

A FIT MODEL OF LEADERSHIP AND TWO EMPIRICAL EXAMINATIONS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the C.T. Bauer College of Business

University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Kenneth Michael Sweet, Junior

May, 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my parents, Donald and Melissa Parker, for teaching me that hard work and perseverance are the only sure routes to success. I'd also like to thank Leanne Atwater and Alan Witt for their support and encouragement throughout my Doctoral studies. There were numerous occasions that, without their assurances and guidance, I may have moved on from my doctoral studies without finishing. I'd like to thank Dale Rude and Steve Werner for their support and valuable feedback throughout the process of completing this dissertation. A special thanks to Betty Zhou and Mo Wang, from the University of Maryland, for their help in collecting the data used in this study. I would like to thank the entire faculty of the C.T. Bauer College of Business for giving me the opportunity and environment to reach my academic and personal goals during the last 6 years. Finally, a heartfelt thanks to Patty Chang for constantly reminding me that "You have work to do" and that "Leanne is going to be mad." Again, thanks to everyone, it has been a privilege.

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ABSTRACT

In a three manuscript dissertation, I propose a Meso-model of organizational leadership based on fit theory and then test key propositions of the model concerning exchange relationships between leaders and followers. The first manuscript examines existing leadership theory highlighting points of agreement and contention among theoretical paradigms, and then presents a fit-based model designed to integrate theory and allow for more directed growth in the field. The second manuscript proposes that narcissistic leaders will form dysfunctional relationships with followers based on subordinate Core Self-Evaluation (CSE). It is hypothesized that follower CSE is positively related to higher quality exchange relationships (LMX) with supervisors. However, I predict that leader narcissism moderates this relationship such that for narcissistic supervisors the CSE-LMX relationship is negative, as narcissists prefer to surround themselves with low-CSE followers. Results did not support the hypotheses, and several intervening variables and future directions are considered in the discussion. The third manuscript investigates the interaction between bad apple followers, or those with a predisposition to destructive behavior, and ethical leaders. Competing hypotheses are presented to explain the interaction, with the goal of determining if and how ethical leaders are able to influence the deviant behavior of Bad Apple employees. Results suggest that Bad Apples improve their behavior in the presence of an ethical leader, but remain equally more deviant than their non-Bad Apple peers with or without ethical leadership. Implications and future directions are also discussed.

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Manuscript 1

A FIT MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

MANUSCRIPT 1 ABSTRACT

Leadership theory has been historically separated along paradigmatic lines (i.e. trait, behavioral, relational, and contingency approaches). Each paradigm has evolved toward a situational model, as researchers uncovered moderating influences on proposed leadership processes. The author examines this trend, and then proposes a meso-model of organizational leadership based on fit theory. Fit theory is an interactional view of organizational relationships based on similarity and exchange between entities. Fit theory offers a lens through which leadership can be viewed, which implicitly captures the effect of situation, hierarchical relationships, traits, and behaviors- the four dominant paradigms in extant leadership theory.

“Do they think that I am such a damned fool as to think myself fit for President of the United States? No, sir; I know what I am fit for. I can command a body of men in a rough way, but I am not fit to be President.”

(Andrew Jackson)

The concept of leadership has been central to the study of human society for as long as history has been recorded, and has been examined from perspectives as diverse as sociology, political science, history, psychology, education, anthropology, zoology, military science, medicine, religion, and business. Over the last several decades a large majority of leadership research has been conducted in the organizational sciences of industrial-organizational psychology and organizational behavior. Though substantial progress has been made in organizational leadership theory (Bass, 2008; House & Aditya, 1997), the field continues to lack a general, prescriptive, and integrated theory of leadership. Impediments to development of a general theory of leadership include conceptual ambiguity regarding a definition (Yukl, 2010; Bass, 2008), challenges to common assumptions about the nature of leadership (Hunter, Bedell-Avers, & Mumford, 2007), and questions concerning the level at which leadership processes occur (Yammarino, Dionne, Chun, & Dansereau, 2005). Without addressing these issues, the field will likely increasingly lack coherence and research will, to a greater extent, fail to provide prescriptive solutions to managers.

Bacharach (1989) described a theory in very simple terms as an explanation of how, why, and when, which he juxtaposed to description, or an explanation of what.

Organizational theories vary in level of abstraction, or generalization. Leadership as a domain is populated by specific theories and lacks a general framework for integrating and evaluating the large body of extant theoretical and empirical work. The vast majority of effort in the domain has focused on construct development and relationship testing, often without broader theoretical development to link paradigms, theories, and constructs. Accordingly, the purpose of this manuscript is to propose a general theory for the advancement of organizational leadership research. To do so first requires a description of organizational leadership, as the ontology of “leadership” has become quite expansive. After delineating organizational leadership as it is used in the current model, I propose a theory of organizational leadership derived from the fit, or interaction, between a manager and the characteristics of his/her work environment.

In the introductory quote, Andrew Jackson (Parton, 1860: 354) demonstrates the implicit and explicit roles of fit in positions of leadership. In this situation, fit holds a high degree of significance for the individual and other stakeholders, because of the strategic importance of the position and the degree of influence the position holder has over others. To some degree this is true for all organizational leaders. Fit theory provides an implicitly situational view of organizational relationships (Schneider, 2001), while leadership research generally fails to account for contextual effects (Hunter, et al., 2007). However, leadership has seldom been examined in terms of fit, nor have the implications of leader-environment fit been directly studied. I believe that fit theory is ideal as a basis for a generalized leadership model because of its ubiquitous and situational nature (Edwards, 2008).

A DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The diverse disciplines through which leadership theory has evolved have created a theoretical mosaic. Leadership scholars continue to haggle with a general definition, spurred by conceptual ambiguity regarding the nature of the concept. After summarizing these ambiguities, Yukl (2010: 8) stated, “It is neither feasible nor desirable at this point in the development of the discipline to attempt to resolve the controversies over the appropriate definition of leadership.” Others have taken a similar stance, viewing leadership as most anything that is declared as such (e.g. Bass, 2008). Here, I will take a contrarian view. The goal of organizational research is to increase the practicality of theory when applied to organizational contexts. For leadership to be a purposive concept in the organizational literature it must be defined in a way that provides pragmatic utility (Bacharach, 1989). Assuming that our customers are practitioners of management, human resources, and managerial consulting, providing functional, prescriptive solutions for enhancing leadership within organizational contexts should be our goal. The widespread use of the word leadership by society in general, as well as by academics and practitioners of various disciplines, makes it necessary to specify what is, and certainly what is not, construed as leadership in the theory proposed here. In the remainder of this section, I will describe the who, what, and where of the theory of organizational leadership presented in the subsequent section.

Who Leads in Organizations?

Bass (2008: 3) begins his impressive leadership review with the sentence, “The evidence is all around us,” suggesting that leadership is an everyday part of human

existence. The dual nature of leadership as both a social and organizational phenomenon, as well as a common part of the everyday vernacular, has done as much to help its popularity in academia as it has to confound the related theorizing. Theories developed in political and social sciences have been applied to organizational settings without adequate explanation of their relevance.

I propose that there is a difference in the emergence of leadership in social groups and the granting of authority by a formal manager to self lead, which has not been explicated in these theories. For example, recent theories attempt to explain leadership in organizations by drawing from social influence processes including lateral and upward influence (Pearce & Conger, 2003) and within social movements or leaderless groups (Schneider & Somers, 2006). Theory on shared leadership, complexity theory, and distributive leadership suggests that those in formal manager and subordinate roles are equally capable of exhibiting leadership depending on the situation (Schneider & Somers, 2006; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Drath, 2001; Bryman, 1996). However, this is not exactly true. Shared and distributed leadership groups come to existence in organizations *because* a manager decides that they can or should exist. The decision maker can also redact that decision and terminate the ability of the group to self lead. In essence, shared and distributive leadership are simply a leadership style, chosen by formal managers.

