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The mission of the *JVBL* is to promote ethical and moral leadership and behavior by serving as a forum for ideas and the sharing of "best practices." It serves as a resource for business and institutional leaders, educators, and students concerned about values-based leadership. The *JVBL* defines values-based leadership to include topics involving ethics in leadership, moral considerations in business decision-making, stewardship of our natural environment, and spirituality as a source of motivation. The Journal strives to publish articles that are intellectually rigorous yet of practical use to leaders, teachers, and entrepreneurs. In this way, the *JVBL* serves as a high quality, international journal focused on converging the practical, theoretical, and applicable ideas and experiences of scholars and practitioners. The *JVBL* provides leaders with a tool of ongoing self-critique and development, teachers with a resource of pedagogical support in instructing values-based leadership to their students, and entrepreneurs with examples of conscientious decision-making to be emulated within their own business environs.

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The *JVBL* invites you to submit manuscripts for review and possible publication. The *JVBL* is dedicated to supporting people who seek to create more ethically and socially-responsive organizations through leadership and education. The Journal publishes articles that provide knowledge that is intellectually well-developed and useful in practice. The *JVBL* is a peer-reviewed journal available in both electronic and print fora (fully digital with print-on-demand options beginning 01/01/15). The readership includes business leaders, government representatives, academics, and students interested in the study and analysis of critical issues affecting the practice of values-based leadership. The *JVBL* is dedicated to publishing articles related to:

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2. Creating ethical, values-based organizations;
3. Balancing the concerns of stakeholders, consumers, labor and management, and the environment; and
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...guest editorial

LYING IN THE MILITARY: AN EXAMINATION OF ROOT CAUSES

– Paul S. Grossgold, Captain, U.S Navy (retired)

"A Cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do."

The words of this simple honor code are emblazoned on walls and outside buildings at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Similar codes or honor concepts that concisely capture the essence of the core value of personal character exist at each of the nation's service academies. This code is as old as the academies themselves. For well over two hundred years, America's professional military officer corps, including prominent leaders like Grant, Pershing, MacArthur, Nimitz, LeMay, Swarzkopf and Petraeus, have all operated under this code or one like it. Given the undeniable fact that many who have sworn to uphold the code have also broken it, it is perhaps time to examine its value and usefulness within the context of the exploration of the root causes of code violations.

In *Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession* (February, 2015) ("The Report"), authors Leonard Wong and Stephen J. Gerras suggest that while there have been displays of dishonesty in the military in the past, there is something different about today's situation. This difference, they submit, is rooted in "ethical numbness" brought on by overwhelming and growing demands that are levied upon operational units by higher headquarters. In the face of ever-growing demands imposed by higher authority–which in combination are impossible to comply with—soldiers will simply fabricate responses to avoid negative repercussions. The authors also mention other factors, such as increased competition among officers vying for dwindling advancement and retention opportunities in a downsizing environment.

The Report's premise that the problem is worse today, primarily due to chronic overtasking, warrants examination. A March 23, 2015 article in *Navy Times* revealed that boot camp recruits are taught to "fudge" physical readiness test scores. According to two junior sailors who were caught doing this at a Navy career development school, they said simply that they had learned to do it in boot camp. The article later suggested that the Recruit Division Commanders had incentive to encourage cheating, as they were evaluated on recruits' test scores. There is no evidence that this blatant honors violation was the result of overtasking.

In the shocking, cheating scandal involving dozens of Air Force nuclear officers in 2014, the systemic dishonesty appeared unrelated to burdensome tasking. The core issue appeared, instead, to be a derivative of a declining sense of mission in the post-Cold War period, during which conventional Air Force programs gained in prestige and budget support at the expense of nuclear programs.

These sad episodes suggest that the issue of lapses in character is more pervasive in the military than many people think. And, it is far more complicated than simply accepting that it derives primarily from a need for expediency in the face of chronic and often perfunctory overtasking. It may well be fair to say, however, that the response to overtasking outlined in the Report is a symptom of the larger problem.

This is not a mere exercise in semantics. If the root cause of rampant dishonesty is, as the Report suggests, primarily a result of too much tasking from upper echelons, then by implication, a dedicated effort on the part of the military services to reduce overtasking will likewise diminish the dishonesty. To say the least, I'm skeptical. While few in uniform would suggest that honesty is not a core value of military service, the more plausible root cause is the painful but obvious truth that for many (but hopefully not most) in uniform, deceit in some circumstances is simply not seen as a breach of personal character.

If that is so, then it is the development of personal character, and not a reduction in tasking, that must be the primary focus. To successfully address such an issue requires immediate, strong, clear, and consistent leadership. In 1991 when the huge financial firm Salomon Brothers was nearly brought down by a bond cheating scandal, Warren Buffett was brought in to right the ship. He went to work immediately to restore the firm's integrity. While testifying at a Congressional hearing, he sent a clear message to Salomon employees: ***"Lose money for the firm and I will be understanding; lose a shred of reputation for the firm and I will be ruthless."***

Translated into military speak, Soldiers, Sailors Airmen, and Marines must understand that failure for the right reasons is acceptable, but violations of trust are unacceptable. That message must not only be clear and consistent, it must also be specific. Personnel must be reminded that as members of the world's finest military, they are expected to uphold values commensurate with their status. Every service does this, but the Marines seem to do it best. The other services would do well to examine why the Marines are so successful.

In addition to ensuring that every person serving understands the core values of his or her service, he/she must also grasp actions that are not permitted. For example, fudging readiness reports for the sake of expediency or because in the judgment of the submitter the reports aren't that important anyway, is a violation of trust and must not be tolerated. Grade inflation on personnel evaluations may keep someone's feelings from being hurt, but the practice undermines the integrity of the system and does a disservice to those who truly deserve the higher grades. These are the types of specific constraints and restraints that must be ingrained and demanded at every level.

The messaging is necessary but not sufficient. It must be reinforced with corrective action that is timely, appropriate to the offense, and transparent, so that everyone may bear witness to the consequences of failures of character. Conversely, individuals who demonstrate the inner courage to bring bad news to light should be thanked and appreciated – publically - for their honesty. Attack the issue, not the messenger.

Each service is dealing with this issue. The Navy, for example, has established the Naval Leadership and Ethics Center, a senior level command dedicated to ***"…instill fundamental tenets of ethical leadership throughout the Navy; develop and guide leaders with a strong abiding sense of responsibility, authority, and accountability; and impart commitment of Navy core values and ethos to sailors."*** Such initiatives are appropriate, but only time will tell whether they are successful at altering the culture at the leadership levels.

In summary, issues of personal character gone amok seem to be pervasive in the military for a wide variety of reasons, only one of which may include chronic overtasking of units by higher authority. While structured training and written policies are important, the primary antidote for this serious problem is bold leadership. While leadership at every level is called for, it is particularly vital for it to start at the top. Senior officer and enlisted leaders must be exemplars of the kind of integrity and personal character demanded of all. Transgressions at those levels must be dealt with immediately and publically.

To conclude, have the honor codes outlived their usefulness? No. They are important and valuable statements of expectations. But they can only be meaningful if they truly guide the actions and behavior of everyone in uniform.

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Authors Gardiner and Tenuto present this case study as a means to identify and explore leadership dilemmas of practicing school administrators and their respective codes of ethics in ethical decision-making. Using data collected in the form of interviews, document analyses, and professional observations with practicing school administrators in public schools, this study demonstrates ways practicing school administrators, faculty preparing administrators, and other business or organizational leaders can invoke ethical decision-making and leadership to attain organizational improvement.

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Culotta, Cutler, and Zheng offer an empirical study addressing non-standardized, poorly-regulated environmentally-friendly claims associated with so many consumer products, especially as an increasing number of consumers are making purchasing decisions based on socially-conscious factors. The authors use their research to explore the relationship between cause-related marketing messages on social media and the true cause alignment of brands by coupling such messages from the Twitter accounts of over 1,000 brands with third-party ratings of each brand as they relate to health, the environment, and social justice.

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Author and scholar William Auxier focuses upon the challenges and benefits of leaders whose backgrounds are diverse, yet who share common themes of moral leadership. His paper both explores the concept of *worldview* and its underlying core values and presents the results of interviews with four business leaders from different countries, each espousing distinct philosophical perspectives. He concludes by identifying, comparing, and contrasting each interviewee's understanding of leadership.

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Niall Hegarty — New York, NY

In order to facilitate the execution of leadership duties, author Negarty draws attention to the need and importance for chief executives to formulate a Leadership Philosophy Statement (LPS) as an aid to guide them in their decision-making processes. Additionally, the author emphasizes that as companies develop and follow mission statements (MS) to foster success, leaders need an underlying moral philosophy. The interconnectedness of organizational mission statements and individual leadership statements is therefore highlighted to demonstrate the importance of linking goals between leader and organization.

Universalism and Utilitarianism: An Evaluation of Two Popular Moral Theories in Business Decision Making

Moral theories remain a topic of interest, not just to moral philosophers, but increasingly in business circles as well, thanks to a tainted reputation that urges more awareness in this regard. Based on the expressed preferences of 163 undergraduate and graduate students of business ethics, this article briefly examines the two most popular theories, Universalism (Kantian) and Utilitarianism (consequentialist), and presents a SWOT analysis of both. Some of the strengths and weaknesses that will be discussed for Universalism are consistency, intension basis, and universalizability, while some of the discussed strengths and weaknesses for Utilitarianism are flexibility, outcome-basis, and lack of consistency. Subsequently, some common factors and discrepancies between the two theories will be discussed. In the conclusive section, some suggestions and recommendations are presented.

Introduction

Moral theories are interesting phenomena. There are overlapping, complementary and contrasting theories: rigid, temperate, and flexible ones and ancient and more contemporary-based ones. Regardless, they all make sense when perceived against certain backgrounds, circumstances, and mindsets. The above may already indicate that moral theories — and therefore the decisions made with these theories as guidelines — can be confusing. It should also be stated that business leaders — especially those who did not attend college — base their moral decisions more on "gut feelings" than anything else. As has been stated by many sources, they may simply be going by the "quick and dirty" moral self-test of asking themselves whether they would mind if their decision made it to the front page of tomorrow's newspaper or if their family would know about it. A third option might be to consider whether they would want their child (or other loved one) to be on the receiving end of this decision.

JOAN MARQUES, PHD, EDD
BURBANK, CALIFORNIA

There are various theories embedded in these quick deliberations: the Golden Rule (which states that we should not do unto others what we would not have done unto ourselves) comes to mind, especially in the last instance. A leader who would not want a loved one to be on the receiving end of her decision has deliberately or reflexively included the notion of not wanting to do unto others what she would not have wanted to be done unto herself (or her loved ones). We can also find a sprinkle of Universalist thinking in this deliberation as placing a loved one into the picture immediately eliminates the use of any party as a mere means toward a selfish end. There are undoubtedly more moral theories to be detected into the above contemplations (e.g., the character-based virtue theory), but in order to remain focused on the purpose of this paper, this should do.

The purpose of this paper is to underscore the complexity of making moral decisions by discussing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of two high-profile theories: Universalism and Utilitarianism. The reason for selecting Universalism and Utilitarianism is explained *infra*. The paper first provides a brief discussion of the two selected moral theories and subsequently analyzes the strengths and weaknesses inherent to each theory. It is then followed by the opportunities and threats they may present. Subsequently, some common factors of — and discrepancies between — the two theories are discussed. In the conclusive section, several suggestions and recommendations are presented.

Why These Two Theories?

Over the course of 6 semesters, the author of this paper, a facilitator of Ethics-based courses for undergraduate and graduate business students, found that, from the 163 students who finished the courses, there was a clear preference for the two theories to be discussed. In the courses, these students were exposed to multiple moral theories and encouraged to research the theory that appealed mostly to them. They were given cases and scenarios to analyze on basis of one or more moral theories of their own choice. At the end of the course, students were asked to list their most preferred moral theory and to explain their reasons behind this choice. While the students' rationales are not reviewed in this article, an overview of the preferences below is presented (*see Table 1* and *Figure 1*).

Moral Philosophy	No. of Students
Utilitarianism	79
Universalism	46
Virtue Ethics	13
Golden rule	11
Ethical Egoism	9
Divine Command theory	5
Total	**163**

Table 1: **Students' Preference for a Moral Theory**

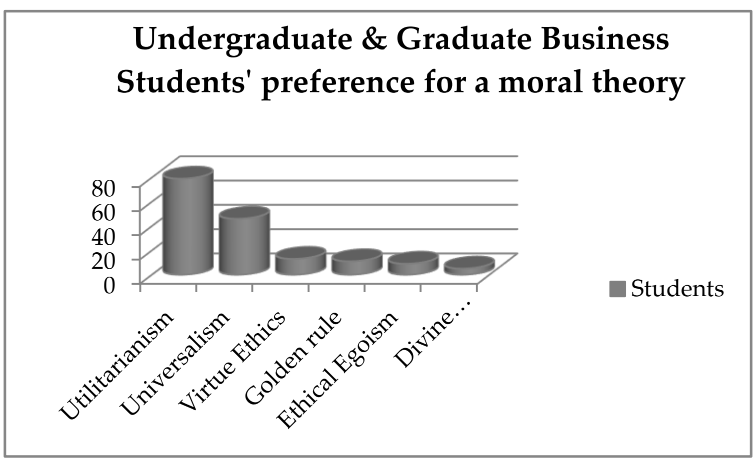


Figure 1: **Students' Preference for a Moral Theory**

Based on the above-listed preferences, the author decided to engage in some deliberations on the two most popular theories as are presented next.

Universalism: A Consistency-Based Moral Approach

The Universalist approach, as it is most frequently discussed in our times, was mainly developed by Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher who lived in the 18th century (1724–1804). Universalism is considered a deontological or duty-based approach (Weiss, 2009). Strict and responsible by nature and through education and upbringing, Kant's philosophy was centered on human autonomy. The notion of autonomy should be interpreted here as formulating our own law on basis of our understanding and the framework of our experiences. Being self-conscious — and thus aware of the reasons behind our actions — is therefore one of the highest principles of Kant's theoretical philosophy (Rolf, 2010). Kant felt that one's moral philosophy should be based on autonomy. In his opinion, there should be one universal moral law which we should independently impose onto ourselves. He named it the "categorical imperative."

The categorical imperative holds that every act we commit should be based on our personal principles or rules. Kant refers to these principles or rules as "maxims." Maxims are basically the "why" behind our actions. Even if we are not always aware of our maxims, they are there to serve the goals we aim to achieve. In order to ensure that our maxims are morally sound, we should always ask ourselves if we would want them to be universal laws. In other words, would our maxim pass the test of universalizability? Within the framework of the categorical imperative, a maxim should only be considered permissible if it could become a universal law. If not, it should be dismissed (Rolf, 2010). "Kant also emphasized the importance of respecting other persons, which has become a key principle in modern Western philosophy. According to Kant, 'Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or that of another, always as an end and never as a means only'" (Johnson, 2012, p. 159). Shining some clarifying light on the above, Weiss (2009) affirms that the categorical imperative consists of two parts: 1) We should only choose for an act if we would want every person on earth, being in the same situation as we currently are, to act in exactly the same way, and 2) We should always act in a way that demonstrates respect to others and treats them as ends onto themselves rather than as means toward an end." A swift and effective way to measure the moral degree of our maxims is to consider ourselves or a dearly loved one at the receiving end of our actions: would we still want to apply them? If not, then we should rethink them.

Most Important Strengths of Universalism

The most obvious strength of Universalism is its consistency. With this moral approach, there is no question about the decision to be made: what is right for one should be right for all. This redacts any emotional considerations and guarantees a clearly-outlined modus operandi.

Another major strength of Universalism is the fact that this moral theory focuses on the intentions of the decision maker, thus making him his own moral agent, and motivating him to practice respect for those he encounters in his decision-making processes. Furthermore, the reflective element in this theory, evoking a deep consideration for the well-being of all parties involved in our actions, exalts it moral magnitude. Yang (2006) makes a strong stance in favor of Kant's categorical imperative (Universalism) and the fact that universality of moral values should exist. Yang affirms, "Moral requirements have a special status in human life. [...] If one who has moral sentiments at all fails to act on them, one will feel guilty, regretful, or ashamed. Moral requirements are the most demanding … standards for conduct, for interpersonal and intercultural criticism" (pp. 127-128).

The foundational guideline in Universalism to make our counterparts an end onto themselves instead of a means toward our ends reminds us somewhat of the Golden Rule, The Golden Rule, however, could be considered as having a narrower focus than the Universalist approach since it only considers immediate stakeholders while Universalism urges us to think in terms of universalizability. Moyaert (2010) shares the opinion that Kant's categorical imperative can be seen as "a further formalization of the golden rule" (p. 455).

The fact that intentions are more important than outcomes in Universalism also emphasizes its noble foundation. While we cannot influence the outcomes of our actions, we can, after all, always embark upon their realization with the best of intentions.

Most Important Weaknesses of Universalism

It is first and foremost the aspect of universalizability that raises concern within the opponents of the Universalist approach: how possible is it, they claim, to consider all people, all nations, all beliefs, and all cultures in every single act we implement? In addition, the equality-based approach, which Universalism proclaims, is an ideal one, but not a very realistic one in today's world. While a good point could be made in favor of ending unfair treatment of those who are already privileged, there is a serious weakness to be detected if we start applying equal treatment when we want to restore an existing imbalance. By utilizing the Universalist approach at all times, we would not be able to correct existing imbalances simply because Universalism does not condone a more favorable approach to anyone — hence, not even to those that are oppressed and subjugated. Similarly, it does not support a less favorable treatment of anyone — hence, not even those that have been unfairly privileged in past centuries.

Contemplating the major moral issue of human rights, Kim (2012) raises an important question by comparing the Divine Command theory, which proposes a Universalist approach based on religious rulings, with Kant's categorical imperative, which proposes this same approach based on autonomy. What makes one more acceptable than the other if they are both aiming for universal application? The fact that non-Muslims become uncomfortable when a Muslim scholar claims that Islam has formulated fundamental rights for all of humanity, and that these rights are granted by Allah, should be a clear indication that there could be opponents to any universal law formulated by any group or individual at any time. "The question here is whether two conflicting justifications that appeal to different foundations of human rights (divine command and autonomy) should strengthen or weaken our confidence in the universality belief" (Kim, 2012, p. 263). In

Kant's favor, Robertson, Morris, and Walter (2007) point out that the notion of autonomy assumes a rational person's capacity for free moral choice made in the spirit of enlightenment. They defend Universalism as being secular and rational, free from superstition or divine commands, void of emotions or filial bonds, and centered on doing the right thing for the right reasons. Conversely, Robertson et. al. admit that Universalism, as Kant defined it, is void of compassion, as it mainly focuses on fulfilling a responsibility. Indeed, rigid and consistent at its core, the Universalist approach does not leave room for flexibility. What is right is right and what is wrong is wrong: no negotiation is possible. This stance can become problematic when situations occur with conflicting duties among involved parties, because in such cases a mutually gratifying solution is impossible to attain.

The intention-based focus of Universalism may not always lead to desired outcomes and may leave unwanted victims down the line. This could be seen as an unwelcome side effect of a generally well-considered moral approach. No one enjoys disastrous outcomes, even if intentions were good. Universalism may therefore not always be the most desired mindset, depending on what is at stake.

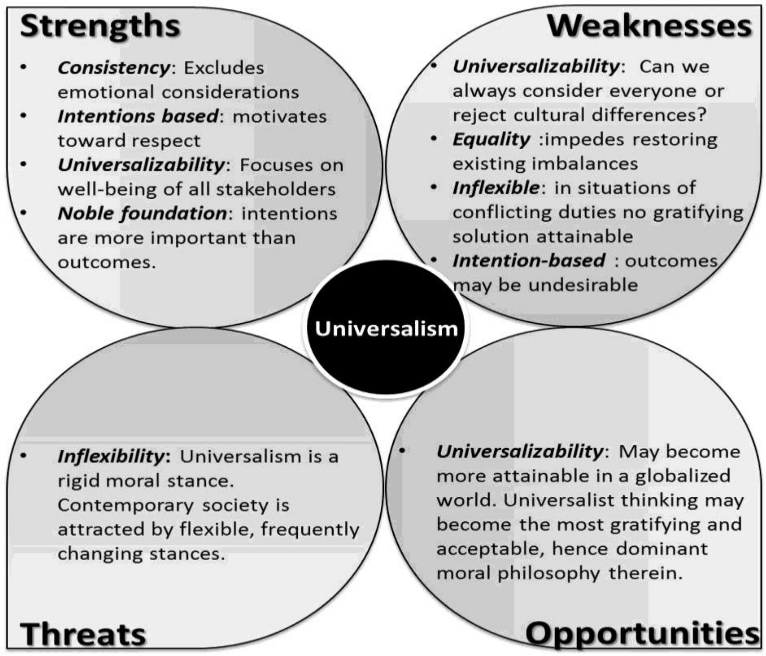
Critical Opportunities for Universalism

Possible opportunities for Universalism need to be considered against the backdrop of contemporary society. Given the upward trend of globalization and the consequentially increasing cultural blend of people worldwide, the mindset of Universalism may become more appealing in near future moral considerations. The increased exposure to a broad range of cultures, religions, ethnicities, age groups, and education levels in one single work environment, has become part of the fabric of modern day's workplaces. Universalists feel that "Our globally interdependent world [...] stands in need of an ethical perspective that transcends cultural and religious differences" (Moyaert, 2010, p. 440). If this mindset finds acceptance on a massive global scale, Universalist thinking may become the most gratifying and acceptable — hence, the dominant moral philosophy.

