

**Traditionality Matters: An Examination of the Effectiveness of Transformational
Leadership in the U.S. and Taiwan**

Gretchen Spreitzer
Department of Management and Organization
Michigan Business School
701 Tappan St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1234
(734) 9362835(p) (734) 9356-0282 (f)
spreitze@umich.edu

Kimberly Hopkins Perttula
Department of Management
College of Business Administration and Public Policy
California State University, Dominguez Hills
Carson, CA 90747
(310) 243-2760 (p) (310) 243-6964 (f)
kperttula@csudh.edu

Katherine Xin
China Europe International Business School
699 Hongfeng Road, Pudong
Shanghai, 201206 PRC
katherinexin@mail.ceibs.edu

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how the effectiveness of transformational leadership may vary depending on the cultural values of an individual. We develop the logic for why the individual value of traditionality (emphasizing respect for hierarchy in relationships) moderates the relationship between six dimensions of transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness. The hypotheses are examined on leaders from Asia and North America. The results indicate support for the moderating effect of traditional values on the relationship between four dimensions of transformational leadership (appropriate role model, intellectual stimulation, high performance expectations, and articulating a vision) on leadership effectiveness.

Key words: Transformational leadership, effectiveness, values

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Transformational leadership has gained academic attention over the last 20 years as a new paradigm for understanding leadership. The notion of transformational leadership was developed under the tutelage of Bernard Bass (1997). Transformational leaders define the need for change, develop a vision for the future, and mobilize follower commitment to achieve results beyond what would normally be expected. In well over 100 empirical studies, transformational leadership has been found to be consistently related to organizational and leadership effectiveness (Bryman, 1992; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). These results hold in a wide range of samples and contexts from Fortune 100 business organizations, to military units, to presidential administrations.

Recently, several studies have examined transformational leadership beyond a North American context. For example, Dorfman and Howell (1996) examined the display of transformational and transactional leadership behaviors in Mexico, as did Yokochi (1989) in Japan, Kuchinke (1999) in Germany, and Ardichvili and Gasparishvili (2001) in Eastern Europe. In these studies, researchers found evidence for the existence of transformational leadership behaviors in each culture.

Yet, a further review of the literature demonstrates that research exploring the *effectiveness* of transformational leadership in an international context is more limited. Because the genesis of transformational leadership was in Western culture, we believe it is critically important to understand the extent to which the effectiveness of transformational leadership varies depending on individual cultural values. What, for example, if a high potential Taiwanese manager, who was educated in the West about the benefits of a transformational leadership approach, behaves as a transformational leader? Will his or her boss value those

transformational behaviors or feel threatened by them? For example, in some non-Western cultures, the change orientation of transformational leaders might come across as not having respect for tradition.

The potential for cross-cultural discrepancies is expected to increase in today's competitive, global business environment. Most large companies have an increasing percentage of sales and profits outside their home country (Adler, 2001). Moreover, the workforce is becoming more culturally diverse with more mergers/acquisitions, joint ventures, and buyer-supplier relationships crossing national boundaries (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1998). Given the increased globalization of today's business environment, a better understanding of how the effectiveness of different styles of leadership may vary with individual cultural orientations becomes important (Dorfman & Howell, 1997). Thus, our purpose is to better understand the effectiveness of transformational leadership across individuals holding different cultural values. As will be described below, we are particularly interested in the cultural value of traditionality, a foundation of Confucian societies.

Background

The literature on leadership suggests two perspectives on the effect of culture on leadership (Dorfman, 1996) – the universal and the culturally specific.

The Universal Perspective. The simple universal perspective suggests that some concepts are generalizable across cultures. In fact, the general idea of leadership is considered a universal phenomenon – indeed, no society has been found without some kind of leadership (Murdock, 1967 as cited in Bass, 1997). Bass (1997) suggests a universal position regarding the cross-cultural transferability of transformational leadership. This kind of culture-free approach

assumes that core leadership constructs should be similar or invariant across cultures. Dorfman and Howell (1997) have found support for the conceptual and measurement equivalence of a variety of different leader constructs. In addition, the path breaking GLOBE research program (a network of 170 social scientists in 61 cultures around the world) (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 1999) also provides important empirical evidence for the universal perspective on the effectiveness of transformational behavior. They found that some leadership behaviors characteristic of transformational leadership appear to be universally endorsed across the 61 cultures in their study: “encouraging,” “positive,” “motivational,” “confidence builder,” “dynamic,” “excellence-oriented” and “foresight.”

Recently, Dickson, Hanges, and Lord (2001) (following Bass (1997) and Lonner (1980)) suggested the need move beyond the simple universal to the variform universal (i.e., when a general principle holds across cultures but the enactment of that principle differs across cultures). While we could find no research on the variform universality of transformation leadership, research by Farh, Early, and Lin (1997) provides support for organizational citizenship as a variform universal (i.e., the construct of organizational citizenship exists across different cultures, but its enactment is different in an Asian context).

Another, more advanced, form of the universal is what Bass (1997) refers to as the functional universal. The functional universal holds when the within group relationship between two variables (like transformational leadership and effectiveness) is the same across cultures. We know little about the extent to which transformational leadership behaviors are viewed as effective across those with different cultural values. Bass (1991) suggests that leaders who engage in more transformational behavior will be more effective than those who engage in less transformational behavior, regardless of culture. He suggests that developing a vision of the

future and motivating followers to work hard to achieve exceptional performance should be part of a formula for excellence in any culture. And Bass (1997) refers to research supporting the generalizability of transformational leadership effectiveness in New Zealand, India, Japan, and Singapore. Additional research using a functional universal perspective was conducted on a group of principals in Hong Kong by Yu, Leithwood, and Jantzi (2002). They found that the effects of transformational leadership on teachers' commitment to change operated similarly in both North America and Hong Kong, but the magnitude of the effects was far less in Hong Kong.

The Culture-Specific Perspective. The culture-specific perspective suggests that many leadership theories developed in North American culture may not be generalizable when used by leaders with different cultural orientations because they are bounded by their roots in Western cultures (Hofstede, 2001). The culture-specific perspective suggests that individuals with different cultural values may perceive leadership differently. For example, Pillai, Scandura, and Williams (1999) did not find that transformational leaders have more satisfied followers in Colombia, the Middle East, or India – findings that are contrary to a large body of empirical research in Western contexts which find more satisfied followers of transformational leaders. These researchers suggest that leadership behaviors that are directive and less involved with followers are likely to be important for those in Columbia, the Middle East or India. In addition, the highly ambitious GLOBE research study has found important leadership differences when comparing Southern Asia cultures (Gupta, Surie, Javidan, & Chhokar, 2002), Anglo cultures (Ashkanasy, Trevor-Roberts, & Earnshaw, 2002), Arab cultures (Kabasakal & Bodur, 2002), Germanic cultures (Szabo, Brodbeck, Den Hartog, Reber, Weibler, & Wunderer, 2002), Eastern

European cultures (Bakacsi, Sandor, Andras, & Viktor, 2002), and Latin European cultures (Jesuino, 2002).

