational leadership and *Traditional Ideal Person* had a negative relationship.

Correlations for Transactional and Laissez Faire Leadership

A correlation analysis was conducted on all constructs of *Transactional Leadership* and *Laissez Faire Leadership* based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire by Bass and Toner's constructs in the Gender Role Internalization Scale (GRSS). Results that indicated significant correlations were present for *Transactional Leadership* when compared to all three constructs of the GRSS scale.

Transactional and Laissez Faire Leadership With Self-Sacrifice: Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis examined whether a negative correlation existed between transactional leadership and each construct of gender role internalization. This author hypothesized that participants who demonstrated lower levels of gender role internalization as measured by the GRSS construct of *Self-Sacrifice* would demonstrate higher scores in *Transactional Leadership* and *Laissez-Faire Leadership* constructs measured by the MLQ. For Hypothesis 2, this researcher measured *Self-Sacrifice* against all constructs of Transactional Leadership. A significant positive correlation was present between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Transactional Leadership*. Further research needs to be conducted to determine which constructs of Transactional Leadership drives the relationship with *Self-Sacrifice*. Next, the construct of Transactional Leadership in the MLQ was correlated with the construct of *Self-Sacrifice* (r =.23), *Traditional Ideal Person* (r=.26) and *Competence Without Compliance* (r=.23) in Toner's GRSS. All three constructs in the GRSS are similarly correlated to *Transactional Leadership,* and they are significant.

Correlations Related to Demographics

Demographic analysis of results are presented to determine if a correlation exists between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Individualized Consideration* related to training factors, company size, and gender makeup of the organization. This information was important to collect and report for the study because

environment can influence behavior. The researcher determined that analyzing the data by these factors would be important. The only limitation to splitting the data in this way in analysis is that it makes the sample size smaller.

Over two thirds of participants held a 4-year degree or higher. Over three quarters of participants belonged to organizations that were at least 50% female. Almost 90% of the organizations represented in this study were for-profit organizations. Nearly three quarters of participants in this study reported that they took part in on the job management training. Almost half of participants reported they were trained by both males and females to be managers. The majority of participants reported that they work at a small organization. Over a third reported working for a large organization.

Business Model: Female Managers Who Worked in For-Profit Organizations

With female managers in for-profit organizations there were implications for Hypothesis 2. Specifically, there was a significant positive correlation (rather than the hypothesized negative correlation) between the GRSS constructs of *Traditional Ideal Person* (r=.24), *Competence Without Compliance* (r=. 22), and *Self-Sacrifice* (r=.23), as well as the *Total GRSS* (r=.27), and the MLQ construct of *Transactional Leadership*.

Regarding Hypothesis 1, no significant correlation existed between the MLQ transformational leadership sub-construct of *Individualized Consideration* and *Self-Sacrifice* in this group, contrary to the hypothesized positive correlation. However, a significant positive correlation, rather than the negative correlation predicted by Hypothesis 2, existed between each construct of the GRSS and *Transactional Leadership*.

Management Training: Female Managers Who Were Trained on the Job

In agreement with Hypothesis 1, there was a significant positive correlation between *Individualized Consideration* and *Self-Sacrifice* among managers who were trained on the job. However, contrary to Hypothesis 2's prediction of a negative correlation, there was a significant positive correlation between *Transactional Leadership* and *GRSS Total* (r=.27). There was also a significant positive correlation between *Laissez Faire Leadership* and two constructs of the GRSS: *Traditional Ideal Self* (r= .23) and *Competence Without Compliance* (r=.26).

Organizational Gender Mix: Organizations 100% Female (n=9)

In organizations that were 100% female *Transformational Leadership* was significantly correlated with *Self-Sacrifice* (r=.74) and *GRSS Total* (r=.70). No significant correlations were noted between *Transactional Leadership* or *Laissez Faire Leadership* and *Self-Sacrifice*. There were no other significant correlations found related to this demographic.