In the theories from the preceding paragraph, effective managers allow leadership to emerge from the most capable person in the group. This individual possesses some critical skill, charisma, or other characteristic that the group utilizes to accomplish their collective goal. These theories are group-level versions of an earlier model that suggested that the outcome of highly effective leadership was the individual's ability to self lead

(Manz & Sims, 1987). How other forms of social influence within the organization enhance or constrain managerial actions is, of course, an important and relevant question for management scholars. However, viewing leadership as any form of social influence occurring in the organization creates an extremely broad, if not perplexing, research schema. Therefore, in the current model *leadership* is conceptualized as a form of behavior exhibited by formal organizational managers.

What is Organizational Leadership?

A large majority of theory and research on leadership in organizations has as its central focus the behaviors of individuals (Lowe & Gardner, 2000; House & Aditya, 1997). Two classes of behaviors- decision making and interpersonal influence- are the conceptual underpinnings of nearly all theories of leadership in the organizational sciences. Additionally, most contemporary definitions of leadership, in both practitioner (Army Field Manual 6-22, 2006) and academic texts (Yukl, 2010), include these two behaviors. Chemers (2000) identified three core behaviors of organizational leaders, two related to interpersonal influence (image management and relationship development) and one related to decision making (resource deployment). But, what distinguishes leadership from other forms of decision and influence behavior by managers? Many organizational scholars have contrasted the concepts of leadership and management. Warren Bennis (Bennis and Nanus, 1985) suggested that managers do things right, while leaders do the right thing. Mintzberg (1973) argued that “leader” is a managerial role. Still others view the distinction as one of recognition by the led (Holloman, 1986).

Recent theory distinguishing leaders from others in organizational settings has centered on change (Hitt & Ireland, 2002; Rost, 1991; Kotter, 1990). An assumption of the theory proposed here is that all managers are charged as agents of the organization to make decisions and influence others to execute those decisions. The difference between leadership and management is the purpose of those decisions and influence attempts. Managers make decisions to utilize organizational resources and influence others to execute those decisions toward accomplishing an organization's existing strategy. When conditions warrant change (i.e. the strategy is no longer effective), managers exhibit leadership to the extent that they make decisions and influence others toward enacting organizationally relevant change (Kotter, 1990). The key difference between leadership and management is change. There is no leadership required to guide individuals, groups, or organizations in a direction they are already going. Therefore, I propose that *organizational leadership* is the process by which managers make decisions, and influence others to enact those decisions, for the purpose of creating organizationally relevant change. Further, managers engage in other primary classes of behavior which are role-prescribed, and not leadership. *Management* is the process by which managers make decisions, and influence others to enact those decisions, for the purpose of implementing organizational strategy. *Administration* is the use of formal and informal organizational procedures to facilitate the accomplishment of work by others. Collectively, these behaviors make up the purposive efforts of a manager on behalf of the organization.

Where does Leadership Occur in Organizations?

Ralph Stodgill (1974: 259) made the oft quoted statement, "There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the

concept.” Similarly, Shirley (1982: 262) noted, “There are almost as many definitions of strategy as there are writers about the subject.” It is no wonder that discussion of the difference between strategic and supervisory forms of leadership takes many forms. Boal and Hooijberg (2001) view strategic leadership as leadership of organizations, and supervisory leadership as leadership in organizations. House and Aditya (1997) define strategic leadership as giving purpose, meaning, and guidance to organizations, and supervisory leadership as providing guidance, support, and corrective feedback for day-to-day work unit activities. A cursory look at the literature suggests that strategic leadership is synonymous with leadership in top-management positions, including chief executives (CEO), directors, and other members of the top-management team, while supervisory leadership occurs at lower levels of the organization (Yukl, 2010; Bass, 2008). Conceptual ambiguity regarding the domain of strategy and preconceived notions about the nature of firms may have led to inappropriate distinctions between strategic and supervisory leadership (Shirley, 1982; Hambrick, 1980).

To combat increasingly turbulent environments, organizations are changing the nature of strategic leadership processes (Luthans & Slocum, 2004). Approaches include flattening hierarchies, pushing decision-making authority down, and empowering lower-level managers with enacting strategically relevant change (Miles, Snow, Mathews, Miles, & Coleman, 1997). To accomplish this, organizations are increasingly replacing bureaucratic, top-down strategic approaches with internal resource markets, and other novel forms (Ellig, 2001; Snow, Miles, & Coleman, 1992). Evidence suggests that large, multi-divisional firms have been using this approach for decades (Kinnunen, 1976). As organizations continue to face increasingly turbulent environments, they will rely more

on those most directly involved with key stakeholders to drive strategic changes, creating ambiguity about where strategic decisions are made.

The elusiveness of the set of decisions that generate a strategy is not as problematic as it appears. Hambrick (1980) noted that there is a distinct difference between strategy formulation and strategy implementation. Setting aside the discursive argument about where strategy is formulated and in which direction it travels, one might conclude that formulating strategy is a process of making change-based decisions and influencing key stakeholders of the value of those decisions. It logically follows that implementing a strategy consists of making the necessary decisions, and providing adequate influence, to carry out the strategy. In other words, formulating a strategy is leadership, and implementing the strategy is management. The content of decisions, the relevant constraints on decision-making ability, and the mechanisms by which influence is exerted likely vary between CEOs, middle managers, and first-line supervisors. How they differ is an empirically testable question; therefore, no distinction is made between supervisory and strategic leaders in the proposed model.

A FIT THEORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Though no general theory exists, PE fit is considered a central concept in organizational behavior (Edwards, 2008) and industrial/organizational psychology (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Schneider (2001: 142) suggested, “If person-environment fit is not the explicit key to our understanding of behavior, it is the implicit key.” While many theories of leadership are implicitly theories of fit, little theoretical groundwork exists for applying the concept of fit to explain the situational nature of management in

organizations. Recently, leadership scholars have increasingly called for meso-models of organizational leadership (Hunt & Phillips, 1992; Hunt, 1991), including a dedicated issue of *The Leadership Quarterly* in 2009. Meso-models integrate multiple levels of analysis (e.g. individual, group, and organizational) with contextual factors, explicating the link between leadership, the environment, and outcomes at multiple levels (Gardner & Coglisier, 2009). The inherently interactional nature of fit offers a lens through which organizational leadership can be viewed that will better describe the contextual, relational, and hierarchical facets of managerial work. The model proposed below is a meso-model of leadership, whereby fit between a leader and multiple levels of their environment determine outcomes (i.e. performance) of individuals and groups in support of the organization.

A Brief Review of Person-Environment Fit Theory

The general conceptual basis of fit theory is that when entities within a work environment are aligned, or fit together, positive outcomes result for individuals, groups, and organizations (Ostroff and Schulte, 2007). Fit theory and research share two key assumptions with other broad domains of organizational theory, including leadership. First, organizational theories assume that employees are embedded in progressively higher echelons of interdependent groups. Second, there is an assumption that these groups, and consequently the individuals comprising the groups, are involved in exchange relationships for valuable resources.

Fit can occur as similarity or congruence, referred to as supplementary fit, or as mutually beneficial, ongoing exchange, referred to as complementary fit (Muchinsky &

Monahan, 1987). Two related sociological theories have been intensely applied toward investigating these phenomena without explicit recognition of the theoretical overlap. A large body of research has supported the proposition that individuals and collectives are attracted to others with similar values, goals, and other characteristics, and subsequently form relationships with them (Klein, Lim, Saltz, & Mayer, 2004; Byrne, 1971; Newcomb, 1956). Commonly referred to as the similarity-attraction hypothesis, this body of research provides sweeping support for the notion of supplementary fit across and between levels of analysis.