Some Universalistic and Some Culture-Specific. Others suggest that both simple universal and culture-specific perspectives are relevant to transformational leadership. Dickson, Hanges, and Lord (2001) review how Hunt and Peterson's (1997) assessment of the articles in the special issue of the Leadership Quarterly on cross-cultural leadership found that all 10 articles emphasized both culture-specific and simple universal results. For example, Dorfman and Howell (1997) found that there are commonalities and differences in effective leadership across cultures. The results of their study in two Western and three Asian countries support Bass's (1990) contention about the validity of both the simple universal and the culture-specific perspectives of several leadership behaviors. Two behaviors tangentially related to transformational leadership (leader supportiveness and charisma) showed simple universal endorsement in all five countries; and two leader behaviors tangentially related to transformational leadership (participativeness and directiveness) had positive endorsements only in the Western countries.

Boehnke, Bontis, DiStefano, and DiStefano (2003) also found commonalities and differences in a study of executives from America, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Latin America, the Far East, and the Commonwealth. They found that key transformational leadership behaviors are universal; however, the applications of these behaviors appear to be tailored to national differences. For example, Americans reported more team building behaviors than their Far East colleagues and more stimulating behaviors than southern Europeans.

Our Perspective. We adopt a more nuanced understanding regarding the generalizability of leadership across cultures. Following the work by Chen and Farh (1999), Den

Hartog, House, Hanges, and Ruiz-Quintanila (1999), and Dorfman and Howell (1997), we assume that the behaviors embodying transformational leadership are meaningful across Eastern and Western cultures (i.e., U.S. and Taiwan) but that their enactment may be different. This is the essence of the variform universal.

Yet, our research moves beyond the issue of the variform universality of transformational leadership to examine the issue of variform functional universality (Bass 1997, Lonner, 1980). The variform functional universal (Bass, 1997; Dickson, Hanges, & Lord, 2001; Lonner, 1980) refers to when the relationship between two variables is found across cultures, but that the magnitude of that relationship differs across cultures. Jung, Bass, and Sosik (1995) offer theoretical arguments on the functional universality of transformational leadership behaviors. They suggest that transformational leadership is not only generalizable but also that it is more important in collectivistic societies than in individualistic ones, because the cultural values that followers hold in a collectivistic society are often more aligned with transformational leaders' focus on collective mission, goals, and responsibilities. So a key contribution of our research is to be among the first to empirically examine the idea of variform functional universality in relation to transformational leadership.

In order to assess the variform functional universality of transformational leadership, we take a "subjective culture" approach – one that focuses on cultural values rather than culture per se. This can be contrasted with the common practice in cross-cultural research to equate cultural values with a person's country of origin or nationality. This approach classifies individuals into country groupings for purposes of aggregation so that culture-level theories can be tested with culture-level data. Prominent researchers including Hofstede (2001), Triandis (1995) and Trompenaars (1997) have successfully used this approach.

Given that our research is at not the level of culture, but rather at the level of the transformational leader, our focus is less on culture *per se* and more on the cultural values held by the leader. This is important because many different cultural norms and values can co-exist within a country (Lytle, Brett, Barness, Tinsley, & Janssens, 1995; Dickson, Hanges, & Lord, 2001). The United States is a *mélange* of different cultures. South Africa has multiple cultures. And what was formerly East Germany has different cultural norms from what was formerly West Germany. All of these nations are culturally “loose” (Triandis, 1995). Moreover, it is not appropriate to infer that because nations differ on a particular value dimension that any two individuals from those countries will differ in the same way. That is, within each nation, there is likely to be variation on a particular cultural value, such that an individual will not be representative of their nation’s mean score (Thomas, 2002).

Den Hartog et al. (1999) argue that a deeper understanding of the cultural boundaries of the effectiveness of transformational leadership can only come from studying the effects of cultural values across leaders. Cultural values are defined as the internalized beliefs, as conveyed by the context in which they exist, that people hold regarding what they should do (Lytle, Brett, Barness, Tinsley, & Janssens, 1995; Ravlin, Thomas, & Ilsev, 2000). So we draw on a perspective often employed by micro-level organizational behavioral researchers (Morris, Podolny & Ariel 2000) by studying “subjective culture,” (i.e., to conceptualize culture as existing in an individual’s mental representations rather than in external structures and artifacts (Triandis, 1995)). This alternative approach accounts for societal differences in terms of subjective psychological characteristics and has also been used by prominent cross-cultural researchers including Triandis (1995) and Nisbett (2003). Cultural values are assessed through inventories such as those traditionally used to measure individual differences.

By assessing individual cultural values (in our case traditionality), we will not only be able to identify differences in the relationship between transformational leadership and effectiveness across countries, but more importantly, we will also be able to begin to understand why those differences may be occurring (Earley & Singh, 1995; Gibson & Marcoulides, 1995). In other words, we will be able to say something about the specific cultural value that may be contributing to the variform functional universality of transformational leadership.

As we describe in detail in the section that follows, we expect that though transformational leadership behaviors may be perceived as effective across U.S. and Taiwanese cultures, they will not be evaluated as effective to the same extent as individuals holding less traditional cultural values. In the sections below, we first define our constructs of interest before moving into the logic underlying our specific hypotheses on the role of cultural values.

THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT

Transformational Leader Behaviors

Transformational leaders articulate a vision of the future of the organization, provide a model that is consistent with that vision, foster the acceptance of group goals, and provide individualized support (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). As a result, followers of transformational leaders often feel trust and respect toward the leader and are motivated to do more than they are expected to do. In this way, transformational leaders change the beliefs and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization.

We use Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter's (1990) conceptualization of transformational leadership because it is behaviorally oriented, well validated, and has been used

in both North American and Chinese cultures (Farh & Cheng, 1999). Their measure identifies six behaviorally-oriented dimensions of transformational leadership: articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, setting high performance expectations, providing individualized support (i.e., giving personal attention and treating individuals according to their needs), and offering intellectual stimulation (i.e., thinking about old problems in new ways).

