The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership, Leader Effectiveness, and Turnover Intentions: Do Subordinate Gender Differences Exist?

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The aim of this study was to examine gender differences among subordinates in the strength of relationships between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. The authors drew from various theoretical bases, including transformational leadership theory, social role theory, and role congruity theory, to undergird the research. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I male and female assistant coaches of women's basketball, softball, and volleyball teams ($N = 294$) responded to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and turnover intention questionnaire. Structural equation modeling (*SEM*) revealed a noteworthy gender difference in the strength of relationship between leader effectiveness and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. Contributions and implications are discussed.

Keywords: leadership, effectiveness, intercollegiate athletics, turnover

Voluntary turnover represents the process of an individual making the decision to stay or leave an organization (McPherson, 1976). It can be costly (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000), dysfunctional, and detrimental (Mobley, 1982) to organizations in all industry sectors, sport included. In addition, as more people voluntarily leave their place of employment, the performance of that entity is likely to decline

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(Abassi & Hollman, 2000; Hill, 2009; Salomo & Teichmann, 2000; Shaw, Gupta, & Delery, 2005; White, Persad, & Gee, 2007).

Given its importance to organizational outcomes, scholars have investigated ways in which voluntary organizational turnover can be mitigated. One avenue for reducing turnover could be leadership. The limited literature suggests that effective leaders are a key factor in reducing voluntary turnover (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Cicero, Pierro, & van Knippenberg, 2010). In a broader sense, effective leadership is a central concern for organizations, scholars, and practitioners (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). For the past 50 years, a vast body of literature has focused on the evolution of leadership paradigms (Higgs, 2003). Recently, transformational and transactional leadership behaviors have been the focus of managerial literature (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Yukl, 2006) and have garnered attention among sport scholars as well (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Choi, Sagas, Park, & Cunningham, 2007; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996; Wells & Welty Peachey, 2011; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012).

Within the sport context, scholars have investigated the relationship between leadership behaviors and organizational outcomes (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Choi et al., 2007; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996; Wells & Welty Peachey, 2011; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012), as well as antecedents and consequences of turnover intentions (Cunningham & Sagas, 2003; Cunningham & Sagas, 2004; Hill, 2009; Sagas & Ashley, 2001). Results from this work suggest perceived leader effectiveness is impacted by leader behaviors (e.g., Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012), and perceived leader effectiveness can in turn influence voluntary turnover intentions (Bycio et al., 1995; Cicero et al., 2010). However, the majority of research on leadership styles have focused on the gender of the manager alone (Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, & Keiser, 2012), but differences between male and female subordinates in the strength of these relationships has gone otherwise unexplored. It may be that transformational leadership, for instance, influences perceptions of leader effectiveness for one gender more than the other, or that male and female subordinates differ in how leader effectiveness influences their turnover intentions.

These compelling questions are important to understand regardless of cultural context, as mitigating voluntary turnover is a central concern of many sport organizations worldwide (Wells & Welty Peachey, 2011). To gain insight into gender differences with regards to the relationship between leadership and turnover intentions in sport, we positioned this study within the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I context in the U.S. The aim of this study was to examine whether there was a gender difference among subordinates in the strength of the relationships between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. To explore this topic, we drew from various theoretical perspectives, including transformational leadership theory, social role theory, and role congruity theory, to suggest that (a) transformational leadership will be positively related to perceived leader effectiveness and (b) the relationship between leader effectiveness and turnover intentions will be contingent upon the gender of the subordinates.

Transformational Leadership

Initially conceptualized by Burns (1978) and later tailored by Bass (1985, 1990), transactional and transformational leadership has gained traction among sport and management scholars (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Doherty, 1997; Duehr & Bono,

2006; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Wells & Welty Peachey, 2011; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012). Transactional leadership is aligned with more classical views of leadership, whereas transformational leadership is considered a new approach to leadership theory (Doherty, 1997), where leaders recognize the higher order needs of subordinates (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leaders transcend the exchange-based process of transactional leaders by engaging followers' values (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders have been known to use optimism and commitment to inspire and motivate their followers (Duehr & Bono, 2006). According to Bass (1985, 1998), transformational leaders tend to the needs of their followers, connect performance goals to employee values, and challenge traditional practices. Thus, transformational leadership is the process of "influencing major change in the attitudes and assumptions of organization members and building commitment for the organization's mission or objectives" (Yukl, 1989, p. 204). Transformational leaders are inherently social and modify their behaviors according to the environment or dynamic interactions with followers (Bass, 1985). Consequently, they influence followers by engaging higher-order needs, encouraging goals of the team, and focusing on the values of the task by earning respect, trust, and admiration from followers (Bass, 1985). Four distinct yet interrelated types of behavior define transformational leadership: idealized influence or charisma—providing vision and instilling pride, trust, and respect; individual consideration—giving personal attention and treating each employee individually; inspirational motivation—communicating high expectations and using symbols to focus efforts; and intellectual stimulation—promoting intelligence and careful problem solving (Bass, 1985). Through these four behaviors, transformational leaders inspire and encourage followers to use novel perspectives and solutions to problem solve.