Similarly, research on social-exchange theory has supported the proposition that individuals and groups seek out others with control over, or access to, needed resources, and engage in behaviors to solicit the use of those resources (Bowler & Brass, 2006; Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1958). Complementary fit, or the social exchange of resources, has been supported at and between multiple levels of analysis in organizational settings. Fit can take at least three forms, based on the levels at which the entities exist (i.e. individual or environmental entity), which are described in terms of managerial fit below.

Person-person fit. Dyadic fit between individuals, or person-person (PP) fit, occurs when individuals within a work environment possess similar characteristics, values, and/or goals (i.e. supplementary fit) and become engaged in ongoing exchange relationships to meet each other's respective needs (i.e. complementary fit). Two theories have primarily been used to explain dyadic relationships between managers and other actors in their organizational environment. Social-network theory (SNT) has demonstrated that managers can access tangible and intangible resources through formal

and informal networks of exchange relationships with other resource controllers (Oh, Labianca, Chung, 2006). Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) proposes that managers and subordinates are involved in ongoing exchange relationships in which consistently met transactional obligations lead to higher levels of trust, commitment, and resource sharing between the partners (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, 1991).

Person-environment fit. Person-environment (PE) fit, or the fit between an individual and another entity within their environment has primarily been examined as fit between an individual and their organization, workgroup, or job (Kristoff-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

Person-organization (PO) fit (Chatman, 1989) is the compatibility between individuals and organizations that occurs when they share fundamental characteristics and/or meet each other's needs (Kristoff, 1996). Supplementary PO fit occurs when the culture, values, goals, or norms of the organization match with the personality, values, goals, and attitudes of the person (Kristoff, 1996). Leadership literature suggests that managers bring requisite skills from prior leadership experiences, but must learn through socialization how to best apply these skills to their new environment (Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000). During socialization, managers learn and are encouraged to internalize the vision, values, strategy, goals, and culture of the organization (Schneider, Smith, Taylor, & Fleenor, 1998). The extent to which the manager internalizes and displays organizational attributes is synonymous with their level of supplementary PO fit.

Complementary PO fit occurs when the resources, knowledge, skills, and abilities supplied by an individual match those demanded by the organization, and the resources and opportunities demanded by the individual are supplied by the organization (Kristoff, 1996). Managers rely on the organization to provide needed information, authority, and discretion to exercise power over subordinates and external entities (Pfeffer, 1992). The manager also has power to the extent that his/her personal characteristics and expert knowledge are valuable within the organization (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989; French and Raven, 1959). For a manager, complementary PO fit is synonymous with the extent to which the organization meets his/her need for sources of power, as well as the extent to which he/she is a source of power for the organization to meet its objectives.

Person-group (PG) fit is the compatibility between individuals and their work groups, defined as any identifiable subunit within an organization (Kristoff, 1996). For a manager, fit with the group of employees for which he/she is accountable is uniquely important. Supplementary PG fit occurs when the manager and the group have congruent values and goals, and the manager adheres to group norms. To be effective, managers must adhere to dominant group norms (Hollander, 1958), while monitoring for, and reacting to, ineffective norms (Hollander & Julian, 1970). Adhering to dominant group norms increases the manager's ability to enact change in the group when it is needed (Abrams, de Moura, Marques, & Hutchison, 2008; Fielding & Hogg, 1997).

Complementary PG fit occurs when the characteristics of the individual enable the group to meet its collective goals, and the characteristics of the group meet the psychological and purposive needs of the individual (Kristoff-Brown, et al., 2005). Managers generally possess authority, decision-making discretion, and control over

resources needed by the group to function effectively. Additionally, managers may possess unique knowledge, skills, and abilities, gained through experience, training, and education, that facilitate the group's efficacy. In turn, managers typically rely on group behavior (i.e. performance), knowledge, skills, and abilities for tangible and intangible individual outcomes. While complementary fit has generally been assumed in leadership research (Hunter, et al., 2007), a small body of research has examined misfit as "substitutes" for leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978).

Supplementary person-job fit has not been proposed in PE fit theory, as it is unlikely that jobs possess the requisite characteristics on which to match a person. Complementary PJ fit occurs when a person's proficiencies and the formal requirements of a job match (Werbel & Gilliland, 1999; Scroggins, 2007). For a manager, complementary PJ fit is the match between his/her specific capabilities and experience and the requirements to be effective at his/her role-prescribed duties.

Systems fit. Systems fit, or the fit between composite collectives of individuals (i.e. teams, workgroups, functional units, or organizations) and another level of the environment with which they interact, is an important and understudied aspect of organizational research (Ostroff & Schulte, 2007). Of particular importance to management research is group-environment (GE) fit, or the alignment between the group for which the manager is directly accountable and other intra- and extra-organizational exchange partners. Supplementary GE fit is the degree to which a manager's workgroup and another environmental entity (e.g. customers, another department, or the organization) have similar cultures, values, goals, and expectations. Complementary GE fit occurs when a manager's workgroup has a positive reciprocal resource exchange with

another entity within its work environment. Organizational structures are becoming flatter and more market based. As a result, lower-level managers have increased discretion, make more resource and strategic decisions, and frequently interact with external and internal interdependent stakeholders. In other words, organizations are moving away from a top-down model, and towards a bottom-up model, of achieving internal and external alignment (i.e. GE fit). Consequently, achieving, maintaining, protecting, and recovering GE fit is a major function of organizational managers at all levels (Mumford, 2003; Semler, 1997).

Fit, in supplementary and complementary forms, can be used to describe the context in which a manager is embedded. The manager's similarity and exchange relationships with individuals, groups, and environmental entities in their work environment describe the socio-political context in which the manager is embedded and help to elucidate the situational nature of managerial and leadership behaviors more effectively than extant static leadership theories.

Why and When does Leadership Occur in Organizations?

Organizations generally form because they are able to produce goods and services more reliably and with greater accountability than ad-hoc collectives of individuals (Hannah & Freeman, 1984). That accountability falls to the founder or chief executive, who is accountable to owners, customers, suppliers, and the community in which the firm operates for all of the actions of the organization (Dubnick, 1998). Accountability exists as a result of the need to ensure reciprocity in exchange relationships that the organization has with external stakeholders (Worden, 2003; Miles, Snow, & Pfeffer,

1974). The actions of the organization and the expectations of environmental partners, as well as the actions of environmental partners and the needs of the organization, must remain aligned for the organization to remain viable. However, managers cannot freely choose any strategy for maintaining alignment, as decision alternatives are bound by constraints, namely discretion and authority.

Managerial discretion is the degree of latitude in decision making that the manager possesses (Hambrick & Finkelstein, 1987; Hambrick, 2007). The chief executive has discretion to the extent that it is not limited by resources, laws and regulations, customers, employees, suppliers, or other environmental forces. The plausible decision alternatives, known or unknown, available to the manager constrain the actions the manager can take on behalf of the firm. Formal authority is a manager's legitimate capability to exercise power (Bass, 2008). Organizational culture and norms, job descriptions, ethics, as well as policies and laws determine what a manager can, or cannot, do. The plausible actions of the manager are constrained or enhanced to the extent that they do, or do not possess authority, and do, or do not, conform to rules and expectations.

Authority and discretion can be delegated to subordinate managers, making the delegate accountable to the delegating manager, starting with the chief executive and moving downward through the organization (Stodgill & Shartle, 1948). While the chief executive maintains overall accountability to owners and society for the organization (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), authority and discretion for most of the tasks in the organization have been delegated to progressively lower echelons of managers.

Maintaining fit between the organization and external exchange partners requires control systems and structures within the organization to create efficiency and synergy between individuals, groups, units, and businesses. Internal fit between individuals, workgroups, functional areas, and the organization's systems and structures is essential to the efficient functioning of the organization, and is a primary function of management (Semler, 1997). Lower levels of an organization are embedded within progressively higher levels (Roberts, Hulin, & Rosseau, 1978), and alignment between the two affects the performance of the organization, the group, and the individual (Schneider, et al., 2003), as well as alignment with other environmental entities (Ostroff & Schulte, 2007).