Cultural Values

As described later in our research design, we compare cultural values of U.S. leaders to Taiwanese leaders. We chose U.S. and Taiwanese leadership as our basis for comparison for several reasons. According to Hofstede's (2001) research, some of the largest cultural differences occur between U.S. and Asian countries, particularly an Asian country like Taiwan which has a culture grounded in Confucian ideology. Confucian-based values emphasize a strong respect for hierarchy whether in work or family, preserving interpersonal harmony, and exhibiting personal modesty (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). In Confucian-based societies, leadership emphasizes paternalism and benevolence (Farh & Cheng, 1999). Moreover, some of the most important economic development in the world right now is occurring in Asian countries such as Taiwan that have a high proportion of business people of Chinese origin. Moreover, scales for transformational leadership (Chen & Farh, 1999) and cultural values (Farh, Earley, & Lin, 1997) have been cross-validated in U.S. and Taiwanese contexts.

Recently Farh et al. (1997) have developed a construct to explicitly capture these sorts of individual values that are consistent with Confucian ideology, aptly named traditionality. This construct focuses on "expressive ties among people manifested in values such as respect for

authority, filial piety, male-domination, and a general sense of powerlessness” (Fahr, et al., 1997: 424). The core values underlying traditionality are consistent with five fundamental relationships of Confucianism: emperor over subject, father over son, husband over wife, elder brother over younger, older friend over younger friend. For each of these relationships, role prescriptions specify what should and should not be done by the submissive partner in the relationships. Leaders with traditional values believe that relationships should be hierarchically maintained and that harmony is highly valued. Those with traditional values believe that conflicts with authority should be prevented even at the expense of less productive performance.

Given the focus on hierarchical relationships, this cultural dimension is related to Hofstede’s (2001) notion of power distance. Those high in traditionality assume the existence of a high level of power distance. As an old Chinese proverb explains: "Juniors and seniors have their ranking" (Bond, 1991: 36). Moreover, given its emphasis on familial relationships and harmony, the cultural value of traditionality is also related to Hofstede’s (2001) notion of collectivism (Schwartz, 1994). So, traditionality is a variant on power-distance that also encompasses elements of collectivism. Prior research has found that traditionality moderates the relationship between justice and organizational citizenship behaviors -- more traditional individuals see a stronger relationship between justice and citizenship (Farh et al., 1997).

This particular cultural dimension is relevant for our study for several reasons. First, traditionality focuses on issues of hierarchy and relationships, making it relevant to our study and understanding of leadership. Leadership is about hierarchical relationships between the leader and the follower.¹ Second, because we were comparing the effectiveness of transformational leadership across Western and Eastern contexts, we wanted a measure of cultural values that

¹ This levels distinction is similar to how Triandis (1989) developed the notions of ideocentrism and allocentrism to parallel individualism and collectivism but at an individual level of analysis.

reflected the essence of Confucian ideology, the essence of Chinese cultural values. Confucian-based values emphasize a strong respect for hierarchy, preserving interpersonal harmony, and exhibiting personal modesty. This measure of traditionality was developed to capture these values. And third, the cultural dimension of traditionality has a measure that has been well-validated in prior research at an individual level of analysis (Farh et al., 1997). This is in contrast to Hofstede's measures of power-distance and collectivism which were developed for a cultural or societal level of analysis.

Why Cultural Values Might Matter for Transformational Leadership

Cultural groups are likely to vary in their conceptions of the most important characteristics of effective leadership. According to Den Hartog, et al. (1999: 225)

“... different leadership prototypes would be expected to occur naturally in societies that have differing cultural profiles ... In some cultures, one might need to take a strong decisive action in order to be seen as [an effective] leader, whereas in other cultures consultation and a democratic approach may be a prerequisite. And, following from such different conceptions, the evaluation and meaning of many leader behaviors and characteristics may also strongly vary in different cultures. For instance, in a culture that endorses an authoritarian style, leader sensitivity might be interpreted as weak, whereas in cultures endorsing a more nurturing style, the same sensitivity is likely to prove essential for effective leadership.”

Hunt, Boal and Sorenson (1990) concur suggesting that cultural values have an important influence on the development of prototypical leadership ideals. Furthermore, Gerstner and Day's (1994) research compared prototypical leaders in different countries and found that different countries seem to have different prototypes of business leaders. The effectiveness of a leader is thus inferred through the lens of cultural values. Attributes that are seen as prototypical of effective leadership are thus likely to vary with cultural values, according to these and other

studies representing the cultural-specific perspective. Erez and Earley (1993) further suggest that practices consistent with a society's predominant cultural values are evaluated favorably. Thus, leadership styles that are consistent with the cultural values of a nation are reinforced and encouraged. In the section below, we offer hypotheses consistent with a cultural-specific approach. The specific logic for why traditional cultural values might matter in the evaluation of transformational leadership is developed below.

Hypotheses Development

While prior research has indicated that the very notion of transformational leadership exists across cultures (e.g. Den Hartog, House, Hanges, & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1999; Dorfman & Howell, 1997), we know much less about the role of cultural values on the relationship between transformational leadership and effectiveness. In this section, we provide some logic for understanding the moderating role of cultural values in assessing the effectiveness of transformational leadership. We suggest that the cultural value of traditionality will moderate the relationship between the six dimensions of transformational leadership and leader effectiveness.

We develop specific hypotheses articulating expected differences in the effectiveness of transformational leadership depending on the cultural values of the person evaluating the leader's effectiveness. To be more specific, this study focuses on general assessments of reputational managerial effectiveness (Tsui, 1984) as assessed by the leader's superior. In most organizational contexts, the person typically responsible for evaluating their performance in a formal appraisal process is the leader's superior. In contrast, we believe that the leader's subordinates are in the best position to assess the extent to which the leader's behavior is transformational. This is because the leader's subordinates are most likely to see the leader's

behavior on a day-to-day basis. In addition, subordinates are often used to assess leader behavior in leadership research (Podsakoff et al. 1990). So, our general research question is: *to what extent will the cultural values of a leader's superior moderate the extent to which the leader's superior evaluates as effective any transformational behaviors exhibited by the leader.* See Figure 1 for a visual representation of this research question.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals. This dimension focuses on fostering collaboration among group members, encouraging them to be team players working toward the group's goal. We expect that fostering the acceptance of group goals will be particularly important when superiors with traditional values are evaluating leadership effectiveness. Societies with traditional values tend to be more collectivistic in nature – emphasizing the importance of the group rather than their own self-interest. In traditional cultures, people have a strong identification with in-groups and possible ostracization with out-groups. Fostering group goals is likely to promote collaboration, cooperation, and harmony among group members. Those in traditional societies have less individualistic viewpoints and thus may have an easier time focusing on group-level goals rather than individual goals. In contrast, those in less traditional cultures are more likely to act according to their own interests rather than for the interests of the collective. Thus, we hypothesize that fostering group goals will be more important for leadership effectiveness as assessed by those with traditional values.