Organizational Gender Mix: Organizations 85% Female (n=17)

In organizations that were 85% female, in agreement with Hypothesis 1, *Transformational Leadership* was significantly correlated with *Self-Sacrifice* (r=.66) and *GRSS Total* (r=.68). Contrary to Hypothesis 2, which predicted a negative correlation, *Laissez Faire Leadership* was significantly correlated with the *Competence Without Compliance* construct of the GRSS (r=.56).

Summary

Eagly et al. (2003) hypothesized that gender role internalization may influence transformational leadership style, and this was the first hypothesis that this study investigated. The second hypothesis investigated was the corollary that a low level of gender role internalization would show a strong correlation with transactional or laissez-faire leadership styles.

To test these two hypotheses, this author developed a quantitative survey and administered it online to females in management positions. The survey consisted of a short demographic survey, B. M. Bass's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X Leader Form (MLQ), and Toner et al.'s Gender Role Socialization scale (GRSS). The survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. This survey was sent in an e-mail newsletter sponsored by Financial Women International, a women's business association with members worldwide. The survey was also posted on LinkedIn, an online networking community for business professionals.

For the study, the total score for the GRSS (*GRSS Total*) was compared to the total score for each leadership style in Bass's MLQ (1985): *Transformational Leadership*, *Transactional Leadership*, and *Laissez Faire Leadership*. Also, each construct for each leadership style was totaled and compared to the total for each construct for gender role internalization. These constructs were compared using Pearson's correlation test in SPSS Version 16. Total scores were used for each survey because statistical means could not be used due to Likert scale number rating differences. These scores were analyzed and strength of correlation was examined and interpreted.

Analysis of the correlations between the three gender role internalization constructs of *Self-Sacrifice, Traditional Ideal Person*, and *Competence Without Compliance* on one side and the three leadership style constructs of *Transformational Leadership*, *Transactional Leadership*, and *Laissez-Faire Leadership* on the other side showed only weak correlations. To confirm or refute Hypothesis 1, the GRSS construct of *Self-Sacrifice* was measured against the transformational leadership sub-construct of *Individualized Consideration*. To confirm or refute Hypothesis 2, *Self-Sacrifice* was measured against the constructs of *Transformational Leadership* and *Laissez-Faire Leadership*. All other measures were extraneous to testing the hypotheses and were measured for exploratory purposes and potential follow up research.

Contrary to the hypothesis suggested by Eagly et al. (2003) and adopted as Hypothesis 1 for this study, this researcher did not find a strong correlation between a high level of gender role internalization (measured by high scores on the GRSS construct of *Self-Sacrifice*) and a high level of transformational leadership style (measured by the MLQ sub-construct of *Individualized Consideration*) in the total sample. When split by demographics, a significant positive correlation was found between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Individualized Consideration* in female managers who were trained on the job.

Only the GRSS construct of *Self-Sacrifice* was used test Hypothesis 1, rather than also using *Traditional Ideal Person*, *Competence Without Compliance*, and *GRSS Total*, because the construct of *Self-Sacrifice* measures behaviors that are selfless in nature. Eagly, Johannesson, et al.'s (2003) meta analysis suggested that perhaps gender role internalization could be a factor in female's who adopt transformational leadership styles. This researcher determined that the other constructs of *Competence Without Compliance* and T*raditional Ideal Person* were not as relevant to the MLQ construct of *Individualized Consideration* as the *Self-Sacrifice* construct in the GRSS.

The results did demonstrate a spillover of gender role internalization into transformational leadership in female managers who were trained on the job. Therefore, regarding transformational leadership, the analyses for this study confirmed Hypothesis 1 it relates to the transformational leadership style and this specific demographic.