In general, transformational leadership is associated with more positive organizational outcomes than is transactional leadership. For example, Judge and Piccolo's (2004) meta-analysis revealed positive effects of transformational leadership behavior on the outcomes of employee attitude, employee motivation, performance, and leader effectiveness. Since this meta-analysis, other business management research has associated transformational leadership with higher work team effectiveness, leader effectiveness, and performance (Polychroniou, 2009; Wang & Huang, 2009), as well as with reducing voluntary turnover intentions (Tse & Lam, 2008).

Within the U.S. intercollegiate sport context, transformational leadership is associated with perceived extra effort among NCAA Division I, II, and III athletic directors (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012). Transformational leadership of the athletic director in the U.S. and Canadian intercollegiate contexts also has positive effects on affective organizational commitment and perceived leader effectiveness (Choi et al., 2007; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996, Kent & Chelladurai, 2001). Transformational leadership is related to Canadian intercollegiate athletes' holistic development and team success (Vallee & Bloom, 2005); perceptions of coaches' effectiveness and extra effort among martial arts athletes (Rowold, 2006); task and social cohesion in frisbee club athletes (Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2008).

Although the aforementioned research has been instrumental in extending scholarship on leadership, and some sport management work has examined the influence of leader gender on various outcome variables (Burton & Peachey, 2009;

Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012; Wells & Welty Peachey, 2011), what appears to be missing is a thorough examination of the differences between female and male subordinates as related to the relationships between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary turnover intentions. Acknowledging this need, the current study addresses this gap in our empirical and conceptual understanding.

Social Role Theory and Role Congruity Theory

To examine whether there is a gender difference among subordinates in the strength of the relationships between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions, we drew from social role theory and role congruity theory (Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Social role theory suggests that there are qualities and behavioral tendencies believed to be desirable for each gender, as well as expectations as to which roles males and females should occupy (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Women's leadership skills have been described through communal characteristics such as affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturing, and gentle (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). In contrast, men have been described by agentic characteristics such as aggressive, dominant, forceful, self-confident, and self-sufficient (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2000). Thus, prescriptive gender role stereotypes suggest that females should exhibit more communal characteristics and roles, while males may have more agentic qualities (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Role Congruity Theory Emerged From Social Role Theory and Holds:

> Female gender role and leadership roles leads to 2 forms of prejudice: (a) perceiving women less favorably than men as potential occupants of leadership roles and (b) evaluating behavior that fulfills the prescriptions of a leader role less favorably when it is enacted by a woman (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 573).

As such, transformational leaders have been noted to be more congruent with stereotypical feminine gender roles, while transactional leaders have been associated with stereotypical masculine gender roles (Powell, Butterfield, & Bartol, 2008). Specifically in the Canadian intercollegiate context, female leaders have been recognized as demonstrating more transformational leadership behaviors than males (Doherty, 1997). Moreover, in the U.S. business setting, male leaders have been identified as demonstrating more transactional leadership behaviors (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen's (2003) meta-analysis on gender differences in leadership behaviors revealed females were rated higher than their male counterparts on the majority of transformational leadership dimensions.

Leader effectiveness is realized through the manifestation of both feminine and masculine traits (Duehr & Bono, 2006; Eagly, 2007). While researchers female and male subordinates rate transformational leaders more effective than transactional leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Powell et al., 2008), overall, female leaders are perceived as more effective when using communal characteristics and acting as transformational leaders (Duehr & Bono, 2006; Eagly & Carli, 2003). Females might also have a leadership advantage over males as a result of demonstrating more transformational leadership behaviors, which are positively associated with organizational effectiveness (Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Given that females exhibit more transformational leadership behaviors, it stands to reason that subordinates will respond better to transformational leadership displayed by female leaders, as these behaviors will resonate with their socially prescribed roles of being communal (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Furthermore, given male leaders exhibit more transactional leadership behaviors, but were not perceived as more effective due to the transactional leadership style (Burton & Welty Peachey, 2009; Powell et al., 2008), a subordinate would value relationship-building and the nurturing and care that a transformational leader provides, satisfying communal orientation and social expectations, rather than transactional leadership. If this is the case, then it seems as though the relationship between transformational leadership and perceived leader effectiveness may mitigate the effect of role congruity theory. Thus, we posit the following:

Hypothesis 1:

Transformational leadership will be positively related to perceptions of leader effectiveness among all subordinates, regardless of gender.