Hypothesis 1: Traditionality will moderate the relationship between fostering group goals and leadership effectiveness. For superiors who hold more traditional values, the relationship between fostering group goals and their assessment of leadership effectiveness will be stronger than for those superiors with less traditional values.

Individualized support. Individualized support has to do with the leader being concerned about subordinates' personal needs and feelings. We expect that a superior with more traditional values will evaluate a leader who provides individualized support to followers as more effective. In traditional societies, a leader is expected to take care of the needs of subordinates, even their personal and familial needs (Farh & Cheng, 1999). In fact, personalism and interpersonal relationships are considered to be trademarks of effective leadership in traditional cultures (Farh & Cheng, 1999). In a culture with traditional values, the leader is supposed to treat employees as though they are members of the family, assisting in personal crises, and showing holistic concern for their needs (see Farh & Cheng, 1999)– even to the point of visiting an employee's sick family member in the hospital or attending a family member's funeral. In exchange for this kind of individualized support, subordinates in traditional cultures are supposed to respond with unconditional loyalty and respect for the leader. Leaders in societies high in traditionality receive high respect, trust, and loyalty from their subordinates, and in return, they make an extra effort to make sure that they understand their followers' needs and feelings. Thus, we hypothesize that individualized support will be particularly important to superiors with traditional values when they are assessing leadership effectiveness.

Hypothesis 2: Traditionality will moderate the relationship between the individualized support dimension of transformational leader behavior and leadership effectiveness. For superiors who hold more traditional values, the relationship between individualized support and their assessments of leadership effectiveness will be stronger than for those superiors who hold less traditional values.

Providing an Appropriate Role Model. This dimension of transformational leadership has to do with leading by example – leading by doing, not just telling. At first glance, it may seem that societies with traditional values would emphasize that a leader must serve as a role

model for subordinates. But the high power distance inherent in traditional societies indicates that there should be some distance between leaders and followers, reducing the need for the leader to role model expected behaviors. In traditional cultures, it would be seen as reasonable and appropriate for a leader to act in authoritarian ways – forcing action as the leader sees fit. Such a leader may keep information secret, emphasize top down communication and even belittle subordinates, all behaviors that the leader would not necessarily want subordinates to model, but that may be perfectly appropriate for the leader to exhibit. Thus, we expect that superiors with traditional values will place less importance on providing an appropriate model when evaluating leadership effectiveness. Recent research on leadership in traditional societies suggests that the leader is seen as omnipotent, demanding obedience and respect from followers regardless of the leader’s actions (Farh & Cheng, 1999). The cliché “Do as I say, not as I do” does not seem so far fetched when the leader is expected to be strong, directive, or authoritarian. In traditional cultures, the leader would want to maintain their differential status rather than having followers model their behaviors. Thus, we hypothesize that superiors with more traditional values will view providing an appropriate role model to be less important for leadership effectiveness than superiors with less traditional values.

Hypothesis 3: Traditionality will moderate the relationship between the appropriate model dimension of transformational leader behavior and leadership effectiveness. For superiors who hold more traditional values, the relationship between being an appropriate model and their assessments of leadership effectiveness will be weaker than for those superiors with less traditional values.

Intellectual Stimulation. This dimension of transformational leadership has to do with getting followers to think about old problems in new ways. We do not expect that intellectual stimulation will be particularly valuable for leadership effectiveness in traditional cultures. Transformational leaders delegate responsibility and authority to followers so that they empower

followers to accomplish organizational goals in a relatively autonomous manner. The status quo is questioned, and new innovative methods for developing the organization and accomplishing its mission are explored (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990). Risk-taking behaviors and autonomy are trademarks for people who value individuality, egalitarianism, and open-mindedness. Those with less traditional values are likely to be more open to the intellectual stimulation of a transformational leader. That openness ensures that they see new ways of thinking as something that contributes to leadership effectiveness. In fact, they may see the leader's role as instigating and stimulating new ideas. Anyone can do the same thing better, but for those with less traditional values, the leader is the one who envisions and stimulates new directions. Those with more traditional values are likely to be less open to the new ways of thinking and doing and thus will view intellectual stimulation as less related to effectiveness. Since the distance between leaders and followers in traditional societies is quite large, followers expect to be told what to do. Therefore, advocating intellectual stimulation may create discomfort for followers who hold traditional values and may want to be told what to do. In addition, advocating intellectual stimulation and innovation may create discomfort for traditional superiors who might see this as a challenge to their authority.

Hypothesis 4: Traditionality will moderate the relationship between intellectual stimulation and leadership effectiveness. For superiors who hold more traditional values, the relationship between intellectual stimulation and their assessments of leadership effectiveness will be weaker than for those superiors with less traditional values.

Creating High Performance Expectations. This dimension of transformational leadership has to do with expecting a high level of achievement from followers, insisting on their best performance. We do not expect that creating high performance expectations will be particularly important for leadership effectiveness in traditional cultures. For cultures strong in

traditional values, self-reliance and a high drive to achieve are not as important as maintaining the status quo and establishing proper relationships. Harmony in relationships may override an emphasis on performance. In traditional societies, control and influence are achieved through conformity, nepotism, and obligative networks (guanxi), not through performance contingent on rewards and punishment (Redding & Wong, 1986). Judgment of a person's worth is based on loyalty rather than ability or performance against objective criteria (Chen, 1995). Therefore, more traditional superiors may see less of a link between high performance expectations and effectiveness than less traditional superiors. High performance expectations may create implied competition, which would work against the harmony valued in traditional societies.

Hypothesis 5: Traditionality will moderate the relationship between the high performance expectation of transformational leader behavior and leadership effectiveness. For superiors who hold more traditional values, the relationship between setting high performance expectations and their assessments of leadership effectiveness will be weaker than for those superiors with less traditional values.

Articulating a Vision. This dimension of transformational leadership has to do with creating and building commitment for an interesting vision of the future for the unit, department, or organization. Vision implies forward-looking drive and the need for achievement. Traditional values are focused on harmony and preserving the status quo. Thus, we expect that superiors with more traditional values are going to place less importance on vision in assessing leadership effectiveness. Those with more traditional values are likely to be less open and supportive of a leader who articulates a new and perhaps even radical vision for an organization. Those with traditional values would not necessarily expect a leader to put his/her mark on the organization with a personal vision of the future (rather than maintaining someone else's vision or maintaining the status quo). In fact, the most dominant form of ownership in Chinese

businesses is the family business, a type of business that tends to be fairly stable with little focus on a vision of the future (Redding, 1993).

