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Generational Differences In Evaluation And Expression Of Leadership Style

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Generational issues in the workplace is a current hot topic in both the popular press and academic research. Baby Boomers are preparing for retirement, leading to organizational concerns about the "brain drain" of experienced workers leaving the workforce at an alarming rate. However, with the current dismal state of the economy, new concerns have emerged as to how older workers, who have realized they cannot afford to retire, find themselves working alongside or even under much younger workers. In these times, where "age" and "generation" are both buzz words in reference to the workplace, research on these topics is in great demand.

While still a nascent body of literature in the academic realm, potential generational issues in the workplace are important to study and understand. The growing need for research in this area and the popularity of this topic can be seen in the fact that, in the past four years, there have been two special issues of journals dedicated to this topic (*Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 2008 & and *Journal of Business Psychology*, 2010) as well as a multitude of books on the subject.

Understanding how generational issues impact topics related to leadership is of particular importance. It is generally accepted that other demographics play a role in understanding topics of leadership. Demographics such as gender, race, age, and even height have been studied in relation to leadership. We know that these demographic factors influence the way that leaders tend to behave. For example, women tend to be more democratic and participative than men as leaders (Eagly & Chin, 2010). Research has also shown that there are differences in the way leaders are viewed. For example, beliefs are widely held that African American leaders are antagonistic and incompetent, Hispanic leaders are uneducated and

unambitious, and Asian leaders are quiet and unassertive (Eagly & Chin, 2010). Despite these research findings, there is a startling lack of research examining topics of leadership and generation membership.

The present study seeks to fill this void by examining generational issues and how they may impact leaders and leadership. By using data from a 360° assessment of managers in organizations, this study answers two key questions: (1) is there greater agreement between managers and others about the manager's leadership style when both are in the same generation? and (2) are there generational differences in self-reported leadership style? These are important issues to understand in terms of determining whether or not generation is another demographic variable that should be considered when interpreting feedback about employees.

If performance information such as a 360° assessment is influenced by the generation of employees, then there are a number of workplace implications which will need to be considered. If leaders are shown to be rated differently by coworkers depending on the generation membership of that individual, then generation should be taken into account when interpreting these ratings. Further, this information can be used in training programs so that biased ratings can be minimized.

Background on Leadership

The study of leadership predates the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology and may even have been studied as long as recorded history. As long as there have been people organized into groups, there have been leaders in those groups organizing those people in a coordinated effort (Chemers, 1997). Though there are nearly as many definitions of leaders and

leadership as there are scholars who study this domain, a generally accepted definition of leadership is that leadership is a process of social influence where a person is able to influence others to act in accomplishing a common task (Chemers, 1997).

Leadership research of the past century has attempted to understand leadership and leaders through the lens of various theories of leadership. These theories include personality theories, theories of influence, behavior theories, situation based theories, contingency theories, transactional theories, theories of non-leadership, cultural leadership theories, transformational theories, and authentic theories (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; King, 1990). Of these many theories, the most widely researched are Transactional and Transformational leadership as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass, 1985). In more recent literature these ideas have been combined into the Full Range Leadership Theory (FRLT) (Avolio & Bass 1991; Bass & Avolio 1997). In FRLT, nine dimensions of leadership are measured.

Full Range Leadership Theory

Full Range Leadership Theory was born from previously established theories of leadership that the authors of FRLT believed did not sufficiently explain leadership when considered alone. FRLT includes five elements of leadership described as transformational. These include idealized influence-attributed, idealized influence-behavior, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence is the extent to which the leader is, or is seen as, powerful and focused on high order ideals. Inspirational motivation is the extent to which leaders motivate and energize followers to align with the leader's mission. Intellectual stimulation measures a leader's ability to relate the

followers' sense of logic by challenging them intellectually. Finally, individualized consideration measures the extent to which a leader advises, supports, and pays individual attention to followers (Antonakis et al., 2002).

In FRLT, these ideas are combined with elements of transactional leadership including contingent reward leadership, management by exception active, and management by exception passive. Contingent reward refers to rewarding employees in exchange for desired job performance, as well as clarifying tasks and making sure followers have all necessary materials for task accomplishment. Management by exception refers to actively making sure that standards are met, and in the passive sense, intervening only if problems occur. Finally, in FRLT laissez-faire leadership is also considered. This includes a lack of behavior in terms of allowing followers to act on their own (Antonakis et al., 2003).

While a large body of research has been conducted on FRLT using the MLQ, the present study will be based on a data set generated by a 360° leadership assessment. Similar to the FRLT measured by the MLQ, this assessment measures multiple dimensions of leadership, however the advantage of using a 360° leadership assessment is that it includes data from a variety of sources in a 360° design.

Of the vast amount of research on FRLT or elements of the FRLT, demographic and diversity issues associated with leadership are amongst the most widely researched. Demographic-based differences have been observed in how leaders rate their own behaviors according to FRLT. Differences were observed in male leaders and female leaders when they rated their own behaviors. Female leaders reported engaging in significantly more transformational behaviors than male leaders (Carless, 1998). More gender differences were

seen in a meta-analysis of leadership style. In this study, women leaders were found to provide self-report ratings indicating that they were more interpersonally oriented and democratic, while male leaders' self-ratings showed that they were more task oriented and autocratic (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). In a more recent follow up meta-analysis, women leaders were found to provide self-ratings indicating they were more transformational than men (Eagly, 2003).

Demographics and Leadership

Gender and leadership issues have been widely explored in relation to workplace preferences of subordinates. One study conducted by Elsessser and Lever (2011) examined preferences of workers for either male or female bosses. Though in this study the majority of participants reported having no preference for either male or female bosses (54%), 33% of participants stated that they would prefer to work for a male boss compared to the 13% who preferred to work for a female boss. The authors reported that this difference was significant and the effect size was large. Current studies like this one justify continuing to examine gender issues in leadership, particularly when considered with the fact that the vast majority of top leaders in business are men (Eagly & Chin, 2010). The present study will carry this idea further by examining possible gender differences among ratings of leaders, and leader's leadership style within generational groups.

In addition to gender and leadership, age and leadership has also been researched. One study found that managers' age moderated the relationship between personality factors of dominance and exhibition, and performance in an assessment center. A stronger positive relationship between these personality factors and performance was found for older managers than younger managers (Krajewski et al., 2007). This is evidence that age plays a role in how

leaders are assessed on the job. Another study found that age moderated the relationship between performance of a team and transformational leadership (Kearney, 2008). Transformational leadership was positively related to group performance only when the leader was older than followers. The present study will expand on this idea by examining the relationship between generation membership and leadership style.

These studies are examples of the literature that show that age is an important factor to consider when studying leadership. Since an individual's age determined by their date of birth is what determines their generation, it follows that generation should also influence how leaders are perceived and how people in different age groups lead. At the very least, the documented differences in leadership behaviors and perceptions should warrant the expansion of research in this area to include generational research.

Many demographics and leadership have been studied including race and leadership, height and leadership, gender and leadership, etc. However, generation membership and leadership have not yet been explored. With such strong precedent for demographic variables relating to leadership and perceptions of leaders, it is surprising that leadership and generations have not been studied. It is particularly surprising to find a void in the research in this area given the research on age and leadership (Kearney, 2008; Krajewski et al., 2007).

To date, the majority of research around generational issues has focused on value differences in relation to work. Specifically, research in this area has examined differences in the values that individuals of various generations endorse, as well as their engagement in and commitment to their work and their organization. From this topic area, the research on

generations in the workforce has expanded to understanding how to recruit Generation Y, the youngest generation, as well as how to retain and motivate this group.

Currently, potential generational issues in relation to leadership have been under-researched. A study by Gentry et al. (2011) is one of the few to examine both concepts of leadership and generational issues. In their study, leaders provided information about whether or not they believed certain leadership behaviors were important. The leaders in this study chose important leader behaviors from a list of 16 different behaviors. The authors of this study then used those data to determine if there were significant differences in endorsements of the leadership behaviors. The authors of this study found that there were no significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, for most of the behaviors. While there were significant differences for 10 of the behaviors, small effect sizes led the authors to conclude that the generations were more similar than they were different.

A major limitation to the Gentry et al. (2011) study is the fact that only one source of information is used. The authors point out that their study is limited by the fact that though a Generation Y leader may believe she engages in the balance of work and family, others in the organization might disagree.

The present study seeks to expand on the Gentry et al. (2011) study by considering not only leaders' self-reported leadership behaviors, but by taking into consideration information from other individuals in the organization about the behavior of these leaders. Further, the present study will examine the degree to which leaders and others within the organization agree about the leadership actions of the leader.

The present study seeks to fill the void in this area of research by focusing on potential generational differences in leadership. The two focuses of the study will be:

1) Is there greater agreement between leaders and others when those two individuals are members of the same generation? And -
2) Are there generational differences in self-reported leadership style?