It must be noted that we focus on subordinate gender in this study, rather than leader gender. As mentioned previously, females exhibit more transformational leadership behaviors, and males more transactional leadership behaviors (Doherty, 1997; Eagly & Carli, 2003). Further, gender of the leader does not influence outcomes such as extra effort and perceived leader effectiveness (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Welty Peachey & Burton, 2011, 2012). Thus, in the current study, we single out subordinate gender to contribute to the literature over and above these previous studies.

Organizational Turnover

With an increasing knowledge-based economy, organizations that retain human resources may be at an advantage over those that cannot (Felps et al., 2009). Indeed, numerous studies have shown the negative effects of turnover on performance, financial costs, morale, and efficiencies (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000; Shaw et al., 2005; Watrous, Huffman, & Pritchard, 2006). Furthermore, coaching successions in collegiate basketball in the U.S. (Fizel & D'Itri, 1996), midseason coaching successions in the National Hockey League in the U.S. (White et al., 2007), out-of-season coaching successions in the English Premier League (Audas, Dobson, & Goddard, 2002) as well as managerial successions in the German Premier Soccer League (Salomo & Teichmann, 2000) all have negative effects on organizational performance.

Whether this turnover has been categorized as involuntary or voluntary, or as dysfunctional or functional (Watrous et al., 2006), damaging effects on organizations have been revealed. The most detrimental turnover to an organization is voluntary turnover (Mobley, 1982). Since voluntary organizational turnover represents a well-performing employee vacating her or his position by choice, not only does the employee depart the organization, but so does the associated knowledge and experience, which can have deleterious effects for the organization.

Rather than examine turnover, this study investigated turnover intentions. When an employee intends to leave an organization, she or he goes through a cognitive

process of thinking to quit, planning to leave the job, and desiring to leave the job (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). Since voluntary turnover intentions have been regarded as a direct proxy of actual turnover (Lee & Mowday, 1987; Mobley, 1982; Mowday, Koberg, & McArthur, 1984; Rosser & Townsend, 2006), there are advantages to studying turnover intentions rather than actual turnover. Oftentimes it is difficult to gain access to and obtain accurate information about former employees; thereby highlighting the importance of querying employees before their departure (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004). In addition, based upon feedback from research, organizations still have a chance to institute changes that may influence their employees' turnover intentions (Dalessio, Silverman, & Schuck, 1986).

A number of predictors, including the presence of effective leaders (Bycio et al., 1995; Cicero et al., 2010), job satisfaction (Griffith, 2004), and affective occupational commitment (Cunningham, Sagas, & Ashley, 2001) are negatively related to turnover intentions. Conversely, negative work experiences (Cunningham & Sagas, 2003), as well as ethnic and tenure diversity (Cunningham & Sagas, 2004), have the potential to positively influenced turnover intentions.

The findings regarding turnover differences between women and men are mixed. Whether voluntary or involuntary, Sicherman (1996) found women to have higher turnover rates than men. While turnover research has traditionally suggested that women, on average, have higher turnover rates when compared with men (Lyness & Judiesch, 2001; Son, Joshi, & Roh, 2012; Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1996; Weisberg & Kirschenbaum, 1993), more recent research in the public sector (Moynihan & Landuyt, 2008) and at the management level (Lyness & Judiesch, 2001) points to an opposite trends.

While the leadership style, social role theory, and role congruity theory literatures (Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly & Karau, 2002) described earlier suggest supervisor and subordinate gender impact the work lives of employees and turnover, the literature is complex (Grissom et al., 2012). Although both male and female subordinates value stereotypical feminine leadership styles (i.e., transformational; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Riger, 1993), there is also some evidence to suggest subordinates expect leaders to be males and use more agentic characteristics (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2000). As a result, followers will seek to align these social role stereotypes with masculine qualities, which could cause subordinates of both genders to systematically be less willing to work for a leader with more masculine qualities (Grissom et al., 2012; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989). Nonetheless, most scholars argue that women and men are less likely to leave an organization when their supervisor adopts a feminine leadership style (Grissom et al., 2012). According to Grissom et al. (2012), stereotypical leadership beliefs remain consistent among men, but are no longer held by women. Consequently, the varying aforementioned literature on voluntary organizational turnover intentions and gender led us to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2:

A significant subordinate gender difference will exist in the relationship between perceptions of leader effectiveness and voluntary organizational turnover intentions.