Critical Threats for Universalism

Inasmuch as globalization is an unstoppable trend, the diversity that it brings reinforces flexibility and receptiveness to multiple perceptions. In its conceptual form, Universalism is known as a rigid, inflexible moral stance. The twenty-first century has taught us thus far that such inflexibility cannot be upheld and tolerated in today's versatile environments. While there is much to be said about considering others as ends unto themselves and not as means toward our ends, the manifestation of conflicting duties based on opposing viewpoints is also more pertinent than ever. This may either lead to an opportunity for Universalism to be adjusted toward contemporary needs of human society, or to obsolescence of a once laudable moral theory.

Figure 2, below, presents the above-mentioned SWOT analysis for Universalism in a nutshell.



Utilitarianism: A Consequence-Based Approach

Utilitarianism is a form of consequentialism, which entails that the end result (the "consequence") should be the most important consideration in any act implemented. The consequentialist approach, therefore, forms a stark contrast with the deontological (Universalist) approach discussed earlier, because Universalism focuses on intentions rather than outcomes while consequentialism, and therefore Utilitarianism, focuses on outcomes rather than intentions. "[W]hether an act is morally right [in this theory] depends only on consequences (as opposed to the circumstances or the intrinsic nature of the act or anything that happens before the act)" (Sinnot-Armstrong, 2011, ¶ 3).

In general, Utilitarianism holds the view that the action that produces the greatest wellbeing for the largest number is the morally right one. "On the Utilitarian view one ought to maximize the overall good — that is, consider the good of others as well as one's own good" (Driver, 2009, ¶ 2). Using more economic-oriented terms, Robertson, Morris, & Walter (2007) define Utilitarianism as "a measure of the relative happiness or satisfaction of a group, usually considered in questions of the allocation of limited resources to a population" (p. 403). Two of the most noted Utilitarian advocates, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873 — a follower of Bentham), felt that "the good" needed to be maximized to benefit as many stakeholders as possible. Bentham and Mill are considered the classical Utilitarians. They were major proponents of constructive reforms in the legal and social realm which explains why they promoted the stance of "the greatest amount of good for the greatest number" (Driver, ¶ 3). Bentham, for instance, was convinced that some laws were bad due to their lack of utility which gave rise to mounting societal despondency without any compensating happiness. He felt, much to the surprise of many of his contemporaries, that the quality of any act should be measured by its outcomes. This was, of course, a very instrumental-based mindset, as it was mainly concerned with tangible results.

Due to Bentham's focus on the happiness levels of the largest group, there was a significant degree of flexibility embedded in the Utilitarian approach. After all, whatever is considered a cause for general happiness today may not be seen as such tomorrow. Tastes, perceptions, needs, and social constructs change, and "the greatest good for the greatest number" may look entirely different tomorrow than it does today.

Johnson (2012) posits that there are four steps to conduct a Utilitarian analysis of an ethical problem: 1) Identifying the issue at hand; 2) Considering all groups, immediate and non-immediate, that may be affected by this issue; 3) Determining the good and bad consequences for those involved; and 4) Summing the good and bad consequences and selecting the option of which the benefits outweigh the costs.

Weiss (2009) emphasizes that there are two types of criteria to be considered in Utilitarianism: rule-base and act-based. Rule-based Utilitarians consider general rules to measure the utility of any act, but are not fixated on the act itself. As an example, while a rule-based Utilitarian may honor the general principle of not-stealing, there may be another principle under certain circumstances that serve a greater good, thus override this principle. Act-based Utilitarians consider the value of their act, even though it may not be in line with a general code of honor. If, for instance, an act-based Utilitarian considers a chemical in his workplace harmful for a large group of people, he may decide to steal it and discard it, considering that he saved a large group of people, even though he engaged in the acts of stealing and destroying company property.

Most Important Strengths of Utilitarianism

The most important appeal of the Utilitarian approach is its focus on the wellbeing of the majority, thus ensuring a broadminded, social approach to any problem that arises. This theory also overrules selfish considerations and requires caution in decision-making processes — with a meticulous focus on the possible outcomes.

In addition, the flexibility that is embedded in this approach makes it easy to reconsider and adjust decision-making processes based on current circumstances. As we live in an era where flexibility is the mantra for succeeding, Utilitarianism seems to be a solid way of ensuring that needs are met with consideration of the needs and desires of all stakeholders. Robertson, Morris, and Walter (2007) underscore this as follows: "The advantages of Utilitarianism as an ethical theory lie in its intuitive appeal, particularly in the case of 'act Utilitarianism,' and its apparent scientific approach to ethical reasoning" (p. 404).

Most Important Weaknesses of Utilitarianism

When adhering to the Utilitarian (consequentialist) approach, one should be willing to let the general welfare prevail and thus be ready to denounce personal moral beliefs and integrity in case these are not aligned with what is considered "the overall good." Volkman (2010) raises a strong point to ponder in this matter: "One's integrity cannot be simply weighed against other considerations as if it was something commensurable with them.

Being prepared to do that is already to say one will be whatever the Utilitarian standard says one must be, which is to have already abandoned one's integrity" (p. 386). Illustrating the moral dilemma that may rise between a potentially questionable "common good" and one's personal moral beliefs, Robertson, Morris and Walter (2007) discuss the so-called "replaceability" problem. Within the Utilitarian mindset, it would be preferable to kill one healthy person in order to provide transplant organs for six others, or to kill one man in order to save dozens of others.

Another point of caution within the Utilitarian approach is its outcome focus; while the end-result may be considered admirable for any decision, there is no guarantee that an act will actually generate a desired outcome. Life is unpredictable, and with the growing complexity of our current work environments, there may be many factors we overlook. This can lead to undesired outcomes that backfire, regardless of the initial focus. If, for instance, a manager decides to layoff three employees to reduce overhead and save the livelihood of twenty other workers, he may find that several of the twenty remaining workers either become demoralized and less productive as a result of this decision or even resign if they have the opportunity to do so.

In addition, Utilitarianism is an individual perception-based approach. Depending on the magnitude of factors involved, it may occur that different Utilitarian decision makers come to different conclusions and make entirely different outcomes based on the angle from where they perceived the issue at hand. One manager may, for instance, conclude that using secret data from a competitor brings the greatest good for the greatest number in focusing on his workforce, leading him to use the data; while another manager may find that using this secret data will negatively affect the well-being of the much larger workforce of his competitor, leading him not to use it.

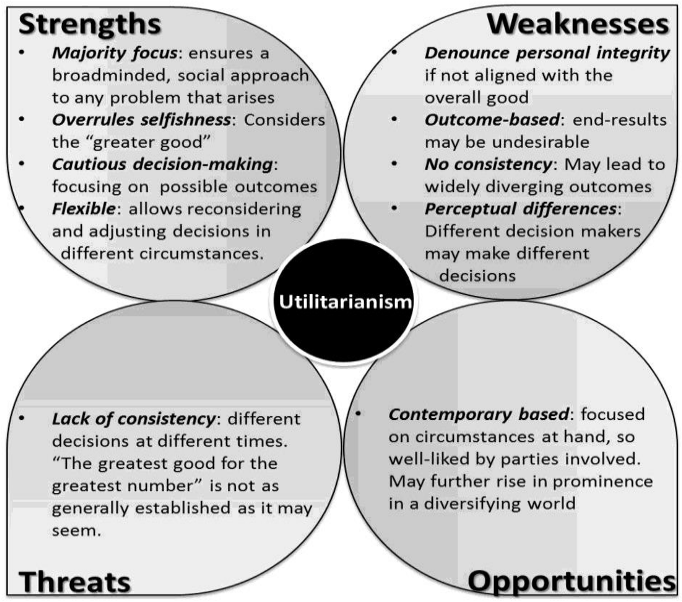
Critical Opportunities for Utilitarianism

Given its focus on circumstances at hand and its lack of concern about consistency, the Utilitarian approach may remain a popular moral stance for a long time to come. Its prominence may even rise due to the fact that societies are increasingly diversifying. Thus, it is in need of continuous changing considerations of what is the proper moral decision.

Critical Threats for Utilitarianism

The lack of consistency, not only seen over time, but also in the decision-making processes from various Utilitarians simultaneously, based on their viewpoints and the information they have at hand, may become an increasing source of concern — leading to outcomes that bring more harm than advantage to a community. "The greatest good for the greatest number" is not as generally established as it may seem, but is a very personal perspective.

Figure 3 below presents the above-mentioned SWOT analysis for Utilitarianism in a nutshell.



Universalism and Utilitarianism: A Brief Comparison

As may have already become apparent, the Universalist and the Utilitarian approaches are each other's opposites in many regards. Where the Universalist approach focuses on good intentions and discourages using anyone as a means toward our ends, the Utilitarian approach focuses on good outcomes. This signifies that others may have to be used as a means toward the desired end. While the Universalist approach emphasizes consistency at all times through its universalizability underpinning, the Utilitarian approach supports flexibility and thus, different decisions are based on the needs and circumstances at hand.

Yet, there are some foundational similarities in these two theories as well. Both aim to eliminate selfish decision-making: the Universalist approach does so by refraining from considering others as a means toward our selfish ends while the Utilitarian approach does so by considering the greatest good for the greatest number of people involved. Both theories perceive an attitude of universal impartiality as a foundational requirement. "On this view, it is irrational to cast one's self as an exception to some universal rule or policy without some justification, since that would involve asserting an arbitrary difference" (Volkman, 2010, p. 384).

On a less positive note, both theories share the weakness of undesirable outcomes. The Universalist approach does so by being intention-based, and good intentions don't necessarily lead to good outcomes. The Utilitarian approach does so by focusing on outcomes that may nonetheless turn out to be different from what was planned due to insufficient data, unexpected turns in the circumstances, or the uncertainty of life.

Both theories remain prominent, regardless of their weaknesses, and both have the potential of gaining even more appeal due to the trend of globalization and thus an increasingly interwoven world: the Universalist approach due to its "universalizability" test, which may not seem so far-fetched as the world continues to become a global village, and the Utilitarian approach due to its flexibility, which may continue to gain attraction in diversifying environments.

Conclusion

As can be derived from the two analyses, both theories have significant strengths and weaknesses that make them difficult to apply unconditionally. As emotional beings, we don't make our moral decisions solely on basis of rationale. There is little doubt that even the most steadfast Kantian Universalist will think twice before adhering to doing the right thing at all times. If, for instance, a murderer would ask this Universalist where his children reside so that he can go and take their lives, it will be highly doubtful that he will provide the requested information — even if being honest is considered the right thing at all times and even though he should see the murderer as an end onto himself and not as a means toward a horrific end. This graphic example may illustrate that there are circumstances where we will feel that it is morally more responsible to do the wrong thing for the right reasons instead of doing the right thing for the wrong reasons.

Considering the contemporary world of interconnectedness and globalization, there have been several authors in recent years who discussed converging moral prototypes to bridge the discrepancy that exists between these two leading theories. Audi (2007), for instance, proposes a model that combines the critical elements of virtue theories, Universalism and Utilitarianism. Referring to this model as "pluralistic Universalism," Audi focuses on three central tenets that both theories harbor: wellbeing, justice, and freedom. In his pluralistic Universalism model, Audi explains that mature moral agents should be able to make morally-sound decisions that optimize happiness, maintain justice and freedom, and are motivating. While generally advocating Audi's theory, Strahovnik (2009) critiques that it is vague and indeterminate and that it should include a list of prima facie duties including refraining from harming, lying, breaking promises, and unjust treatment; correcting wrongdoing; doing well to others; being grateful; improving ourselves; preserving freedom; and showing respect. Strahovnik feels that, with the incorporation of these values, pluralistic Universalism could emerge into a global ethic.

Whether any form of universal moral stance could ever be enforced remains to be seen. As matters currently stand, our global human community — while converging through social networks, increased travel, and worldwide professional shifts — still holds too much perceptual, moral, religious, and cultural divergence to seriously strive for a global ethic. And why should this be anyway? Pluralism is the spice of life and serves as the foundation to keep us thinking critically about the various notions of "right" and "wrong" that currently exist. As long as human beings have divergent mental models which they develop through the multiplicity of impressions they acquire throughout their lives, they will continue to differ in perspectives. Rather than developing a moral doctrine that we are all supposed to honor, we should consider, within reasonable, compassionate boundaries, the healthy dialogues and the perceptional expansion that results from diversity. In the end, there is still no stronger and more direct response to any ethical dilemma than the three golden questions posted in the introductory part of this article:

(1) Would I still do this if it would be published in tomorrow's newspaper?

(2) Would I still do this if my family would know about it?

(3) Would I still do this if my child (or another loved one) would be on the receiving end?

If the answer is "yes" on all three counts, the act is most likely one that we will be able to live with without regrets.

And is that not what ultimately matters?

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A Perspective on Transformative Leadership and African American Women in History

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The work of African American women as leaders historically has gone unnoticed or its impact has been underrepresented. This essay presents a discussion of transformative leadership and examples of three notable African American women who, through their work, provide illustrations of the transformative leadership framework.

Transformative Leadership as a Conceptual Framework

There is a tendency in the literature for the term "transformational leadership" to be used interchangeably with "transformative leadership." However, the relationship between the two types of leadership is evolutionary (Shields, 2010). By way of definition, "transformative leadership is an ethically-based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interest of stakeholders and society and honoring the moral duties owned by organizations to their stakeholders" (Caldwell et al, 2012, p. 176).

Transformative leadership is comprised of seven tenets which are considered to be the core components of the transformative leadership model (Shields 2011): In brief, they are:

1) Acknowledging power and privilege and their impact;
2) Focusing on moral purposes that are related to equity, excellence, public, and private good, along with individual and collective advancement;
3) Deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge frameworks;
4) Seeking to balance critique and promise which involves developing strategies to address inequities;

5) Bringing about deep and equitable change;
6) Working toward transformation (which includes liberation, emancipation, democracy, equity, and excellence); and
7) The demonstration of moral courage and activism (Shields 2011).

Six perspectives in leadership are identified as contributing to transformative leadership (Caldwell et al, 2012). They include: transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, level 5 leadership, principled-centered leadership, servant leadership, and covenantal leadership. Transformational leadership motivates followers to increase their level of performance and has, at its foundation, four pillars. The first is idealized influence. The second is inspirational motivation. The third is intellectual stimulation. The fourth is individualized consideration. This fourth pillar defines the leader's role as that of a coach or advisor attempting to help followers develop to their full potential in a supportive climate.

Charismatic leadership is predicated on the followers having a strong personal bond with the leader as well as viewing the leader as one who advocates a moral purpose. Level 5 leadership reflects the leader's personal humility and tendency toward being understated. Level 5 leaders and transformative leaders are reported to share a commitment to results, employee recognition, cooperation, and partnership. Principled-centered leaders are obligated to embrace ethical standards that require them to focus on universal principles and values that combine the attainment of a more productive and moral society with one's desire to become a better person. Servant leadership is incorporated into transformative leadership with the demonstration of an authentic concern for others that inspires them. Lastly, covenantal leadership advocates that "it is only through increased understanding that people can benefit themselves, society and the organizations" (Caldwell.et al, 2012). In support of this, convenantal leaders also create a learning culture in which information is shared and individuals are provided with the opportunity to improve (Caldwell et al, 2012).

Transformative leaders are also described as creative, charismatic, self-creative (someone who commits to making a difference) (Montuori & Fahim, 2010). The transformative leader is credited with the ability to rethink "the who, what, where, when and how of leadership" in complex environments (Montuori & Fahim, 2010, p. 2). They require people to reconsider their assumptions and to develop new solutions (Caldwell et al, 2012). Transformative leadership requires the reframing of one's view as well as the creation and integration of "organizational systems that add value, enhance lives, benefit society, and honor duties owed to stakeholders by optimizing long term wealth" (Caldwell et al, 2012, p. 177).

Three Examples of Transformative African American Women Leaders

Historic reflection provides numerous examples of African American women, from multiple disciplines, who have embodied transformative leadership. The following three women, Sojourner Truth, Harriett Tubman, and Mary McLeod Bethune are all examples of transformative leaders. Because of their inclination toward advocacy, their work provides particularly strong examples of the third tenet (deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge frameworks), the fifth tenet (bringing about deep and equitable change), and the seventh tenet (demonstrating moral courage and activism).

Sojourner Truth

Sojourner Truth was born into slavery in 1797 as Isabella Baumfree in Ulster County, New York. Throughout her life, she was an advocate for social justice and inclusion. Among her many activities, and perhaps one of the most pivotal, occurred in 1844 when she joined the Northampton Association of Education and Industry, an organization founded by abolitionists who supported an agenda that included the reform of women's rights. It was there that she met other abolitionists such as Frederick Douglas and William Lloyd Garrison (The Biography Channel, 2013).

Her commitment to the inclusion of African American women in the suffrage movement is well documented. "Typical of the Sojourner Truth's proficiency as a speaker is a talk she gave at a July fourth gathering in 1850 in which she played on White women's maternal sentiments to remind them of their common humanity with Black women." Sojourner Truth, in effect, challenged the agenda of those committed to women's rights to include African American women and is credited with influencing the platform of the National Women's Convention in 1850 to adopt a resolution that stated that "among women, those in bondage were 'the most grossly wronged of all'" (Kelly, 2010, p. 262). In 1851, she delivered a speech to the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in which she rhetorically asked those in attendance to consider her question: "Ain't I a woman" (The Biography Channel, 2013). This rhetorical question is a clear indication of the third tenant of the transformative leadership model – deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge frames.

Sojourner Truth's life of advocacy provides numerous examples of transformative leadership and advocacy that continued until her death in 1883. Truth is remembered as one of the foremost leaders of the abolition movement and an early advocate of women's rights. Although she was known as an abolitionist, the reform causes she sponsored were broad and varied, including "prison reform, property rights and universal suffrage" (The Biography Channel, 2013).

Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman was born circa 1820 and lived until 1913 (Crewe, 2005. p.6). Her work as an abolitionist is well documented with her role as the "conductor" of the Underground Railroad in the 1850s. She is credited with at least nineteen return trips to the South to lead other Blacks to freedom (History.com). She is credited with rescuing more than three hundred people, including her parents and other members of her own family (Crewe, 2005, p.6).

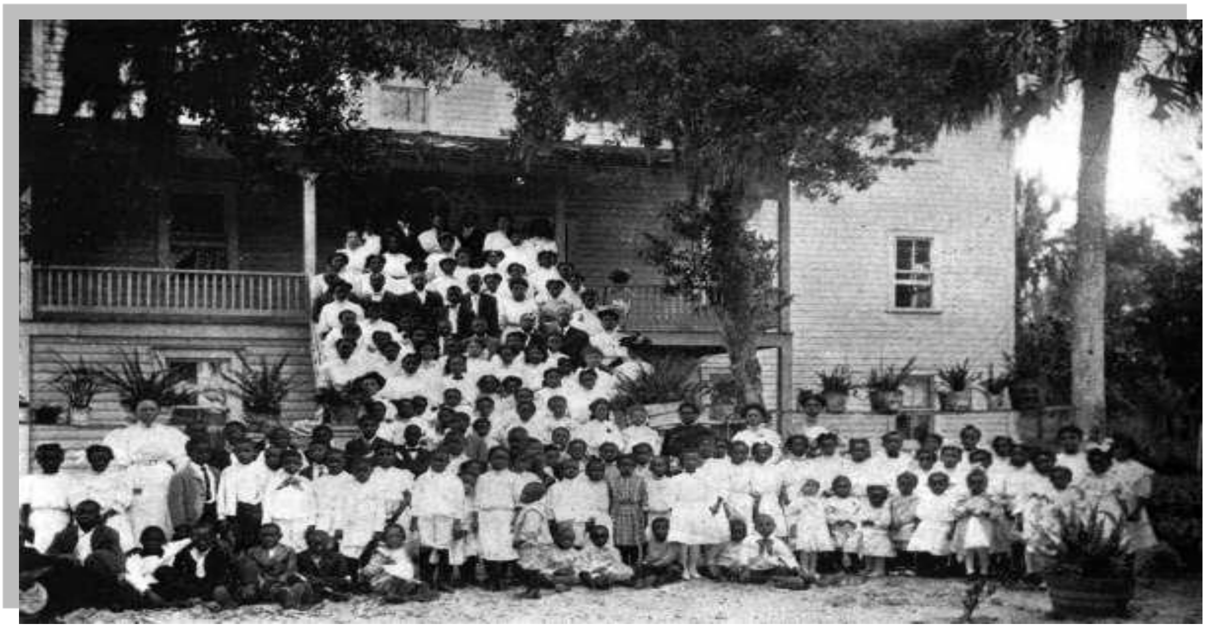
Another area in which Harriet Tubman illustrated great courage and dedication was demonstrated in her work — providing housing and supportive services to others. She had many accomplishments in this area and in some instances, models she developed became the basis for programs developed in the nineteenth century. She recognized the importance of providing supportive services (such as housing and care) for individuals, while concomitantly encouraging independence through self-sufficiency activities. These activities amounted to what would be referred to today as "micro-enterprises activities"

(Crewe, 2005). For example, she funded the construction of a wash-house and taught freed women how to do laundry while providing them with assistance in growing food. This made it possible for these women not to have to rely on government assistance to support themselves (Crewe, 2005).