Background on 360°s

The data used in the present study will come from an existing data set of 360° data. 360° data is multi-source multi-rater feedback data. It is a collection of performance ratings that generally include ratings from supervisors, subordinates, coworkers, and the self (Bailey & Austin, 2006) and can also include customers. This feedback data is then generally used for developmental purposes because of the richness of the data in terms of the multiple perspectives that it encompasses (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2008).

360° performance data is generally categorized as judgmental data, rather than objective data (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2008). This means that 360° data consists of ratings on both work behaviors and work results that may be influenced by biases of raters. (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2008). These biases or differences amongst raters are not generally treated as a problem, but rather as valid differences in how the rater views the target. The differences among raters can stem from a number of causes, including differences in conceptualizing the rating instrument, individual rater bias, and differing perspectives of the target applicants (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2008). This multiple perspective aspect of 360° feedback is its greatest strength.

Because of the time consuming nature of collecting and interpreting ratings in the 360° method, the targets of 360°s tend to be management level individuals or above. These are the employees within organizations that are deemed worthy of the time and resources required to provide 360° feedback. In the present study, the focus of all analyses will be managers and their corresponding supervisors, peers, and subordinates.

Few studies have looked at the congruence of self and other ratings from 360° feedback in terms of demographic differences. However, one study that did examine differences in ratings between self-ratings and other-ratings found differences in ratings of leader effectiveness depended on the gender of the raters (Vecchio & Anderson, 2009). In this study, results indicated that men were more likely to rate their own leader effectiveness higher than others would rate them, when compared to women. Additionally, self-other agreement on leader effectiveness was related to the age of the focal leader, such that older leaders rated their own leadership behavior higher than their coworkers rated them. The author does not suggest that this is overestimation on the part of the leader, but rather the others are giving low ratings to the older leaders. If demographic differences such as gender and age have been found to influence congruence between self and other ratings in 360° assessments, it is important to consider whether other demographic differences, such as generation, exist as well. The present study will examine this issue.

Background on Generational Issues in the Workplace

Generations were first described by Mannheim in 1952 as a group of people born in similar years. Due to their similarity in birth years, Mannheim wrote that members of a generation would experience the same societal events and thus have certain similarities that

they continue to share as they age. In more recent literature, Mannheim's idea has been transformed into what is known today as generational cohort theory (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

Generational cohort theory focuses on the fact that major cultural events influence individuals, particularly early in life during formative years (Pilcher, 1994). These events shape aspects of a generation member's personality, thus causing similarities amongst individuals in the same generational group. Finally, according to generational cohort theory, as adults, members of the same generation will be more similar to each other than they are to members of other generations (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

The present workforce is mainly comprised of three generations: Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Baby Boomers, those born between 1948 and 1964, take their name from the boom in birth rate that occurred during this period (Lyons et al., 2007). Baby Boomers grew up in a rapidly changing social climate including major issues such as the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War (Lyons et al., 2007). This group is commonly defined as being competitive due to its large size and the fact that members of this group have always been in competition for resources (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

The middle, smallest, and most commonly overlooked generation is Generation X, which encompasses individuals born between 1965 and 1979. This group came of age in a period of economic uncertainty when for the first time, large numbers of households had dual earners resulting in "latch key kids" (Kupperschmidt, 2000). According to Kupperschmidt (2000) and Lyons et al. (2007), more than any other generation, this group is associated with negative descriptions, such as a lack of work ethic, cynicism, skepticism, and laziness.

The youngest generation currently in the workforce, and the one currently receiving the most attention is Generation Y. This group is composed of individuals born after 1980. This group is characterized by the increased use of computers and internet during their childhoods and adolescence, and as growing up in what is commonly described as a "child centric society" where the focus of family, education, and society in general is on the child (Sessa et al., 2007).

From the above descriptions, it becomes clear that these are merely generalizations of the generations which are often vague, and in some cases, contradictory (Deal et al., 2010). However, there is some solid research on workplace generational issues. Most research on generational issues focuses on differences amongst the generations in values. Most studies have found that the generations are very similar in the values that they hold, both in reference to work and their personal lives. The differences we see between the generations are due to how these values are expressed (Zemke et al., 2008). For example, both Baby Boomers and members of Generation X report supporting family as very important. Baby Boomers express this value by spending long hours at work to provide for family members, while members of Generation X express this same value by spending as much time at home as possible to be with family members.

Drive to work, or obligation to work is another value which is widely researched in regard to generational issues. There is a general consensus among many older workers that younger workers do not seem committed to their organizations. It is thought that they do not care about the welfare of the organization that they work for and they are expected to jump from job to job. This perception has led to much of the research in this area (Deal et al., 2010). A time lag study by Smolla and Sutton (2002) found that Generation Y was more likely to agree

that they would quit working if they didn't need the money compared to Baby Boomers. There are also a number of research findings indicating that Generation Y is more likely to declare interest in spending time in activities other than work, when compared to either Generation X or Baby Boomers (Twenge et al., 2010). However, Generation Y and Generation X have also been found to be higher in need for achievement than Baby Boomers (Twenge et al., 2010).

Second only to research on values is research on generation differences in organizational commitment. It is commonly lamented by older workers that younger workers seem to always be dissatisfied with their jobs, and are happy to hop from one job to another with no organizational commitment. Surprisingly, research in this area has shown the opposite. Studies have shown that members of Generation Y are more satisfied with their jobs and desire more job security than members of other generations (Twenge et al., 2010).

Difficulties in Studying Generational Differences

Studying generational issues presents a unique set of challenges to researchers. The construct of generation naturally overlaps other constructs, such as age, maturation, tenure, and societal culture. In most research studies it is difficult if not impossible to parse out differences between groups solely due to generation membership, rather than the confounds mentioned above. Previous studies on generational issues have failed to deal with these other potential explanations for variance observed. One option for dealing with this issue is to acknowledge that generation is a part of a person's life stage, as proposed by Pitt-Catsouphes (2009). Another option is to "bury one's head in the sand" and forget about or ignore all of the other factors that might impact variables that we try to study. A small number of studies have attempted to control for factors like age or societal culture by using cross temporal data

(Twenge et al., 2005), but no studies have been published yet using a longitudinal design (for obvious reasons).

The present study will follow Pitt-Catsouphes's idea that generation is one aspect of a person's life stage. In the present study, variables such as tenure and age will not be controlled for because removing variance due to these variables would only be possible statistically, and it is the opinion of the author that doing so would not yield any useful information (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2009). Tenure effects will be dealt with by removing all data from raters that have job title tenure of less than one year. This is not an attempt to control for tenure, but rather an effort to remove ratings made by individuals who are not well acquainted with the target.

The Present Study

Though the number of studies on generational issues is growing, in the opinion of the author, unfortunately the quality of this research is improving less quickly than it is growing. Except for a small number of studies, many of which are cited above, most of the early literature on generational issues is overly rigid. This early literature only examines differences between the three main generational groups in relation to stereotypes of these groups. Many studies begin by using anecdotal evidence to describe and characterize the generational groups, and then sticks to these unsubstantiated and unproven descriptions (Twenge et al., 2010). The result of this weak methodology that continues to be used is mixed and occasionally contradictory findings.

In the present study I seek to differentiate from this weak body of literature by setting aside most descriptions of the generational groups. Instead of relying on previous inconsistent and possibly misleading results, in the present study, I intend to take a more organic approach

to understanding workplace generational issues. The present study is largely exploratory in nature and is designed in this manner to refrain from attempting to either confirm or reject specific descriptions of the generational groups. Instead, the present study is designed to gain an understanding of the similarity or dissimilarity of the various generations by looking at their level of agreement when rating leadership behaviors.

Generational cohort theory states that major cultural events will influence individuals coming of age in similar birth years so that they are share certain similarities in their personality and retain these similarities as they progress through their lifespans (Kupperschmidt, 2000; Pilcher, 1994). As adults, it is expected then that in terms of leadership, members of the same generation will share certain views of leadership. These shared views of leadership should influence both the ways that individuals act as a leader, and how individuals perceive leaders. Further, members of different generations will respond differently to leaders of different generations because of the differences in their mental models of Leader and differences in expectations and values of leadership behaviors (Gentry et al., 2009).

Hypothesis 1: Self-ratings of leadership behaviors are more similar to others' ratings of leadership behavior when the leaders and other raters are members of the same generation than when they are members of different generations.