The relationships between the hypotheses are depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 — Hypothesized Path

Method

Participants

We collected data from 294 NCAA Division I basketball, softball, and volleyball assistant coaches. Most of the participants were female ($n = 193$, 65.6%), while the rest identified as male ($n = 101$, 34.5%). On average, the organizational tenure of assistant coaches was four years ($SD = 3.19$) and the age of assistant coaches was 33 years ($SD = 8.09$). The majority of respondents identified themselves as White ($n = 217$, 73.8%) or African American ($n = 41$, 13.9%).

Measures

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ—Form 5×, Bass & Avolio, 2000) was used to evaluate head coach's leadership behavior and perceived leader effectiveness on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*frequently, if not always*). Transformational leadership was categorized into the following groups: idealized influence-attributes, inspirational motivation, idealized influence-behavior, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. For example, the statement "Articulates a compelling vision of the future" was a measure of the participants' perception of their head coach's inspirational motivation. Due to the highly correlated MLQ transformational subscale scores, an average transformational leadership score was calculated. Participants also rated three perceived leader effectiveness (e.g., is effective in meeting subordinates' job-related needs) items, which had an acceptable reliability estimate ($\alpha = .86$).

In addition, similar to previous turnover intention studies in sport (Cunningham, 2006; Cunningham, 2007; Wells & Welty Peachey, 2011), a three-item scale was used to measure voluntary organizational turnover intentions. An example item was "I will try to leave this coaching staff within the next year." The voluntary organizational turnover measure had an acceptable reliability estimate ($\alpha = .96$).

Procedures

Since 57.1% of all women's team paid assistant coaches in the NCAA are female (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012), we narrowed our study to focus on teams with the most equally distributed gender of head and assistant coaches, which were NCAA

Division I women's basketball (65.2% women head coaches), softball (60% women head coaches), and volleyball (45.8% women head coaches) teams. Theoretically, this provided the best opportunity to assess gender differences among the strength of the variables. To access NCAA Division I women's basketball, softball, and volleyball collegiate assistant coaches, we collected e-mail addresses from the current websites of NCAA Division I institutions. Once Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted, we sent an initial e-mail invitation to the NCAA Division I assistant coaches to inform them about an upcoming survey and to recruit them to participate. Two days following the invitation the online survey was released. Then once a week over a two-week period a reminder e-mail was delivered to nonrespondents through the web-based survey tool, Qualtrics. While participants remained anonymous, Qualitrics does have the ability to track respondents and nonrespondents through the survey link provided in the e-mail invitation. A total of 1,268 NCAA Division I basketball, softball, and volleyball female and male assistant coaches were recruited to participate in this study. Of the 1,268 participants recruited, 294 ($N = 294$) responded for a response rate of 23.2%.

To compare early and late responders analysis of variance (ANOVA) was administered. No significant differences were found between the respondents.

Given the low response rate, we took two steps to consider whether nonresponse bias was a problem. First, we compared early and late responses, as late responders are likely to have similar characteristics as nonresponders. With this reasoning, differences between early and late responders would suggest nonresponse bias is an issue (Dooley & Lindner, 2003). An analysis of variance indicated this was not the case. We also compared the demographics of our sample to those in other reports. The representation of women (65.6%) and men (34.5%) in our sample is representative of the gender distribution of Division I assistant coaches of women's teams (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). In addition, the racial distribution of our sample closely mirrored those reported in previous research (Cunningham & Sagas, 2003; Sagas, Cunningham, & Pastore, 2006). Collectively, these data suggest that while our response rate was low, questions related to the representativeness of the sample are not a primary concern.

Results

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 20.0 as well as Muthen & Muthen's Mplus Version 6. To investigate the hypothesized relationships between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions, multigroup structural equation modeling (*SEM*) was employed. First, a baseline model without any constraints on the groups was performed. Then, equality constraints were conducted across the two samples and chi-square difference tests assessed the differences on the parameters of the models (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Byrne, 2012).