Harriet Tubman's philosophy of "bringing someone to freedom is not enough, you sometimes have to take care of, empower and teach to take care of themselves as well" (Crewe, 2005, p.6). This ideology demonstrates her commitment to advocacy for those who were underserved and provides clear support for her work as a transformative leader. Additionally, her work shows her commitment to stimulating deep and equitable change — another tenet of transformative leadership.

Mary McLeod Bethune

Mary McLeod Bethune, the child of former slaves, was born in 1875. She is credited with



many accomplishments that promoted social justice including the establishment of the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute for Negro Girls in Daytona, Florida which would later merge with the Cookman Institute for Men becoming Bethune Cookman College (The Biography Channel, 2013). She ascended to the national platform of leadership through her service as the president of the National Association of Colored Women of the Florida Chapter. This was followed by a number of invitations and appointments by U.S. presidents. . Specifically, President Coolidge requested her participation in a conference on child welfare. President Hoover invited her to serve on the Commission on Home Building and Home Ownership and appointed her to a child health committee. President Roosevelt appointed her as special advisor on minority affairs, leading to her tenure as the Director of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administrators. President Truman appointed her to serve on a committee devoted to national defense. In 1935, she founded the National Council of Negro Women. The purpose of this organization was "to represent numerous groups working on critical issues for African American women" (The Biography Channel, 2013).

> In her advocacy role, Bethune navigated the boundaries of race and gender by using direct but carefully chosen words to exemplify traditional values of God and country. She spoke of family mostly in the broad sense of race and humanity....She occupied a perch of moral authority and from this position, attempted to revise existing scripts that read Blacks as morally and intellectually inferior and confined them to a narrow range of their human potential (McCluskey, p. 237).

Conclusion

African American women have a rich history of occupying roles as transformative leaders. The tenets of this leadership style have been embraced and effectively leveraged to further social justice in numerous instances. While history has documented the work of notable African American women such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Mary McLeod Bethune, their contributions as leaders, particularly in the context of transformative leadership, has not been fully described. This model of leadership seems particularly appropriate given its focus on ethics, values, empowerment, and the long-term interest of society as a whole.

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The Emergence of Leader-Society Value Congruence: A Cross-Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

Previous research on cross-cultural leadership has focused on the outcomes associated with leadership factors consistent with national cultural values without exploring how leaders' individual cultural orientations become congruent with the societal culture in different national settings. The purpose of this paper is to provide a deeper understanding of how leader-society value congruence is produced and how the degree of such congruency varies across cultures. This paper conceptually clarifies the mechanisms that mediate the influence of cultural context on leader-society value congruence; suggests that the effects of societal context are only distal antecedents of producing congruence between leaders' individual and societal level cultural values; and concludes that their effects are manifest via their impact on self-construal and communication patterns.

Introduction

Cross-cultural leadership research suggests that cultural forces affect the kind of leader behavior that is commonly accepted, enacted, and effective within a collective (Den Hartog et al., 1999; Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, Dastmalchian, & House, 2012; Elenkov, 2002; Hofstede, 1980; House, Wright, & Aditya, 1997; Javidan, Dorfman, de Luque, & House, 2006; Javidan & House, 2001). As such, behavior that is reflective of collective values will be more acceptable and leaders tend to behave in a manner consistent with the desired leadership found in that culture (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). For example, the cultural congruence proposition would assert that high power distance and in-group collectivism societies (Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004) tend to accept leader behaviors that are consistent with high scores on these dimensions. Several researchers (e.g., Dorfman & Howell, 1988) have shown that strong importance placed by Asian managers on paternalism and group maintenance activities (Schweiger, Sandberg, & Ragan, 1986) is consistent with countries that are culturally highly collective. More recent findings (Dorfman, Sully de Luque, Hanges, & Javidan, 2010) further support the congruence proposition by showing that leaders tend to behave in a manner consistent with the expectations of their respective societies.

This stream of research, however, has focused on congruence between leadership behaviors and national culture while the issue of congruency between leaders' individual and societal values on underlying dimensions has received negligible attention. Nonetheless, there is a sparse body of cross-cultural psychology and leadership literature that suggests that the individual-society value congruence tends to be higher in cultures where discrepancy from societal values is not tolerated and/or wherein certain values are communicated during formative stages in one's life (Fischer, 2006; Mustafa & Lines, 2012, 2013; Triandis, 1989), but these studies have not addressed the question of how such cultural effects are transmitted. Thus, little is known about the emergence and extent of leader-society value congruence, that is, how leaders' cultural orientations become congruent with societal culture and whether the degree to which leader- individual level values correspond to the values of the larger society varies across cultures.

To address this gap in the literature, this paper identifies "self-interdependent orientation" and "high-context communication" as two potential mechanisms that mediate the influence of cultural context on leader-society value congruence. The paper suggests that the effects of societal context are only distal antecedents of producing congruence between leaders' individual and societal level cultural values and their effects are manifest via their impact on self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and communication pattern (Hall, 1976), and their subsequent effects on such congruence. Understanding these mechanisms may help construct a clear picture of the cross-level effects of culture on leadership behaviors and may be important for carrying out selection and training of cross-cultural managers.

To develop propositions, this paper reviews and integrates the following categories of literature: literature on cultural effects in shaping members' individual values, self-construal theory, low/high-context communication, and the literature that provides a potential link between different cultural value dimensions and self-construal and communication patterns. The discussion begins with a review of the individual-society value congruence. The paper then discusses how differences in values associated with leaders' national cultures shape the self-construal and communication pattern of leaders differently as well as how self-interdependent orientation and high-context communication are linked with high leader-society value congruence. Lastly, the paper suggests implications for practice and identifies avenues for future research.

Cultural Setting and Leader-Society Value Congruence

There is a high level of consensus in cross-cultural literature (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Javidan & House, 2001; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001) that societal culture influences perceptions and values of societal members, and that a set of cultural orientations — such as egalitarianism or power distance, collectivism or individual autonomy, and assertiveness or femininity — is deeply internalized in societal members through different means of socialization. Hence, values held by members of a society are partly a social phenomenon and since leaders are members of societal cultures, the value systems they hold are also likely to be reflective of the larger society (Hanges, Lord, & Dickson, 2000).

For leaders, societal culture has a direct impact on their values by societal socialization and the influence of societal culture is mediated by the organizational culture. This is evident from the fact that national culture plays an important role in shaping organizational culture (Dickson, BeShears, & Gupta, 2004; Hofstede & Peterson, 2000; Sagiv & Schwartz, 2007), which may lead to behaviors within organizations that correspond to a society's predominant values (Shane, Venkataraman, & MacMillan, 1995). Over time, leaders in organizations respond to the organizational culture (Schein, 1992; Trice & Beyer, 1984), and the cultural elements within the organization lead to an indirect effect of societal culture on their values. The point to argue is whether societal culture has a direct effect on leader values or an effect that is mediated by organizational values and the value systems leaders hold that are partly shaped by the larger society (e.g., Hanges et al., 2001). The direct effect stems from societal socialization; these values are brought by leaders to the organization. The mediated effect is a result of the socialization that takes place within the boundaries of an organization. Since organizational culture is reflective of the surrounding national culture, organizational socialization is not limited to one's organization alone, but occurs within the broader milieu of the whole societal context (Morrow, 1983; Wiener, 1982). Schwartz (1999) suggests that managers in different cultural settings tend to emphasize work goals that are reflective of the core values of their respective societies.

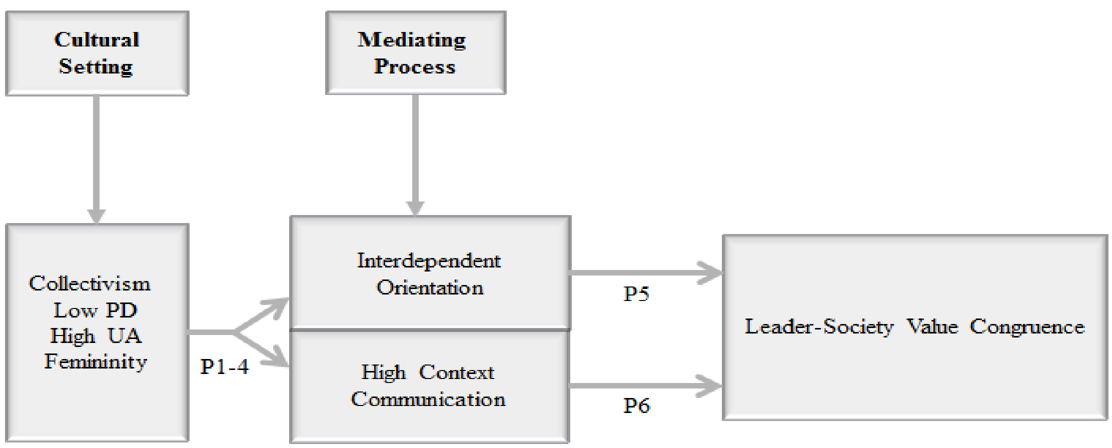
However, national cultures are thought to differ in the intensity of their influence in creating convergence between individual and societal level values (Mustafa & Lines, 2013). In their respective studies on value transmission and assimilation in the family system, Boehnke (2001) and Schönflug (2001) found that collectivistic (embeddedness) values tend to be more internalized than individualist (intellectual autonomy) values. In a similar vein, Fischer (2006) reported a strong convergence between individual and societal level value ratings for embeddedness and affective autonomy values. Fischer (2006) argues that these values might be deeply ingrained during socialization processes because they are related to culturally appropriate experiences and expressions of connectedness.

The strength of a culture to create congruence has been argued to depend on how strongly a culture's values are communicated to the societal members and to what extent a national culture deals with discrepancy from societal values by creating a certain degree of tolerance. Triandis (1989) argues that compared to loose cultures, members in tight cultures show greater homogeneity in values, that is, they closely share norms and values that characterize their society. In such societies, people attempt to harmonize social expectations with individual preferences in order to exhibit steady conformity to societal values. As a result, social expectations become an internal norm of obligation (Vauclair, 2009; Yao & Wang, 2006), which tends to produce a close alignment between personal and societal values. For instance, fostering harmonious interdependence among in-group members is a core cultural norm in Japan (Kim & Nam, 1998). Since Japanese employees are expected to display a high level of value congruence, Japanese organizations rely on long socialization processes to pass on collective behavioral patterns to organizational members (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Ouchi, 1981).

That is to say, the predictive ability of societal values on leaders' individual level values will be stronger in a cultural context where social norms are more salient and demanding. For instance, personal and communal goals are more closely aligned in collectivist cultures than in individualist cultures (Triandis, 1995). Conversely, the basic motive structure of people in individualistic cultures reflects their internal beliefs and capacities — including the ability to effect change and to withstand social pressure (Triandis, 1995). According to Yaveroglu and Donthu (2002), individuals in collectivist cultures are more likely to imitate each other in an effort to fit in to gain social standing and acceptance. This line of argument is supported by earlier evidence which suggests that social norms rather than personal values are a useful predicator of behavior in collectivist societies, while personal values and attitudes play an important role in predicting one's behavioral intentions in individualist cultures (Bontempo & Rivero, 1992). Similarly, role obligations and other normative influences are said to play an important part in the development of self-identity of people in cultures (e.g., China) marked by traditional values (Westwood, Chan, & Linstead, 2004).

The above reveals that a general consensus in research is that cultural context directly affects the extent of congruence between individual and societal values. Also, it is more prevalent in cultures where certain societal norms are more pervasive and demanding. The current literature, however, does not provide a deeper understanding of the potential causal relationships between cultural dimensions and member-society value congruence. The existing studies have shown that value congruency is higher in some cultures than others, but the question being raised is how such cultural effects are transmitted. The insertion of mechanisms between cultural dimensions and value congruence may extend our understanding from the effects of societal context *per se* to the underlying processes that are responsible for such effects and may also help explain why, in some cultures, value congruence occurs more than in others.

***Figure 1*: Leader-Society Value Congruence**



In view of the above, this paper identifies "self-interdependent orientation" and "high-context communication" as two potential mechanisms that mediate the influence of cultural context on leader-society value congruence. The paper suggests that differences in societies' values shape the communication pattern and self-construal of the leaders differently such that in some cultures, they tend to develop an interdependent orientation of self and are exposed to high-context form of communication which, in turn, positively affects the extent of leader-society value congruence.

An Overview of Self-Construal and Communication Pattern

Independent versus Interdependent Orientation of Self

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), the identity orientation of a person consists of two different loci: the self as an independent entity and the self as an interdependent being. Each orientation of the self is connected with two distinct motives among individuals: the emphasis on pursuing and/or securing personal interests or adopting a group's perspective. The independent orientation of self underscores a sense of individual autonomy and uniqueness. People with a salient independent orientation are motivated by self-interest; they strive to express themselves and tend to act in furtherance of their own goals (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Being independent entails seeing oneself as a unique entity who is detached from the social context and for the most part, whose behavior and attitudes are shaped and organized by reference to the individual's own thoughts and feelings (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Interdependent orientation, on the other hand, implies a psychological merging of self with the collective that leads an individual to perceive others as included in one's own self-representation (Hogg, 2001; Sedikides, 2002). Markus and Kitayama (1991) argue that a dominant interdependent orientation makes people see themselves integrated with others in an encompassing social context. People are responsive to the thoughts and preferences of other individuals in the social relationships when the definition of self is associated with the surrounding social environment (Yamazaki, 2005).

High versus Low-Context Communication

From a cross-cultural perspective, Hall's (1976) taxonomy of high-context and low-context communication constitutes the two widely discussed communication patterns. High-context communication refers to a relational approach to communication (Pekerti & Thomas, 2003) and is indicated by associative, polite, less confrontational, and both indirect and implicit actions (Adair, 2003; Gudykunst & Matsumoto, 1996; Murphy & Levy, 2006). In a high-context form of communication, much of what is meant cannot be said outright; this implies that an implicit meaning of a message is embedded in the contextual clues (Hall, 1976; Kitayama & Ishii, 2002). Individuals in high-context interactions would particularly emphasize another's feelings in the communication process. In order to be responsive to the feelings of the audience, the speaker/writer expresses his/her thoughts and intentions in a way that tends to be indirect, implicit, and less impersonal (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Hall, 1998; Mintu-Wimsatt & Gassenheimer, 2000; Niikura, 1999). Past evidence (Bello, Ragsdale, Brandau-Brown, & Thibodeaux, 2006) reveals that in cultures (e.g., China, Taiwan, and Colombia) where a high-context form of communication is prevalent, people tend to use less direct and less explicit messages in communication compared to cultures (e.g., Australia) more inclined to use equivocal or direct communication styles. Adair's (2003) study provides further evidence for context orientation as an indicator for directness, confirming that unlike their counterparts in low-context societies, negotiators in high-context cultures are more likely to adopt an indirect communication behavior. In a similar vein, it has been observed that people involved in high-context interactions are more polite and less confrontational while communicating with others (Murphy & Levy, 2006).

In a low-context form of communication, explicitness and unambiguity in generating messages is greatly emphasized; attention to surrounding social and contextual circumstances is less crucial in the message encoding and decoding process (Bello et al., 2006; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Hall, 1976). In such a form of communication, interpersonal relationships are less emphasized and the major focus of communicators remains on rationally-detached analyses (Hall, 1976; Yamazaki, 2005). In low-context communication, both speaker and audience expect directness and explicit verbal expression of intentions, thoughts, and wishes (Abdullah, 1996; Adair, 2003). This is why low-context interactions tend to be objective and impersonal with a primary emphasis on promptness and task accomplishment (Burgoon & Hale, 1987).

Influence of Culture on Leaders' Self-Construal and Communication Patterns

Differences in values associated with a national society influence the way individuals perceive themselves. Individuals native to certain cultures tend to develop independent orientation of self, and for people brought up and socialized in certain other cultures, interdependent construal of self becomes salient. In previous studies, linkage of different orientations of self has been provided to the extent of cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism. Triandis (1989), for example, argues that people in collectivist cultures may develop an interdependent construal of self, while individualistic values are linked to the perceptions of independent self-construal.

Likewise, societal values also define norms for interpersonal communication and help to determine how individuals in different societies generate and interpret messages (Leonard, Van Scotter, & Pakdil, 2009; Pekerti and Thomas, 2003). For example, in the United States clarity and unambiguity is expected in communication, that is, people are supposed to express their thoughts explicitly (Gallois & Callan, 1997). In contrast, the communication pattern in other societies, such as China and Indonesia, is relatively more indirect and implicit (Pekerti, 2003). In the past, there have been negligible empirical and conceptual attempts to clarify the relationships of cultural values and communication styles. A few studies, however, (e.g., Gudykunst et al., 1996) have provided support that a high-context form of communication prevails in collectivist cultures, while individualist societies prefer a low-context communication pattern.

The present article attempts to provide a separate logic for linkage of each cultural dimension with the leaders' construal of self and communication pattern, and contend that, on average, cultural values characterized by collectivism, low power distance (PD), high uncertainty avoidance (UA), and femininity have more pronounced effects in shaping an interdependent orientation of self and a high-context communication pattern in leaders. This, in turn, is likely to mediate the influence of cultural context on leader-society value congruence.

Collectivism-Individualism

Self-Construal. Collectivism is characterized by a closely-knit social framework where individuals have a tendency to see themselves from a holistic perspective (Triandis, 1995) and tend to keep the interests of the collectivite above their personal priorities (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1999). By virtue of the strong group orientation, collectivists are more likely to activate information that facilitates achieving collective welfare, which in turn motivates behaviors that focus on interdependence (Triandis et al., 1993). Empirical evidence suggests that people in collectivist cultures (e.g., China) work well on interdependent group tasks, while people from individualist societies (e.g., the US) report higher incidences of social loafing and free riding while working on tasks that require interdependence (Earley, 1989). Sosik (2005) contends that leaders with a collectivist orientation tend to build a collective identity; their efforts are likely to be directed towards promoting team work and mutual goal attainment. This implies that leaders in collectivist cultures acquire much of their construal as interdependent beings.

In individualistic cultures, the individual is viewed as an autonomous entity who is encouraged to find meaning in his/her distinctiveness and act or behave in relation to his/her own thoughts and motives (Schwartz, 1999; Triandis, 1994). People from cultures characterized by individualistic values tend to activate information and behave in ways that facilitate the goals of independence and self-achievement (Triandis et al., 1993). Earlier findings report that social loafing disappears among group members of individualist cultures when individual responsibility is fixed for group outcomes (Weldon & Gargano, 1988). This suggests that in individualistic cultures, perceptions of self are less likely to be influenced by the norms of the social setting, and people tend to perceive their private self as salient (Earley, 1989; Uskul, Hynie, & Lalonde, 2004). Leaders in such societies are, therefore, expected to construe themselves in an acontextualized manner.

Communication Pattern. Members of collectivist societies stress a high degree of behavioral conformity to the codes of behavior established by the collectivite (Doney, Cannon, & Mullen, 1998; Kagitcibasi, 1997). They maintain harmonious relationships and show concern for the needs and feelings of others in the group (e.g., Jordan & Surrey, 1986). The norms in such cultures define appropriate ways of interacting with others and they provide implicit rules about how to behave in given roles and situations (Schall, 1983). It has been noted that people in collectivist cultures emphasize others' feelings in social interactions and frequently engage in face-saving behaviors in the communication process (De Mooij, 2010). The strength of members' connectedness to the group dictates their pattern of communication; they tend to pay more attention to the socially-accepted cues and symbols in communicating with others. Bello et al.'s (2006) findings suggest that collectivist cultures, such as China, Taiwan, and Colombia, are more inclined to use implicit and indirect communication styles than cultures characterized by individualist values, such as Australia. Based on this, it would be expected that a high-context form of communication will prevail in organizations of collectivist cultures and leaders would also be attuned to such a pattern of communication.

In individualistic cultures, members are less concerned about others' needs and feelings and emphasize objectivity, directness, and explicit logic in the communication process (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Individuals in such cultures are less responsive to the social and contextual clues in the communication process and tend to seek ways that facilitate the expression of what they mean, feel, or think (Earley, 1989; Yamazaki, 2005). This suggests that leaders in such societies would prefer a low-context form of communication. Based on the above discussion, the following is proposed:

- Proposition 1(a). ***The greater the collectivist values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leader will develop an interdependent orientation of self.***

- Proposition 1(b). ***The greater the collectivist values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leader will adopt a high-context communication pattern.***

Power Distance (PD)

Self-Construal. Power distance in a culture signifies to what extent inequalities among societal members are maintained (Hofstede, 2010). High PD cultures emphasize verticality, which is expressed in senior-junior relationships where superiors lead and those who occupy low ranks in the hierarchy occupy an obedient position (Javidan et al., 2006; Smith, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2002). In principle, superiors are socialized to take control while people in subordinate positions refrain from voicing personal opinions and show deference to the wisdom, knowledge, and expertise of superiors (Bu, Craig, & Peng, 2001; Dorfman et al., 2012; Pasa, 2000). Norms in such cultures tend to confer on leaders significant prerogatives and ample latitude for action (Hambrick & Finkelstein, 1987). This allows leaders to demand obedience from followers and force action as they deem fit (Farh & Cheng, 2000). For instance, both leaders and followers from high PD cultures, such as The Philippines, Venezuela, and India see any bypassing of superiors as inappropriate (Adler, 1997). The supremacy attached to the leadership positions in high PD societies is expected to promote a construal of self that implies that the actions of a leader are not guided in relation to the preferences and values of subordinates.