Another term for Generation Y is the "echo boomer" generation (Hauw & De Vos, 2010; Wesner & Miller, 2008). This name is given to generation Y because of the large number of similarities between the two groups. In one study, researchers examined Baby Boomers and Generation Y in the years that each were new to the workforce. Both groups were found to be very similar in terms of their education, the way that they were parented, the way they dealt

with new technology, their commitment to their employers, and the fact that they seek meaning from their work (Wesner & Miller, 2008). Note that these descriptions are objective (based on facts and measurements) rather than evaluative (based on opinion and stereotype), and are supported by data, in contrast to the research rightly critiqued by Twenge et al. (2010) which I referenced above. Based on these tentative findings, I hypothesize that second to leaders and others that fall into the same generation, the pairing of Baby Boomers and Generation Y will be most similar in their evaluations of leader behavior. This is directly contradictory to what we would expect to find due to age differences and can in effect test the generational differences versus maturation differences debate. To add on to the first hypothesis, which is a test of generational cohort theory, the following is proposed, which added on the rank ordering of similarity between the generations.

Hypothesis 1A: Leader's self-ratings of leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar when the two are in the same generation, followed by the pairing of Baby Boomers and Generation Y, with the pairings of Generation X and Generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers being least similar.

It is hypothesized that differences between generational groups will be magnified when the rated behaviors are least observable. It is expected that in addition to similarity in ratings being highest when leaders and others are in the same generational group, correlations of ratings will be highest for scales that measure leader behaviors (objective), compared to scales that measure leader intentions or cognitions (subjective).

Hypothesis 2: Leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar for ratings based on objective leadership behaviors compared to ratings based on subjective leadership behaviors.

Next, it is expected that leaders in the same generation should tend to act similarly. This would mean that leaders among one generational group are more similar to each other than to leaders in different generations. Based on generational cohort theory this would be expected. Individuals who grow up in similar environments should share similarities which cause them to be more similar as leaders amongst one generation than compared to other generations.

Hypothesis 3: Leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership style are most similar to other leaders in the same generation.

Finally, it is expected that gender differences in leadership style will be greatest for Baby Boomers, the oldest generation. It is also expected that Generation Y will have the smallest differences between men and women in leadership style of the three generational groups. This is expected because over time, in the past 40 years opportunities for, expectations of, and general thoughts surrounding women in leadership have changed significantly. Since generational cohort theory states that individuals are shaped by the environment in which they develop in childhood and early adulthood, the differences in the environments that influenced Baby Boomers, compared to the environment that shaped Generation Y are significant, particularly with respect to gender and leadership. Generation Y came of age in a time where women have been serious presidential candidates, the wage gap has narrowed, and there are an increasing number of women in top levels of organizations (though still significantly fewer than men). Conversely, Baby Boomers grew up in a time with many fewer females in positions

of leadership, more gender discrimination and disparity, and fewer laws to protect the rights of women leaders.

Hypothesis 4: Differences between men's self-reported leadership ratings and women's self-reported leadership ratings within the Baby Boom generation have a larger difference than do men's self-reported leadership ratings and women's self-reported leadership ratings in Generation Y.

Hypothesis 5: Agreement between target leaders and others who rate that leader is increased when gender is controlled by matching target and rater gender. The largest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are Baby Boomers are rated, and the smallest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are in Generation Y are rated.

In the present study race will not be considered, as racial information on participants is not available in the data set. It is the opinion of the author that this limitation in the available data set is outweighed by the fact that it is a large data set of 360° ratings that includes the birth year of all raters. Most data sets of this type only include the age range that a rater falls into, and the ranges do not generally correspond to generational groups. These types of data sets make it impossible to assign raters to generational groupings, and there for make it impossible to study generational issues using this type of data.

Chapter 2: METHOD

Participants

Participants in the present study were individuals who had taken the TalentSage assessment. After removing raters with less than one year in their current position, the data set consisted of 20,597 individual raters. Of those, 3,557 were target leaders (76.8 % male and 23.2% female). There were 17,040 non-target raters (75.4% male and 24.6% female). The average age of the target was 43.46 years old, and the average of the non-leader raters was 39.04 years old. Non-target raters were broken into 4 groups including peers (N=6,475), direct reports (N=3,166), primary supervisors (N=1,864), and other supervisors (N=2,392). A summary of participant information by generation is provided in Table 1.

Measure

The data used in the present study came from the TalentSage assessment. TalentSage is a 360° feedback assessment of leadership skills that was developed by Randall Peterson, Ph.D (http://www.talentsage.com, 2/10/12). The TalentSage assessment is widely used in both business and education. It has been adapted by the London School of Economics' MBA program as both a teaching tool and assessment of MBA students. In addition, it has been used by organizations and universities including Swedbank, Barclays, UlsterBank, Sanofi Aventis, AREVA, CB&I, Cooper, Cornell University, London Business School, NCI Building Systems, and Rice University. The assessment has been used for customizing development plans, crafting executive coaching plans, targeting developmental job assignments, identifying training gaps, establishing succession plans, building effective teams based on members' strengths and gaps,

identifying trends in the skills of your organization overall, reinforcing or building competency models, and fostering a culture for performance and acceptance of feedback.

The TalentSage assessment is a web-based assessment. The available data set comprises 51 items, with 21,056 respondents in total. Because this study focused on agreement across generations in general, rather than on specific content, the nature of the scales is less important. The author of this study assessed the items to create scales that are psychometrically sound for use in the present context, though these may not align perfectly with the scales used by TalentSage when presenting results to client organizations in their applied, commercial setting. A factor analysis following the Principle Factors method was conducted, on a 3,000 case subset of the data which was stratified to reflect the generational groups. This was done to identify scales that comprise the assessment. Results of the factor analysis can be seen in Table 2. Only factors with eigen values above 1.00 were retained. Additionally, only items with factor loadings larger than 0.30 or -0.30 were included in the factors. This resulted in a 7 factor solution with 37 residuals. These factors are shown in Table 3. The author reviewed the resulting scales and determined that they were logically grouped. The first factor consisted of items about analytical skills, the second factor consisted of items about business skills and general leadership skills, the third factor consisted of items about emotional intelligence, the fourth factor consisted of items about possessing a team orientation, the fifth factor consisted of items about possessing an achievement orientation, the sixth factor consisted of items about flexibility, and the seventh scale consisted of items about cultural sensitivity.

After these classifications a second 3,000 case subset of the data which was stratified to reflect the generational groups was collected. A second factor analysis was run on this sample to confirm the factor structure. Results of the second factor analysis were identical to the first factor analysis with the exception of only a few items. The same 7 factors were identified in both of the factor analyses. Items that loaded onto a factor on only 1 of the 2 factor analyses were not included in the final scales shown in Table 3. Scale statistics for the resulting scales can be seen in Table 4.

Next, the resulting scales were classified as either objective leadership behavior based scales or subjective leadership behavior based scales. Objective leadership based scales were defined as those measuring primarily observable behaviors of leadership, and subjective leadership based scales were those defined as measuring primarily non-observable thoughts or beliefs.

These distinctions were proposed by the author and were then validated upon agreement by other subject matter experts. Ten fellow graduate students were shown the items in each scale, and asked to sort the scales into these two categories. All of the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) were doctoral students in or beyond their 4th year of the Industrial Organizational Psychology program and had completed their required course work. SMEs were sent e-mails containing a link to a Survey Monkey site. The survey site gave instructions to the SMEs instructing them to choose either Objective or Subjective Leadership for each scale based on the definitions in the previous paragraph. For each scale, SMEs were shown all of the items, and then asked to choose between labeling the scale as objective leadership or subjective leadership. For each scale, percentages of SMEs that rated objective versus subjective were

calculated. Results indicated that Scale 1 (Analytical Skills) was identified as objective and Scales 3 (Emotional Intelligence) and 5 (Achievement Orientation) were labeled as subjective. Each of these three scales had 90% agreement about the categorization of the scale. All of the other scales scored 70% agreement or below. Scales that were not agreed to by 75% of the Subject Matter Experts were not included in this division or the testing of this hypothesis.

Analyses

Hypothesis 1 stated that self-ratings of leadership behaviors are more similar to others' ratings of leadership behavior when the leaders and other raters are members of the same generation than when they are members of different generations. Hypothesis 1A stated that leader's self-ratings of leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar when the two are in the same generation, and followed by the pairing of Baby Boomers and Generation Y. In order to test Hypotheses 1 and 1A, an Inter-Class Correlation (ICC) was calculated comparing results on scales for the TalentSage assessment for each scale amongst leaders and others in the same generation. The ICCs of leaders and others who fell into different generations were compared.

ICCs were used to test these hypotheses because the ICC(1) is a measure of agreement among individuals. The ICC(1) was used as opposed to other tests of agreement such as ICC(2) or r_{wg} because the ICC(1) is identified as the most appropriate measure of inter rater agreement when there are multiple targets rated by different sets of judges (LeBreton & Senter, 2007). In many studies this figure is calculated to justify grouping individual scores in a multi-level model test. In the present study, however, the measure of agreement was the end result. The hypotheses in the present study focused on whether or not individuals within a group

responded similarly to the leadership assessment items, so using an ICC was chosen as the method for comparing the groups. While it would have been possible to use an ANOVA to test this hypothesis, ANOVAs are designed to compare group means, rather than group cohesion or similarity. Additionally, using an r_{wg} could have also been an option; however the author of this study attempted to use this method in past generational research, and found too much agreement among raters to meaningfully interpret differences in the generational groups (Reiss, 2010). Further, there is no clear consensus in the generational literature on the best statistical method to assess potential differences between groups.