Descriptive statistics (see Table 1) were computed for each of the variables, and Mplus was used to examine differences by gender of the participant. Before analyzing the data, preliminary analyses tested for normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity to make certain violations did not occur and no violations were found.

Table 1   Means and Standard Deviations (*SD*) of the Variables by Participant Gender

	Participant Gender	Means (*SD*)
1. Transformational Leadership	Female	2.63 (0.81)
	Male	2.62 (0.91)
2. Leadership Effectiveness	Female	2.63 (0.97)
	Male	2.66 (0.73)
3. Voluntary Organizational Turnover Intentions	Female	1.11 (1.28)
	Male	1.43 (1.45)

Note. A Likert-type scale ranging from 4 = frequently, if not always to 0 = not at all was used to measure all variables.

Model Fit Indices

To indicate a good model, Hu and Bentler (1998) suggest cut-off values less than 0.06 for Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) greater than 0.95. First, the measurement model performed well: $\chi^2/df = 2.16$; RMSEA = 0.05; Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = 0.06; CFI = 0.95, and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.94. Each of the estimated loadings was significant. In addition, the baseline (without any constraints among the groups) met good model fit values: $\chi^2/df = 1.66$; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.07; CFI = 0.94; and TLI = 0.93. Next, a structural invariance model (Byrne, 2012) was conducted. This constraint model met the marginal model fit values: $\chi^2/df = 1.26$; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.07; CFI = 0.94; and TLI = 0.94.

Model

Hypothesis 1, which stated transformational leadership will be positively related to perceptions of leader effectiveness among all subordinates, regardless of gender (see Figure 2; Males: $\beta = 0.77$, $p < .05$; Females: $\beta = 0.78$, $p < .05$), did not reveal a statistically significant χ^2 difference test (ΔMLM χ^2 (145) = 171.59, $p > .05$). Thus, this hypothesis was supported.

In support of Hypothesis 2, which stated a significant subordinate gender difference will exist in the relationship between perceptions of leader effectiveness and voluntary organizational turnover intentions, male subordinates perceived leader effectiveness to be more negatively related to voluntary organizational turnover intentions than female subordinates (see Figure 2; Males: $\beta = -0.57$, $p < .05$; Females: $\beta = -0.47$, $p < .05$), and the c^2 difference test revealed significant differences between males and females (ΔMLM χ^2 (145) = 177.59, $p < .05$).
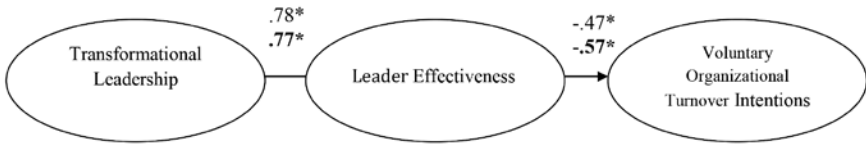
Figure 2 — Results of gender differences between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. *Note.* *Significant at the 0.05 level. Male assistant coach results are bold and listed second.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine if there were gender differences in the strength of the relationships between transformational leadership, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. These are areas not examined in previous research from the perspective of subordinate gender differences. Our first hypothesis, which stated that transformational leadership will be more positively related to perceptions of leader effectiveness among all subordinates, regardless of gender, was supported. This finding is important and extends previous leader effectiveness literature (Bass, 1997; Bycio et al., 1995) by demonstrating that transformational leadership is positively associated with perceptions of leader effectiveness, irrespective of gender.

Given these findings, we submit it is possible that transformational leadership may help mitigate the effects role congruity theory (Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Perhaps the highly competitive environment of NCAA Division I athletics requires both communal and agentic characteristics to achieve organizational objectives and field competitive teams. The unique nature of sport might also make these effects more salient. Sport teams require goal- and task-orientation and coordination in the pursuit of winning and common objectives, just like in other business environments, but what could be different is that the sport team context requires a high degree of communal and relational foci as well, to get teammates to work together effectively. This relational aspect undergirding interdependent actions and behaviors of teammates could be more pronounced in the sport setting than in other business environments, due to the amount and nature of coordination and interdependence that is required to achieve objectives. Both female and male subordinates in intercollegiate sport, and other sport contexts, may recognize that the transformational qualities of a leader are necessary to achieve performance success. As such, both female and male subordinates could equally perceive a transformational leader to be effective.