The kind of person who can generate and sell a vision of transformation tends to be rather assertive and future looking. This is contrary to the cultural values of modesty and harmony that are more prevalent in traditional cultures. Moreover, the emphasis in traditional cultures is on the preservation of the status quo. Vision implies change. People with traditional values are less likely to be open to a new vision or to a leader developing his/her own direction for the organization. Thus, superiors with more traditional values are not likely to see the articulation of a vision as particularly important for leadership effectiveness.

Hypothesis 6: Traditionality will moderate the relationship between articulating a vision and leadership effectiveness. For superiors who hold more traditional values, the relationship between articulating a vision and their assessments of leadership effectiveness will be weaker than for those superiors holding less traditional values.

METHODS

Samples

The study involved two samples of leaders. The hypotheses on the effect of cultural values on the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and leadership effectiveness were tested using a data set combining both samples.

The first sample comprised 115 leaders in a leading global IT company based in Asia with operations throughout Asia, Europe, and North America. These leaders were directors of divisions or functional units with an average age of 40.5 years (s.d.=5.49), an average year of education after high school of 5.08 years (s.d.=2.46), and an average organizational tenure of 5.89 years (s.d.=4.40). Women constituted 8.2% of the group. More than 90% of participants in this sample were Asian by ethnicity and were working in Asia at the time of the survey.

Because this sample came primarily from a Chinese society, to increase the variance in the cultural value of traditionality, we followed the method used by Earley (1993) and collected a sample from the U.S., a country which is typically lower in traditionality. As a result, the second sample was comprised of 150 leaders in a leading global automobile company in its North America location. These leaders were heads of functional units with an average age of 41 years (s.d.=7.05), an average year of education after high school of 5.06 years (s.d. 2.60), and an average organizational tenure of 9.10 years (s.d. =6.28). Women constituted 34% of the group. Leaders from these two samples were similar in age, educational level and managerial levels in their respective organizations. However, there were some differences in their organizational tenure and gender composition. A dummy variable was created to control for the two samples in our analyses.

Procedures

Leaders of both samples were participants in a three-day executive development class sponsored by their companies. Leaders in the first sample attended the program in Asia, and those in the second sample attended a West Coast business school program. Leaders' participation in both executive programs was determined by a nomination by one's immediate supervisors with final determination by senior executives. The data were collected one month prior to the start of the executive education programs. The leaders were provided with feedback during the program on some of the measures in the surveys.

The leader, his/her immediate superior, as well as three subordinates were asked to complete a survey that was mailed directly from the researchers and returned directly to the researchers. Respondents were assured that no one in their companies would see the completed

surveys or the personalized feedback reports. The feedback was only for the leader's eyes only. Data from the different sources were combined in the personal feedback report in such a way that individual anonymity was assured. The surveys were coded so that we could match up data from the different respondents. In sample 1, there were 115 leaders and an 87% response rate: 89 superiors (89% response rate) and 158 subordinates (53% response rate). In sample 2, there were 150 leaders and a 91% response rate; 140 superiors (93% response rate); and 388 subordinates (86% response rate).

Measures

To avoid common method variance, we obtained our independent variable measures and our dependent variable measure from different sources. We asked the subordinates to rate the leader's transformational leadership behavior. Using subordinates as the referents here is important because they are in the position to see the leader's behavior on a daily basis. We asked the immediate superior of each leader to assess their own cultural values and the leader's effectiveness. These superiors are the appropriate referents because they are responsible for evaluating the performance of managers in their companies. More than 99% of superiors in the Asian sample were Asian by ethnicity and 97% of superiors in the U.S. sample were of U.S. origin. Both firms were global organizations using English as their official business language. Employees in both companies were fluent in English; thus, there was no need to translate the surveys into Chinese for the Asian sample.

Transformational Leader Behaviors. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter's (1990) transformational leadership behavior inventory was used to assess the leadership behaviors in this study. This scale is designed to measure six key dimensions of transformational

leadership that have been identified in the research literature as indicated above. Previous research using this inventory found support for the hypothesized factor structure and indicated good reliability (Podsakoff et al., 1996), most recently in a Taiwanese setting (Chen & Farh, 1999).

Insert Table 1 about here

A confirmatory factor analysis of our data supported a six-factor solution. Before the data were combined to create a single sample, a test of group invariance was conducted on the factor structure to ensure that the structure is consistent across the two samples. The results indicate that the six dimensions, their loadings, and their intercorrelations were consistent across the two samples (see Table 2). Acceptable levels of reliability were also found for all six scales (see Table 3).

Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here

Traditionality. Traditionality was measured with five items taken from Farh et al. (1997), which were adapted from the Chinese Individual Traditionality Scale. The items for this scale are provided in the appendix. The scale has a reliability score of .81 and a unidimensional factor structure. As might be expected, the two samples are significantly different on this measure of traditionality (sample 1 mean=3.21, sample 2 mean=2.42, t-statistic=5.43***).

Effectiveness. This variable was measured using the reputational effectiveness scale developed by Tsui (1984) and used in Ashford and Tsui (1991), and Tsui, Ashford, St. Clair and

Xin (1995). This three-item summary scale measures the extent to which leaders have met performance expectations. The scale was found to have a reliability of .86 and a one-dimensional factor structure. Again, as discussed earlier in the section on hypotheses development, we use superior's assessment of effectiveness to avoid common method bias and because they are usually the formal assessors of effectiveness in organizations.

RESULTS

The means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations for all of the survey variables are provided in Table 3. As expected, the different dimensions of transformational leadership were positively correlated with each other.

The results of the moderated regression analyses are provided in Table 4. To avoid suppression effects due to the moderate multicollinearity among the dimensions of transformational leadership, we conducted a separate set of regressions for each of the six dimensions of transformational leadership.

Insert Table 4 about here

In each Model 1, we examined the effects of five control variables on effectiveness: a dummy variable for the leader's company (0 for sample 1, 1 for sample 2), the time in months that the superior has known and worked with the leader, and the time in months that the subordinate has known and worked for the leader. These controls were included because they may affect the assessments of leadership and effectiveness. Model 1 is the same for each dimension of transformational leadership. In each Model 2, we examined the main effects of the particular transformational leadership dimension and traditionality on effectiveness. In each

Model 3, we examined the effect of the interaction effect produced by one dimension of transformational leadership and traditionality on effectiveness.