An ICC was calculated for all target-rater pairs that were within the same generation, and it was compared to the ICC for all target-rater pairs who did not fall into the same generation. Additionally, 95% confidence intervals were calculated for each of these ICC values. The confidence intervals were evaluated to determine if the two ICCs values were significantly different. When the two confidence intervals overlapped, this was taken as evidence that there were no significant differences between the ICCs, and when the confidence intervals did not overlap, it was taken as evidence that there were significant differences between the two ICC values.

Hypothesis 2 stated that leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar for ratings based on objective leadership behaviors compared to ratings based on subjective leadership behaviors. To test hypothesis 2, the scales comprising the TalentSage assessment were grouped into two categories. They were categorized as either objective or subjective based. This categorization was done by SMEs. Scales included in this analysis were only those scales that received 75% or higher agreement

from SMEs as to the category in which it fell. The two categories were then used to calculate new ICCs. One ICC was calculated for all target-rater pairs in the data set based on objective scales, and another ICC was calculated for all target-rater pairs in the data set based only on subjective based scales. These two values were tested to see if they were significantly different using confidence intervals.

Hypothesis 3 stated that leaders' self-ratings of their leadership behaviors are most similar to other leaders in the same generation. In order to test this hypothesis, an ANOVA was calculated on the self-reported data from all of the target leaders in the data set. Scale scores of the TalentSage assessment were compared, with generation membership used as the grouping variable. An ANOVA was used to test this rather than ICCs because comparisons across the generational groups are the focus of this hypothesis, unlike the previous hypotheses. Significant differences were determined by interpreting the F and *p* values. When significant differences were found, post hoc analyses were performed.

Hypothesis 4 stated that men and women within the Baby Boom Generation have a larger difference in leadership style than between men and women within Generation Y. To test Hypothesis 4, an ANOVA with post hoc analyses was run on only self-reported data from the target leaders. For this hypothesis, each of the three generational groups were divided into one group of only men and another group of only women, resulting in 6 groups. Similar to Hypothesis 3, significant differences were determined by interpreting the F and *p* values. When significant differences were found, post hoc analyses were performed.

Hypothesis 5 stated that agreement between target leaders and others who rate that leader is increased when gender is controlled by matching target and rater gender. The largest

increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are Baby Boomers are rated, and the smallest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are in Generation Y are rated. To test this hypothesis, additional ICCs were calculated using the entire data set. A separate ICC was calculated for men and women within each generation as well as one overall for the group. This resulted in a total of 9 ICCs. Confidence intervals were then used to determine if the ICCs for men and women in each generational group were significantly different.

Chapter 3: RESULTS

Before individual hypotheses were tested by running the ICCs described above, ICC values were calculated on each of the 7 scales for each of the 9 possible combinations of rater and target generation (see Table 5). These values were calculated to justify combining the results of ratings of target leaders and other raters from any generation, as long as the target and rater do not belong to the same generation (i.e. combining Generation Y leaders rated by Generation X raters with Generation Y leaders rated by Baby Boomer raters into the same group). The confidence intervals were examined for each of these 9 cells and it was determined that there was overlap between the intervals for the cells including target and rater pairs in different generations, as well as target and rater pairs within the same generation on each of the seven scales. Since overlap was observed it was taken as evidence that these cells did not differ significantly in term of agreement, and thus could be aggregated.

The nine groups described above were condensed into 2 groups. This was done because the levels of agreement all fell into the same general range of agreement, see Table 5. Additionally, evidence from the overlap of the confidence interval was considered. One group consisted of targets and raters who are members of different generations, and the other group consisted of targets and raters who are members of the same generation. Prior to aggregation, for each of the seven scales, ICC(1) values for targets and raters in different generations ranged from 0.06 to 0.26. As these values are less than 0.40, they reflect poor agreement (Sampat et al., 2006)). Prior to aggregation, for the group of targets and raters in the same generation, ICC(1) values for each of the seven scales ranged from 0.02 to 0.40. Again, these values fall into the same category of poor agreement. Though these values were not as high as expected, the

uniform level/category of agreement estimate provides no reason to refrain from aggregating these groups. It would have been problematic if some of the cells had high levels of agreement, and others had low agreement, but that was not the case here. The Sampat et al. (2006), article describes ICC(1) values less than 0.40 as reflecting poor agreement or reproducibility, values between 0.40 and 0.75 as good agreement or reproducibility, and values over 0.75 as excellent agreement or reproducibility.

Hypothesis 1 stated that self-ratings of leadership behaviors are more similar to others' ratings of leadership behavior when the leaders and other raters are members of the same generation than when they are members of different generations. Hypothesis 1A states that Leader's self-ratings of leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar when the two are in the same generation, followed by the pairing of Baby Boomers and Generation Y, with the pairings of Generation X and Generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers being least similar. After aggregation, Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 1A were tested by running an ICC on the entire data set of target-rater pairs comparing results on the 7 scales for the TalentSage assessment. Scale scores were compared for leaders and others in the same generation, as well as leaders and others in different generations. The ICC results of these two groups were similar to the previous results and are shown in Table 6. ICC(1) values for the group of targets and leaders in the same generation range from 0.100 to 0.261. ICC(1) values for the group of targets and leaders in different generations range from 0.107 to 0.262. Both of these are categorized as reflecting poor agreement among raters (Sampat et al., 2006).

Additionally, ICC values were slightly lower for the same generation group than the different generation group for 3 of the 7 scales. This is contrary to what was expected.

Confidence intervals were examined to determine if these differences were statistically significant. The confidence intervals for the two groups overlapped for each of the 7 scales, indicating the differences in ICC vales between the two groups were not statistically significant. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Since Hypothesis 1 was not supported, Hypothesis 1A was not tested.

Hypothesis 2, which stated that leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar for ratings based on objective leadership behaviors compared to ratings based on subjective leadership behaviors, was tested by first grouping each of the seven scales into two categories. SMEs categorized each scale as either subjective or objective. Only the three scales that received 75% or higher agreement from SMEs as to the category in which it fell were retained. Scale 1 (Analytical skills) received 90% agreement that it was an objectively based scale, and scales 3 (Emotional Intelligence) and 5 (Achievement Orientation) received 90% agreement that they were subjectively based. Results of each scale's categorization can be seen in Table 7. These three scales were grouped into the two categories and were then used to calculate new ICCs listed in Table 8. One new ICC was calculated for all target-rater pairs in the same generational group, and one new ICC was calculated for target-rater pairs in different generations. These were based only on the two subjective based scales and the single objective scale. These ICCs for the objective scale were then compared against the ICCs for the subjective scales. These values were based on their confidence intervals. The confidence interval for the objective scale did not overlap with confidence interval of the subjective scales. Specifically the ICC value reflected significantly stronger agreement for the objective scale compared to the subjective scales. Further, this

finding was observed for both the group of targets and raters in the same generation and for the group of targets and raters in different generations. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3, which stated that leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership style are most similar to other leaders in the same generation, was tested by running a separate ANOVA, of only self-report data from the target leaders, on each of scale scores of the TalentSage assessment, with generation membership used as the grouping variable. Significant results were found for 4 of the 7 ANOVAs. Specifically, significant differences were found in scales 1 (Analytical Skills) and 3-5 (Emotional Intelligence, Team Orientation, and Achievement Orientation). Tukey's HSD post hoc analyses were run for each of the ANOVAs, but were only interpreted for the scales with significant differences found between the groups. The post hoc analyses revealed that there were significant differences in mean scores on scale 1 (Analytical Skills) such that Generation Y scored significantly higher than Generation X. Additionally, on scale 3 (Emotional Intelligence), there were significant differences in mean scores such that Generation Y scored significantly higher than Generation X. On Scale 4 (Team Orientation), there were significant differences in mean scores such that Generation Y scored significantly higher than Generation X. Finally, on Scale 5 (Achievement Orientation), there were significant differences in mean scores such that Generation X scored significantly higher than Generation Y. Thus Hypothesis 3 was supported. For complete results see Table 9 and Table 10.

To test Hypothesis 4, which stated that differences between men's self-reported leadership ratings and women's self-reported leadership ratings within the Baby Boom generation have a larger difference than do men's self-reported leadership ratings and women's self-reported leadership ratings in Generation Y, another ANOVA was run. This

ANOVA, run on only self-report data from the target leaders, broke each generational group into two sub groups comprised of either men or women and thus compared 6 groups. Significant results were found between groups in regard to gender for scales 1 (Analytical Skills), 4 (Team Orientation), and 7 (Cultural Sensitivity). Results are shown in Table 11. The post hoc analyses revealed that there were significant differences in mean scores on scale 1 (Analytical Skills) between men and women in Generation Y, such that males scored higher than females. On scale 4 (Team Orientation), significant differences were found between men and women in Generation Y such that women scored higher than men. On scale 7 (Cultural Sensitivity), significant differences were found between men and women in Generation Y such that women scored higher than men. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Results are shown in Table 12.