Research has demonstrated that alignment between organizations and individuals (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkle, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), organizations and functional groups (Preston & Karahanna, 2009; Chan, Sabherwal, & Thatcher, 2006), and two functional groups within an organization (Wier, Kochhar, LeBeau, & Edgeley, 2000; Strahle, Spiro, & Acito, 1996) leads to improved organizational outcomes. Further, as organizations increasingly move to market-based internal resource systems, maintaining alignment between lateral exchange partners within the organization will become increasingly important to effective management within organizations (Snow, et al., 1992). Managers throughout the organization are responsible for ensuring fit (i.e. ongoing mutually beneficial exchange) between the group for which they are accountable and their internal and external exchange partners. When their workgroup becomes misaligned with an exchange partner, in terms of supplementary or complementary GE fit, the manager is responsible for realigning the group with the stakeholder entity.

Groups may become misaligned by not adequately embracing the culture, values, norms, or goals of an important stakeholder entity. Misalignment might also occur through imbalanced or changing relationships in which the group fails to meet the demands of, or have its needs met by, an exchange partner. When workgroups become misaligned with internal or external exchange partners, managers must make changes to ensure the continuing competitiveness of the organization (Semler, 1997; Mumford, 2003). Managers can attempt realignment through modification of the behaviors and/or expectations of the stakeholder, their workgroup, or both. The realignment of workgroup and stakeholder values, norms, and goals, along with meeting the evolving exchange expectations of each, are the driving forces behind managerial change decisions.

When organizations, groups, and individuals are meeting, and are expected to continue to meet, the expectations of their economic and social partners, there is no need to make changes. In fact, it is likely that changes made for reasons other than to combat misalignment are actually counterproductive, and may increase the likelihood of becoming misaligned. As environments and expectations change, the workgroup must remain aligned with stakeholders, and managerial change-based decisions (i.e. leadership) are the mechanism for doing so.

An overview of the Model: How Leadership Functions in Organizations?

The general purpose of this paper is to propose a meso-model of organizational leadership that captures the situational and hierarchical nature of management processes at an abstract level of theorizing, which might allow for the integration of extant leadership theories. Increasing calls for meso-models are based on the recognition that

managers are embedded in complex, interdependent environments. The following three sections explain how the proposed model is explicitly integrative, situational, and hierarchical.

The Integrative Nature of the Model. The four dominant paradigms in extant leadership research include trait, behavioral, relational, and contingent models (House & Aditya, 1997). The current model captures manager and subordinate traits in regards to fit with their job, organization, and each other. Managerial behaviors are delineated and tied to outcomes, including subordinate behaviors, the exchange of resources, and group alignment. Relational models are included in the proposed exchange processes between managers and subordinates, as well as between a manager and resource network members. Another well researched leadership paradigm is the power-influence approach (Bass, 2008). Power-influence is captured in the proposed model as complementary fit between the manager and their organization.

Theories that have been proposed as explanations for error in leadership ratings, namely implicit leadership and attribution theories, are considered in the model as forces that moderate the relationship between leader behaviors and follower perceptions. Emerging theories of self-directed teams, organizational complexity, and leaderless groups are also considered in the model. Workgroups may render leadership unnecessary if they are able to recognize and correct their own misalignment as well as, or better than, the manager. Organizational hierarchies are undergoing fundamental changes, and strategic decision making is being shifted to lower-level managers. The processes in the fit model can be applied to managers at all levels of the organization, thereby integrating strategic and supervisory views of leadership. The integration of each of the dominant

supervisory paradigms, strategic leadership, perceptual biases, and emerging and substitutes theories, makes this the most integrative model of organizational leadership proposed to date.

The Situational Nature of the Model. Generally, extant leadership theories have evolved toward situational models as research has uncovered moderating environmental forces. Therefore, I believe that an effective model of organizational leadership should adequately capture situational influences. Calls for Meso-models of leadership have also made the explication of the role of context an important issue for the advancement of leadership theory. The proposed model is entirely determined by contextual factors.

The need for role-prescribed or change-based behaviors by a manager is contingent on his/her workgroup's fit with the environment, as well as the manager's and the workgroup's ability to recognize and address misalignment. The effectiveness of a manager's behavior is contingent on his/her fit with the job, group, and organization in which he/she is embedded. Subordinate behavior is dependent not only on a manager's behaviors, but also on his/her attributions about the manager and his/her work environment. Resources available for change-based initiatives are not fixed, but rather are determined by a manager's social capital with external resource controllers. Einstein and Socrates noted that everything is relative, in physics and meta-physics, respectively. Relativity is especially important in organizational contexts, as what is a matter of daily practice in one organization, or for a specific individual, may seem nearly impossible for another, in another context. Accordingly, the entire proposed model is based on environmental fit, and explicitly captures the situational nature of managerial processes.

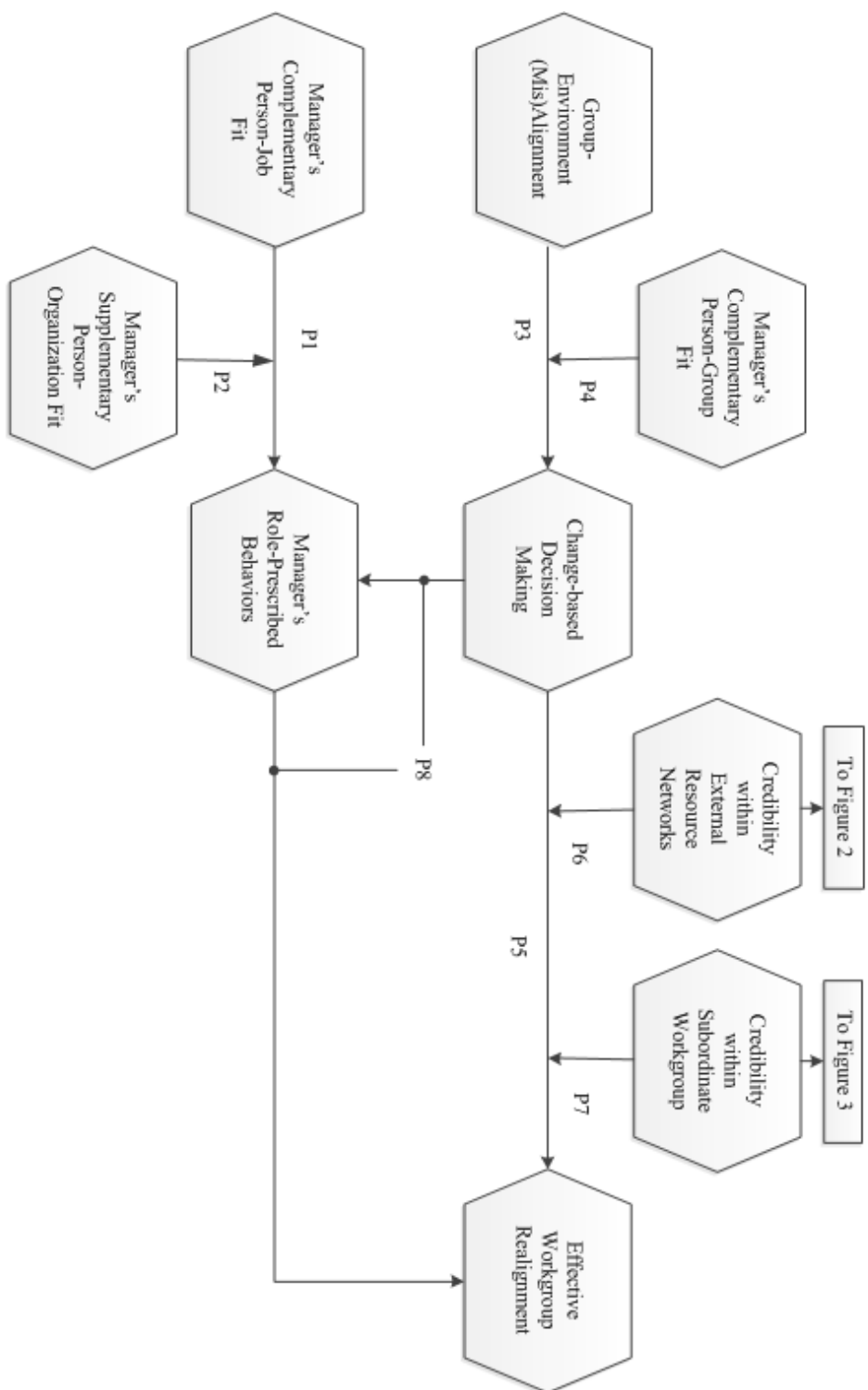
The Hierarchical Nature of the Model. Increasing calls for multi-level models of leadership, and the accompanying criticisms of current models, was in large part the inspiration for taking on this project. The proposed model is essentially a model of relationships. Relationships are proposed between individuals and their jobs and organizations, between dyadic sets of individuals, between individuals and groups, and between groups and environmental stakeholders. Outcomes occur at the individual level (e.g. subordinate work perceptions and behavior), the dyadic level (e.g. supervisor-subordinate exchange), and the group level (e.g. alignment). Using fit between individuals, dyads, and groups as the basis for the model proposed here allows for a more explicit integration of levels of analysis than in any organizational theory proposed thus far.