Regarding Hypothesis 2 (that a low level of gender role internalization would show a strong correlation with transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles; that is, the construct of *Self-Sacrifice* would be negatively correlated with *Transactional Leadership* and *Laissez Faire Leadership*) , there were significant positive correlations in the total sample and in for-profit organizations between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Transactional Leadership*, but no significant results between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Laissez-Faire Leadership*. Therefore, there was no strong negative correlation supporting Hypothesis 2, and the Null Hypothesis was confirmed regarding transactional and laissez faire leadership styles.

This researcher did find a strong correlation between a high level of gender role internalization and a high level of the transformational leadership style in female managers who were trained on the job, thus confirming Hypothesis 1 as it related to this demographic. Furthermore, a low level of gender role internalization did not show a strong correlation with a high level of the transactional leadership or laissez-faire leadership styles. Thus, Hypotheses 2 for this study was unable to be confirmed due to weak correlation.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to test two hypotheses concerning leadership styles of female managers and their

levels of gender role internalization. Specifically, the researcher wanted to explore whether caring and nurturing behaviors that are traditionally associated with women spill over into their leadership styles as defined by Bass's (1985) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

For the study, the GRSS construct of *GRSS Total* was compared to the total score for each leadership style construct (*Transformational Leadership*, *Transactional Leadership*, and *Laissez Faire Leadership*) in Bass's MLQ (1985). Also, each construct for each leadership style was totaled and compared to the total for each construct for gender role internalization (*Ideal Traditional Person*, *Self-Sacrifice*, *Competence Without Compliance*). These constructs were correlated using Pearson's Correlation Test in SPSS Version 16. Total scores were used for each survey because statistical means could not be used due to Likert scale number rating differences. Their scores were examined and strength of correlation was examined and interpreted.

Further analysis was conducted by breaking out the data by demographics and significant findings resulted. In organizations that were either 100% female or were 85% female, a significant correlation exists between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Transformational Leadership*. More importantly, participants in these organizations demonstrate a significant positive correlation between *Transformational Leadership* and Toner et al.'s GRSS. Further analysis is warranted to determine the influence of gender role internalization on leadership in mostly female organizations. It is worth examining whether females influence other females in these organizations and whether this affects the level of gender role internalization and the adoption of transformational leadership. In organizations where female managers who were trained on the job (rather than in college, in seminars, or by other means), there was a significant positive correlation between *Individualized Consideration* and *Self-Sacrifice*. However, there was also a significant positive correlation between *Laissez- Faire Leadership* and *Traditional Ideal Person* and between *Laissez Faire Leadership* and *Competence Without Compliance*.

Organizations Predominately Female
The researcher hypothesized that women who internalized their gender role as caring and nurturing would carryover these behaviors into their leadership style and this would be reflected in their scores on the GRSS and on the transformational leadership sub-construct of *Individualized Consideration*. After analyzing the data, this is not the case in the total sample. However, there are some significant correlations between total scores for *Transformational Leadership* and GRSS constructs in organizations that are mostly female.

Perhaps the other sub-constructs of Transformational Leadership (*Intellectual Stimulation*, *Idealized Influence (behavioral)*, *Idealized Influence (attributed)*, and *Inspirational Motivation*) are at play in this case. It is possible that

organizations that are mostly female influence gender role internalization and leadership style in a different way that in other organizations.

Female Managers Trained on the Job
A significant correlation between *Self-Sacrifice* and *Individualized Consideration* appears in organizations where female managers were trained on the job. In these organizations, over half were trained by females. Further research should be conducted to determine whether women who are trained by other women internalize gender roles and whether they adopt a more transformational leadership style.

Limitations

Cultural and religious differences. The sample in this study consisted of female managers in the United States. A previous study (Tang & Tang, 2001) regarding gender role consideration consisted of a sample of Chinese women in Hong Kong. Eastern and Western cultures are very different. In this study and the previous study by Tang and Tang, certain cultural issues could limit the generalizability of the findings. In Chinese culture, attentiveness and sensitivity to other people's needs is a key ingredient of social interaction (Gabrenya & Hwang, 1996). The Chinese have a proclivity toward collective welfare and social concern, as well as toward neglecting their own feelings and personal enjoyment (Yang, 1986). Western culture places more value on the individual and on personal success rather that collective welfare of society. These differences in culture could produce very different results in the U.S. study.