In contrast, people in low PD societies tend to recognize each other as moral equals (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2007; Yan & Hunt, 2005) and seem to cooperate and act for the benefit of others as a matter of choice (Clugston, Howell, & Dorfman, 2000). Management practices in such societies are characterized by inclusion and attention to the well-being of all (Sagiv & Lee, 2006). Evidence from the Nordic countries suggests that norms in such cultures support little managerial discretion in Nordic firms; leader-follower interactions are based on mutual understanding and concern (Selmer & De Leon, 1996). The above suggests that managers in low PD cultures view themselves as not detached from the surrounding social environment and understand their roles as reflective of the feelings and responses of employees.

Communication Patterns. In high PD cultures, superiors wield strong authority over followers. Thus, it is improper for followers to show any resentment to leaders' decisions (e.g., Cheng & Jiang, 2000; Smith et al., 2002). There is a strong norm that leaders issue instructions and directives emphasizing a top-down communication instead of sharing or delegating decision-making authority (Hui, Au, & Fock, 2004). Thus, in high PD cultures, the behaviors of leaders are directed towards exerting control to induce follower compliance and conformity, and as such, leaders tend to ascribe less priority to the thoughts and feelings of subordinates. For this reason, a task accomplishment role of communication will dominate for leaders in such societies and they will be more direct, explicit, and sender-centered in their communication with subordinates.

In contrast, members in low PD cultures do not wish to maintain inequalities and status differences between incumbents of different hierarchical levels (Hofstede, 2001). Low PD societies provide an environment that supports a smooth vertical and horizontal flow of data and information within organizations. Organizational members are respected as independent workers and their input in decisions is appreciated (House et al., 2004). This encourages a leadership process that is built on consultation and open communicative interaction between leaders and followers (Selmer & De Leon, 1996). This suggests that leaders in less hierarchical (egalitarian) cultures would have a strong tendency to adopt a communication pattern that involves consciousness of fitting in with their environment. The above discussion leads to suggest the following:

- **Proposition 2(a).** ***The lesser the PD values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leader will develop an interdependent orientation of self.***
- **Proposition 2(b).** ***The lesser the PD values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leader will adopt a high-context communication pattern.***

Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)

Self-Construal. Uncertainty avoidance reflects how comfortable individuals in a culture are with ambiguous situations (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). In societies marked by UA values, members focus on stability and engage in greater risk- avoiding behaviors (House et al., 2004; Kueh & Voon, 2007). When encountering a new situation, they engage in a less cognitive assessment of the situation and tend to rely on information gathered from those around them (Sorrentino, Bobocel, Gitta, Olson, & Hewitt, 1988). As a strategy to reduce uncertainty, people in such cultures are likely to base their decisions on the opinions and experiences of others (Dawar, Parker, & Price, 1996). Prior studies suggest that managers in high UA cultures are averse to novel behaviors and their actions and decisions are guided by shared societal norms and expectations (Hambrick & Brandon, 1988). In their study on the role of social environment in technology adoption, Strite and Karahanne (2006) found that social influences play a significant role in technology adoption and utilization for individuals characterized by UA values. Thus, we expect that leaders in high UA cultures would be more susceptible to social influences and, as such, an interdependent orientation would be more desirable for them.

Conversely, low UA cultures allow new initiatives and encourage individuals to use their own knowledge and analytical capabilities instead of relying on social and environmental cues (Petty & Capioppo, 1996). Strite and Karahanne (2006) contend that individuals not characterized by UA emphasize rational elements rather than being mobilized by social influences in making decisions — such as in adopting and utilizing a particular technology. Further, managers in such cultures have been found to prefer novelty and experimentation over using tested patterns and procedures (Hambrick & Brandon, 1988). This suggests that leaders in low UA societies tend to be less regulated by social influences, thus allowing them to emphasize their own uniqueness and become more independent from others.

Communication Pattern. Members of high UA cultures will prefer to communicate in a manner that provides enough information to reduce ambiguity and resolve unclear and unstructured situations (Money & Crotts, 2003). People in such cultures tend to heavily rely on environmental cues (Strite & Karahanne, 2006) because direct and verbal messages not supported by symbols and overt cues will be less informative in reducing ambiguity. Conversely, a communication style that carries symbols and non-verbal cues reflecting societal norms and beliefs will provide needed structure. Smith's (2004) research shows that an acquiescent response style in communication representing agreeableness and modesty in verbal statements (Javeline, 1999) is more common within cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance. It is, therefore, expected that leaders in such cultures will prefer a high-context form of communication in that they will be more responsive to social influences and will pay more attention to cues social environmental cues.

Low UA cultures are tolerant of ambiguity; a developed structure is generally not advocated in such societies (Hodson & Sorrentino, 2001; Hofstede, 2001). Members low on UA orientation tend to generate and interpret messages based on objective judgment instead of relying on environmental cues (e.g., Chaiken, 1980). Earlier studies indicate that less acquiescent response behaviors reflecting clarity, precision, and explicitness in verbal statements are more common among individuals embedded in low- uncertainty avoidance cultures (Smith, 2004). This suggests that leaders in low UA cultures will exhibit low-context communication behaviors because the communication pattern that is suitable for storing and transferring data and objective information tends to align with the norms prevalent in low UA cultures. Consequently, the following is suggested:

- Proposition 3(a). ***The greater the UA values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leaders will develop an interdependent orientation of self.***
- Proposition 3(b). ***The greater the UA values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leader will adopt a high-context communication pattern.***

Masculinity-Femininity

Self-Construal. People in masculine societies are assertive, competitive, achievement-oriented, and generally less motivated by affiliation and belongingness needs (Hofstede, 1998; Randal, 1993). Previous evidence suggests that people with a masculine orientation are less receptive to others' opinions (Pornpitakpan, 2004), objective in their judgment, and rely more on their own experiences and understanding (Meyers-Levy, 1989; Strite & Karahanne, 2006). People marked by a masculine orientation tend to be overwhelmed by the motives of success and accomplishment (Hofstede, 1980; Kale & Barnes, 1992), and might afford less importance to affiliation and belongingness needs (Hofstede, 1980; Lam, Lee & Mizerski, 2009). Earlier studies support this view by arguing that masculine values indicate pragmatism (Rakos, 1991) and pursuing a cost-benefit calculation in social exchange relations (Randall, 1993). At the workplace, a tilt towards masculinity may represent placing higher value on individual material incentives than on social exchanges, such as attention, sensitivity, and nurturance (Hofstede, 1998; Newman & Nollen, 1996; Schuler & Rogovsky, 1998). This suggests that leaders in masculine societies are less likely to see themselves as part of an encompassing social relationships and their self-representation will reflect less inclusion of others.

In contrast, people who espouse feminine values would be more concerned with showing empathy and fostering interpersonal harmony (Hofstede, 1984; Schuler & Rogovsky, 1998). To look agreeable, people with a dominant feminine orientation tend to be more responsive to the suggestions of others (Kim, Lehto, & Morrison, 2007), show high social influenceability (Venkatesh, Morris, Sykes, & Ackerman, 2004), and are more likely to conform to group pressures (Bem, 1975). For leaders in feminine cultures, the desire to achieve is less important than supporting people through benevolent and nurturing practices (Hofstede, 2001). Further, a drive to maintain and achieve interpersonal harmony may take precedence over emphasis on recognition and advancement for leaders of such societies. Thus, leaders in feminine cultures are more likely to develop an interdependent orientation of self.

Communication Pattern. People in masculine cultures tend to be overwhelmed by the motives of success and accomplishment and are likely to prefer pragmatic, decisive, and daring actions in social interactions (Hofstede, 1998, 2001; Randall, 1993). Earlier studies suggest that individuals with a predominant masculine orientation are more verbally assertive, use more direct statements (Hogg & Garrow, 2003), and are less likely to display acquiescent behaviors in the communication process (Johnson, Kulesa, Cho, & Shavitt, 2005). This suggests that leaders in masculine societies will be less influenced by the needs and preferences of others (Pornpitakpan, 2004) and are expected to show low levels of reliance on social clues (Morden, 1991; Rodrigues, 1998), leading them to adopt a low-context communication style.

Femininity represents a communal orientation (Chang, 2006) wherein people build and maintain friendly social ties with others and their actions are embedded within relationships (Hofstede, 1998). Communication may serve as a basis for nurturing relationships in such cultures. As such, members of feminine societies are likely to be accommodative, non-confrontational, and obliging in interacting with others. Johnson et al.'s (2005) findings indicate that response behaviors that are linked to agreeableness and group harmony tend to be more prevalent in cultures low on masculine values. This implies that a high-context form of communication will be prevalent in cultures characterized by feminine values. Thus, leaders in such cultures will show stronger concern for feelings and thoughts of subordinates in the communication process. Based on the above discussion, the following is proposed:

- **Proposition 4(a).** ***The greater the femininity values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leader will develop an interdependent orientation of self.***
- **Proposition 4(b).** ***The greater the femininity values associated with a leader's national culture, the greater the leaders will adopt a high-context communication pattern.***

Interdependent Orientation and Leader-Society Value Congruence

An individual with an interdependent orientation subordinates his/her personal priorities to those of the collective in many domains of social life and becomes attuned to perspectives of salient others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1995). For instance, in collectivist cultures, children are exposed to a sociocentric orientation (e.g., consideration, nurturance, and benevolence). As a result, children in collectivist cultures tend to develop strong perceptions of interdependence with regard to the relationship between the individual and the social group (Fischer, 2006). Likewise, people in paternalistic cultures are taught that the expectations and wishes of other members in the family system come before their own needs and feelings (Kakar, 1978). To uphold family coherence and harmony, individuals in such cultures hold other members in high esteem when self and relational preferences are incompatible (Seymour, 1999). This, in turn, influences the development of interdependent perceptions of self in their later lives.

According to many past studies, people with an interdependent orientation place more emphasis on display of behaviors that fulfill their socicentric and associative needs. For instance, Cross, Morris, and Gore (2002) reported that people with a relational self-construal emphasize connectedness to other people and act or behave in a manner conducive to promoting and strengthening the existing relationships. Ybarra and Stephan's (1999) findings suggest that Asians are more attuned to situational factors such as cultural norms. In contrast, people with low interdependent orientation exhibit low intensities of affiliative motives that segregate self from the context, thus making them less attuned to the external sources of guidance in determination of behavior (Al-Zahrani & Kaplowitz, 1993; Morris & Peng, 1994; Triandis, 1989).

In the workplace, members with a prevalent, interdependent self-react positively to the organizational goals and practices that promote group accomplishment while members with a salient independent orientation tend to evaluate the meaning of such goals and practices in terms of their likely capacity to enhance or inhibit opportunities for individual success (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989). Leaders with an interdependent orientation might be responsive to, and hence accommodate, the needs, priorities, and values of others. The act of giving primacy to the feelings and preferences of others over one's own value priorities will lead to deep social patterning of individual level values and erode personal-societal value inconsistencies over time. This suggests that individual-level values of leaders, who have dominant perceptions of interdependence and develop the ability of relating to others in the collectivitive, are likely to be less incongruent with the socio-cultural values. In the light of above, the following is suggested:

- **Proposition 5.** ***Self-construal mediates the influence of cultural context in producing congruence between a leader's individual and societal values such that leader-society value congruence will be higher in cultures where a leader's interdependent orientation is dominant.***

High-Context Communication and Leader-Society Value Congruence

One key distinction between high and low-context forms of communication is their relative susceptibility to social influences. High-context communication needs a higher intensity of social and emotional cues to build and foster relationships whereas a low-context form of communication places more value on the efficiency of communication to get the job done (e.g., Hall, 1998; Niikura, 1999). Contrary to low-context communicators, who in general are more direct and sender-centered, speakers/writers in high-context interactions are more indirect and receiver-centered (Ting-Toomey, 1988). This suggests that high-context communication involves a strong consciousness of relatedness to the surrounding social environment (Hall, 1976; Yamzaki, 2005). Moreover, fitting in and gaining social acceptance is considered more important in high-context interactions.

Previous research suggests that high-context communication places a high priority on maintaining harmony and social order and fulfills an associative function of communication while low-context interactions are more concerned with a functional role of communication that is directed towards task accomplishment (Burgoon & Hale, 1987). Pekerti and Thomas's (2003) findings confirm that high-context communicators (e.g., Asians) tend to display high levels of people-oriented communication styles consistent with maintaining harmony and promoting one's integration into the surrounding world. The authors reported that low-context communicators (e.g., Westerners) demonstrated communication behaviors that were more idiocentric. This means that the focus in such communication pattern was on task accomplishment. Evidence from other studies also provides support for differences between high- and low-context communication patterns. For example, such studies purport that Chinese communicators are more sensitive to cultural cues and are inclined to reconcile their communication styles to that of their partners while Americans are more context- independent and tend to be less aware of cultural differences in communicating with others (Wang, Fussell, & Setlock, 2009).

The above findings suggest that people with high-context communication ascribe a high degree of importance to context and embedded relationships and may expect the communication process to play an affiliative role (Pekerti & Thomas, 2003). They tend to be situational, meaning that they may place great emphasis on fitting in with their environment during organizational interactions. As opposed to the low-context form of communication, use of symbols and non-verbal cues are also afforded high importance in high-context forms of communication. When selecting symbols and non-verbal cues in generating a message, one is less likely to use personal judgment; he/she must look towards the social environment to select those symbols and cues that are widely recognized. It seems that leaders involved in high-context interactions would be more receptive to social influences in sending and interpreting messages and are more likely to follow culturally agreed-upon cues with respect to what constitutes the right way of communicating. Thus, a leader socialized in a culture where high-context communication prevails has to regulate his/her communication styles according to organizational goals and values. As a result, the personal priorities of leaders will be attuned to the societal influences leading to high leader-society value congruence. Consequently, the following proposition is suggested:

- Proposition 6. ***The communication pattern mediates the influence of cultural context in producing congruence between a leader's individual and societal values such that leader-society value congruence will be more demonstrable in cultures where leaders adopt a high-context communication pattern.***

Implications for Research and Practice

Future Theory and Research

The theoretical model developed in the present paper has a number of significant implications for future research. Several interesting avenues would be to empirically examine how each cultural dimension affects a leader's construal of self and his/her communication pattern; how a leader's identity orientation and communication pattern transmit effects of cultural values in producing leader-society value congruence; and how such congruency is related to leadership effectiveness. It would be interesting to examine the cultural congruence for lesser or greater degree of convergence between leaders' individual and their societies' values by assessing the level of value internalization — external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation — echoed in self-determination literature (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Connell, 1989). These studies suggest that in "external regulation" and "introjected regulation," one acts or behaves in the face of regulatory or normative pressures while in "identified regulation" a particular value is consciously endorsed as if it is personally important for him or her. In integrated regulation, a societal value is synthesized into an individual's everyday life and becomes part of his/her self-conception. This will help explore the relative strength of value congruence in different cultural settings. Further, future research might examine the interaction between a leader's identity orientation and communication pattern as well as the relative importance of each mediating construct in determining the level of leader-society value congruence.

The present paper assumes the emergence of cultural congruence as a top-down process and does not explicate the role of leaders' individual level factors in shaping their communication patterns and identity orientations. Future research should examine the influence of a leader's individual level factors such as self-management to observe and regulate his/her public appearance (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Sosik & Dinger; 2007). Another promising direction for future research is to understand the effects of an experiential learning process on value congruence; that is, how leaders observe subordinate reactions and over time learn to shift their emphasis toward group/individual orientation and produce alternative communication styles presumed to be consistent with follower-cultural values (Kolb, 1984; Mustafa & Lines, 2013). In addition to assessing the role of individual-level factors, it would be important to examine the separate role of societal and organizational culture in the relative importance of a leader's self-construal and communication style. This is important for developing a better understanding of the role of acculturation through organizational socialization to achieve the benefits of cultural congruence (e.g., minimizing the role of formal control).

While discussing cultural congruence, the current paper posits that people's values and psychological tendencies develop in ways that their overlap with societal values tends to be more salient in certain cultures compared to others. It was postulated that some cultures promote "interdependent orientation" and "high-context-communication" more than other cultures, which in turn help leaders to produce value congruency with their societies' values. But, given the contention that people are socialized to fit in with, and adapt to, the cultural milieu in which they are embedded (Gelfand et al., 2011), it will be interesting if future studies suggest theoretical reasons regarding acontextuality of cultural congruence to justify that the degree of convergence between personal and societal level values is not subject to any particular cultural influences. For instance, this paper proposes that the egalitarian cultures will evoke higher levels of interdependent orientation than hierarchical cultures, but earlier studies show that in paternalistic cultures where PD is a prevalent cultural characteristic, managers not only guide professional activities of followers but also attempt to promote their well-being by exhibiting concern for their personal matters (Pasa, Kabasakal, & Bodur, 2001). In such societies, the leader is seen within the role of a guardian who is expected to provide support and protection to all under his control as a caretaker of the work unit (Kerfoot & Knights, 1993; Martinez, 2005). Thus, the expectation that managers in low PD cultures will develop an interdependent orientation of self may also hold for paternalistic PD cultures because managers in such cultures are likely to be very in tune with their employees. Future research might propose theoretical rationales to present a more sophisticated view of the means and processes that help leaders to fit in with their cultures — whether the culture is individualistic or collectivistic, egalitarian or hierarchical. Further, the arguments and logic of lack of variability (greater congruence) in some cultures is supported by examples that are linked to theory and research on cultural values. But the theory of cultural tightness-looseness takes a slightly different perspective and suggests that the cultural value dimensions like collectivism-individualism, PD, UA, and masculinity-femininity do not focus on pressures for conformity to general external standards. Rather, the importance of congruence with societal norms is something that is explained by cultural tightness and looseness (Gelfand, et al., 2011). Thus, it's possible to make a stronger case about the importance of conformity to a particular societal standard by bringing in the theory of cultural tightness-looseness.

Moreover, our discussion has been based on the assumption that the proposed mechanisms operate independent of each other. However, they may be somewhat related and influence each other in a particular manner and there may be the possibility of some overlap existing between the proposed mechanisms. Future research might explore interaction effects of the proposed mechanisms on outcome variables. Clarifying and testing such interactions would likely make a valuable contribution to a more holistic understanding of the strength of mediating mechanisms and their effects on leader-society value congruence. Likewise, the assessment of the cultural dimension of individualism-collectivism may fetch some criticism for not stipulating whether this study uses the in-group collectivism dimension or institutional collectivism dimension. Although the characteristics of the dimension posited by Hofstede (1980) do not stipulate this and merely refer to individualism-collectivism, according to this notion, people in collectivistic cultures experience stronger pressures to conform to a generalized external, societal standard than individuals in individualistic cultures. But other studies (House et al., 2004) suggest that there are two dimensions of collectivism (i.e., institutional and in-group) which focus on two different levels. According to this conceptualization of collectivism, people of in-group collectivist cultures do not conform to the societal standards, but rather to the expectations and needs of a specific in-group within which they are embedded. Depending on the focus, future studies need to delineate which dimension is being used.

Lastly, the focus of the present study is on the effects of culture from a unidimensional perspective. The propositions imply that culture has its impact one dimension at a time. However, a more realistic situation is that the strength of a particular mechanism is the result of the combined influence of all cultural dimensions. This is important in view of the reason that all national cultures embody multidimensional characteristics. One ideal situation is a culture with characteristics that all promote a particular mechanism, i.e., interdependent orientation or high-context communication. The situation becomes more complex in cultures that have some characteristics which may promote independent orientation but others that may promote interdependent orientation of self. For example, just from a two-dimensional perspective, a culture may have collectivistic and feminine characteristics and there may be other cultures that have individualistic and feminine characteristics at the same time; these characteristics may have an equal or unequal combined influence on a leader's construal of self. An in-depth discussion of the multivariate aspect and testing the propositions in a multivariate way will help construct a more complete picture of the effects of cultural values on the strength of mediating mechanisms in different national settings.

Practical Implications

For organizations, the proposed conceptual model can be a useful tool for selection of managers. In cultures where a high-context communication and an interdependent orientation tend to prevail, managers are likely to pay more attention to contextual information including other members' cultural emphases and the behavioral or value discrepancies between self and others. Conversely, in societies where a low-context communication and an independent orientation prevail, managers tend to overlook peripheral and contextual information and may be more concerned about task accomplishment, taking others' cultural backgrounds for granted and thus failing to adjust to social and cultural differences (e.g., Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Markus & Kityama, 1991; Yamazaki, 2005). While carrying out selection of managers for overseas assignments, managers with a high-context communication and an interdependent orientation should be considered for countries where organizations emphasize shared goal setting and consensus decision making. Selection of such managers will be suitable for projects with interdependent teams and organizations that practice long-term planning. Conversely, managers with a low-context communication and an independent orientation are preferred for cultures where organizations emphasize swift decision making, members of work teams prefer independent accountability for their performance, and setting short-term goals take precedence over long-term plans. Such managers may be in a better position to lead projects and assignments that have an agenda of fast and efficient mobilization of resources and turning out immediate results. They may also be allowed to assume leadership roles in situations where circumstances warrant prompt and tough decisions by leaders for the benefits of the organization.