Consistent with our expectations, we observed that gender moderated the relationship between perceptions of leader effectiveness and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. This finding reinforces previous studies that suggest perceived leader effectiveness influences voluntary turnover intentions (Bycio et al., 1995; Cicero et al., 2010). Importantly though, our work extends the understanding of how gender is related to perceptions of leader effectiveness and voluntary

organizational turnover intentions. Although NCAA Division I athletics is a highly competitive sport environment where both female and male subordinates value the ability of a leader to achieve organizational objectives and field competitive teams, as we argue, and following social role and role congruity theories (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly et al., 2000), female subordinates may use a holistic approach inclusive of relationships and communal aspects of the organization with regards to their turnover decisions. Male subordinates, on the other hand, could equate socially prescribed roles of aggressive and forceful decision-making with leader effectiveness, and if a leader is not perceived as being effective, the male subordinate may wish to leave to align with a leader perceived to have a better chance of obtaining organizational outcomes, or in this case, winning. However, it is important to note that male subordinates also valued transformational leadership and rated transformational leaders as effective. This is encouraging, as it shows that despite an agentic orientation for males, transformational leadership is also valued, although perhaps not enough to prevent turnover if the leader is not perceived as being effective.

Implications

Theoretically, we have demonstrated that a gender difference exists in the strength of the relationship between perceived leader effectiveness and voluntary turnover intentions. This is an important contribution to the leadership and turnover literatures, as the differences between female and male subordinates with regards to these variables have not been previously examined. Thus, to examine prevailing gender structures and better understand leadership in sport settings (Shaw & Frisby, 2006), this model of leadership and turnover in sport accounted for potential gender differences, not only of leaders, but also of followers. Given that transformational leadership is perceived to be more effective in achieving organizational outcomes in this context, continued work is needed to understand why women are excluded from leadership positions, especially in intercollegiate athletics, if they do indeed exhibit more transformational leadership behaviors (Eagly, 2007).

From a practical standpoint, athletic directors and hiring managers should consider hiring qualified head coaches and other sport managers with both feminine and masculine traits to successfully manage diverse staffs (Duehr & Bono, 2006; Eagly, 2007), and who demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors to increase leader effectiveness, as well as mitigate turnover intentions. Specifically in a team or interdependent environment, hiring managers should identify and recruit leaders with balanced agentic and communal qualities to create collaborative, competitive, and successful teams. Furthermore, coaches and managers should foster healthy working conditions and monitor the effectiveness of organizational and team leadership to reduce voluntary turnover.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the results of this research add to the literature there are limitations to our study. To begin, there are other explanatory variables which may contribute to the voluntary organizational turnover intentions of assistant coaches that we did not assess, such as pursuing a head coaching position or family-work conflict. However, we did follow other sport scholars (Cunningham & Sagas, 2003; Cunningham &

Sagas, 2004; Hill, 2009; Sagas & Ashley, 2001) who examined voluntary turnover intentions in sport, but further research should attempt to tease out additional explanatory factors. Further, the sports that we chose were all women's team sports, where the proportion of women and men in leadership positions are relatively comparable (see Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). Lastly, the timing of data collection may have influenced assistant coaches' perceptions of viable job opportunities. As Wells and Welty Peachey (2011) noted, the timing variance of seasons (i.e., basketball in winter, softball in the spring, and volleyball in the fall) impacts perspectives of feasible job opportunities.

While we have extended the literature and created a comparison, there is still a need to expand the literature by conducting similar research on gender differences in the strength of the relationships between leadership behaviors, leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions in other sport settings, such as professional, youth, community, and nonprofit sport. Perhaps findings will differ based upon sport context. In particular, less competitive sport environments could yield different results than the highly competitive Division I context of our study. In addition to pursuit of a head coaching position or family-work conflict, other explanatory variables such as leader member exchange and organizational commitment (Tse & Lam, 2008) are not included in our path, but should be examined in future research. Finally, there may be gender differences in the strength of the relationships between other leadership behaviors (e.g., transactional, servant, or authentic leadership) and outcome variables that would be worthwhile investigating, such as trust in the leader, satisfaction, withdrawal behaviors (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001), job search behaviors (Bretz, Boudreau, & Judge, 1994), as well as organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Conclusion

As noted, the aim of this study was to examine whether there was a gender difference among subordinates in the strength of the relationships between transformational leadership, perceived leader effectiveness, and voluntary organizational turnover intentions. This study built upon previous literature by comparing female and male antecedents to voluntary organizational turnover intentions of assistant coaches in NCAA collegiate sports. An important theoretical contribution was the comparison models, which revealed male assistant coaches, more than their female counterparts, rated leader effectiveness to be more negatively related to voluntary organizational turnover intentions.

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