Limitations of survey research. Another limitation was the possibility of managers self-reports not reflecting their true leadership style. Although great care was taken not to reveal too much detail about the subject matter of the study in order to not bias results, some participants were likely to report behaviors they imagined themselves as practicing, rather than the actual behaviors they practiced.

Implications

Accounting for disconfirmation of hypothesis 1. This research suggests that either females separate their internalization of gender roles from their management identity or women in the U.S. do not internalize messages about how society, as a whole, views and portrays women. Another possibility is that women do not report their feelings about gender; therefore, a self-report bias skews the results in this study.

The significance of the gender mix. Although further examination is needed, the positive correlations between high transformational leadership and high gender role internalization for organizations that are predominately female suggests that predominately female organizations have female leaders who

demonstrate a higher level of gender role internalization and transformational leadership styles than female leaders in organizations that are predominately male. One explanation for this is that organizations with a strong female presence have managers who practice transformational leadership.

For those who are responsible for hiring new leadership talent in organizations, the findings of this study could help determine which candidates would be a good fit in the organization. If further studies replicate the data found in this study, then those responsible for hiring could use the gender mix of the organization as an indicator of which candidates would bring a leadership style that is congruent with the organization. If this is true, this could be taken into consideration when hiring mid-level management as well.

The significance of the business model. The results of the study found a high level of gender role internalization and a more transactional leadership style in for-profit organizations. This refutes the second hypothesis that predicted females who practice transactional leadership with have a lower level of gender role internalization. This could be due to organizational environmental factors or the culture of the organization. Previous studies (Young, 2004) have shown that the environment can overtake other factors in order to be the dominant force in what leadership type is practiced. In contrast, previous studies (Kane & Tremble, 2000; Singer & Singer, 1986) demonstrated transformational leadership in industries that are traditionally male dominated. Further research needs to be done to uncover the reasons behind the findings in for-profit and non-profit organizations before implications can be drawn from the results.

Leader effectiveness. For those who evaluate the competence and effectiveness of leaders in organizations, for organizations that are mostly female the data suggests that females may be more effective leaders (since females are more likely to practice a transformational leadership style) than males (since they are more likely to practice a transactional leadership or laissez faire leadership style). This is a very important implication because in order to get the best performance from subordinates, you need good leadership. It may be that organizations with a majority of women need leaders who are supportive, encouraging, and motivating (the hallmarks of transformational leadership).

Congruence with Bass's leadership theories. Those who support Bass's leadership theories that transformational leadership is the most effective leadership style may find it easier to be successful under certain types of leaders. Specifically, employees who support these theories may be able to affect more change within an organization under a transformational leader, rather than a transactional leader, simply because they may be able to get their ideas across in a transformational environment. A transformational environment is more likely to foster teamwork and a group mindset for

success. At the same time, those who are used to a very structured environment may be more comfortable under a transactional leader who delineates tasks and offers contingent rewards.

As gender roles and expectations continue to gain attention in American society, there is an increased focus on both women's representation in leadership positions and their approaches to leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007). While women's presence in the workforce, enrollment in higher education, and attainment of supervisory positions continue to dramatically increase, and in many cases exceed that of men, there is still a significant disparity between women and men holding top leadership positions that carry with them substantial authority (Eagly & Carli, 2004, 2007; Helfat, Harris, & Wolfson, 2006).