Hypothesis 5 stated that agreement between target leaders and others who rate that leader is increased when gender is controlled by matching target and rater gender. The largest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are Baby Boomers are rated, and the smallest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are in Generation Y are rated. To test this hypothesis, additional ICCs were calculated on the entire data set. The data set was divided into three groups based on the generation membership of the target leader. A separate ICC was calculated for men and women within each generational group as well as an overall ICC value for the group. This resulted in a total of 9 ICCs with 3 ICCs calculated for each group. The values of these ICCs are shown in Table 13. Confidence intervals were used to determine if the ICC for men or women in each generational group was significantly different from the overall group's values. Because of very small sample sizes in the Baby Boom generation, ICC values

were not reliable enough to make meaningful comparisons. In the group of Generation X targets, higher levels of agreement were found for 6 of the 7 scales when gender was controlled. In the group of Generation Y targets, higher levels of agreement were found for all 7 of the 7 scales when gender was controlled.

To assess if these differences were statistically significant confidence intervals were examined. It was observed that, for both Generation X and Generation Y, the confidence intervals for the gender controlled groups overlapped with the confidence intervals for the overall groups. Thus Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Chapter 4: DISCUSSION

The results of the present study were mixed. Hypothesis 1 was not supported. This hypothesis stated that self-ratings of leadership behaviors are more similar to others' ratings of leadership behavior when the leaders and other raters are members of the same generation than when they are members of different generations. As no significant differences were found between these two groups for the seven scales, the author does not interpret this as support for the hypothesis. It was expected that greater levels of agreement would be observed in the group with targets and raters in the same generation than in the group with targets and raters in different generations.

The results of the ICCs indicate that for 5 of the 7 scales the opposite results were found. Greater levels of agreement were observed when targets and other raters were not members of the same generation. Finding support for the hypothesis in only 2 of the 7 scales is most likely due to chance, as the absolute differences between the groups on each of the scales were very small and non-significant. Additionally, the increased agreement when targets and others were in different generations is likely due to chance, and will average out as no difference over many trials. It is unlikely that being members of the same generation versus different generations caused either a meaningful increase or decrease in agreement.

Hypothesis 1A stated that leader's self-ratings of leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar when the two are in the same generation, followed by the pairing of Baby Boomers and Generation Y, with the pairings of Generation X and Generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers being least similar. Since the overarching hypothesis was not supported by the data in this study, it was not possible to test this sub-hypothesis. This should

not be taken as evidence in favor of or against the idea that Generation Y is similar to Baby Boomers and is considered an "echo" boomer generation. This was simply not testable with the data set used in this study.

Hypothesis 2 stated that leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership behaviors and others' ratings of the leader are most similar for ratings based on objective leadership behaviors compared to ratings based on subjective leadership behaviors. This hypothesis was supported. Significant differences were observed between the objective and subjective scales for both generation matched and generation mismatched target-rater pairs. The fact that this hypothesis was supported shows that there were higher levels agreement around objective versus subjective leadership items, and further, this was observed regardless of the generation membership of the target leaders and other raters. If generational issues were more influential in agreement of 360° ratings than the nature of the items, then both of the groups should not have had significant improvement in agreement of objective over subjective items. The support of this hypothesis indicates that if generation membership influences agreement between targets and other raters, that it is secondary to other factors influencing agreement.

Hypothesis 3 stated that leaders' self-ratings of their own leadership style are most similar to other leaders in the same generation. Support for this hypothesis was found amongst 4 of the 7 scales where significant differences were found between the generational groups. Though there were significant differences between the groups, post hoc analyses revealed that all of the significant differences were found between generation X and Generation Y. There were no significant differences in self-report ratings of leadership between Baby Boomers and any other generational group.

These results provide some support for generational cohort theory. From a purely maturation perspective, the expected results would suggest no significant differences between the groups, or only finding significant differences between Generation Y and Baby Boomers. This is not what was found in the present study. While the results of the present study are not exactly what were predicted in the hypotheses, the author does interpret the results as cautious support for generational cohort theory, in relation to differences between Generation X and Generation Y. Further, many studies in the aging literature divide individuals into groups based on being over or under the age of 40. From a generational perspective, those under 40 would include Generation Y and most of Generation X as well. The consistent difference found between these two groups in the present study suggests that this may not be an appropriate way to group individuals, particularly when using self-report data.

Hypothesis 4 stated that differences between men's self-reported leadership ratings and women's self-reported leadership ratings within the Baby Boom generation have a larger difference than do men's self-reported leadership ratings and women's self-reported leadership ratings in Generation Y. Significant differences were only found between men and women within Generation Y. No significant differences were found between men and women in the Baby Boom Generation. This is exactly the opposite of what was expected. It was expected that larger differences would be observed in the Baby Boom generation than in Generation Y. Because of these results, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. It is not clear if non-significant results were observed in the Baby Boom generation because of the small sample size of this group, and further, if significant differences were only found in Generation Y because of its

large size. It is unknown if these results are due to sample size or if the results reflect a true lack of differences in the Baby Boom generation.

The fact that differences were only found between men and women in Generation Y may also be attributable to the fact that this generation has been in the workforce for the shortest period of time. Pre-existing ideas about gender and leadership may fade away as experience working with all types of leaders in a variety of situations informs ideas around leadership. This would explain why significant differences were only found in Generation Y and not in the other generations. It is suggested that future research examine this issue.

The other hypothesis examining gender issues was Hypothesis 5, which stated that agreement between target leaders and others who rate that leader is increased when gender is controlled by matching target and rater gender. The largest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are Baby Boomers are rated, and the smallest increase in agreement occurs when leaders who are in Generation Y are rated. This hypothesis was not supported. Though significant differences were found between the gender controlled groups and the overall groups, these differences were not statistically significant for Generation X or Generation Y. It was expected that significant differences would have been observed in the Baby Boom generation; however, it was not possible to test the Baby Boom generation because of its small sample size. It is suggested that this idea be studied further with larger and potentially over-sampled groups of leaders in the Baby Boom Generation to determine if gender effects are observed in this generation.

Of the six proposed hypotheses, there were two that were supported. Taken together the results tell us that there are generational differences in self-reported leadership style and

that the subject matter of items has a greater influence on target-rater agreement than does generation membership of these individuals. Interestingly, one of these findings suggests that the generational groups behave differently from each other, and the other shows the opposite.

The fact that the two hypotheses which were supported were based on different types of ratings is important. Significant differences were observed between Generation X and Generation Y only for self-reported leadership evaluations. No generational differences were observed for measurement of target-rater agreement. This may indicate that generational differences only surface when information is collected in a self-reflective manner. Further research is recommended to understand if generational differences in agreement of 360° ratings truly do not exist, or if they have been overshadowed by other factors, such as the nature of the items.

Limitations

Because of the small size of the Baby Boomers in the present study, meaningful comparisons between this group and the other generations were not always possible. Unfortunately, it is difficult to make strong statements about the implications of results based on limited findings. The small number of Baby Boomers is likely due to the fact that the TalentSage data set was partially comprised of data from MBA and EMBA students, who are less likely to be Baby Boomers. Because generational research looks for differences between groups, it can be difficult to understand and interpret differences between groups when essentially looking at a very narrow range. For example, over the last 500 years there have been about 25 different generational groups (based on an average generation span of 20 years). Identifying generational differences would be much easier if it were possible to include

25 difference generational groups in a study. Due to the human lifespan this is obviously not possible. Further, individuals are generally only in the work force from about age 18 to 65 or 70. This greatly limits the ability of researchers to understand the true nature of how these groups behave when we are only able to compare two or three generational groups at a time.

This brings up an important question; how should the results of this study be taken, given the fact that there is a limit to the amount of generations observed in the present study? The author believes that the results of this study should not be used as evidence either for or against generational cohort theory. All of the significant differences found in this study were observed between Generation X and Generation Y. This is evidence that there are differences between these two groups. It is not clear if differences were not observed between the Baby Boomer generation and other groups because of its small size. Attention should be focused on understanding the differences between Generation X and Generation Y, rather than attempting to extrapolate and predict how other groups would behave based on these results.

Implications for Theory and Research

The hypotheses in this study were designed to be exploratory in nature, differences were expected between the generational groups, but for the most part the specific nature of those differences was not predicted. Even with this forgiving approach, only tentative support was found for a few of the hypotheses. In general, the hypotheses in this study were not supported. Two main questions were addressed in this study: (1) is there greater agreement between managers and others about the manager's leadership style when both are in the same generation? and (2) are there generational differences in self-reported leadership style? The results of this study indicate that the answer to the first question is no.