This conceptual framework has many practical implications for training of managers who might serve on foreign assignments. Managers socialized in cultures with a high-context communication and an interdependent orientation need less adaptation-oriented training before sending them overseas. The reason is that they tend to be more receiver-centered and are likely to be more concerned about their discrepant behaviors in communicating and collaborating with others. Thus, they show high self-monitoring tendencies across different cultural contexts and tend to regulate their public appearances according to expectations of the target social group (Sosik & Dinger, 2007). However, for expatriate assignments, preference needs to be given to those managers who produce culturally-correspondent behaviors in the face of normative and other cultural influences, but their personal values reflect a moderate internalization of societal values. Individuals who have a deep imprint of societal values on their personal values may experience identity conflict when they attempt to adapt to the behavioral demands of another culture (Molinsky, 2007). On the other hand, managers from cultures with low-context communication and a dominant, independent orientation pay less attention to cultural cues and tend to engage in rationally-detached analyses which lead them to display consistent behaviors across different cultural contexts. This warrants cultural sensitization of such managers through specially-designed training programs.

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Reflections of Practicing School Principals on Ethical Leadership and Decision-making: *Confronting Social Injustice*

Abstract

The study objective was to identify leadership dilemmas of practicing school administrators and their own codes of ethics to inform understandings of ethical decision-making. Ethical decision-making underpins leadership practice, theory, and preparation. Existing models for ethical leadership underplay the importance of social justice ethics in decision-making. The research encompassed a qualitative study based upon the constructivist paradigm. Data were collected in the form of interviews, document analyses, and professional observations with practicing school administrators in public schools. Dilemmas reported were analyzed utilizing ethical leadership theories together with social justice constructs. Results indicate ways practicing school administrators, faculty preparing administrators, and other business or organizational leaders can utilize ethical decision-making and leadership for organizational improvement.

Introduction

Managers and leaders in business, education, medicine, athletics, policing, law, and other professions are seeking to more effectively serve a diverse clientele and be responsive to cultural, linguistic, and other behavioral differences. Using a framework of ethical social justice leadership praxis, this case study reveals the processes and practices of current school administrators in one suburban school district serving approximately 10,000 students in the US. The findings substantiate the theory of social justice leadership and produce a model of ethical leadership, while evoking a narrative directly from the school principals themselves.

Justice, specifically justice principles and practices shaping education, is an ethic that addresses human freedom and making choices equal to all individuals. The ethic of justice in US education stems from the idea that individuals relinquish some of their own rights for the public interest to serve others and benefit society. As an administrator, it is important to think about this ethic when "judging human behavior and interactions" (Vogel, 2012). Justice also calls for the ethic of *social* justice (Santamaria, 2013). Beyond simplistic views of rights, justice, and a common legal framework, social justice in ethical leadership decision-making means "identifying and undoing oppressive and unjust practices and replacing them with more equitable, culturally appropriate ones" (p. 194). As Dantley and Tillman (2010) state, the leadership needed to attain social justice is active leadership which comprehensively addresses and resolves societal inequities. Furman (2012) defines leadership praxis to mean connecting theory and practice with the leader's own principles and ethics through reflection on action. In other words, to lead ethically using a justice perspective means integrating practice with theory and engaging in intentional reflection (Duignan, 2012). Figure 1 demonstrates the integrated components of leadership praxis for creating ethical learning environments in school communities and other organizations.

Figure 1: **Ethical Leadership Praxis for Social Justice**

The leader integrates personal values and leadership ethics with legally mandated organizational and professional standards which also require a commitment to ethical leadership and inclusiveness. A leadership dilemma occurs when the administrator faces an incident or situation requiring his/her leadership and decision-making abilities and the administrator is unsure of which competing frameworks should be applied to solve the problem or guide others to solve the problem. An ethical leadership and decision-making approach includes social justice ethics as an essential part of educational justice. Emotion may also be involved as the leader reflects on the present dilemma and how the dilemma relates to his/her own personal code of ethics and values (Yamamoto, Gardiner, & Tenuto, 2014). Researchers (McCabe, 2013; Palestini, 2012; Theoharis, 2007) argue that school leaders' ethical decision-making and leadership abilities require courage and risk-taking in the face of opposition. In the present study, leadership dilemmas and scenarios experienced in practice were analyzed in light of constructs of ethical leadership theory and social justice.

In the US, principles of democracy and inclusiveness guide organizational leaders' decision-making and actions (Gardiner, Howard, Tenuto, & Muzaliwa, 2014; English et al., 2012; Gross & Shapiro, 2013). The research framework incorporates Shapiro and Stefkovich's (2011) multi-dimensional approach, asking questions related to the ethics of justice, critique, and care, additionally moving beyond these ethics to "formulate and examine their own professional codes of ethics in light of individual personal codes of ethics, as well as standards set forth by the profession, and then calls on them to place students at the center of the ethical decision-making process" (p. 27). Ethical leadership is included in educational leadership professional standards, and the research base supporting the standards (Young & Mawhinney, 2012). The ethics and perspectives of those in the community are also taken into account. Role-modeling by organizational leaders in ethical decision-making influences others in the organization (Jordan et al., 2013; Simpson & Wagner, 2008). Our approach to leadership and decision-making builds on this framework by conceptualizing the centrality of social justice to emphasize valuing self, students, faculty, staff, and community members who present cultural, linguistic, and other diversities. Therefore, justice — specifically social justice — is an essential connector for ethical leadership. Ethical leadership and ethical leadership development in schools, university programs, businesses, and other organizations are critical dimensions of building socially just and equitable communities. We maintain that leadership in all public and service professions requires attention to social justice, democratic values, and promotion of, and respect and appreciation for, diversity.

Research Methods

The research design was comprised of a constructivist, interpretive, qualitative case study (Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Yin, 2008). From this perspective, the research sought to understand ordinary school leaders' practices and understandings of leadership dilemmas and professional ethics and decision-making. Data were collected in the form of interviews, document analyses, and professional demeanor observations with ten (10) practicing educational administrators with a minimum of three years administrative experience currently overseeing one large suburban school district serving approximately ten thousand students with a diverse student and family population.

Selection was equitable for gender, age, ethnicity, across available administrators who met the criteria delineated above. Analysis was conducted utilizing traditional qualitative research methods of coding, categorizing, and thematic analysis.

In this exploratory study, research queries included:

(1) What patterns or themes occur in the ethical dilemmas that arise for contemporary educational administrators in their day-to-day work?

(2) How do ethical dimensions of leadership processes relate to leadership practices and why is this connection important?

(3) What were educational leaders' processes for employing decision-making to attain ethical leadership and resolve conflict?

Participants were practicing school administrators in a large suburban school district with a diverse student and family population. Following University of Idaho IRB approval, sixty to ninety minute face-to-face (F2F) interviews with ten (10) school principals were held in their respective offices. Participants were provided a copy of the interview guide prior to the interview. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed with consent. Data were analyzed through the lens of professional educational ethics to assess ethical and culturally proficient leadership. Trustworthiness was established by triangulating multiple sources of information (Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Yin, 2008). Credibility was enhanced through engagement with the participants, peer debriefing, and reflexive discussions with multiple researchers. Reflexive engagement (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012) was a way for the researchers to reflect on their own personal and theoretical stances in relation to the research and to enhance outcome validity.

Each participant engaged in a semi-structured interview. Participants were also asked to provide newsletters, faculty memos, public documents pertaining to ethical principles and leadership. Directed observation was limited to professional interactions of the participant with the researcher, including demeanor and any evident display of professional ethics. Data revealed an area that school administrators felt needed to be addressed more at the school level and in higher education classes was the school or district's policies and procedures for cultural proficiency. Essentially, analysis considered how administrators worked to ensure success for all students regardless of ethnicity and cultural subgroups.

School Administrator Perspectives on Ethical Leadership & Decision-Making

The study found P-12 school administrators considered the ethical dimensions of leadership for enhanced learning and teaching in educational environments to be more critical than ever before. School leaders felt they work in new and emerging ethical situations of cultural and linguistic differences, discrimination, bias, communication challenges, diverse perspectives, legal, and accountability pressures. Findings suggest the ethical dimensions of leadership dilemmas with a focus on the ethic of cultural proficiency arising from administrative practice were sought by practicing administrators to inform leadership preparation programs.

Specific issues identified by school administrators for professional educational ethics preparation — which were supported by the large numbers of ethics concerns filed with the State Department of Education [State Report, Ethics Conference 2013] — included:

- Educators' inappropriate relations with students(including electronic and face-to-face communications);
- Unsupervised special needs students; and
- Equality and adequacy of equal protection for students' rights to a quality education, academic integrity, and the need for improved processes for data-driven teacher evaluations as opposed to subjective interpretations of performance.

Administrators' ethical dilemmas and conflicts were clustered around the following themes:

1. Cultural differences and situations of conflict concerning race, ethnicity, and/or other differences;
2. The need to process and adequately address the resulting behaviors connected with conflicts stemming from these differences; and
3. Decisions made in immediate situations without the benefit of reflection or a model designed to process ethical decision-making.

Each of these themes is exemplified below through the narrative of one of the administrators selected: Middle School Principal Villafuente. Each of these three primary themes on ethical leadership and decision-making were also present in all the administrator narratives and represent a cross-case analysis.

Cultural Differences and Situations of Conflict Concerning Race, Ethnicity, or Other Cross-Cultural Differences

Principal Villafuente explained her leadership praxis and how this could be infused in educational leadership preparation:

> Following set guidelines and state, federal, and district policy is not enough for me as a school principal. I also need to do what is right for the child. Some students need extra tutoring time. Sometimes I need to meet special needs because of socio-economic circumstances, providing support when it is needed such as transport for equity … because of our Hispanic population and the culture of poverty in this district we alter our values to meet their needs and having those principles [of social justice] is really important for the job of school principal.

The administrator speculated while it is possible to learn cultural sensitivity as a new principal, awareness and specific assignments during administrator training could be helpful.

The Need to Process Emotion Connected With Conflict Surrounding These Differences

Many of the dilemmas school principals face in today's educational and societal context in the US are difficult to address on an emotional level and require intentional self-talk and interaction to process the situation. The school principal articulated her process for decision-making as follows:

> I don't make decisions fast. I take time. If I didn't have my yoga, I would be a mess. I have to listen to what my heart, mind, and emotion are telling me and process my emotion, not let it control me. Conflict is challenging. Not everyone has the same values or the same ideas. I use what I learn to know what to do next. I'm not authoritarian so I always meet with staff and take these concerns to them. We use each other's ideas. We work together to change things as needed based on what we have learned through listening to ourselves and our emotion as a guide and then process that emotion in productive ways rather than letting it become a stressor for us. If we don't have the answers for all the dilemmas we face, we have to keep an open mind and remember that being judgmental doesn't help improve students. Our main role as an administrator is to understand and be aware of the backgrounds of all our students and incorporate the cultural differences in our school so that all are being enriched through education.

From a social justice and ethical leadership perspective, the principal engaged her staff in a form of shared leadership, while also recognizing the value of her own emotion as a signal regarding differences in ethical principles and how the situation could be resolved.

The Role of Reflection for Processing Ethical Decision-Making

The school principal stressed the value of ethics embedded in the policies from the school district and enshrined in US law. While she stated "all societies need that," she continued to elaborate that this simply provides a basic understanding of expectations for equality and justice in schools. The administrator needs to move to the next level: reflecting on the specific dilemma at hand in the school (e.g., a student's pregnancy or incarceration) and how to respond appropriately to provide them with the education they need to graduate:

> Reflecting on the ethical issues for me means making sure I have provided a free and appropriate education for all regardless of behavior, disability, socioeconomic needs — taking ownership of student outcomes including the child who has been earning an "F" in Math since the first grade, having transparency for our families in the SBAC [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium] which must be confusing for them when English is not spoken at home. Here in our district, the school boards represent the white male population and the same for teachers, administrators, and counselors. We only have one female secondary administrator who is a vice principal. We need more Hispanic principals and in the district office. So to use this example, I do my part by reflecting on how I can make up for this leadership vacuum and be inclusive and be accountable in my leadership and decision-making. Do I bring in more parents into the school? Do I pressure central office with their hiring practices?

The school administrator was able to employ self-reflection as a tool to enhance decision-making. She realized she is not a solitary decision-maker, but rather engages others in the quest for thoughtful school leadership which meshes with her own sense of herself as an ethical leader.

Considerations for Ethical Leadership and Decision-Making

Educational leaders employ decision-making in their day-to-day processes and practices, whether or not the decision-making is conducted with intentionality or follows professional and personal codes of ethics. Specific ethics, such as professionalism, democracy, care, inclusion, due process, justice, and social justice are embedded in the administrator's personal or professional codes of ethics and leadership.

The study revealed everyday practices and perspectives of leaders in a large, diverse suburban school district with a diverse student and family population. By investigating dilemmas of ethical processes and practices surrounding justice and equity in P-12 schools to advance administrator practice and administrator preparation, we confirmed the importance of several, newer dimensions of leadership preparation. The study confirmed prior research and added some new insights, revealing the importance to school administrators of: (1) ethical relationship, including trust and integrity (McCabe, 2013) together with cultural proficiency and understanding. Culture in school learning (Hollins, 2008; 2011; 2012; 2012a) is necessary to build trust and integrity in school administrators' processes and practices; (2) emotion in leadership is an underutilized vehicle for understanding our own and others' perspectives (Yamamoto, Gardiner, & Tenuto, 2014; Culham, 2013); with (3) reflection and contemplative learning essential for growth as a leader (Burnell & Schnackenberg, 2014). The centrality of school climate and culture in the organization and the need for the leader's awareness and sensitivity to this dimension of leadership was confirmed. The study also showed the need for acceptance of a taboo topic in organizations: the role of emotion in leadership. We refer the reader to a model for the processing of emotion by school leaders reported in another empirical study of school administrator practices (*see* Yamamoto, Gardiner, & Tenuto, 2014). Finally, reflection and contemplative learning, which for some leaders may include spirituality, was a core dimension of ethical leadership. School leaders and other organizational leaders have the capacity to engage in critical thinking and reflection applying or discussing their own ethical leadership and decision-making approaches. Discussion of one's own ethical leadership and decision-making in a collaborative organizational setting could enhance cultural sensitivity and awareness of school processes and practices in student data analysis, school policy and procedures, faculty development, and extra-curricular support.

Using an ethical leadership and decision-making approach supports administrators engaging in reflection and seeking justice through understanding the conflict in values proposed by competing arguments. Ethical leadership includes the value of culturally proficient and social justice sensibilities for equity. Spicer (2009) notes public administrators can engage more self-consciously in a type of practical reasoning that more closely mirrors the adversarial character of legal arguments in the justice system to understand both sides before seeking resolution. We found in our study that ethical decision-making also requires critical reflection and a cultural component for social justice to meet the needs of students and families and move beyond a simplistic justice framework.

Conclusion

This exploratory research supports current trends in leadership development toward reflective practice and ethics engagement, particularly in administrator practice and leadership preparation. The study offers a vision for educational leadership preparation where instructional leaders, instructional coaches, and administrators work with university faculty around ethics and issues of practice. Through the research and engagement with school administrators in this study the goal was for ourselves to develop our competencies as faculty functioning as a team of individuals who are in touch with ethical administrative processes to seek optimum learning outcomes for students. Dissemination of the research in this article may enable others to use the school leader experiences provided for discussion and reflection.

Findings inform educational leadership curriculum and instruction by indicating leadership knowledge, skills, and dispositions for ethical decision-making within positive school cultures (Fiore & Joseph, 2013). The article advances leadership theory, preparation, and practices in education shaped by principles and practices of social justice by reporting practice-based findings on ethical leadership and decision-making. The everyday acts of school principals cannot change education as a whole, but seemingly small and invisible efforts of ordinary public organizational leaders can have an impact and improve their organizations. Rights, justice, and law guide ethical decision-making, but equally important are the contributions of cultural understandings, care, concern, and connectedness embodied in the ethical leadership and decision-making presented in the paper, and at the heart of every educational and administrative encounter.

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Finding Truth in Cause-Related Advertising: A Lexical Analysis of Brands' Health, Environment, and Social Justice Communications on Twitter

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Abstract

Consumers increasingly desire to make purchasing decisions based on factors such as health, the environment, and social justice. In response, there has been a commensurate rise in cause-related marketing to appeal to socially-conscious consumers. However, a lack of regulation and standardization makes it difficult for consumers to assess marketing claims; this is further complicated by social media, which firms use to cultivate a personality for their brand through frequent conversational messages. Yet, little empirical research has been done to explore the relationship between cause-related marketing messages on social media and the true cause alignment of brands. In this paper, we explore this by pairing the marketing messages from the Twitter accounts of over 1,000 brands with third-party ratings of each brand with respect to health, the environment, and social justice. Specifically, we perform text regression to predict each brand's true rating in each dimension based on the lexical content of its tweets, and find significant held-out correlation on each task, suggesting that a brand's alignment with a social cause can be somewhat reliably signaled through its Twitter communications — though the signal is weak in many cases. To aid in the identification of brands that engage in misleading cause-related communication as well as terms that more likely indicate insincerity, we propose a procedure to rank both brands and terms by their volume of "conflicting" communications (i.e., "greenwashing"). We further explore how cause-related terms are used diff erently by brands that are strong vs. weak in actual alignment with the cause. The results provide insight into current practices in cause-related marketing in social media, and provide a framework for identifying and monitoring misleading communications. Together, they can be used to promote transparency in cause-related marketing in social media, better enabling brands to communicate authentic values-based policy decisions, and consumers to make socially- responsible purchase decisions.

Introduction

Consumers increasingly make purchasing decisions based on factors such as health, the environment, and social justice — a recent survey reports that 71% of Americans consider the environment when they shop. In response, there has been a commensurate rise in cause-related marketing to appeal to these socially-conscious consumers (Aaker, 1999; Sonnier & Ainslie, 2011). However, because there is little standardization of terminology used in marketing communications, vague and misleading terms (e.g., "greenwashing") can make it very difficult for consumers to make informed decisions (Kangun, et al., 1991; Laufer, 2003; Furlow, 2010).

This problem is amplified by the growth of social media, which provide a cost-eff ective platform for firms to cultivate brand personalities with frequent conversation-like messages, the volume of which complicates regulatory enforcement. The informal nature of Twitter makes it particularly easy to cultivate an association between a brand and a cause, without necessarily making concrete statements or claims.

Despite substantial theorizing on the prevalence and implications of such greenwashing, little empirical work has been done to broadly examine the nature of cause-related marketing messages in relation to a brand's true alignment with the cause. In this paper, we investigate the relationship between the lexical content of a brand's Twitter communications and the quality of that brand with respect to three cause-related dimensions: health, the environment, and social justice. We collect nearly three million tweets from over one thousand brands across two diff erent sectors (Food & Beverage and Personal Care) and pair them with independent ratings from GoodGuide.com, which provides in-depth ratings of brands for social causes based on product contents, corporate policy, certifications, and awards. With these data, we explore several questions:

RQ1. *Can we estimate the health, environment, and social justice ratings of brands based on their Twitter communications?* We find that the lexical content of a brand's Twitter feed is significantly correlated with its rating, most strongly for health. A text regression model produces out-of-sample error rates between 1 and 2 points on a 10-point scale, suggesting that high-rated brands do indeed communicate diff erently than low-rated brands.

RQ2. *Can we detect brands that potentially engage in misleading Twitter marketing?* Selecting the brands for which the model overestimates the ratings quickly reveals instances of cause-related marketing that may conflict with the properties of the product. While explicit false advertising is uncommon, we instead find a concerted eff ort to cultivate a brand personality that suggests a stronger cause alignment than the ratings indicate.

RQ3. *Can we identify cause-related terms that are used most frequently by brands in misleading contexts?* We perform a variant of feature selection to identify terms that overall correlate with high ratings, but also appear often in tweets from low-rated brands. This analysis identifies cause-related marketing terms on Twitter that are most susceptible to "greenwashing" and may have reduced communication value.

RQ4. *Can we further classify misleading cause-related terms based on context?* We train a classifier to distinguish tweets containing terms like organic as originating from high-rated or low-rated brands, based on the context in which they are used. We find that retweets containing such salient terms are strong indicators of low-rated brands.

Background and Related Work

It is well established that brand image and personality associations constitute an important component of brand equity (Aaker, 1999; Sonnier & Ainslie, 2011). Brands serve not only to signal functional product attributes, but also to provide consumers with an identity association they can use for self-congruence and social signaling (Aaker, 1999). Marketing activities designed to cultivate such image and personality associations have been referred to as brand image advertising (Kuksov, et al., 2013) and cause-related marketing (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988) when the desired association is with a social cause. Because consumers often project human personality characteristics onto brands (Aaker, 1999), firms can benefit from cultivating a general personality around social responsibility or causes of interest, even without making specific claims about their products or policies (for example, by enthusiastically recognizing Earth Day or retweeting news about the environment) (Etter & Plotkowiak, 2011; Banerjee, et al., 1995). This type of cause-related brand personality cultivation is often seen on Twitter, which provides a means of frequent conversation-like communications with their network (Etter & Plotkowiak, 2011). Such indirect tactics are low-cost to implement and can influence consumers who seek relationships with brands based on perceived humanlike characteristics that match their own values (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). However, because there is little regulation or standardization of terminology used in related marketing communications, vague and misleading terms are often used to imply socially responsible practices that are not in place (Kangun, et al., 1991).