For example, in examining the moderating effect of Traditionality on the relationship between Articulate a Vision and Leadership Effectiveness, we first regressed effectiveness on our five control variables in Model 1. Then, we added the main effects of the Articulate a Vision and Traditionality scales in Model 2. We then added the interaction effect of Traditionality and Articulate a Vision to the regression in Model 3. We tested the moderating effect by examining the significance of the interaction term.

As Table 4 shows, in each Model 2, the main effects for each of the dimensions of transformational leadership were significant and in a positive direction (the exception is Individualized Support which was marginally significant at the .10 level but in the predicted direction). These effects support prior literature on the effectiveness of transformational leadership. Furthermore, in each Model 2, the main effect of Traditionality was not found to be significant. The lack of a main effect for cultural values indicates that there was nothing about these cultural values that by themselves influenced ratings of effectiveness (i.e., just because a superior has traditional values does not influence his/her general ratings of effectiveness).

The moderated regression analyses (shown in Model 3) indicate that there may be some cultural value differences in the effectiveness of different dimensions of transformational leadership. Superiors who had more traditional values perceived a weaker relationship between several dimensions of transformational leadership behavior (i.e., Appropriate Role Model, Intellectual Stimulation High Performance Expectations, and Vision) and leadership effectiveness. Leaders who scored high on appropriate role modeling were viewed as less effective by more traditional superiors than by superiors who were less traditional. Leaders who

scored high on intellection stimulation were viewed as somewhat less effective by more traditional superiors than by superiors who were less traditional. Leaders who scored high on setting high performance expectations were viewed as less effective by more traditional superiors than by superiors who were less traditional. And, leaders who scored high on setting a vision were also viewed as less effective by superiors who were more traditional than by superiors who are less traditional. These results provide support for hypotheses 3, 5, and 6 and marginal support hypothesis 4, the dimension of intellectual stimulation. Hypotheses 1 and 2, which suggest that traditionality will moderate the effect of Individualized Support and Group Goals on leadership effectiveness, were not supported.

DISCUSSION

The pattern of results is quite interesting. In support of the plethora of prior studies showing a link between transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness, the main effect of each of the six dimensions was significant (though only marginally so for individualized support). This indicates that the ability of a leader to articulate a vision, provide an appropriate model, foster group goals, create high performance expectations, and provide intellectual stimulation was generally important in assessments of leadership effectiveness.

But the primary purpose of this paper was to examine whether the effectiveness of transformational leadership is culturally specific or universal. We found some evidence of cultural specificity regarding the cultural dimension of traditionality. It may be helpful to discuss the findings of Chen and Farh's study of transformational leadership (1999). In their study, they classified Podsakoff's dimensions of transformational leadership as either task-oriented or relationship-oriented. The dimensions of articulate a vision, set high performance expectations, and intellectual stimulation are classified as more task-oriented. The dimensions of

individualized support, appropriate model, and fostering group goals are classified as more relationship oriented. The findings are consistent for the more task-oriented dimensions of transformational leadership – as expected, each is found to have a weaker relationship with leadership effectiveness in the case of superiors with more traditional values. Traditional values place less emphasis on task achievement and more focus on preserving harmonious relationships, so these findings make sense.

The findings with regard to the relationship-oriented dimensions of transformational leadership are less consistent. For two dimensions, individualized support and fostering group goals, we hypothesized a positive moderating effect. Neither interaction term was found to be significant. For the third relationship dimension, appropriate role model, we had hypothesized a negative moderating effect. This hypothesis was supported.

In summary, these findings not only suggest that superiors with traditional values see the task-oriented dimensions of transformational leadership as less important to effectiveness but also that they do not necessarily associate more effectiveness with two of the more relationship-oriented dimensions of transformational leadership. It may be that other types of cultural values such as collectivism/individualism matter more for the relationship-oriented dimensions of transformational leadership. It may be that because the construct of transformational leadership was developed in a Western context and Western cultures tend to more individualistic. Jung, Bass, and Sosik (1995) offer theoretical arguments suggesting that several characteristics of collectivistic cultures (such as sharing common responsibility for goal accomplishment and emphasizing mutual interdependence) may be preconditions for facilitating the transformational leaders' effectiveness.

The four significant negative interactions suggest that transformational leaders are not perceived to be particularly effective by those with more traditional cultural values. Gerstner and Day's (1994) research comparing prototypical leaders in different countries found that different countries seem to have different prototypes of business leaders. People with traditional cultural values appear to have different perceptions about how an effective leader should behave. It appears that they place less importance on the task-orientation of the transformational leader.

Comparison to Country Differences

To see whether our research actually captures cultural values beyond country affiliation, we conducted a second set of regressions which paralleled the set reported in Table 4. In these analyses, we performed the same analyses, except we substituted country affiliation for traditional cultural values. So in Models 2, we substituted the main effect of country affiliation for traditionality. And in Models 3, we examined interactions between each dimension of transformational leadership and country affiliation (e.g., group goals x country affiliation) rather than the interactions between transformational leadership and traditionality. In these analyses, only the interaction term for intellectual stimulation by country affiliation was found to be marginally significant ($\beta = -.40^+$). Remember that in the parallel analyses using cultural values, we had found four significant interaction terms. The general lack of significant interactions in the analyses using country affiliation is important because it shows that cultural values capture important information on "subjective culture." These findings suggest that it is important to actually measure cultural values to assess variform functional universality.

Implications for Research

This research demonstrates that we cannot just transfer constructs and theories developed in a Western context and assume they will work the same way in cultures with substantially different value sets. Instead, we need to look carefully at whether the meaning of constructs and their relationships with relevant outcomes can be affected by the different norms and expectations within a culture. This is especially true of a construct of leadership that carries a certain amount of romance in Western cultures (Meindl, Ehrlich & Dukerich, 1985).

This research approach has a number of strengths. First, we provide the conceptual development for why cultural differences in transformational leadership may occur. Earley and Singh (1995) suggest that this is the most important direction for intercultural research to move toward. Most of the prior work has looked for empirical differences and then drawn post hoc conclusions. In this way, we make the theoretical case for variform functional universality regarding the relationship between transformational leadership and effectiveness across two cultures.

Second, the prior research on cultural values has tended to focus on the four primary dimensions evoked by Hofstede (2001): power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity. Our study examines a different cultural value that seems particularly relevant to the hierarchy inherent in leadership – traditionality.

Third, we collect data from different referents (i.e., the subordinates of the leader assesses the leader's behavior and the superior of the leader assesses their own cultural values as well as the effectiveness of manager) to minimize the potential for common method bias.