However, the results of this study do support the idea that there are differences amongst the generational groups in self-reported leadership style. Though this study is the first to record these differences, and the strength of these findings is limited by the fact that differences were only observed between two of the generational groups, the importance of this finding should not be overlooked.

While this is the first study to report generational differences in self-reported leadership style, research on leader values has also found generational differences. The study by Gentry et al. (2011) examined information from leaders on whether or not they believed certain leadership behaviors were important. The authors of this study found that there were no significant differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, for most of the behaviors. In this study small non-significant differences were observed between the generational groups. Very similar results were obtained in the present study. It may be the fact that generational differences consistently surface in relation to leadership; however these are very small differences.

It may be worthwhile to conduct further research on the topic of the present study to determine if these consistent and small group level differences are meaningful. In the opinion of the author, if small differences are found consistently between the same generational groups, in the same direction, in relation to the same topics, then these are important differences, despite the fact that they may not be statistically significant in any one study. Further, this model is similar to the one commonly accepted for examining gender differences in leadership style (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

A major topic of this study revolves around generational cohort theory, and how to distinguish influences of age or maturation versus generation. In the introduction to this study, it was stated that a life course approach (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2009) was going to be taken to drawing inferences from the results of the study. The author believes that both age and generation, as well as other variables such as tenure, jointly influence the thoughts, behaviors, and values of individuals. This combination of influential variables is what Pitt-Catsouphes refers to as a life-stage variable, which takes many other variables into account. This makes practical sense in conducting research because it is not possible to tease apart variables like generation membership and age. This approach also allows for some change in individuals over time, as it would take their current state into account, rather than assume that individuals remain constant over time. While personality factors are supposed to remain constant over an individual's life span, there are studies which have demonstrated that there are exceptions to this rule (Twenge & Foster, 2010).

Since little support was found for generational cohort theory in the present study, and similarly little support has been found for the theory in recent literature, the author believes that future research should not focus on this theory. This is not to say that research on the generational groups should end. Rather, it is proposed that this line of research should shift from a focus on generational cohort theory, to a focus on the generations. A generation is simply a convenient way to group individuals. Young versus old employees have been studied, and using generations should be treated as another way to group employees. The benefit to using generations as a way to break up the continuous variable of age is that most people are

familiar with generational groups. People identify with their own generation and generally have a basic understanding of the major generational groups in the workplace.

By approaching research from a generation perspective, rather than a generational cohort perspective, researchers will be more attuned to identifying differences and similarities between the groups. When the focus of research is simply generational cohort theory, the focus tends to be finding support for the theory and magnifying small differences between groups. By taking generational cohort theory out of the picture, future research on generations can more easily be compared to existing research on age, and can add to the general body of research on age and the workplace.

It is also recommended that future research be done on the Baby Boom generation in order to fully understand this group. If this is done, then comparisons can be made between Baby Boomers and subsequent generational groups to understand if the way that this group behaves is due to generational effects, or of there are age/maturation effects that are primarily influencing this group. Distinguishing between these influences has been examined somewhat in previous research (Deal & Altman, 2010) however there are some researchers (including the author) who believe teasing apart these differences is neither practical nor useful (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2009).

In the present study generation membership was the primary mechanism used in dividing individuals into groups. However, it would have been possible to divide the individuals on the basis of age as well, and likely similar results would have been obtained. It is not clear from the present study, or any studies on this topic, if studying generation as opposed to age provides any unique information, however that does not mean it should be abandoned as a line

of research. It may simply mean that it should be considered as another way of looking at age, or of looking at a person's life-stage.

Regardless of whether or not the results of the present study are taken as evidence for generational differences, or as support for generational cohort theory, the results of the present study do have implications for future research. There is clear evidence in the present study to suggest that Generation X and Generation Y are different from one another. Whether or not the individual attributes these differences to maturational differences or generational differences, or even any other theory, the fact remains that there is evidence to suggest that these groups should be considered individually.

Implications for Organizations

In addition to the implications that this study has for future research, there are organizational implications as well. The results of this study suggest that there are some generational differences in leadership styles of Generation X and Generation Y. If future research supports this idea, organizations should consider how these differences impact their employees.

Potential differences in leadership style, and also expectations about leadership style can lead to conflict amongst employees. It was demonstrated in this study that Generation Y and Generation X differed in their self-reported leadership style. If future research can confirm that members of these two generations differ in their views and expectations of leadership, then there can be a number of important things to consider. First, developing a common language around leadership in organizations should be able to reduce miscommunications and conflict amongst employees. For example, Generation X may view good decision making as an

activity that should be done quickly, appropriately, and decisively. However, Generation Y may view good decision making as only occurring after all options have been thoroughly explored. Both of these perspectives are valid, yet they are at odds with one another. This difference in interpretation of a vague behavior or value may be similar to the differences observed by Zemke et al. (2008).

If leadership behaviors are clearly defined with behavioral examples, miscommunications like the one above can potentially be eliminated. When leaders understand not only their own biases and perspectives about leadership, but also that of their subordinates, better communication and less conflict should take place. Creating an understanding of one's own views on leadership can be done by participating in assessment centers, or completing detailed leadership assessments. Further, 360° leadership assessments will allow leaders to understand how others view them, and where there is agreement or disagreement about their behaviors. In cases of disagreement, coaching may help leaders to understand how their own views of leadership may differ from the views of their subordinates.

It may also be important to consider generation in how employees evaluate other's job performance. The present study found differences in how Generation X and Generation Y view their own leadership. If this is the case, then it may also be true these generational differences are due to differences in the generations of how leadership is viewed or understood. If future research can support this idea, there may also be differences in how the generational groups view good versus poor job performance of leaders. If future research can substantiate this idea then this may be extremely important to consider because job performance may be inaccurately evaluated. This inaccuracy could lead to qualified leaders being passed over for

promotions or bonuses, or worse yet being fired due to poor job performance. Further, when the leader is over the age of 40 this issue would also become a legal concern.

To prevent this type of situation, diversity training may be helpful. Diversity training programs can educate employees about any known differences amongst generational groups in the workplace, and the best ways to communicate across generations in relation to expectations of leadership. This solution can be rolled out to many if not all employees in an organization relatively quickly and for relatively low cost compared to assessment centers and individual coaching.

In addition to leadership issues or issues between leaders and subordinates, team issues may also arise around generational differences in the workplace. The present study demonstrated differences between Generation X and Generation Y in leadership style, but many aspects of leadership influence interactions between all employees. For example, communication styles as rated on a leadership inventory will generally describe an individual's communication style towards teammates as well. When there are differences in communication style amongst teammates, conflict and miscommunications are likely to ensue. This issue can be addressed with diversity training as mentioned above.

Organizational changes should not be made based on the results of only one study, so using the present study as grounds for any organization initiatives is not advised. However, decision makers in organizations should consider that there may be generational differences amongst employees. If future research supports the findings in the present study it may be appropriate to preventatively provide trainings around generational issues in the workplace, and to work with employees to understand where potential differences may influence

interactions. It may also be appropriate to consider performance appraisal procedures and how biases of the generational groups may lead to inaccurate or disputed evaluations.

Though the present study did not provide clear support for generational cohort theory, there were differences observed between the generational groups. Future research is recommended in order to make appropriately informed decisions in organizations.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1. Raters in the TalentSage Data Set

	Total		**Baby Boomers**		**Generation X**		**Generation Y**	
Rater Type	**N**	**%Male**	**N**	**%Male**	**N**	**%Male**	**N**	**%Male**
Self	3,557	77.00%	136	71.36%	1,676	80.80%	1,565	74.70%
Direct Reports	3,166	69.20%	351	74.10%	1,323	73.30%	1,203	67.60%
Peer	6,475	74.30%	681	78.10%	3,056	77.70%	2,207	71.20%
Primary Supervisors	1,864	85.50%	572	89.90%	1,006	84.50%	119	79.80%
Other Supervisors	2,392	83.40%	618	88.50%	1,368	83.80%	187	71.70%
Other Rater	2,434	72.00%	449	80.60%	1,150	75.60%	584	63.00%

Table 2. Factor Analysis Pattern Matrix

	Factor						
Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48	.447						
65	.396						
52	.394						
53	.335						
61	.320						
58							
75							
85		-.816					
83		-.788					
84		-.775					
80		-.744					
79		-.732					
77		-.727					
81		-.724					
76		-.656					
86		-.656					
87		-.608					
78		-.608					
82		-.530					
36			.880				
40			.854				
43			.441				
37			.358				
42							
70				.672			
67				.549			
51				.478			
68				.452			
59				.418			
69				.413			
47				.402			
72				.363			
73							
60							
66							
41					-.536		
55					-.508		

38					-.502		
57					-.436		
54					-.413		
49					-.380		
39					-.348		
56					-.308		
45						.614	
71						.580	
74						.508	
44						.441	
50							
62							.795
63							.787
64							.309
46							