Numerous researchers have expressed concern over the potential implications of such practices (e.g., Kangun, et al., 1991; Laufer 2003; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Marciniak, 2009; Mark-Herbert & von Schantz, 2007). Some researchers have hypothesized, for example, that an abundance of misleading advertisements may desensitize consumers to sincere communications of cause-related initiatives, thus reducing firms' incentives to adopt socially responsible practices (Furlow, 2010). Others have suggested that consumers will identify insincere marketing communications and penalize such firms for hypocrisy (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Mark-Herbert & von Schantz, 2007; Wagner, et al., 2009). Popoli (2011) provides a review of literature on the link between corporate social responsibility (CSR) practice and brand image, but discusses little about the potentially moderating role of topic-relevant marketing communications. Brown and Dacin (1997) show that increasing consumer awareness about a firm's CSR activities can aff ect brand evaluations, but the role of marketer generated content (MGC) as a vehicle for awareness is not explored. Du, et al. (2010) and Varadarajan and Menon (1988) present conceptual frameworks for the role of MGC in realizing the value of legitimate CSR initiatives, but do not consider the eff ects of greenwashing practices or examine large empirical samples.

Despite the importance of this issue and the confusion surrounding it, the literature does not yet off er broad empirically-grounded insights on truthfulness in cause-related marketing practices — i.e., on understanding the overall relationship between cause-related communication and commitment to the cause; on ways to detect brands and terms that may signal greenwash; and on identifying they ways in which sincere and insincere cause-related marketing communications differ. We expect that this is likely because empirically exploring this question requires collecting and labeling an extensive data set of categorized marketing communications, which can be prohibitively difficult and costly to obtain for large numbers of brands through traditional techniques (e.g., manual content coding) (Netzer, et al., 2012; Godes & Mayzlin, 2004; Liu, 2006).

The recent explosion of social media use by marketers offers an unprecedented data trail of such communications, though new methods must be developed in order to effectively leverage this tremendous volume of unstructured data. We introduce an approach that uses text regression to build a model to predict a brand's third-party ratings along different dimensions of social responsibility from the textual content of their Tweets. This technique has been used in the past to predict movie revenues from online reviews (Joshi et al., 2010), stock volatility from financial reports (Kogan, et al., 2009), and legislative roll calls from legislative text (Gerrish & Blei, 2011). In doing this, we can discover, over a wide range of brands, the extent to which truth can be predicted from Twitter communications; identify brands and terms that may be using or used in greenwashing practices; and glean insight into how cause-related terms are used differently in sincere vs. misleading contexts.

Data

GoodGuide

Several organizations have attempted to objectively rate different aspects of a brand or product, including the impact on health, environment, and society. While there is considerable debate on how to most usefully measure this (Delmas & Blass, 2010), for this study we rely on data from GoodGuide.com, one of the most ambitious efforts in this area. Founded in 2007 by a professor of environmental and labor policy at the University of California, Berkeley, GoodGuide applies a highly rigorous and well-documented scientific methodology to rate the health, environmental, and social impact of thousands of companies and brands across a range of sectors.

Beyond its rigor, the GoodGuide ratings are uniquely suited for our research purposes as they provide ratings at the brand as well as company level, while most rating systems provide assessments only of corporate-level policies, and many only for Fortune 500 firms (e.g., TruCost, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*). For large companies, sub-brands may vary dramatically in both the environmental friendliness of the product line, and the brand personality/image. Corporate images can have highly variable influence on brand images (Berens, et al., 2005; Brown & Dacin, 1997) and in many cases consumers are more likely to form the relationship-like connections we aim to explore at the brand level.

GoodGuide considers over 1,000 different indicators to rate performance, including greenhouse gas emissions, environmental certifications and awards, third-party ratings, company policy statements, amount of recycled content in products, types of chemicals used, and fair trade status. These are compiled into three scores between 1 and 10, for health, environment, and social impact. Higher scores indicate better performance.

We collect brand-level information from GoodGuide for the two sectors with the most ratings: Food & Beverage (1,644 brands) and Personal Care (1,377 brands). These sectors contain many brands that have been rated along all three dimensions (unlike Cars or Apparel, which lack a Health rating).

Twitter

For each brand, we searched for its official Twitter account using a semi-automated method. First, we executed a script to query the Twitter API for user profiles containing the name of the brand or its parent company. To focus on brands with an active Twitter presence, we removed accounts with fewer than 1,000 followers or 100 tweets or 1,000 tokens. We also removed accounts that appeared to be personal, rather than company accounts (i.e., those containing "I" or "me" in the description field or containing only first names in the name field). Finally, we manually checked each account to ensure it was correctly matched to the brand. This resulted in a final list of 941 brands in the two categories of Food & Beverage (446) and Personal Care (495). The GoodGuide scores for these final brands are summarized in Figure 1(a).

We note that roughly 65% of the original brands collected from GoodGuide were removed from analysis because of a lack of Twitter presence (either no account found, or insufficient tweets or followers). An obvious limitation of our approach is that it is only applicable to brands that are active on Twitter (recently, it was estimated that 77% of Fortune 500 companies maintain active Twitter accounts (Barnes, et al., 2013)). We leave for future work extensions to other social media outlets (e.g., Facebook).

The Twitter Search API allows us to collect up to 3,200 tweets per account. Doing so results in 2.95M tweets containing 49.7M word tokens, or 38k tokens per brand on average (Figure 1(b)).

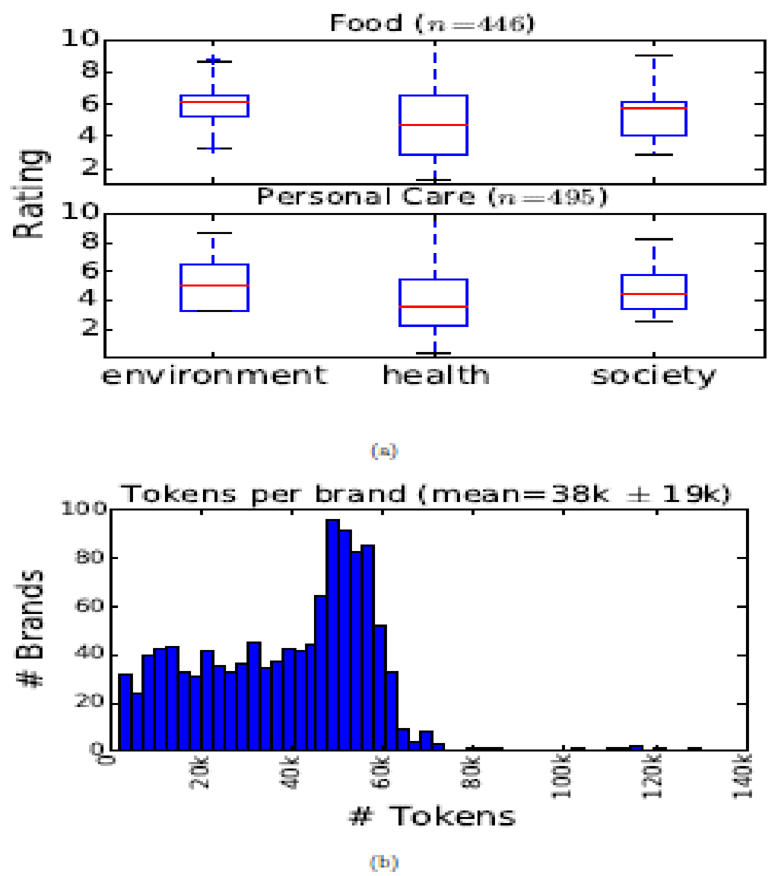

***Figure 1*: Descriptive statistics of the collected data: (a) the ratings distribution from GoodGuide.com for the two product categories and three dimensions considered; (b) the number of tokens collected from each brand's Twitter account.**

Analysis

Predicting Ratings from Text

To explore RQ1, in this section we perform text regression to predict the GoodGuide rating of each brand based on the lexical content of its tweets.

Preprocessing

We created one term vector per brand, summarizing the content of all of that brand's tweets. We tokenized each tweet by converting to lower case, collapsing URLs and mentions into identifier tokens, and collapsing characters repeated more than twice. Punctuation is retained, as are indicators for hashtags and retweets. For example, a tweet *http://www.foo.com fast-forward hi :) how?? U.S.A. @you whaaaaaaat? #awesome*. is transformed into the tokens: *URL fast-forward hi :) how ?? u.s.a. MENTION what ? #awesome*. A retweet *RT hi there* is transformed into *rt-hi rt-there*. The motivation here is to retain the distinction between hashtags and regular tokens, and between retweeted text and regular text. This allows us to identify Twitter-specific distinctions in brand marketing strategy.

Next, these tokens were converted into a binary representation, where 1 indicates that a term is used by a brand, 0 otherwise. We removed from the vocabulary terms not used by at least 10 diff erent brands, to help identify terms that are generalizable across brands. This resulted in 54,958 unique terms. Finally, to downweight common terms, we transformed these into tf-idf vectors by dividing by one plus the number of brands that use each term.

Regression

Given the list of brand vectors paired with three ratings from GoodGuide, we fit six separate ridge regression models (one for each category/rating pair). We performed 10-fold cross-validation to assess the out-of-sample error rate of the model, reporting two quality metrics:

- Pearson's r: We collect all the predicted values from the held-out data in each fold and compute the correlation with the true values; r $\in [-1, 1]$; larger is better.
- nrmsd: Normalized root-mean-square deviation computes the square root of the mean square error, normalized by the range of true values:

$$\mathrm{nrmsd}(\mathbf{y}, \hat{\mathbf{y}}) = \frac{\sqrt{\frac{\sum_i (\hat{y}_i - y_i)^2}{|\mathbf{y}|}}}{\max(\mathbf{y}) - \min(\mathbf{y})}$$

where y is the vector of true ratings and ŷ is the vector of predicted ratings. nrmsd $\in [0, 1]$; smaller is better.

Results

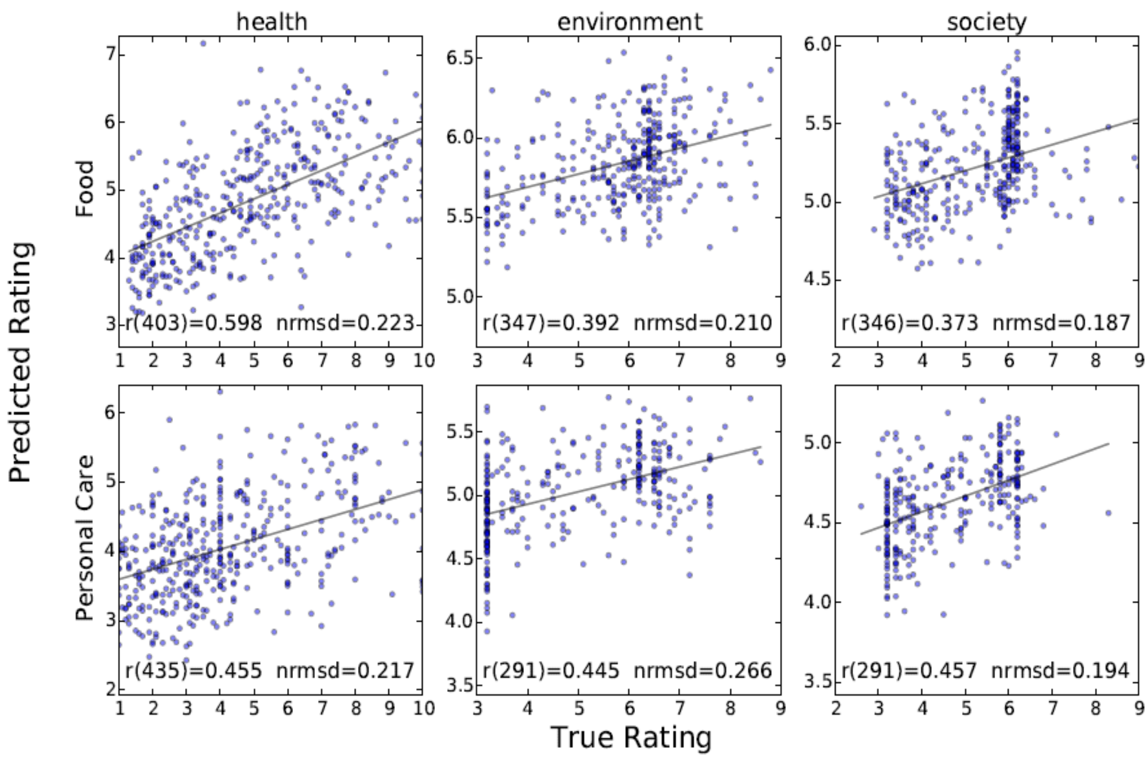

***Figure 2*: Scatter plots of the true rating (from GoodGuide) and that predicted from the tweets from each brand, along with the held-out correlation (r) and normalized root-mean-square deviation (nrmsd).**

Figure 2 shows the scatter plots for each category/rating pair. The out-of-sample correlation ranges from .598 (Food/Health) to .373 (Food/Society). All correlations are statistically significant at the .001 significance level using a two-tailed t-test. To interpret the nrmsd values, on a scale from 1-10, a value of .2 means that, on average, the predicted rating is within 1.8 points of the true rating (.2 * (10-1)).

These results suggest that high-rated brands do indeed tweet differently than low-rated brands. It is perhaps unsurprising that the Food/Health results are the most accurate — the health of food is a widely discussed issue, and this rating is most tied to the contents of the actual product. Additionally, Figure 1(a) shows that the Health category has the largest dispersion of scores, which may provide a more useful signal for training. What is more surprising is the extent to which environment and society issues are discussed, and how predictive the related terms are of the brand rating.

To further investigate these results, Table 1 shows the top six coefficients for each of the six models. We find a number of intuitive results, including terms like *organic*, *fair trade*, *sustainable*, and *chemicals*. Other terms require more context. While some may be a result of model over-fitting, others have plausible explanations once we examine the matching tweets: *m-f* is used when providing customer service phone number and hours to customers with complaints or queries. These correspond to brands with a very engaged customer support operation, which appears to correlate with high ratings. The term "mom's" refers in part to the *Mom's Best Award*, a website that recommends products safe for expectant mothers; a similar website mentioned is *Mom's Best Bets*. Highly-rated products promote the fact that they have been awarded a high rating from such websites. The term "87" comes from a popular retweet of a poll indicating that 87% of Americans want genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) to be labeled. Thus, while richer language analysis may uncover more complex linguistic patterns, it appears that a simple bag-of-words approach quickly identifies salient terms used by highly-rated brands.

Sector	Health	Environment	Society
Food	nutritious (0.72) cereals (0.70) rt-cereals (0.69) #organic (0.68) rt-organic (0.63) grains (0.63)	#organic (0.40) sustainable (0.38) rt-film (0.37) farming (0.36) rt-#fairtrade (0.35) chalk (0.33)	rt-#fairtrade (0.52) #fairtrade (0.36) m-f (0.30) philly (0.30) peeps (0.29) farming (0.28)
Personal Care	mom's (0.75) chemical (0.75) #organic (0.71) toxic (0.65) rt-#eco (0.63) chemicals (0.62)	rt-#ad (0.39) reco (0.36) incl (0.36) simone (0.36) photographs (0.36) ss14 (0.35)	rt-#ad (0.32) feed (0.30) collaboration (0.30) 87 (0.28) core (0.28) reco (0.27)

***Table 1*: The top weighted coefficients for each category.**

Identifying Potentially Misleading Brands

In RQ2, we explore whether the model from the previous section can be used to identify instances of low-rated brands using terms that are indicative of high-rated brands, and whether we can identify patterns in these potentially misleading accounts to better understand greenwashing practices in social media.

A natural way to investigate this question is to examine brands for which the model overestimates the true rating. While some of these errors are simply due to inaccuracies of the model, many may be indicative of attempts to position a brand as higher rated than it is. For each brand, we compute the predicted rating minus the true rating, and sort the brands in decreasing order.

Table 2 displays a sample of the top brands according to this measure. For each brand, we identified the terms that had the largest contribution to a high predicted rating (based on the corresponding coefficient), then we searched for tweets containing those terms.

Brand	GoodGuide	Predicted	Sample Tweet
The Ginger People	1.6	5.4	#EarthDay every day. Partnership with Non-GMO Project. Expanding organic production. Focus on complete sustainable and ethical supply chain.
Daisy Brand	3.5	6.9	Top 5 Myths About the Diabetes Diet via @TodaysDietitian by @nutritionjill
Pamela's Products	2.4	5.6	PP Tasting 10/4 @ Organics & More in Wyoming, Ontario Canada
Stretch Island	2.9	6.1	Try a healthier option for trick-or-treating this year with #StretchIsland FruitaBu Fruit Rolls! They're naturally sweet and nutritious!
Wholly Wholesome	2.4	5.2	Did you know our cookie doughs are 70% organic?! http://t.co/zEGIic7iD8 #Organic #Baking #Cookies
Chobani	3.3	6.3	@JWright99 We are actively exploring an organic option for consumers who prefer having that choice.
Guiltless Gourmet	3.2	6.0	Check out this amazing vid, and stop drinking bottled water! #green #reuse #greenisgood #waste #eco #earthtweet
Philip Kingsley	0.5	4.1	Our top 8 holiday season foods high in iron -a mineral essential for healthy, beautiful hair growth & wellbeing.
Herbacin	1.1	4.6	Hi everyone! Welcome to Herbacins Twitter page. Herbacin is a European skincare line that contains organic and natural ingredients.

***Table 2*: A sample of the brands for which the model over-predicts the true rating by the largest amount.**

Examining these results, a few patterns emerge:

1. Brand Personality: The most common pattern found is where a brand uses Twitter to cultivate an informal personality consistent with support of a cause. For example, Guiltless Gourmet discusses the environmental damage of water bottles, which is tangential to its product line. Similarly, Pamela's Products mentions that its products are available at a store called "Organics and More," even though its products are not necessarily organic. Finally, Philip Kingsley has a very low health rating, in large part because of hair products containing Cocamide Dea, which GoodGuide labels as a health concern. While its tweets do not make direct claims about the health of its products, the brand personality promotes health and well-being.

2. Product Labeling. A second common case arises when low-ranked brands attempt to label their products with terms popularly associated with a cause, most notably for health and the environment. For example, some brands with low GoodGuide ratings have advocated for voluntary labeling of genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) or have advertised their products as GMO-free. Similarly, many brands highlight that their products are gluten-free or vegan. For example, in Table 2, Wholly Wholesome, which makes organic desserts, receives a low health rating from GoodGuide (due to high sugar content), but the model predicts a high score due to the term "organic." Additionally, Herbacin, which makes skincare products, highlights its organic ingredients, though GoodGuide assigns a low health rating due to the presence of Propyl Paraben in some of its products, which GoodGuide views as a health risk.

3. Explicit Health Marketing: A third category contains direct attempts to promote the health of a line of products. For example, Daisy Brand, known most for sour cream and cottage cheese, often posts tweets promoting the health value of its products, e.g.: "Our mission is to make the highest-quality & healthiest cottage cheese on the planet." The sample tweet in Table 2 cites an article clarifying that not all white foods are unhealthy (in response to the guidance to encourage people to eat more whole grains).

This analysis provides insight into the most common ways in which brands may be engaging in greenwashing practices on Twitter and cultivating a brand image that is more in line with a social cause than independent ratings suggest.