Group Misalignment and Change-based Decision Making

The general proposition of the model is that leadership occurs as a result of misalignment between a manager's workgroup and the environment in which they are embedded. For clarity and parsimony the model presented here has been divided into three portions, depicted in the three figures below. Figure 1 is a model of the process by which managers lead groups from misalignment to realignment through change-based decision making and influence in the form of managerial credibility. Figures 2 and 3 are models of managerial credibility with external resource controllers and the subordinate workgroup, respectively. Figures 2 and 3 tie into figure one as illustrated, to form the complete theoretical model.

Role effectiveness. Management and administration behaviors, coupled together here as role-prescribed behaviors, are concerned with maintaining existing alignment through the effective implementation of organizational systems, structures, and processes toward the group and organization's strategic goals. Effectiveness in role-prescribed behavior is dependent on the manager possessing the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) for successfully executing their job functions. A long-standing truism in the study of organizational behavior is that voluntary behavior by employees (performance) is a function of motivation and ability (Vroom, 1964). Even when the manager's KSAOs match the requirements of the job, the manager must be motivated to engage in role behaviors to be effective. Jobs provide motivation to the

Figure 1.1: Fit Model of Leadership



extent that they meet the manager's physiological and psychological needs. A job meets the needs of an individual to the extent that the conditions are safe, the rewards are equitable and sufficient, duties are not overly stressful, and the work is meaningful, challenging, and fulfilling (Scroggins, 2008; Ehrhart, 2006). Complementary person-job fit is the match between individual KSAOs and the demands of a job, as well as the needs of a person and what is provided by a job (Edwards, 1991). The fit between a manager and the attributes of his/her job influences his/her ability to effectively engage in role behaviors, as well as his/her motivation to do so.

Proposition 1: A Manager's complementary person-job fit predicts his/her effective role-prescribed behaviors.

Fit with Systems and Structures. Managers do not operate in a vacuum. The distribution of accountability, authority, resources, and information are formalized in organizational systems and structures. Organizational systems and structures can enhance or reduce the ability of the manager to direct their behavior toward role-specific challenges by constraining the available plausible courses of action (Ireland & Hitt, 1999). Managers must learn to apply their KSAOs to the organizational context in which they are embedded (Mumford, et al., 2000). A manager's supplementary person-organization fit, or the degree to which he/she embraces and enacts the organization's goals, values, culture, and norms, determines how well he/she is able to leverage his/her KSAOs within the organization (Schneider, et al., 1998).

Proposition 2: A manager's supplementary person-organization fit enhances the relationship between his/her complementary person-job fit and his/her role-prescribed behaviors.

Change-based Decision Making. As noted earlier, managers are responsible for maintaining alignment between their workgroup and intra- and extra-organizational exchange partners. Dynamic environments, resulting from technological innovation and the changing expectations of exchange partners, can lead to misalignment. To remain a viable exchange partner, the organization, or the component for which the manager is accountable, must adapt to the changing needs of the other entity.

Proposition 3: Group-environment misalignment creates the need for change-based decision making.

Managerial Value. Many workgroups and organizations have systematic processes for recognizing misalignment and recovering alignment, with both internal and external exchange partners. Workgroups and organizations represent a collection of human capital, structures, and processes that in some cases may render leadership unnecessary, because the collective is able to solve its own misalignment problems without the guidance of the accountable manager (Kerr & Jermier, 1978).

Complementary fit between a manager and their workgroup refers to the extent to which the manager possesses attributes that the workgroup needs and lacks, as well as the extent to which the group meets the manager's needs. When the group faces misalignment, the manager is capable of generating a change-based decision, beyond the capability of the group, to the extent that he/she possesses KSAOs or resources that

enable him/her to recognize misalignment and formulate solutions more effectively than the workgroup. The organization is dependent on the manager to recognize and correct misalignment when the group is an incapable, unwilling, or untrustworthy source of realignment.

Conversely, managers might consider employing self-directed teams when the group is able to effectively realign independently, or when the environment is relatively stable. A manager must not only possess the ability to make a change-based decision, but also the motivation to do so. Managers are typically dependent on group outcomes for pay, promotions, bonuses, and other important physiological outcomes. In cases where performance outcomes are ambiguous or managerial and group outcomes are not linked, the manager may be unwilling to engage their own resources toward group realignment.

Further, change-based behaviors involve outcome uncertainty, and therefore risk. Managers may be risk averse or short-sighted if their values or goals are not congruent with those of the group for which they are accountable (Eisenhardt, 1989). Managerial attributes needed by, and lacking in, the group, and the manager's motivation to enact them on the group's behalf, determine the utility of change-based decision making. Therefore, the degree of complementary fit between the manager and the workgroup is indicative of the manager's incremental capability and motivation to act relative to group misalignment.

Proposition 4: A manager's complementary person-group fit enhances the relationship between group-environment misalignment and change-based decision making.

Enacting Change-based Decisions. Clearly, making a decision is of very little practical utility to the manager, the workgroup, the organization, or other stakeholders if the decision is not enacted. The effective enactment of a change-based decision is dependent on three requisite processes. First, the manager must secure necessary support and resources from external actors to facilitate the decision. In many instances managers recognize the need for realignment, but lack the formal discretion and authority to secure the resources needed to enact change. As a result, a manager must either influence formal resource controllers to support the change decision, or informal social networks to bypass formal systems and structures to secure needed (Hall, Blass, Ferris, & Massengale, 2004). In contemporary organizational structures, managers at all levels of the organization must engage internal and external stakeholders in resource exchange relationships to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of their workgroup. When misalignment occurs with a stakeholder, the manager may be able to leverage resources from their social network to effectively realign their group. Research has demonstrated that a manager's position within internal and external social exchange networks is positively related to the objective performance of the manager's workgroup (Mehra, Dixon, Brass, & Robertson, 2006). The social capital that results from the manager's credibility with external resource networks can be spent to garner support and resources necessary to enact change-based decisions.

Second, the manager must secure the support and cooperation of subordinate employees. Change generally increases the effort and risk for employees. Extra effort results from the requirement to learn new skills, to try out new behaviors, or to learn new processes. Change creates risk because the outcomes of new behaviors and processes are less known than those for which the employee had experience and a demonstrated level

of competence. Subordinate trust is essential for effective leadership to mitigate risk and increase willingness to engage in extra effort (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007).