And fourth, we examine theoretically and empirically the separate dimensions of transformational leadership rather than an overall construct of transformational leadership. This

is important given that, theoretically, the dimensions are expected to operate in different ways across the cultures we examine.

This study follows the paradigm for confirmatory cross-cultural research developed by Lytle et al. (1995). They suggest that researchers select a mid-range theory to test cross-culturally – in this case, the effectiveness of transformational leadership. Then, researchers should select at least one cultural dimension to incorporate into the mid-range theory to explain why selected cultural groups may differ – in this case, traditionality. Finally, researchers should choose a design to allow replication across cultural samples – in this case, we study two samples representing different cultural contexts.

Nevertheless, the research has some limitations. One limitation is that our Asian sample responded to an English language survey. Prior research has suggested that response patterns differ when respondents complete a survey in a non-native language (Bennett, 1977; Brislin, 1986; Marin, Triandis, Betancourt, & Kashima, 1983). Asian respondents completing an English survey may be cued to respond more similarly to the U.S. respondents than expected. Of course this would reduce the variation in our sample and make it more difficult to find significant results. A second limitation is our comparison of leaders in only two cultures. We chose to study leaders in cultures that have some of the strongest differences on values pertinent to traditionality. Clearly, it will be important to extend this type of research on variform functional universality of leadership to a broader array of cultural values. Clearly, the third phase of the GLOBE data will provide an excellent avenue for this future research across an impressive array of cultural values.

Implications for Practice

As the business world increasingly becomes a global marketplace, we need a better understanding of the cultural boundaries of leadership. Today, with the global expansion of businesses, we see more opportunities for cross-cultural interactions within organizations and with customers and suppliers. While in the past, it was not uncommon for a U.S. expatriate to manage a foreign business, today, we are likely to see a manager from one country managing a team of employees from a wide range of other countries on a transnational team (Earley & Gibson, 2002). It is not clear what effective leadership looks like when one is leading an international array of employees. This research suggests that by understanding the cultural values of those involved, we can develop a better understanding of what effective leadership will look like.

CONCLUSION

Is transformational leadership positively related to effectiveness regardless of culture? Based on this study, yes. Does this positive relationship work the same way, regardless of culture? Based on this study, no. We found that those with more traditional cultural values see a weaker link between transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness compared to those with less traditional cultural values. The obvious next step is to study other possible different moderating cultural values using different samples. It is not really enough to know if transformational leadership works across cultures. Now, we need to gain a better understanding of how, when and why it works. This study is a start in this direction.

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APPENDIX

Traditionality: Hierarchy, respect for authority

1. The chief government official is like the head of a household. The citizen should obey his decisions on all matters.
2. The best way to avoid mistakes is to follow the instructions of senior persons.
3. Before marriage, a woman should subordinate herself to her father. After marriage, to her husband.
4. When people are in dispute, they should ask the most senior person to decide who is right.
5. Those who are respected by parents should be respected by children.

TABLE 1
CFA Factor Analysis for the Transformational Leadership Scale (N=547)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Group Goals						
Encourages employees to be “team players”	.75					
Fosters collaboration among work groups	.77					
Develops a team attitude and spirit among his/her employees	.85					
Gets the group to work together for the same goal	.85					
Individualized Support						
Treats me without considering my personal feelings (R)		.74				
Acts without considering my feelings (R)		.78				
Shows respect for my personal feelings		-.85				
Behaves in a manner that is thoughtful of my personal needs		-.84				
Appropriate Role Model						
Leads by “doing” rather than simply by “telling”			.70			
Leads by example			.83			
Provides a good model to follow			.88			
Intellectual Stimulation						
Has ideas that have forced me to rethink some of my own ideas				.74		
Has provided me with new ways of looking at things that used to be a puzzle for me				.77		
Has stimulated me to think about old problems in new ways				.84		
High Performance Expectations						
Insists on only the best performance					.83	
Will not settle for second best					.79	
Shows us that he/she expects a lot from us					.54	
Articulating a Vision						
Is always seeking new opportunities for the unit/department/organization						.68
Paints an interesting picture of the future for our group						.73
Is able to get others committed to his/her dream of the future						.79
Inspires others with his/her plans for the future						.80
Has a clear understanding of where we are going						.71
$\chi^2 = 611.24$ $df = 194$ $GFI = .91$ $AGFI = .88$ $CFI = .94$ $RMSEA = .06$						

TABLE 2
 Goodness of Fit of the Leadership Model Across Samples
 (Sample 1 = 161, Sample 2 = 386)

Hypothesis Description	X ²	df	X ² /df	GFI
1. Equal number of factors	854.48	388	2.20	.89
2. Equal number of factors, item loadings	878.41	404	2.17	.89
3. Equal number of factors, item loadings, measurement error	1035.78	426	2.43	.88
4. Equal number of factors, item loadings, measurement error, and factor correlations	1061.98	447	2.38	.88

Note: The factors were tested as orthogonal.

TABLE 3
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations^a

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Time supervisors know manager	75.57	58.38	--											
2. Time supervisors work with manager	54.56	54.38	.77**	--										
3. Time subordinates know manager	49.82	55.52	.18**	.19**	--									
4. Time subordinates work with manager	30.36	35.54	.13**	.16**	.55**	--								
5. Traditionality	2.56	1.25	.17**	.09	.11*	.07	(.81) ^a							
6. Group goals	5.48	1.10	.03	.03	-.08	-.06	-.03	(.88)						
7. Individualized support	5.39	1.23	-.06	-.08	-.08	-.09	-.07	.64**	(.88)					
8. Appropriate role model	5.27	1.27	.08	.09	-.04	-.02	-.05	.69**	.59**	(.85)				
9. Intellectual stimulation	5.15	1.12	.11*	.12*	.04	.03	-.08	.50**	.39**	.55**	(.83)			
10. High performance expectations	5.29	1.05	-.10*	-.05	.01	-.00	.01	.48**	.22**	.45**	.35**	(.75)		
11. Articulating a vision	5.21	1.11	.03	.00	-.05	-.08	-.05	.67**	.48**	.70**	.64**	.55**	(.86)	
12. Effectiveness	5.33	.93	.07	.07	-.06	-.05	.00	.20**	.12**	.21**	.16**	.13**	.28**	(.86)

^aNumbers in parentheses are reliability measures (Cronbach's alpha)