Identifying Potentially Misleading Terms

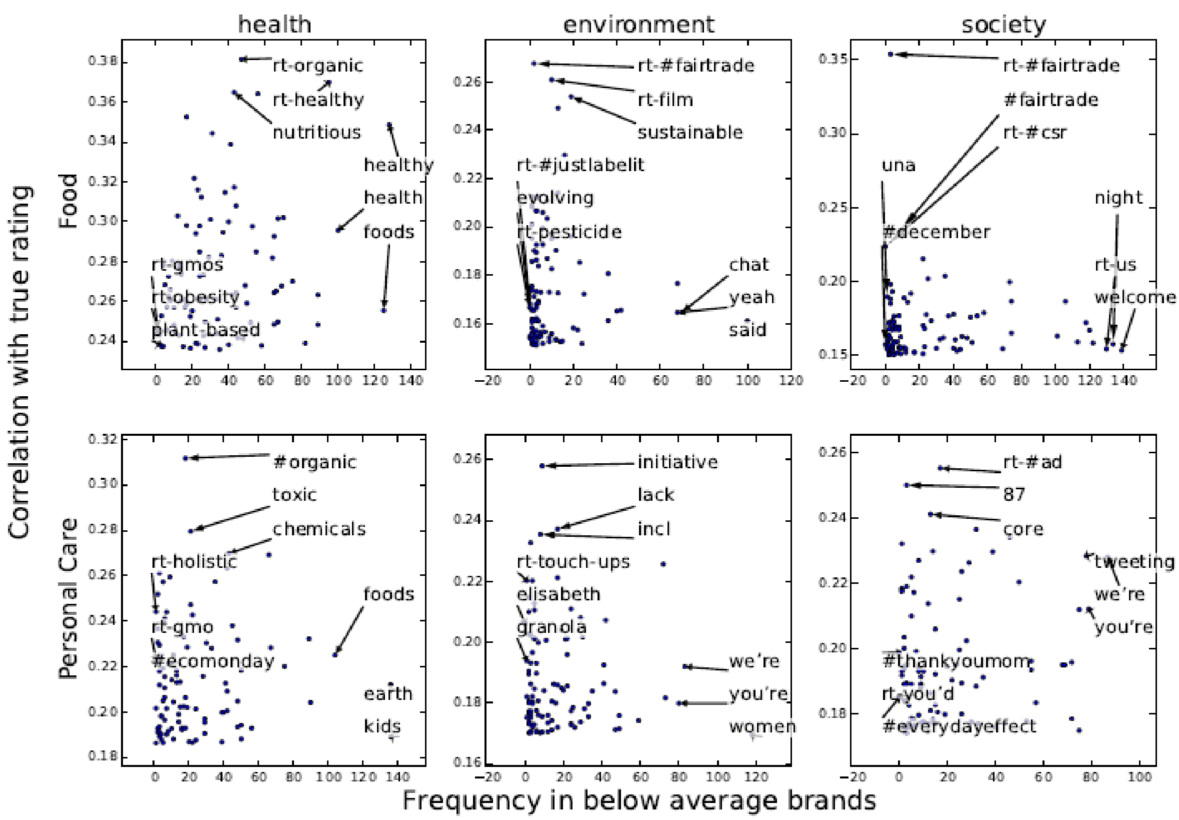

***Figure 3*: The 100 most highly correlated terms for each rating. We have labeled the three terms with the highest correlation, as well as the three terms with the lowest and highest usage among below average brands. Terms with high usage by below average brands may indicate attempts to enhance the perception of a brand.**

Given that brands with very diff erent ratings may use similar terminology, in this section we investigate how to identify terms that might be used most in misleading contexts. In doing so, we aim to provide insight to marketers and consumers alike regarding the true communication value of common cause-related marketing terms (and to provide a method for monitoring trends therein). The problem can be understood as follows: identify terms that are generally predictive of high ratings, but are also occasionally used by low-rated brands.

We build on traditional feature selection approaches to identify such terms. A common approach is to rank features by their correlation with the output variable. While this will provide us with terms correlated with health and the environment, terms with similar correlation values may have very diff erent usage among low-rated brands. To distinguish between these cases, for each term we also compute the number of brands with a below average rating that have used it.

Figure 3 plots these results for the 100 terms with the strongest positive correlation with each category. We include a label for 9 terms per plot: the three with the highest correlation, the three with the lowest usage by below average brands (smallest x value), and the three with the highest usage by below average brands (largest x value).

Term	Category	Rating	No. Tweets	Accuracy
organic	food	health	15988	0.880 ±0.02
gmo	food	health	3109	0.858 ±0.03
health	food	health	15099	0.812 ±0.03
fairtrade	food	society	990	0.810 ±0.06
nutritious	food	health	897	0.704 ±0.03
foods	food	health	10204	0.656 ±0.02
healthy	food	health	22507	0.652 ±0.02
chemicals	personal care	health	999	0.549 ±0.04
organic	personal care	health	15988	0.483 ±0.04
toxic	personal care	health	858	0.457 ±0.07
			Avg.	0.686

***Table 3*: Binary classification results distinguishing diff erent contexts of salient terms.**

Examining these plots can provide some insight into the state of lexical usage in a category. For example, the term “healthy” has a strong correlation with foods with high health ratings; however, it is also used by nearly 130 below average brands. This reinforces the observation from the previous section concerning explicit health marketing (e.g., Daisy Brand), which dilutes the predictive power of the term “healthy.” In contrast, the term “rt-#fairtrade” appears to be a reliable indicator of environmental and social justice ratings — it has both a strong correlation and is used by very few below average brands.

We also investigated the context in which high- and low-rated brands used predictive terms. For example, the terms “vegan,” “#organic,” and “healthy” are commonly used by healthy brands in the context of farming practices, specific vegetables, or grains (e.g., quinoa, tofu); in contrast, brands rated as less healthy tend to use these terms to modify foods that are typically not healthy (e.g., pie, baking, desserts).

“Sustainable” is used by environmentally-friendly food brands along with words such as “petition” and “policy,” suggesting a more engaged, activist approach to environmentalism. Low-rated personal care brands tend to use the word “sustainable” with terms like "#ecomonday" and "#earthmonth," suggesting that these brands typically discuss sustainability issues in the context of re-occurring events that focus on the environment.

Disambiguating Terms Based on Context

The preceding analysis presumes the presence of third-party ratings to detect potentially misleading uses of terms – we find, for example, that a salient term like "organic" is used by brands with very diff erent ratings. However, this approach can only be applied given some rated brands. That is, we can use the approach in the preceding section to identify potentially misleading terms, but given a new tweet from a new brand, how can we assess whether it is misaligned with the rating of the brand?

In this section, we next consider whether the context in which these terms are used can be analyzed to infer whether they are being used by high- or low-rated brands. For example, consider these four (real) tweets:

- T1. *#FillInTheBlank! My favorite healthy lunch to make is ______.*
- T2. *RT @Qalisto26: @aveda My new year's resolution is to use more environmentally conscious, natural, organic, non-gmo, & sustainable products.*
- T3. *We believe children should be fed from pure ingredients, which is why we provide high quality certified #organic foods that do not use GMOs!*
- T4. *Resolve to avoid toxic beauty and skin care products. Do something good for you and let Aubrey Organics help! http://t.co/HVHjbk3K*

Each tweet contains one or more terms correlated with a high rating. However, the usage and context is quite diff erent. T1 asks users to respond with healthy lunch items, but does not make any claims about a specific product. T2 is a retweet of a user who has mentioned a personal care product (Aveda), listing many desirable properties of the brand. This is an interesting and common case of a brand retweeting a customer's tweet to promote a product. These diff er from T3 and T4, which provide direct statements about the health of a product. Indeed, the GoodGuide ratings for the brands of T1 and T2 are lower than those for T3 and T4.

In this section, we build a classifier to distinguish between these two types of contexts. We borrow ideas from word-sense disambiguation (Stevenson and Wilks, 2003), a common natural language processing task to identify the sense of a term (e.g., bass the fish or bass the musical instrument). While here the terms are not expected to have diff erent senses in the NLP sense, we do expect the contexts to diff er based on the rating of the brand.

Thus, we can view this as a supervised learning task: the training data consist of a list of (term, context) pairs; each point is assigned a label that is positive if the term is used by a high-rated brand, and negative if the term is used by a low-rated brand. Once we fit a classifier, we can then apply it to new tweets (with unknown ratings) in order to determine whether the author is a brand with a high or low rating.

To binarize the ratings, we consider brands with ratings above 5.5 to be positive, and those below 4.5 to be negative (to filter neutral ratings). We then fit a logistic regression classifier[7] using the same term list use in the previous regression analysis. The primary diff erence is that here we are classifying individual tweets containing a specific keyword, rather than estimating the rating of a brand based on all of that brand's tweets.

Table 3 displays the average accuracy of 10-fold cross-validation. To better estimate generalization accuracy, we have ensured that a tweet from the same brand cannot occur in both a training and testing split in the same fold. (This is to confirm the classifier is not simply learning to associate brand-identifying terms with the class label.)

We can see that the difficulty of this classification task varies by keyword, ranging from 88% accuracy for tweets containing the word "organic," to only 46% accuracy for tweets containing the term "toxic." Averaged over all terms, the classifier is 68.6% accurate at determining whether a tweet originated from a high- or low-rated brand, given that the tweet contains a keyword known to correlate with high ratings. This indicates that there exist contextual clues that may sometimes reveal the rating of a brand.

We also examined how Twitter-specific behavior diff ers between the two contexts. Specifically, we investigate whether usage of retweets, hashtags, urls, and mentions diff ers between high- and low-rated brands. Table 4 displays how often each Twitter feature was among the top 10 most highly-correlated features for high- and low-rated brands. We can see that the behavior varies considerably depending on the term. For example, the use of hashtags is strongly correlated with high-rated food brands mentioning the term "organic," but the use of hashtags is correlated with low-rated food brands mentioning the term "health." We can see that the feature that displays the most consistent signal is retweeting — for 7 of 10 terms, it is strongly correlated with low-rated brands. For example, if the term "organic" appears in a retweet, it is more likely to be from a low-rated brand. This suggests that retweets may be a way for low-rated brands to align themselves with a particular cause.

Examining other highly weighted terms reveals another interesting insight: for the term "GMO," the highest weighted term is certified. This labeling carries a stronger, official meaning ("certified GMO-free") and so is likely to be used by high-rated brands to distinguish their products.

Feature	High Rating	Low rating
hashtag	5	4
retweet	2	7
mention	3	3
url	5	4

Table 4: **The number of terms in Table 3 for which each feature was among the top 10 most highly correlated features for a high or low rating. While hashtags, mentions, and urls are strongly predictive of class, which class that is varies depending on the term. On the other hand, retweets containing salient terms are a fairly reliable indicator of low-rated brands.**

Conclusion and Future Work

Using text regression, we have found that the textual content of brands' tweet can, to some extent, predict their ratings with respect to three different concerns (health, environment, social justice). Furthermore, we have found that such a model can then be applied to identify patterns that might suggest misleading or conflicting messages. Finally, we have provided a method to explore terms that are used in conflicting contexts. We expect the presented findings and approaches can be useful towards promoting transparency in online, cause-related marketing. Such transparency and accountability is necessary for values-based leadership to flourish, enabling values-based decisions to be effectively communicated to consumers, empowering consumers to make more informed decisions, and enabling marketing researchers and policy-makers to track trends cause-related advertising practices.

There are a number of limitations with this work: a brand must have an active social media presence and the model requires ratings from third-party sources for training. In future work, we will explore: (1) adapting this methodology to other social media platforms; (2) more sophisticated linguistic analysis beyond unigrams; and (3) improved monitoring of the marketplace for greenwashing brands and terms that have weakened messaging value.

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A Comparison of Worldviews of Business Leaders from Disparate Geographic Cultures

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Abstract

Leadership functions within the context of multiple perspectives. Business leaders naturally possess a worldview that is influenced by today's global society and economy. Although interacting with business leaders of disparate worldviews can create challenges, the better these various worldviews are understood, the more positive the outcomes of leadership will be. Global business organizations require leadership that recognizes their own foundations, along with those of the leaders with whom they interact -- especially leaders emanating from other cultures and geographic locations. This paper explores the concept of *worldview* and its underlying core values and present the results of interviews of four business leaders from different countries with distinct philosophical perspectives, identifying, comparing, and contrasting each leader's understanding of leadership.

Introduction

Business leaders seldom take the time to reflect upon their worldview and therefore the origins of their philosophical foundations of leadership. Leadership studies have examined this phenomenon and observed how important culture is in the influence of leadership development. Globalization has encouraged intercultural leadership studies, but a gap exists comparing and contrasting the philosophical underpinnings of leadership as espoused by business leaders from different geographic cultures. Business leaders attempting to collaborate with varying definitions of reality or right versus wrong could result in less than desirable outcomes.

Leadership is highly contextualized and involves complex interactions among leaders, followers, and situations (Hollander & Julian, 1969). Leadership is a process of reality construction that takes place within a given context (Smircich & Morgan, 1982). Leadership is also culturally contingent (House, 2004). Leaders must give meaning to various situations to avoid vagueness and to encourage organizational members to act in ways that will lead to desired outcomes. The leadership development process involves transferring organizational values and culture. A leader's philosophical foundation upon which his or her leadership practices are based is therefore a major factor of leadership effectiveness. Leadership development and its philosophical foundations are vitally important concepts to the understanding of leadership (Hamilton & Bean, 2005).

Everyone holds a worldview. Every day, we make perfunctory decisions based on our personal worldview. It takes a concerted effort to delve deeply into one's inner beliefs to flush out exactly what one's worldview truly is. Making decisions that are not aligned with one's worldview creates inner conflict. Aligning decisions with worldview provides inner harmony. As leaders, understanding worldview helps us achieve harmony within ourselves, our followers, and our organizations.

What is worldview? Its origin is a translation from the German term *Weltanschauung.* This term was used by Immanuel Kant and others as a way to denote a set of beliefs that underlie and shape all human thought and action (Heslam, 1998). Wilhelm Dilthey was one of the first to expound his own philosophy in terms of a worldview concept. According to Dilthey, the ultimate root of any worldview is life itself (Kluback & Weinbaum, 1957). Our worldview is ours: one that may be held in common with others, but only because they are like us. Friedrich Nietzsche viewed every worldview as a product of its time, place, and culture (Naugle, 2002), each rendering a significant distinction. Many other scholars have contributed to the evolution of a definition for worldview with each scholar's respective worldview influencing his or her own definition. Naugle provides a definition of worldview from a Christian perspective, implying the objective existence of the Trinitarian God whose essential character establishes the moral order of the universe and whose word, wisdom, and law define and govern all aspects of created existence.

Worldview incorporates our assumptions which may be true, partially true, or entirely false, to create our core values and what we believe about the world. Sometimes our beliefs are known to our conscience thought, or they may be archived in our subconscious. Sometimes we are consistent with our beliefs; at other times we are inconsistent. Regardless, these assumptions, core values, and beliefs create our perception of the world around us. In simple terms, our worldview is the way we address everyday issues of life. For leaders, worldview provides the philosophical foundations of leadership. Every person is unique, therefore, so is his/her perspective of life, reality, foundation, belief system, and life experiences. Individuals may be similar, but no two are exactly alike. Thus, the same holds true for worldviews. Sire (2004) reviews the evolvement of worldview as a concept and ultimately posits the following definition:

> A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being (p. 122).

As leaders in a global society, it is inevitable that one will encounter individuals with diverse worldviews. While effective leaders comprehend their own worldview, awareness of other worldviews will foster effective communication and better understanding.

Interviews of Four Business Leaders

Four business leaders from different countries were interviewed over a period of time utilizing face-to-face interaction, telephone, and email. Participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

1. Willingness to participate.
2. Rapport of the participants with the author and the author with the participants.
3. Fluency in English.
4. Maximum variation.

Study participants were:

- Mr. Yo Sakata, CEO (now retired), AMCO, Tokyo, Japan.
- Mr. Ranjit Mathew, Owner, Merit Global, Mumbai, India.
- Mr. Britain (participant preferred anonymity) General Manager of a medical device company in the United Kingdom.
- Bill Auxier (Author), who at the time of this study was the CEO of Thompson Surgical Instruments, Traverse City, MI, USA.

The interviews were centered on the following questions.

- What is your definition of leadership?
- What are your core values that most affect your leadership philosophy?
- In what ways have your life experiences helped shape those core values?
- What impact, if any, does religion play in the shaping of your core values?
- How do you determine right from wrong?

Each interview will be summarized, compared, and contrasted.

Mr. Britain is the General Manager of a medical device distributor in the United Kingdom. Mr. Britain became the General Manager quite by accident. Educated as an electrical engineer, Mr. Britain was quick to answer questions with short, factual answers. When asked to share his philosophical foundations of leadership and how they evolved, Mr. Britain was eager to respond. He admitted to having difficulty participating in this process because he had never taken the time to reflect upon the development of his values which, in turn, affected his leadership philosophy. He found the questions extremely difficult to answer, and he apologized for his concise responses.

Mr. Britain credited his solid family upbringing for providing him with moral guidance. His father was a strong influence who taught him the importance of adopting an effective work/life balance. Both his mother and father instilled within him core life principles regarding honesty, fairness, and “playing by the rules.” Mr. Britain even admitted to deciphering between right and wrong by sometimes considering his family’s opinions of his actions. In his youth, he played team sports, cricket, and football (soccer) mostly. He learned at an early age that it was more fulfilling to win than to lose, which helped him foster a spirit of healthy competition.

Mr. Britain was reluctant to give credence to religion as having an influence on his core values. Describing himself as “not a church goer,” he contradicted himself when he stated, “I guess they (his core values) are based on fundamental Christian principles.” Family, team sports, education, and religion provided life experiences that helped shape his core values. He identified the following core values:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Fair Play
- Competitiveness
- Ambition
- Diligence/attention to detail
- Balance
- Decisiveness

Mr. Britain was very uncomfortable looking inward at his philosophical foundations of leadership. Upon reflection, he realized that family, team sports, education, and religion all play a major role in developing his core value beliefs and the foundation for his leadership philosophy.

Mr. Sakata was both president and CEO (he has since retired) of AMCO, a medical device company in Japan, where he was very focused on the type of leadership he provided to his company. Mr. Sakata identified three core values that most affect his leadership philosophy. The first one he mentioned was the spirit to carry out tasks. “Spirit to carry out tasks” refers to the sense of urgency to get things done. Another way of explaining this is the possession of self-motivation to complete a task without anyone putting pressure on you to get the job done. The second core value is self-control or patience with employees. The third core value is stubbornness but willingness to understand others which is carried over from self-control and patience. When an employee presents an idea, Mr. Sakata feels it vitally important to listen, understand, and be receptive.

During his college years, Mr. Sakata was a member of the college rowing club. All the members trained daily with strenuous workouts to gain strength – approximately 300 days each year. They also lived together, with the entire crew sharing the same boarding house. From this experience, Mr. Sakata learned the importance of self-control, friendship, and a spirit of perseverance.

Concerning religion, Mr. Sakata describes himself as a lukewarm Buddhist. He does not think religion has played a role in the formation of his core values. Upon further questioning about this, he admitted that while executing his daily tasks, he always tries to pay respect to his employees – elderly employees in particular – which is one of the foundational teachings in Buddhism. In determining right from wrong, Mr. Sakata’s principles are outlined in a simple phrase: *Whatever is good for the company is right, and whatever is bad for the company is wrong*. Other concepts of leadership Mr. Sakata identified as being important include listening to others, fairness in decision-making (particularly in personnel matters), and avoiding personal likes or dislikes in the decision-making process.

Mr. Mathew is the owner of Merit Global, a medical device distributor in Mumbai, India. Mr. Mathew majored in engineering in college, and like all his classmates, had the opportunity to come to the United States to earn a graduate degree. Instead, he was one of the few to stay in India, primarily to care for his parents. After working for a medical device company, he decided to branch out on his own and start his own distribution company. Unlike the other participants who found the process of examining their philosophical foundations of leadership difficult, Mr. Mathew embraced and enjoyed the process. He took the least amount of time to complete and return the questionnaire and was the most willing to engage in discussion.

Mr. Mathew's definition of leadership involves the adoption of change for the greater good of society. Leadership, affecting change simply for materialistic or self-serving goals, is wrong. Genuine leadership is effecting change to make the world a better place for all living entities. As a fourth-generation Christian, Mr. Mathew also noted that an omnipotent, omnipresent God is the best example of a leader. Mr. Mathew identified several core values, the first being that a leader needs to bring a positive outlook to a negative situation. He called it, "bringing in positivity where there is negativity in order to effectively solve problems." Another core value is adopting views that will long stand the test of time. Honesty is another core value Mr. Mathew identified as strong ethics and aiming to work for the betterment of others. Life experiences that helped shape his core values include family, his upbringing by his parents, and a social responsibility for the greater good. For Mr. Mathew, whether you are a believer or an atheist, religion is the underlying principle of one's core values.

At the time of this study, I was the CEO of Thompson Surgical Instruments, a surgical device manufacturing company based in the United States. Becoming the CEO was a dream come true for me after twenty years of successful experience in sales, marketing, management, and other leadership roles for a variety of organizations including a Fortune 500 medical device company. I grew up in a rural area of the Midwest with humble beginnings, which taught me all about hard work and making due with one's situation. My father was bi-vocational, working six days a week for an oil company and on Sundays he was a Baptist minister. My mother was a homemaker.

I, too, found it difficult to reflect upon the underlying life experiences of which my worldview had evolved, and, therefore, my philosophical foundations of leadership. For me, leadership involves the following: the utilization of effective communication to understand culture, the willingness to implement change, the ability make more good judgments than bad ones, the foresight to perceive and understand followers, the knowledge to understand the situation, and the commitment to surpass the expectations of others. This definition evolved as the result of reading ample leadership literature on various leadership concepts and theories and attempting to understand and evaluate situations -- a combination of intellectual knowledge of leadership and real-world application.

It was difficult for me to separate the teachings of my parents and my Christian upbringing, as they were so intertwined. Honesty, ethics, contributing to mankind, playing by the rules, and establishing a solid work ethic were core values learned from my parents and their Christian influence. Conflict resolution, being a team player, and proactive behavior were learned elsewhere, namely through team sports that I played in my youth. I learned that to be on the team, everyone needed to contribute one hundred percent, one hundred percent of the time. These lessons have stayed with me in the business world.

Coaching team sports, terminating employees, working my way through college, and growing up in modest economic conditions impacted my core values. I believe that human beings choose right and wrong based on what they have learned through life experiences and communicating those experiences with God, oneself, and others.

Discussion

Definitions of leadership were provided by everyone except Mr. Britain and are summarized in Table 1. Each definition shares two common themes: implementing change and influencing for a good or better state. Mr. Sakata's definition refers to "maintain and develop the company" — which was interpreted as dealing with changes within the environment to "maintain" the company — and changing the organization as needed to "develop" the company. Mr. Mathew and I refer to change in our definitions by including the words "affecting change" and "implement change" respectively. Change is a common theme in all the definitions.