High-quality exchange relationships between managers and subordinates are characterized as partnerships involving high degrees of trust, respect, and mutual influence (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). A trustworthy manager is better able to influence their workgroup to embrace and enact change, because he/she has demonstrated his/her willingness to reciprocate exchanges when given increased resources and support from the other (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Therefore, a manager's credibility as an exchange partner with subordinates increases workgroup members' willingness to assume risk and engage in additional effort to maintain their exchange relationships with the manager.

Third, enacted changes typically have trickle-down effects. Scholars have distinguished between the process of strategy formulation, or making strategic decisions, and strategy implementation, or carrying out those decisions (Hambrick & Finkelstein, 1987). Changing a strategy creates the need to change the accompanying systems and structures designed to implement that strategy. Implementation of change-based decisions requires modifications to the structure, systems, and processes intended to maintain alignment through the previous strategy. It is imperative for the success of a change-based decision that the manager effectively reconfigures the related systems and structures required to facilitate the enactment of that decision. Therefore, I propose that the efficacy of a manager's change initiatives is dependent not only on the quality of the change-based decision, but also on perceptions of the manager's credibility as an exchange partner by resource controllers and/or subordinates, as well as the manager's effective role-prescribed behaviors.

Proposition 5: Change-based decision making predicts effective realignment of a group.

Proposition 6: Credibility with external resource networks enhances the relationship between change-based decision making and effective realignment of a group.

Proposition 7: Credibility within the subordinate workgroup enhances the relationship between change-based decision making and effective realignment of a group.

Proposition 8: A manager's role-prescribed behaviors mediate the relationship between change-based decision making and effective realignment of a group.

Managerial Credibility

Kouzes & Posner (2007: 37) claim that "Credibility is the foundation of leadership." They base their assertion on more than twenty years of interviewing and surveying organizational members about effective management practices, and sum up their work with two *Laws of Leadership*. The first law states "*If you don't believe the messenger, you won't believe the message* (p 38)" and the second states "*Do what you say you will do* (p 41)." Research on the antecedents and construct validity of managerial credibility is extremely limited, and the inductive approach used in formulating their propositions lacks strong theoretical development. A small amount of empirical research available supports the proposition that managerial credibility influences subordinates in positive ways (Gabris & Ihrke, 2007; Gabris & Ihrke, 1996; Church, 1995), and results in increased decision-making latitude from resource controllers (Gabris, Golembiewski, &

Ihrke, 2001). Clearly, credibility is important for managers, but what it is and where it comes from has received very little attention from scholars.

Managerial credibility has been described as a form of social capital (Worden, 2003). Social capital refers to the collective resources, tangible or intangible, that an individual, group, or organization can access through its social network (Oh, et al., 2006). According to Worden (2003), behavioral integrity results in perceptions of trustworthiness and reliability with exchange partners, which the manager can use on the organization's behalf. To be viewed as a reputable source of influence, a manager must appear capable of reciprocating exchanges with a valuable resource. Capability as an exchange partner is analogous to Kouzes and Posner's first law of leadership. A manager must also appear likely to follow through on their exchange obligations. Reciprocity behaviors are analogous with Kouzes and Posner's second law. Managers develop a reputation within exchange networks based on their access to, and control of, resources, and their willingness to reciprocate positive exchanges. In the current model, managerial credibility is the cumulative social capital of a manager with respect to a group of stakeholders based on his/her access to network resources and reputation within the group.

Credibility in External Resource Networks

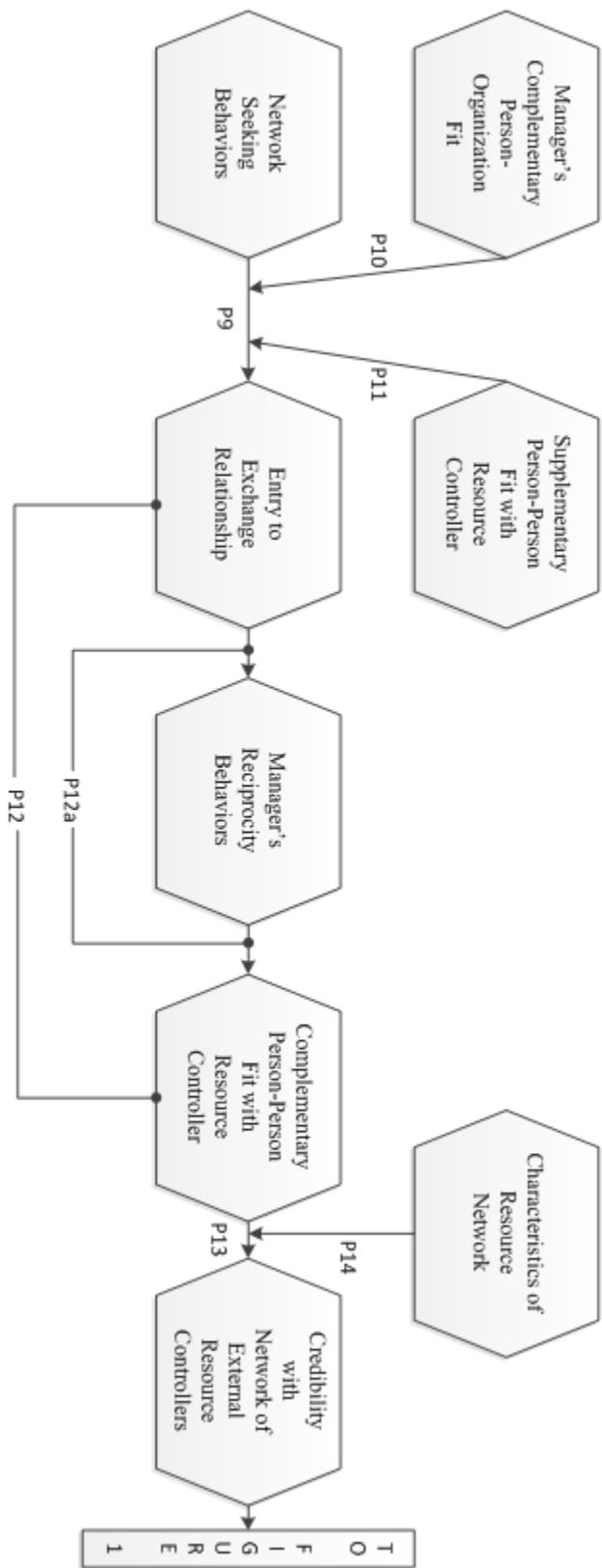
The socio-political landscape of organizations makes the facilitated exchange of resources within formal and informal networks a reality of work life. Researchers have examined the development of relationships and networks within organizations from a social network perspective based on Newcomb's (1956) attraction-similarity hypothesis.

Others have investigated networks from a social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1958). Little theoretical integration of social network and exchange approaches exists within the management literature. In the current model, managers are able to enter into exchange relationships with others based on their supplementary and complementary fit with exchange partners. Credibility as an exchange partner results from equitable and mutual reciprocity behaviors over time. A manager's credibility within a network determines the influence and access of the manager within a resource network. Figure 2 presents a model of managerial credibility with external (to the workgroup) exchange partners. The model moves from dyadic relationship formation to an explanation of resource access (i.e. credibility) within a social network.

Dyadic Credibility with Exchange Partners. It seems highly likely that socio-political relationship-seeking behaviors by a manager increase access to exchange partners. Behaviors such as networking, impression management, and influence tactics signal to others in the work environment that the manager has resource needs, resources available, and is interested in exchange behavior. For example, interpersonal citizenship behaviors directed at network members are related to an individual's number of network ties and centrality in the network (Bowler & Brass, 2006). Ingratiation behaviors directed at CEOs substitute for legitimate credentials in the granting of board positions (Westphal & Stern, 2006). In other words, network seeking behaviors (i.e. ingratiation) were used to signal to the CEO that the individual was willing to enter into an exchange relationship. Engaging in network-seeking behaviors is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for entering into social-exchange relationships. Two moderating forces influence the relationship between network-seeking behaviors and entry into exchange relationships.