*p < .05

**p < .01

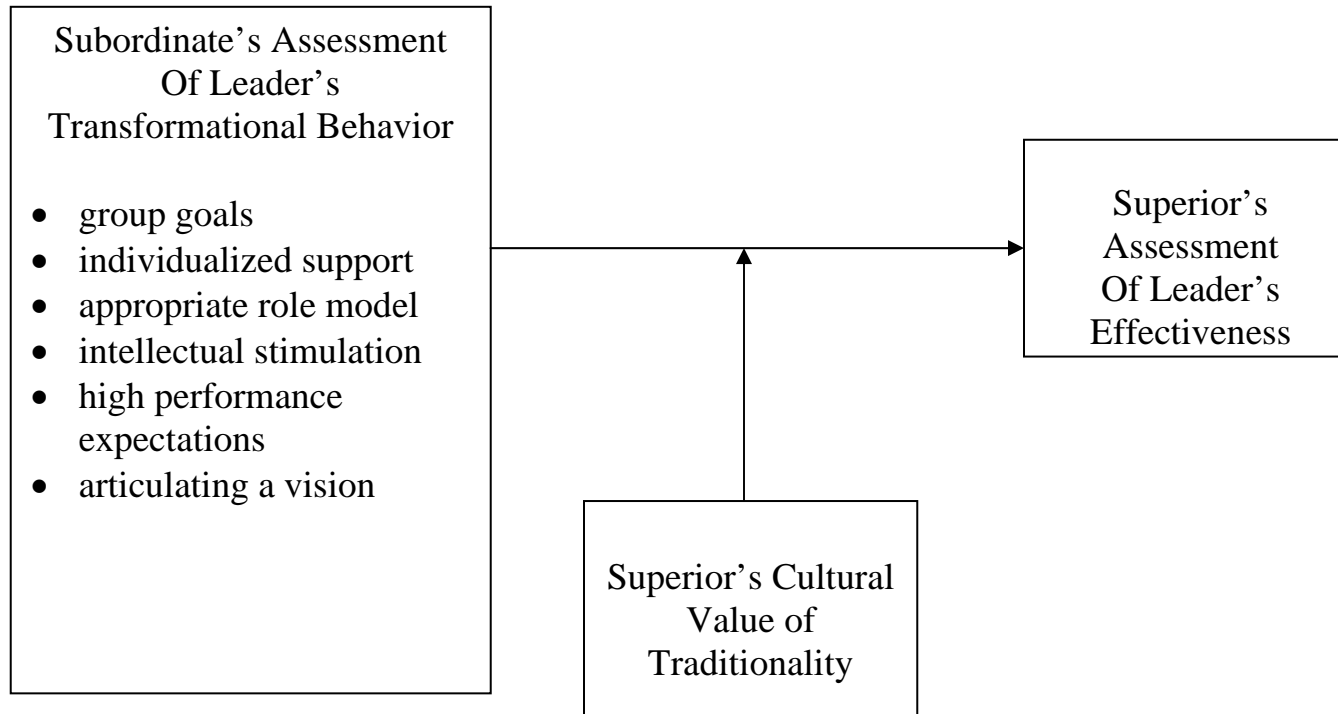
TABLE 4
Summary of Moderated Regression Analyses -Traditionality and Leadership Effectiveness

Independent Variables	Leadership Effectiveness												
		Group Goals		Individualized Support		Role Model		Intellectual Stimulation		High Performance		Vision	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 2	Model 3	Model 2	Model 3	Model 2	Model 3	Model 2	Model 3	Model 2	Model 3
Controls:													
Sample	.15**	.15**	.15**	.14**	.14**	.12**	.12**	.14**	.14**	.14**	.13**	.13**	.13**
Time supervisors know manager	.11	.11	.10	.11	.11	.10	.09	.10	.10	.13	.13	.08	.08
Time supervisors work with manager	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.00	-.00	-.03	-.03	-.02	-.02	-.03	-.04	.00	-.00
Time subordinates know manager	-.04	-.04	-.04	-.04	-.04	-.03	-.04	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.05
Time subordinates work for manager	-.06	-.05	-.03	-.05	-.06	-.05	-.03	-.06	-.05	.05	-.03	.02	.01
Main Effects:													
Group Goals		.19**	.32**										
Individualized Support				.10 ⁺	.05								
Role Model						.22**	.44**						
Intellectual Stimulation								.14**	.31**				
High Performance Expectations										.17**	.42**		
Vision												.32**	.52**
Traditionality		.02	.33	.01	-.09	.02	.47*	.03	.39 ⁺	.01	.66**	.03	.54*
Interactions:													
Group Goals x Traditionality			-.34										
Support x Traditionality					.12								
Model x Traditionality							-.50*						
Stimulation x Traditionality									-.40 ⁺				
Expectations x Traditionality											-.69**		
Vision x Traditionality													-.53*
Overall Model F:	2.41*	3.69**	3.42**	2.23*	1.98*	4.29**	4.40**	2.76**	2.78**	3.19**	3.59**	7.74**	7.35**
Adjusted R-Square	.02	.05	.05	.02	.02	.06	.07	.03	.04	.04	.05	.12	.12

^aEntries are standardized regression coefficients.

⁺ p < .10; * p < 0.05; ** p < .01

FIGURE 1
A Visual Representation of the Research Model



Sidebar – Traditionality Matters article

The data for this article were drawn from a larger research project investigating leadership effectiveness in the U.S. and Asia. Gretchen Spreitzer, Kimberly Perttula and Katherine Xin began this project when Gretchen and Katherine were on the faculty at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business and when Kimberly was a Ph.D. student there.

The data were collected in 1998 when one author was teaching in custom executive education programs around the world on issues pertaining to global leadership development. As part of her diagnosis of the leaders who took part in the programs, she collected 360 degree data about them for a variety of key stakeholders. The data not only were used to further the pedagogical goals of the programs but also provided a rich environment for research on leadership. Because of the strong level of trust this member of our research team was able to build with these companies, she was able to collect a diverse array of data related to leadership development.

The U.S. Company. This company is a leading global automobile company. The data were collected from respondents who were part of their North American subsidiary based in Southern California. Wholly owned by the global corporation, the subsidiary handles all U.S. sales and North American manufacturing companies. Direct functions include: corporate communications; investor relations; corporate advertising; federal government, industry and regulatory affairs; market, economic and auto industry research; the company's USA Foundation; corporate planning, diversity and business activities of the U.S. The purpose of its custom leadership development program was to help its middle managers to become more effective in a global organization.

The Taiwanese Company. This company is a leading global IT company that makes desktops, laptops, tablet computers, servers, and monitors. The company was in a high growth trajectory at the time and employed more than 7,000 people who manufactured, marketed, and supported dealers and distributors in over 100 countries. Since the data were collected, the company has outsourced its manufacturing capacity to others. The purpose of its custom leadership development program was to develop its middle managers to become more global in their leadership perspective.