Table 3. Results of Factor Analysis on Stratified Sample of the Data

Scale 1 (Factor 3) – Analytical Skills

- Displays an understanding of financial reports (i.e., balance sheets, profit and loss accounts, etc.)
- Displays an understanding of the core operational processes in the organization (i.e., how the primary product/service is created and delivered to the external customer)
- Is skilled at using financial information to make decisions and prepare budgets
- Uses analytical techniques to help make decisions

Scale 2 (Factor 5) – Business Skills and General Leadership Skills

- Has a strong understanding of human resource management and practice
- Understands marketing and brand management
- Displays an understanding of the needs of internal and external customers
- Able to spot talent in others
- Able to give useful feedback to others
- Is able to motivate and energize others
- Achieves excellent performance from others
- Makes clear and compelling presentations

Scale 3 (Factor 6) – Emotional Intelligence

- Interacts well with an extremely wide variety of people (i.e., different backgrounds, functions, and levels in the organization)
- Would interview well for a job
- Makes a good impression on others
- Handles themselves well at social gatherings with people from the same cultural background

Scale 4 (Factor 4) – Team Orientation

- Works well with others in a team situation
- Is a good listener
- Is willing to learn from others
- Helps others when they are down
- Shares emotions appropriately with others at work
- Is an accurate judge of others
- Is sensitive to other people's needs and feelings
- Other people confide in them

Scale 5 (Factor 1) – Achievement Orientation

- Takes responsibility for own actions
- Can manage a project
- Able to cut through to the main problem in a complex situation

- Perseveres through the difficult time
- Has a passion for excellence

Scale 6 (Factor 7) – Flexibility

- Enjoys change
- Is adaptable and responsive to new situations
- Has a high degree of personal energy

Scale 7 (Factor 2) – Cultural Sensitivity

- Is conscious of what s/he needs to know about working with people from an unfamiliar culture
- Modifies speech style, body language, etc. to suit people from a different culture
- Can make friends with people from different cultures with relative ease
- Plans how to interact with others from a new culture
- Adapts to the lifestyle of different cultures with relative ease
- Can alter his/her expressions when cultural encounter requires it
- Has the confidence to deal with people from a different culture
- Changes body language (e.g., eye contact or posture) to suit people from a different culture
- Can deal with a cross-cultural situation that is unfamiliar
- Can easily change the way they interact when a cross-cultural encounter seems to require it
- Can sense when something is not going well in a cross-cultural interaction
- Is clear in what they hope to achieve when interacting with someone from a new culture

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Table 4. Scale Statistics

	Statistic	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
Target Leaders	Chronbach's Alpha	0.77	0.79	0.71	0.79	0.74	0.70	0.92
	Mean	16.64	30.41	16.57	28.02	21.43	12.37	47.17
	S.D.	2.19	3.67	2.13	3.23	2.19	1.63	6.11
	N of Items	4.00	8.00	4.00	7.00	5.00	3.00	12.00
Other Raters	Chronbach's Alpha	0.78	0.87	0.78	0.86	0.80	0.76	0.94
	Mean	16.83	31.55	17.32	28.63	21.70	12.75	48.99
	S.D.	2.05	3.92	2.31	3.60	2.38	1.60	5.66
	N of Items	4.00	8.00	4.00	7.00	5.00	3.00	12.00

Table 5. ICC values for 9 Groups of Target-Rater Pairs

Target	Rater	Statistic	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
Baby Boomer	Baby Boomer	ICC (1)	0.06	-0.11	0.10	0.09	0.21	0.11	-0.15
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.37	0.20	0.37	0.37	0.45	0.38	0.22
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	-0.27	-0.39	-0.18	-0.21	-0.07	-0.16	-0.48
		N	37	42	49	44	53	51	30
	Generation X	ICC (1)	0.32	-0.43	0.06	-0.02	0.12	0.46	0.40
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.49	-0.87	0.38	0.38	0.45	0.68	0.56
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	-0.15	-0.68	-0.28	-0.37	-0.23	0.18	-0.12
		N	34	30	35	30	31	37	28
	Generation Y	ICC (1)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
		95% C.I. Lower Bound							
		N	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Generation X	Baby Boomer	ICC (1)	0.22	0.09	0.14	0.20	0.23	0.16	0.24
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.33	0.22	0.25	0.31	0.33	0.26	0.37
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.10	-0.04	0.03	0.08	0.12	0.05	0.10
		N	256	229	295	259	327	336	181
	Generation X	ICC (1)	0.26	0.14	0.14	0.16	0.11	0.12	0.17
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.29	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.14	0.16	0.22
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.22	0.10	0.10	0.12	0.07	0.09	0.13
		N	2330	2153	2765	2563	2846	2931	1910
	Generation Y	ICC (1)	0.26	0.13	0.15	0.18	0.11	0.11	0.16
		95% C.I. Upper	0.28	0.15	0.16	0.20	0.12	0.12	0.18

		Bound							
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.24	0.11	0.13	0.16	0.09	0.09	0.13
		N	9391	8189	11458	10464	11591	11817	7464
Generation Y	Baby Boomer	ICC (1)	0.22	0.25	0.23	0.37	0.25	0.21	0.32
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.42	0.47	0.41	0.54	0.41	0.37	0.54
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.17	0.07	0.03	0.06
		N	78	61	100	81	116	119	54
	Generation X	ICC (1)	0.27	0.28	0.19	0.17	0.07	0.10	0.12
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.33	0.35	0.24	0.23	0.13	0.15	0.19
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.21	0.21	0.14	0.11	0.02	0.05	0.04
		N	977	672	1330	1093	1322	1357	613
	Generation Y	ICC (1)	0.26	0.11	0.18	0.20	0.10	0.08	0.14
		95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.30	0.15	0.21	0.24	0.14	0.12	0.19
		95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.22	0.06	0.14	0.16	0.07	0.04	0.10
		N	2142	1848	2651	2465	2598	2639	1712

Table 6. ICC values for Final 2 Groups

Group	Statistic	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
Same Generation	ICC (1)	0.26	0.13	0.16	0.18	0.11	0.10	0.16
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.29	0.16	0.19	0.21	0.13	0.13	0.19
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.23	0.10	0.13	0.16	0.08	0.07	0.13
	F	1.71	1.28	1.38	1.45	1.24	1.22	1.37
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	N	4,509	4,043	5,465	5,072	5,497	5,621	3,652
Different Generation	ICC (1)	0.26	0.14	0.15	0.19	0.11	0.11	0.16
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.28	0.16	0.17	0.20	0.12	0.13	0.18
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.24	0.12	0.14	0.17	0.09	0.09	0.14
	F	1.71	1.33	1.36	1.45	1.24	1.25	1.38
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	N	10,736	9.183	13,220	11,972	13,387	13,668	8,340

Table 7. Results of SME Categorization of Scales

Category	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
Objective	90%	40%	10%	30%	10%	30%	50%
Subjective	10%	60%	90%	70%	90%	70%	50%

Table 8. ICC values for Objective and Subjective Scales

Group	Statistic	Objective	Subjective
Same Generation	ICC (1)	0.26	0.12
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.28	0.14
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.24	0.09
	N	4,509	4,997
Different Generation	ICC (1)	0.26	0.11
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.27	0.12
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.24	0.09
	N	19,843	11,992
All Data	ICC (1)	0.26	0.10
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.27	0.12
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.25	0.09
	N	27,858	16,989

Table 9. ANOVA Results for Hypothesis 3

	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
F	7.42	3.17	6.97	4.43	3.91	1.06	0.15
P	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.36	0.86
N	2515	2486	2624	2615	2684	2707	2518

Table 10. Post Hoc Results for Hypothesis 3

Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Scale 1	Generation Y	Generation X	.44*	.11	.00
		Baby Boom	.35	.52	.78
	Generation X	Generation Y	-.44	.11	.00
		Baby Boom	-.09	.52	.98
	Baby Boom	Generation Y	-.35	.52	.78
		Generation X	.09	.52	.98
Scale 2	Generation Y	Generation X	-.21	.17	.41
		Baby Boom	-1.72	.75	.06
	Generation X	Generation Y	.21	.17	.41
		Baby Boom	-1.51	.75	.11
	Baby Boom	Generation Y	1.72	.75	.06
		Generation X	1.51	.75	.11
Scale 3	Generation Y	Generation X	.31*	.08	.00
		Baby Boom	.35	.39	.65
	Generation X	Generation Y	-.31	.08	.00
		Baby Boom	.03	.39	1.00
	Baby Boom	Generation Y	-.35	.39	.65
		Generation X	-.03	.39	1.00
Scale 4	Generation Y	Generation X	.42*	.14	.01
		Baby Boom	-.32	.66	.88
	Generation X	Generation Y	-.42	.14	.01
		Baby Boom	-.73	.66	.51
	Baby Boom	Generation Y	.32	.66	.88
		Generation X	.73	.66	.51