First, a manager must appear to be a valuable exchange partner. One source of this perception might be the degree to which a manager possesses power relative to others in the organization, or the manager's level of complementary PO fit. Power is the ability

Figure 1.2: Managerial Credibility in Resource Networks



to administer positive, or remove negative, tangible or intangible resources from another (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989). Managers rely on the organization to provide needed authority, discretion, and information to exercise power over subordinates and external actors (Pfeffer, 1992). The organization provides a manager with control over resource allocation so that he/she can utilize exchanges to maintain workgroup alignment. To be effective, managers rely on the power granted to them by the organization, as well as personal power that they enact on the organization's behalf, to influence upward, downward, and laterally. Potential exchange partners likely prefer individuals with higher levels of power in organizations, because those individuals will appear more capable of reciprocating exchanges. As a result, complementary manager-organization fit influences others' perceptions of the manager as a worthy exchange partner, and increases the effectiveness of the manager's attempts to enter into exchange relationships with other resource controllers.

Second, the supplementary fit between a manager and potential exchange partners will determine the manager's access to exchange relationships. A long standing and well researched hypothesis in both sociology and organizational science is that individuals are attracted to similar others (Bryne, 1971; Newcomb, 1956). Within organizations, individuals with similar personalities, demographic traits, values, attitudes, and goals develop positive affective opinions of one another (Umphress, Smith-Crowe, Brief, Dietz, & Watkins, 2007; Pfeffer & Fong, 2005; Glaman, Jones, & Rozelle, 1996). In turn, positive affect towards another is a strong determinant of cooperative effort choices (Casciaro & Lobo, 2008). Supplementary fit influences others' affective dispositions toward a manager, and as a result increase the effectiveness of the manager's attempts to

enter into exchange relationships. In sum, network seeking behaviors by a manager are more likely to lead to entry into social exchange relationships with other resource controllers when the manager has high complementary fit with the organization and/or high supplementary fit with the individual.

Proposition 9: A manager's network seeking behaviors predict entry into exchange relationships with external resource controllers.

Proposition 10: A manager's complementary person-organization fit enhances the relationship between network-seeking behaviors and entry into an exchange relationship.

Proposition 11: A manager's supplementary person-person fit with external resource controllers enhances the relationship between the manager's network-seeking behaviors and entry into exchange relationships.

Recent research suggests that social networks exist within and between organizations, as both cognitive structures and behavioral manifestations (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006). As stated in proposition six, individuals perceive others as valuable exchange partners based on their fit within these cognitively construed networks, and enter into exchange relationships accordingly. Entry into an exchange relationship represents a psychological contract between the two entities, but simply gaining access to exchange partners is not enough to sustain an ongoing relationship. Continuance of cooperative behavior within organizations depends on fulfillment of the psychological contract via reciprocity behaviors. Unreciprocated exchange behaviors are unlikely to continue (Koster & Sanders, 2006), and result in negative perceptions of the exchange

partner (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008). Individuals with control over valuable resources have a broad selection of potential social partners in their work environment, and a limited set of resources to exchange. Individuals enter into social relationships with the expectation of reciprocity (i.e. they will receive as much as they give), and are likely to exit relationships they perceive as imbalanced (Berninghaus, Guth, & Vogt, 2008). Therefore, it is essential for the partners to reciprocate exchanges to develop complementary fit.

Proposition 12: Entry into exchange relationships with resource controllers positively predicts complementary person-person fit between a manager and an external resource controller.

Proposition 12a: A manager's reciprocity behaviors mediate the relationship between entry into an exchange relationship and complementary person-person fit between a manager and a resource controller.

Credibility within Resource Networks. The development of an equitable ongoing exchange relationship with an external resource controller may lead to increased network centrality and increased access to other network partners' resources (Liu & Ipe, 2010). The exchange partner might rely on other network members' resources to reciprocate obligations to the manager, or on the manager's resources to reciprocate to other network partners (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006). In both cases, the manager's centrality in the network will increase as their number of network ties, access to exchange partners, and reputation as an equitable exchange partner increase.

The velocity with which this occurs, the number of network ties available, and the variety of resources available depend on the characteristics of the network (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006). *Density* refers to the interconnectedness of network members (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). The degree to which network members exchange resources with multiple network partners likely increases the ease of propagating network ties for a new exchange partner. Social networks also vary in the degree of *cohesion*, or emotional and affective commitment by members (Lawler, 2001; Lawler & Yoon, 1998). The degree to which network members are able to cognitively identify, draw boundaries for, and feel attached to a social network likely affects members' willingness to accept new entrants, to exchange resources within the network, and to enter into cognitively complex exchanges with multiple network members. Finally, the characteristics of network resources, including *variety*, *transferability*, and *duplicity*, influence network members' willingness to exchange resources, as well as their selection of exchange partners within the network (Schaefer, 2009).

Complementary fit with social network members increases a manager's access to, and credibility within, a resource network, and characteristics of the network serve to enhance or constrain the development of credibility within the network by the manager.

Proposition 13: Complementary person-person fit between a manager and a resource controller predicts the credibility of the manager within a network of external resource controllers.

Proposition 14: Characteristics of a resource network may serve to enhance or constrain the relationship between a manager's complementary person-person fit

with individual network members and his/her credibility within a network of external resource controllers.

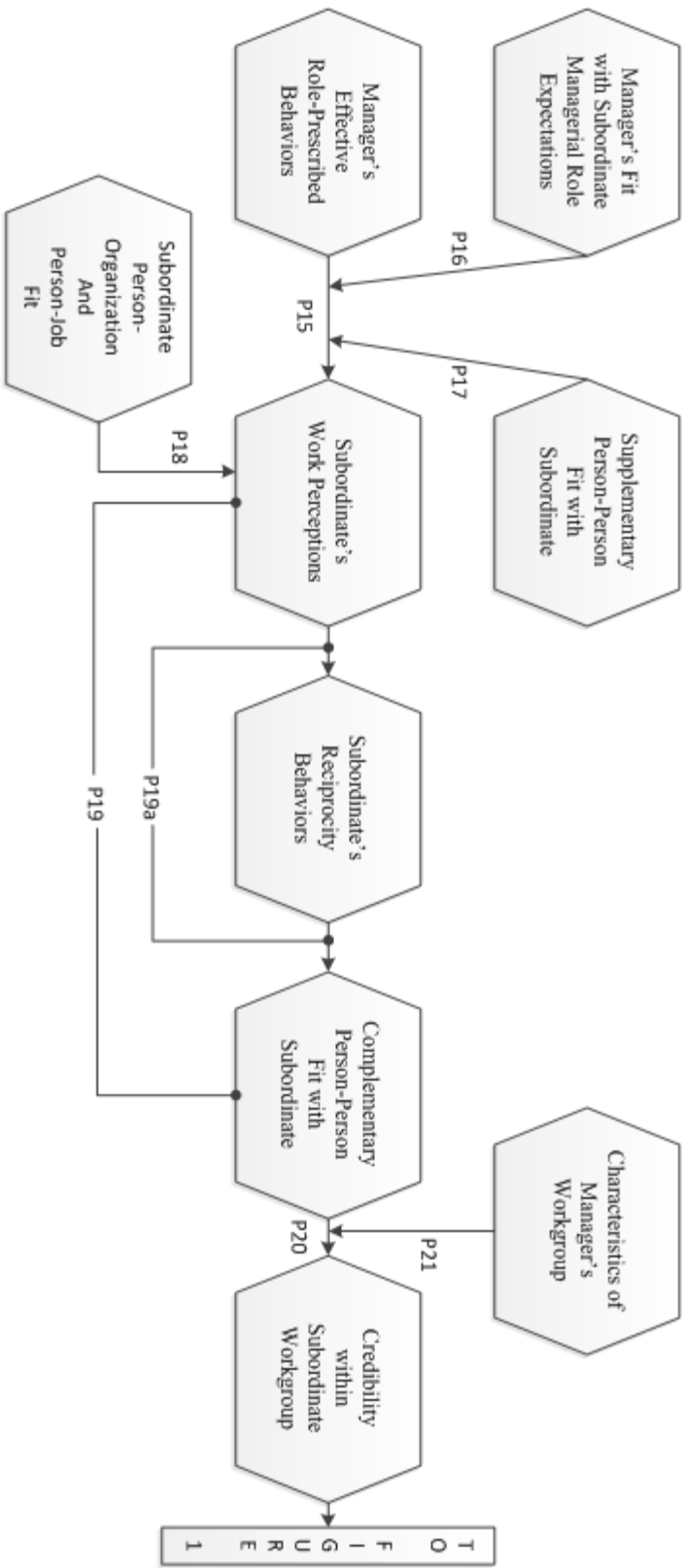
Credibility within the Manager's Workgroup