In addition to the disparity of the number of women in top leadership positions, there are a number of challenges that women face when in these roles. Research demonstrates that women in top leadership positions face challenges in balancing their preferred leadership styles with followers' expectations while in leadership roles (Eagly & Carli, 2007). While women's leadership styles and approaches tend to be more collaborative, participative, and democratic than the leadership styles of most men (Dugan, Komives, & Segar, 2008; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Haber & Komives, 2009; Smith, 1997), women in top leadership, particularly in male-dominated industries, can feel pulled to adopt more masculine, autocratic, and directive leadership styles (Eagly & Carli, 2004, 2007; Moran, 1992). This is a tricky double bind that women must face, as acting more assertive and directive is often met with resistance from both male and female colleagues; men, however, do not normally confront such resistance (Driskell, Olmstead, & Salas, 1993; Eagly & Carli, 2007). Women leaders also face challenges in their roles with stereotyping, experiencing harassment, feeling excluded, and feeling alone and tokenized (Edmondson Bell & Nkomo, 2003).

Although women face the challenges of under-representation in top leadership roles and must often confront and manage gender norms, expectations, and even harassment while in these roles, there is evidence that the playing field is gradually being leveled. Women are gaining access to and increasingly assuming top leadership roles (Helfat et al., 2006), just as men are assuming more domestic responsibilities (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2009). Additionally, androgynous leadership styles that reflect a combination of masculine and feminine characteristics are more accepted and, even, valued than ever before (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Northouse, 2007). Women's more democratic and transformational approaches to leadership have proven to be crucial to both organizational effectiveness (Eagly & Carli, 2004; Helgesen, 1990; Smith, 1997) and individual

success (Heffernan, 2007). These steady changes could lead to an environment that is more open to women in top leadership roles and women's ways of leading.

One area that is under-researched but that could conceivably promote understanding of the future of women's leadership in society is the experience of college student women leaders. Examining the leadership styles and influences of these younger women may help us gain a greater understanding of women's leadership today and what we may expect in the future. The college environment provides many opportunities to be involved with different organizations and hold formal leadership roles in these organizations (Astin, 1997). Additionally, unlike the upper ranks of the business world, the college environment is a conceivably more empowering context for women leaders, particularly as women in higher education outnumber men.

The topic of female collegiate leaders is not completely uncharted territory, of course. Recent research shows that college women student leaders demonstrate greater competence and ability to engage in more democratic leadership (a form of leadership that is increasingly associated with organizational success) than men (Dugan, et al., 2008; Eagly & Carli, 2004; Haber & Komives, 2009; Helgesen, 1990; Shankman, Haber, Facca, & Allen, 2010; Smith, 1997), though men tend to have greater confidence and self-efficacy in their ability to lead (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000). While the existing research sheds light on women's preferred leadership style and their relative confidence in their ability to lead, it does not focus specifically on college student women who hold formal leadership roles. There is a lack of information on how college women in leadership roles exercise leadership and the various factors, such as follower expectations and gender roles and norms, influence how they engage in leadership. A further examination of the leadership experiences of college women leaders can contribute to a better understanding of women's leadership today, with a particular focus on younger, college aged women. This information can also inform the ways in which college women leaders are supported and served on college campuses and how college student educators can help prepare these women for their leadership lives post-college.

Suggestions for Future Research
Further analysis on this subject is warranted. To overcome any self-rater bias, both the leader and rater form of the MLQ could be used in a more expansive study. A study using populations from Western and Eastern culture could possibly uncover differences and answer questions about cultural influence on gender role internalization and female leadership style. Further analysis needs to be done on organizations that are mostly female and organizations where female managers are trained on the job by other women in order to determine whether a strong female culture within an organization fosters transformational leadership. Finally, both a quantitative and a qualitative approach should be used together in future research to add depth to the survey data and to uncover more themes in female leadership style.

Conclusion
This research uncovered some significant correlations between the level of gender role internalization and transformational leadership in certain samples. These findings warrant further evaluation in organizations that are mostly female and organizations that have managers who are trained on the job by other females. It is possible that women influence other women in organizations and this issue needs to be analyzed further by using methods that eliminate self-rater bias and cultural bias.

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