Scale 5	Generation Y	Generation X	-.25	.10	.03
		Baby Boom	-.57	.45	.40
	Generation X	Generation Y	.25*	.10	.03
		Baby Boom	-.33	.45	.75
	Baby Boom	Generation Y	.57	.45	.40
		Generation X	.33	.45	.75

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 11. ANOVA Results for Hypothesis 4

	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
F	9.62	2.02	4.46	4.78	2.42	1.77	2.49
p	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.12	0.03
N	2515	2486	2624	2615	2684	2707	2518

Table 12. Post Hoc Results for Hypothesis 4

Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Scale 1	Male Gen Y	Male Gen X	.50619*	.13	.00
		Male Boomer	.66	.60	.88
		Female Gen Y	.81*	.18	.00
		Female Gen X	1.30*	.23	.00
		Female Boomer	.23	.99	1.00
	Male Boomer	Male Gen Y	-.66	.60	.88
		Male Gen X	-.16	.60	1.00
		Female Gen Y	.15	.62	1.00
		Female Gen X	.64	.63	.91
		Female Boomer	-.43	1.16	1.00
	Female Gen Y	Male Gen Y	-.81	.18	.00
		Male Gen X	-.30	.18	.54
		Male Boomer	-.15	.62	1.00
		Female Gen X	.49	.26	.40
		Female Boomer	-.58	1.00	.99
	Female Boomer	Male Gen Y	-.23	.99	1.00
		Male Gen X	.28	.99	1.00
		Male Boomer	.43	1.16	1.00
		Female Gen Y	.58	1.00	.99
		Female Gen X	1.07	1.01	.90
Scale 4	Male Gen Y	Male Gen X	.16	.16	.92

		Male Boomer	-.74	.77	.93
		Female Gen Y	-.82	.22	.00
		Female Gen X	.50	.29	.50
		Female Boomer	.12	1.29	1.00
	Male Boomer	Male Gen Y	.74	.77	.93
		Male Gen X	.90	.77	.85
		Female Gen Y	-.08	.78	1.00
		Female Gen X	1.24	.80	.64
		Female Boomer	.86	1.50	.99
	Female Gen Y	Male Gen Y	.82*	.22	.00
		Male Gen X	.97*	.23	.00
		Male Boomer	.08	.78	1.00
		Female Gen X	1.32*	.33	.00
		Female Boomer	.94	1.30	.98
	Female Boomer	Male Gen Y	-.12	1.29	1.00
		Male Gen X	.04	1.29	1.00
		Male Boomer	-.86	1.50	.99
		Female Gen Y	-.94	1.30	.98
		Female Gen X	.38	1.31	1.00
Scale 7	Male Gen Y	Male Gen X	-.43	.31	.72
		Male Boomer	-1.66	1.47	.87
		Female Gen Y	-1.43	.43	.01
		Female Gen X	-.51	.55	.94
		Female Boomer	1.29	2.59	1.00

	Male Boomer	Male Gen Y	1.66	1.47	.87
		Male Gen X	1.23	1.47	.96
		Female Gen Y	.23	1.50	1.00
		Female Gen X	1.15	1.54	.98
		Female Boomer	2.95	2.96	.92
	Female Gen Y	Male Gen Y	1.43*	.43	.01
		Male Gen X	1.00	.43	.19
		Male Boomer	-.23	1.50	1.00
		Female Gen X	.92	.63	.69
		Female Boomer	2.72	2.61	.90
	Female Boomer	Male Gen Y	-1.29	2.59	1.00
		Male Gen X	-1.72	2.59	.99
		Male Boomer	-2.95	2.96	.92
		Female Gen Y	-2.72	2.61	.90
		Female Gen X	-1.80	2.63	.98

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 13. ICC values for Target Rater Pairs Grouped by Generation Membership of the Target Leader

Group	Statistic	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6	Scale 7
Male Baby Boomer Leader	ICC (1)	-0.036	-0.342	0.173	0.134	0.120	0.336	0.100
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.244	-0.057	0.415	0.392	0.375	0.542	0.395
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	-0.310	-0.564	-0.090	-0.143	-0.152	0.093	-0.212
	N	49	50	56	51	53	60	40
Female Baby Boomer Leader	ICC (1)	0.837	0.565	-0.041	-0.667	0.290	0.333	-0.988
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.988	0.999	0.866	0.988	0.930	0.936	0.651
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.061	-0.829	-0.831	-0.990	-0.693	-0.666	-1.000
	N	4	2	4	2	4	4	2
Baby Boomer Leader	ICC (1)	0.128	-0.330	0.081	0.055	0.189	0.269	0.046
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.349	-0.111	0.287	0.278	0.386	0.450	0.298
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	-0.106	-0.517	-0.131	-0.173	-0.025	0.067	-0.212
	N	71	74	86	74	84	90	58
Male Generation X Leader	ICC (1)	0.252	0.130	0.155	0.172	0.125	0.120	0.179
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.272	0.153	0.175	0.192	0.145	0.140	0.203
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.231	0.107	0.136	0.152	0.106	0.101	0.155
	N	7,983	7,031	9,461	8,702	9,719	9,915	6,363
Female Generation X Leader	ICC (1)	0.250	0.134	0.176	0.216	0.105	0.108	0.092
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.317	0.207	0.235	0.276	0.166	0.169	0.168
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.180	0.060	0.114	0.153	0.043	0.047	0.015
	N	714	687	986	923	986	1,022	644
Generation X Leader overall	ICC (1)	0.259	0.131	0.146	0.180	0.108	0.111	0.162

	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.276	0.150	0.162	0.196	0.124	0.126	0.181
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.242	0.112	0.130	0.163	0.092	0.095	0.142
	N	11,977	10,571	14,518	13,286	14,764	15,084	9,555
Male Generation Y Leader	ICC (1)	0.240	0.176	0.210	0.207	0.114	0.119	0.182
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.281	0.224	0.248	0.247	0.153	0.158	0.231
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.197	0.127	0.171	0.165	0.074	0.079	0.131
	N	1,918	1525	2,397	2,117	2,399	2,429	1,421
Female Generation Y Leader	ICC (1)	0.367	0.185	0.280	0.215	0.169	0.114	0.143
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.466	0.304	0.372	0.314	0.268	0.212	0.269
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.259	0.060	0.183	0.110	0.066	0.013	0.013
	N	269	239	366	335	353	378	224
Generation Y Leader overall	ICC (1)	0.268	0.166	0.185	0.193	0.098	0.094	0.145
	95% C.I. Upper Bound	0.300	0.203	0.214	0.224	0.129	0.124	0.184
	95% C.I. Lower Bound	0.235	0.128	0.155	0.162	0.068	0.063	0.105
	N	3,197	2581	4,081	3,639	4,036	4,115	2,379

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ABSTRACT

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN EVALUATION AND EXPRESSION OF LEADERSHIP STYLE

by

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Major: Psychology (Industrial/Organizational)

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Generational differences in the workplace have received a great deal of attention in the past few years. The present study used 360° data to examine the agreement of Generation Y, Generation X, and Baby Boomers target leaders with other raters. Archival data generated by the TalentSage leadership assessment was used. Both self-reported leadership style and perceived leadership style was considered. Significant differences were observed between Generation X and Generation Y for self-reported leadership style, however no significant increase in agreement between targets and raters was observed for generation matched versus generation mismatched pairs.

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2008-2011 APORG Consultant

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Publications and Presentations

Bal, A., Reiss, A., Rudolph, C. W., & Baltes, B. B. (2010, April). A Meta-Analysis of Positive and Negative Aspects of Ageism. To be presented in Kotrba, L., Baltes, B. B. (Co-Chairs). Age in the Workplace: Positive Implications of an Older Workforce. Symposium to be presented at the 25th annual meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Atlanta, GA.

Chakrabarti, M., Arnold, J. D., & Reiss, A. (Co-chairs). Hall, S., Fetzer, M., Pratt, A. K., Barney, M. (speakers). Cool Assessment Tools. Symposium to be presented at the 25th annual meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Atlanta, GA.

Baltes, B.B., Reiss, A., Rudolph, C.W., Lelchook, A. (co-chairs), Pratt, A., Deal, J., Jurkiewicz, C., Pitt-Catsouphes, M., & Sessa, V. (2009, April). Generational differences at work: Are the causes generational or maturational? Debate presented at the 24th annual meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Dickson, M. W., Schneider, B., Nieminen, L., Weidner, N., Weller, M., Bal, A., Castano, N., Reiss, A., & Yu, M. (2009, April). The zeitgeist of the future. Conversation hour to be presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Weidner, N., Lelchock, A., Dickson, M., Castano, N., & Reiss, A. Does Religion affect Leadership?: The influence of religion on leadership perceptions and behaviors to be presented at Academy of Management August 2008.