Examining the core values of the participants reveals diversity. Table 2 provides a summary of the core values. Honesty and ethical behavior are common themes regardless of geographic culture. Communication, decision-making, goodness, and work ethic also emerge. It is interesting to look at the terms each person utilized. For Mr. Britain and I, English is our first language. Is this the reason our stated core values use less words? For both Mr. Sakata and Mr. Mathew, English is a second language. Is that why they identify core values with more words? For example, they identify core values such as the "spirit to carry out tasks" and "views that will stand the test of time." Or is this a message they are truly trying to convey? In the discussions with Mr. Sakata and Mr. Mathew, it was determined that "spirit to carry out tasks" equates to strong work ethic and "views that will stand the test of time" equates to good judgment and good decision-making. One might question whether I forced these clarifications into words that made sense to me and that perhaps there is more to these words than elaborated here.

Table 1
Definitions of Leadership

PERSON	DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP
MR. SAKATA	*Leadership is the power to maintain and develop the company for employees and their families, and my own family.*
MR. MATHEW	*Leadership is affecting change for the greater good of society.*
AUTHOR	*Leadership is serving first by utilizing effective communication to understand culture, implement change, make more good judgments than bad, to perceive and understand followers, to understand the situation, and influencing myself and constituents to not only achieve but surpass expectations.*

Mr. Britain notes competitiveness and ambition in his core values. These relate to work ethic. Some competitiveness is good, but some might question the possibility that at times, there is too much competition in the business world. Mr. Britain's academic training as an engineer is reflected in his core value of "diligence to detail." It is interesting that Mr. Britain was the only one to mention balance.

Mr. Sakata provides an interesting perspective on core values when he provides the statement, "spirit to carry out tasks." There is something about using the word "spirit" that gives this core value a deeper meaning that perhaps exemplifies the Japanese work ethic. Of the four business leaders, Mr. Sakata has been in his position the longest amount of time and he is also the oldest. This may be why he was the only one to identify the core values of self-control and patience. Another interesting contribution from Mr. Sakata was his simply stated core value of "never give up."

Table 2
Core Values

MR. BRITAIN	MR. SAKATA	MR. MATHEW	AUTHOR
Honesty	Spirit to Carry Out Tasks	Honesty	Honesty
Integrity	Self-Control	Positive Outlook	Ethics
Fair Play	Patience	Views that Will Stand the Test of Time	Contribute to Mankind
Competitiveness	Stubbornness	Optimism	Play Within the Rules
Ambition	Understanding Others	Ethics	Conflict Resolution
Diligence to Detail	Listening	Betterment of Others	Strong Work Ethic
Balance	Fairness	Problem Solving	Team Player
Decisiveness	Communication	Problem Solving	"Whatever It Takes" Attitude
	Never Give Up		Proactive

Mr. Mathew's core values are interwoven with a substantial commitment to social responsibility. As mentioned previously, his explanations were interwoven with examples of nature. It would appear that of all the study participants, Mr. Mathew's worldview was the most strongly influenced by geographic culture.

In what ways have your life experiences helped shape your core values (Table 3)? Family and religion were mentioned by every participant. Family was easily mentioned by all, but both Mr. Britain and Mr. Sakata begrudgingly acknowledged religion helped shape their core values. Team sports — both playing and coaching team sports — was mentioned by three of the four leaders. Mr. Sakata's theme of serving his employees and their families comes through very strongly with his core values. Mr. Mathew included traveling and meeting people from different cultures as helping shape his core values. Understanding culture is an important element of leadership, and this is a very interesting life experience for Mr. Mathew.

Table 3
Life Experiences That Have Shaped Core Values

MR. BRITAIN	MR. SAKATA	MR. MATHEW	AUTHOR
Family	Family	Family	Parents
Religion	Religion	Spirituality	Religion
Playing Team Sports	Playing Team Sports	Personal search for Infinity	Playing Team Sports
Education	Coaching Team Sports		Coaching Team Sports
	Employees	Traveling, Meeting People from Different Cultures	Terminating Employees
	Families	Cultures	Working Way Through College

How do you determine right from wrong? Mr. Britain and I both mention that family values help us determine right from wrong and both of us also admit that these family values are influenced by Christian values. Mr. Sakata is more oriented to his organization when he states that if it is good for the company it is right; if it is bad for the company, it is wrong. Here again, Mr. Sakata's theme of servant leadership comes through. Mr. Mathew is more elaborative as he lists several questions that must be answered to determine right from wrong. Those questions are: Is it ethical? Is it selfish? Does it help others? Does it include a social view that is good for society? If the answer to these questions is "yes," it is right. If the answer to any of these questions is "no," it is wrong.

Conclusions

The majority of business leaders participating in this study, regardless of culture, had difficulty reflecting upon life experiences to understand the core values that provide the foundation for their worldviews and, therefore, their philosophical foundations of leadership. Each definition shares two common themes: implementing change and influencing others for a positive outcome. Mr. Sakata's definition refers to the development or maintenance of a company which could be defined as accommodating changes within the environment to maintain the company and modifying the organization as needed for development and growth. Mr. Mathew and I referred to change in our definitions by including the terms, "affecting change" and "implementing change," respectively. Honesty and ethical behavior are common themes regardless of geographic culture. The common themes of communication, solid decision-making, integrity, and work ethic also emerge. Family and religion were mentioned by every participant regardless of personal opinions on these subjects. Playing a team sport or coaching a team sport was a significant factor of influence with three of the four business leaders. Through the data presented in this article, it can be deduced that, despite cultural differences, each leader upholds similar values that help contribute to the development of effective business leadership.

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In the real world, Bill has spent over 30 years in the healthcare industry, where he worked his way up from the bottom to become the CEO of a medical device manufacturer with global distribution. In the academic world, he earned a Bachelor's degree in Business, a Master's degree in Communication, and a Doctorate in Leadership.

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Catch My Fall:
The Importance of Developing a Leadership Philosophy Statement in Sustaining Original Values and Leadership Direction

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Abstract

This article draws attention to the need and importance for chief executives to formulate a Leadership Philosophy Statement (LPS) as an aid to guiding them as they execute their duties of leadership. As companies adhere to mission statements (MS) which are developed to light the pathway to success, so too does the leader need a leadership philosophy to pursue that mission. The interconnectedness of organizational mission statements and individual leadership statements is highlighted to emphasize the importance of having related goals between leader and organization. The structure of the LPS as well as its content is discussed to better inform leaders of the best approach to writing a LPS.

Introduction

Leadership is an ongoing developmental process which adapts to changes in the market environment. And while there are numerous theories and approaches to leadership and how leadership changes, the literature fails to point out that a leader is a human being; a constant human being. And although their style of leadership may change over time, although not radically, it remains that the values held by these individuals remain constant. Yet, too often, we see instances where seemingly good human beings engage in unethical and illegal behavior at the workplace. A compromise of the personal self and the business self has occurred. While individuals would never dream to engage in wrong behavior, the pressures of business demands and the "get the deal done at all costs" mantra clouds the situational thought processes of business transactions. In addition, leaders who have proven themselves as proficient leaders all too often find themselves in periods of leadership where every decision they make seems to work against them and ultimately leads to their downfall. The question bodes: how could these intelligent, smart, well-qualified individuals make such catastrophic decisions which led to their and their company's downfall? Research by Carton, Murphy, & Clark (2014) informs that leaders have difficulty in consistently communicating their vision and values to employees. The presence of an LPS may help improve the leader in being consistent with projecting and implementing his/her message and promote a greater understanding and alignment among employees of desired practices and outcomes.

This article posits that leaders stray from the core values that created their success — which inevitably leads to their downfall. Consequently, this author proposes that leaders should not only create a written Leadership Philosophy Statement, but should also revisit this statement each and every time a major decision arises. All great leaders, theorists, and practitioners espouse a core value that guides all decision-making and subsequent choices as well as provides courses of actions and indeed a way of thinking. Ghandhi, for example had "peace" at the core of all his actions; Buffet invokes "value" at the core of his stock purchases, and Jobs imbedded "creativity" at the center of his thought processes. This one message, this one thought, permeates everything and guides everything. So, why then do some formerly accomplished leaders change and become poor leaders? This article argues that a deviation from the core principles that enabled leaders to rise and produce positive results is the root cause for the downfall of such previously successful leaders. To explain this deviation, possible reasons are proffered while concomitantly emphasizing the importance of adherence to core values through the maintenance of issues presented in a leader's Leadership Philosophy Statement. This article, therefore, focuses on key items of concern for inclusion in all LPS. And while there is a multitude of research on leadership and leadership philosophy — particularly in the practitioner domain — there is limited available research on the development and construction of a LPS by senior executives. This article aims to address this gap in the literature.

Background

Although ultimately leaders are responsible for the success or failure of their respective enterprises, the level of blame assigned to them quite often is the result of how much control they had over the situation. This approach to success and failure is supported by Fiedler's contingency theory (1971) which states that the success or failure of leaders depends upon the control they had, or in some instances lacked, over the situation and whether their basic motivation was people-oriented or job-oriented. Furthermore, who is doing the blaming also determines the level of failure assigned to a leader (Meindl, 1990).

With the caveat that failure, although measurable, is determined by those conducting the evaluation, we now contemplate the reason(s) for the occurrence of leadership failure. Thus, in assessing failure, we must be aware that while beauty is in the eye of the beholder, failure then is in the mind of the evaluator. Leaders are blamed more vehemently when failure is a result of internal factors as opposed to external pressures (Hino & Akoi, 2013).

Success happens for a reason; however, failure occurs for a plethora of reasons which include engaging in unethical practices, the inability to adapt to changes in the market, and internal misalignment of people and resources which result in poor decision-making.

Whatever the cause, it becomes apparent that leaders have separated from their original mindsets that were originally successful and had presented the opportunity to be chosen as a leader. The damage that failure causes can be so immense that the development of a LPS can help a leader stay true to the original ethos of leadership which proved successful for them in the past.

Purpose

As there is a strong connection between an organization's mission and its leader, it is imperative to discuss mission statements and their purposes. While Drucker (1971) identifies the mission statement as reflecting the organization's objectives, it has since evolved to represent a variety of domains including organizational identification and values, customer orientation, stakeholders, and product development. Hence, it has developed into a statement of organization characteristics and indeed individual personality (Mintzberg & Quinn, 1996).

Available research indicates that mission-centric organizations experience higher levels of performance and return on equity than those who do not have a mission statement (Mohammad & Karami, 2009; Green & Medlin, 2003; Bart, Bontis, & Taggar, 2001; Baetz & Kenneth, 1998.) Yet further research indicates that their effectiveness is debatable (Braun, Wesche, Frey & Peus, 2012; Desmidt, Prinzie, & Kramer, 2011). However, what does emerge from all areas of available research in this area is that the quality and relevance of the mission statement greatly determines what its impact will be (Blair-Loi, Wharton, & Goodstein, 2011; Khan, Chaudhry, & Khan, 2010). Thus, it is arguable that if used correctly, the mission statement functions as a tool that can positively impact the financial performance of an organization. Nowhere has this research uncovered literature which suggests the development of a mission statement to be detrimental to organizational performance. Therefore, it is in the organization's best interest to carefully craft, maintain, and utilize a mission statement aimed at all organizational stakeholders. Consequently, the relationship between leader and mission statement arises as an issue for discussion.

If the mission statement can be directly related to company performance and is developed by senior management, then ostensibly leadership priorities impact performance. Consequently, through extrapolation it becomes reasonable to assert that the form of leadership responsible for company performance can also be identified and documented. This is where the LPS connects with the MS.

Because leaders, for a variety of reasons struggle, underperform, and fail the needs of the organizations they manage, an LPS is warranted. To negate the chances of failure, something is needed to keep leaders focused, grounded, and in alignment with the recipe that made them successful. That necessary tool can be the LPS. The simple purpose of an LPS is to help leaders succeed by reminding them of how best to lead in a manner congruent with the organizational mission. If an organization has a mission and vision statement to guide it, then too should the chief executive have a mission or vision statement to guide their decision-making process towards the achievement of the overall organization's mission. In other words, how can leaders create a mission statement for an organization if they don't have their own philosophy on how to lead towards that mission?

In fact, the absence therefore of a leadership statement could be an indicator of a leader who is not fully aligned with the organization which he/she leads. The LPS is then the insurance policy statement that helps a leader avoid developing decision-making behavior which would not be beneficial.

The need for a LPS has also grown because leadership has become increasingly challenged over the past decade with respect to competitive global pricing, corporate governance, and the eternal quest for increased efficiencies (Brown, 2013; Kor & Mesko, 2013; O'Shanassy, 2010). These issues, combined with the speed of information through technological advances, have made decision- making an immediate process and every competition a sprint race. Failure to win in the short term evaporates a customer's confidence that an organization can perform over the long term. This splintering of decision making has therefore compromised the grounded, long-term view that most CEOs espouse and forced them to engage in riskier decision making; and for many seasoned CEOs, this is not a skill set they have practiced (Walter, Kellermann, & Lechner, 2010). Leaders, therefore, rather than change their decision-making process, need to apply their philosophy of leadership to how they make decisions. The return will be that their style of leadership has not changed, but has helped them adopt new decision-making processes which, in turn, have increased their overall self-confidence.

Considerations for Leadership Philosophy Statements: Structure & Content

Structure

Thus far we have outlined why mission statements exist and why leadership underperforms in the context that executive leadership and MSs are more closely aligned than is evident from a simple reading of a mission statement. We have, therefore, highlighted the need for both MSs and LPSs. We now embark on offering a framework for LPS development. While we know a CEO, together with his/her executive team, cannot radically change the product of a company, we propose that the CEO can change "how" that product is delivered in a way that aligns with the leader's successful leadership history.

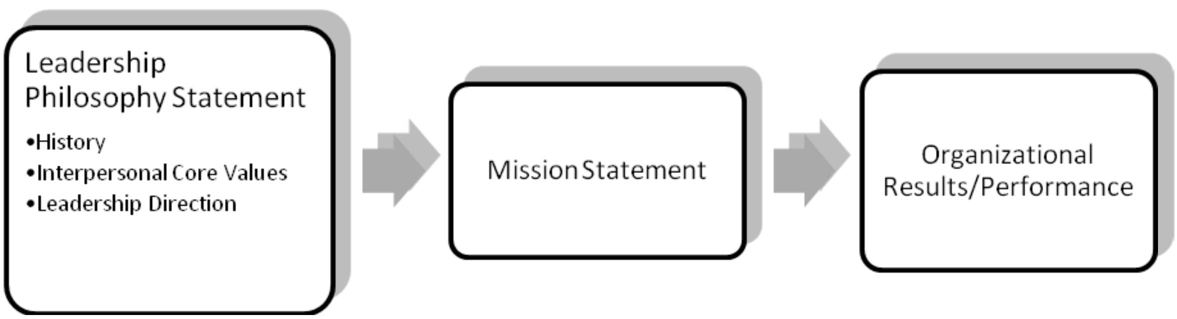
While the MS has a wider audience, the LPS is a more intimate document written for, and by the leader, and at his/her discretion and is shared with that leader's executive team in order to make them aware of the leader's core values and precisely what will guide future leadership decisions. It is built upon past leadership success and lays the framework for future decision making. The greater importance of this document is that it is centered on the core beliefs of the leader with regard to how to lead organizations and interact with followers; essentially, it is the mirror image of what the leader wants to evoke in congruence with that person's leadership style.

For purposes of construct fluidity, the following three-pronged approach may best accommodate the design of the LPS:

1. **History**: How I've led and what the pillars are that have made me successful as a leader.

2. **Interpersonal Core Values**: Employees execute the leader's plan. The better they are treated and regard the leader, the more they feel connected with the leader and identify with the organization. In this context, how a leader treats and values people is central.
3. **Leadership Direction**: Based upon my history and interpersonal relationships, how I envision leading in an uncertain and ever-changing future must be scrutinized. Have my actions and the way I work with people translated into future success and what changes do I need to make in order to successfully navigate the future? How must I change how I manage operations in the future without compromising what makes me successful is an imperative consideration.

Figure 1 clearly illustrates the influence the LPS has on MS formulation which in turn guides an organization in the execution of its plans to realize organizational success. As can be seen, the MS is the vehicle which carries the priorities of the CEO in achieving the organization's goals. Figure 1 below tracks that process:



Content

In delving deeper into the above categories which guide LPS development, it is very easy to fall victim to highlighting all the positives and looking at things through rose-colored glasses. However, it is imperative to be aware of both the positives and the negatives which affect how we lead. There is an abundance of literature on the positive attributes of leaders such as being motivational, a great communicator, results-oriented, innovative, and having an analytical mind. There is yet further literature on familiar styles of leadership such as servant leadership, authentic leadership, and transformational leadership. However, there is markedly less attention paid to the negative attributes and styles of leaders. Research by Toor and Ogunlana (2009) on negative leadership traits termed "organizational neutralizers" revealed that poor communication, abuse of power, and lack of experience are the main culprits in derailing leaders. Therefore, in the absence of any concrete plan for the future, many leaders who simply lead and learn by doing (Nixon, 2003) would be best advised to merely avoid any potential pitfalls as opposed to attempting to create an innovative masterplan for the future. This is quite often done with "survival" as the plan in harsh economic times (Nickell, Rollins, & Hellman, 2013).

In terms of ***history***, we consider the key personal drivers that created success for the leader. Historically, the leader self-examines to identify trends and traits which consistently contribute to success. The leader may identify a strong work ethic, timely communication with peers that engender trust, organizational restructuring skills, or well-developed industry analysis as hallmark traits to achieving success. This research does not advocate doing more of the same just because it previously worked but rather being aware of which approach worked in certain situations and knowing when to reuse it again to achieve a higher probability of success.

In the area of ***interpersonal core values*** (IVC), the leader seeks to understand the interpersonal relationships that have returned productive working relationships: that is, what types of professional relationships worked best, why did relationships develop and grow, were they built on trust and integrity, and what types of relationships failed to produce. Here our leader is seeking to understand the best way to maximize relationships. Central to IVC is the communication of what is important to the leader and what it is he/she represents in terms of values-based leadership. Once subordinates understand the core values of their leader, they will be more comfortable in their own future decision making without second guessing what they "think" the leader would want.

Is the ***leadership direction*** I want and need to take the organization realistic? Have my successes thus far indicated that the direction is attainable and reasonable? Is it overly ambitious? Is it consistent with my history and what I stand for in terms of ICV? These are vital questions for leaders to ask themselves because an envisioned future that does not dovetail with the leaders' experiences and values is strongly in danger of failing. The blueprint the leader has for the future must be believable by organization employees in order to promote personal investment. It must also build upon the leader's skills and any changes must not endanger or compromise the leader's core skill set. In other words, the leader must use caution so as to not over-manage or over-lead the organization. A realistic future that should be idealized is one that leverages organizational key competencies while concomitantly being creative to establish or maintain separation from competitors.

Ultimately, the LPS must speak to the leader — it's a personal document built upon personal honesty with oneself; where and why they've seen success, what's important to them as a leader, and how both of these will interact to create success in the future.

Maintenance of Success

The original purpose of the LPS is to assist the leader in staying committed to developing skills, communicating values, and planning for future success. The LPS a CEO may have will change should she or he move as CEO to another organization while specifically, the third component, ***leadership direction***, might have to be greatly modified to meet the challenges of a new organization. However, the history and IVC of the leadership are inherent components which direct the style of leadership towards achieving organizational success. Successful leadership achieves a seamless continuum of leadership practice. Leaders do not reinvent themselves, but rather adapt their personal styles without fundamental alteration. This results in the maintenance of the successful traits that resulted in leadership successes while also helping those traits adapt to changes and challenges as they arise. The LPS then helps leaders remain consistent with developing their strengths without compromising integrity in the decision-making process.

While companies quite often reinvent themselves to thrive and indeed survive, leaders typically do not fundamentally change their styles of leadership — they merely seek a better understanding of their employees, their products, and their customers (Frankfort & Berfield, 2013). When they do attempt a leadership style transformation, unpredictable results can occur as there is no continuum of consistent leadership. The LPS serves to prevent such leadership transgression when consulted regularly.

Final Thoughts

This article had, as its purpose, the recommendation that leaders should develop an LPS to help guide them as leaders. Failure of senior leadership is too expensive and detrimental to an organization. The business world is littered with good leaders who ultimately led their companies to failure. Deviation from a particular style of leadership coupled with radical changes in decision making takes a leader away from what it is he or she does best — lead. Thus, a leader's job is to lead first and extract natural decisions from that leadership. Quite often, leaders are asked to compromise their values and methods of leadership which is why the LPS helps keep them focused on who they are, how they lead, and what has made them successful. Just as regular consultation with a mission statement helps a company stay focused, so too does the LPS help leaders stay committed to their ethos of leadership and the personal values which inform that leadership.

Many companies do not report a correlation between the return on equity and the MS, but that doesn't mean that one doesn't exist. Instead, it may mean they just haven't adhered to their mission. Mission statements only work if they are re-visited, re-read, and used as a tool. Similarly, the LPS, once written, should be used as a reference tool by leaders because it identifies how they will lead their organizations into the future by referencing the past and cites core values which have already returned success. The LPS is not stagnant; it embraces change but change is managed and controlled through core leadership values and well-informed leadership directions. Ultimately, it is the document which reminds leaders of what brought them success, how to treat people respectfully through empathy and humility, and how best to work *with* people in the attainment of personal and organizational goals.

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