An enormous body of theory and research has been generated in the organizational leadership domain to support two basic propositions. First, managers are able to influence subordinate behavior through the mediating mechanism of subordinate work perceptions (e.g. Bass, 1985; House, 1971; Fiedler, 1967). Second, managerial behaviors influence subordinate behaviors because of reciprocity obligations (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, 1991; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 1991; Graen & Schiemann, 1978). Little theoretical development has been directed at integrating these two approaches, and little is known about the development of behavioral exchange relationships between managers and subordinates (Schreischiem, et al., 1999; Gerstner & Day, 1997). Figure 3 presents a model of managerial credibility with subordinates, which elucidates the role of behavior, perceptions, and context in the formation of exchange relationships between the manager and individual followers, as well as the group. In the model, managerial role behaviors influence follower work perceptions, subsequently driving follower reciprocity behaviors and leading to the development of a high-quality exchange relationship. The extent to a manager is gains credibility within the workgroup depends on his/her individual exchanges with subordinates and the characteristics of the group.

Dyadic Credibility with Followers. The execution of daily role behaviors by a manager likely influences followers' perceptions of their work environment, as the manager is the primary representative of their work experience (Wayne, Shore, & Liden,

1997; Mintzberg, 1973). For example, meta-analytic findings show that how a leader distributes

Figure 1.3: Managerial Credibility within a Subordinate Workgroup



rewards and punishments influences subordinate perceptions of their work environment (Podsakoff, Bommer, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). Another meta-analytic review demonstrates that consideration and initiation of structure by managers influence subordinate work perceptions (Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004). While it seems fairly clear that the behavior of a manager can have a strong influence on a subordinate's work perceptions, Martinko & Gardner (1987) proposed that the perceptions formed by subordinates may be affected by attributional biases. Two forms of fit capture the attributional biases that moderate the relationship between managerial behavior and subordinate work perceptions.

First, supplementary fit between a manager and subordinate influences the formation of work perceptions resulting from managerial behavior (Sparrowe & Liden, 1997; Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). Similar individuals are more likely to form affective relationships, and research supports this proposition between managers and subordinates (Kacmar, Harris, Carlson, & Zivnuska, 2009; Bernerth, Armenakis, Field, Giles, & Walker, 2008). Affective relationships between supervisors and subordinates may lead to differential subordinate work perceptions because affective partners tend to view each other favorably. As a result, a subordinate may view a manager's behaviors as more appropriate or effective because he/she has a generally positive view of them as a person. A manager may also actually behave differently across subordinates, favoring those for whom he/she has a positive affective disposition.

Second, fit between the role expectations of a subordinate and a manager's traits and behaviors influences subordinate perceptions of the manager's effectiveness, and subsequently the subordinate's work perceptions. Work by Lord and colleagues (Ritter &

Lord, 2007; Lord, Brown, Harvey, & Hall, 2001; Phillips & Lord, 1986) has examined the formation of leadership prototypes by subordinates. Individuals form a leadership schema within their work environment, and subconsciously use this schema to classify the traits and behaviors of their manager to determine whether he/she meets their expectations. The degree to which the manager fits the subordinate's leader prototype influences the subordinate's work perceptions, as well as their willingness to enter into an exchange relationship with the manager (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005). In sum, the relationship between a manager's behaviors and follower work perceptions is enhanced or constrained by the supplementary fit between the two, as well as the similarity of the manager to the subordinate's leader prototype.

Proposition 15: A manager's role-prescribed behaviors predict positive subordinate work perceptions.

Proposition 16: A manager's fit with a subordinate's managerial role expectations enhances the relationship between a manager's role-prescribed behaviors and a subordinate's positive work perceptions.

Proposition 17: Supplementary person-person fit between a manager and a subordinate enhances the relationship between a manager's role-prescribed behaviors and a subordinate's positive work perceptions.

While organizational managers significantly affect employee work perceptions, at least two other forms of fit also directly affect employee work perceptions.

Supplementary and complementary PO fit have each been shown to significantly affect subordinate work perceptions in meta-analytic reviews (Kristoff-Brown, et al., 2005;

Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Available empirical evidence suggests that this effect is distinct from the subordinate's relationship with their immediate supervisor (Wayne, et al., 1997; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996). PJ fit is also predictive of employee work perceptions (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Scroggins, 2008; Kristoff-Brown, et al., 2005). Person-organization and person-job fit may also have additive or multiplicative effects on employee work perceptions (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Scroggins, 2008; Resick, Baltes, & Shantz, 2007). The degree to which an employee feels their needs are being met by their job and organization, as well as congruence with organizational values, goals, and culture, affect employee work perceptions in a process distinct from social exchanges with his/her direct manager.

Proposition 18: Subordinate person-organization and person-job fit predict subordinate work perceptions.

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory proposes that the exchange relationship between a supervisor and subordinate is based on mutual reciprocity of behavior (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, 1991; Graen & Scheimann, 1978). The norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) suggests that employees who view their organizational exchange relationships favorably (i.e. develop positive work perceptions) are likely to engage in reciprocal behaviors. The outcome of ongoing equitable exchanges is the formation of a trusting relationship. Employees with positive perceptions of their manager and work environment engage in increased task and extra-role behaviors to reciprocate their positive work perceptions. In turn, increased performance by a subordinate increases his/her trust relationship with the manager, leading to a more positive resource exchange between the two (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). For example, Lapierre & Hackett (2007)

found that employee job satisfaction predicts extra-role behaviors, which in turn increases the quality of the exchange relationship between the manager and the subordinate.

Subordinates who perceive their manager and work environment in a positive way are motivated to engage in behaviors that reciprocate their positive experiences, and ongoing mutual reciprocity increases the complementary fit between the two.

Proposition 19: Subordinate work perceptions predict complementary person-person fit between a manager and a subordinate.

Proposition 19a: A subordinate's reciprocity behaviors mediate the relationship between subordinate work perceptions and complementary person-person fit between a manager and a subordinate.

Credibility within the Workgroup. Recent research on LMX variability suggests that group characteristics determine the level of differentiation between supervisor-subordinate relationships within a workgroup (Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, & Chaudhry, 2009; Henderson, Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2008). Similar exchange relationships result from cohesive, homogenous, and interdependent workgroups. Task diversity affects the consistency and similarity of exchange relationships between managers and group members. Workgroups with high levels of task or skill diversity represent a wide variety of resources that the manager can access through exchange. Likewise, employees with unique job tasks and skills have different exchange needs. Therefore, in a more task-diverse group the manager would be likely to have more varied exchanges. In workgroups with low task interdependence subordinates complete their tasks wholly, rely less on their peers, and their level of contribution and

performance is more apparent. In these situations, the manager likely forms stronger exchange relationships with stronger performers, because they are better able to meet the manager's exchange needs. Characteristics of the workgroup influence the interconnectedness of social exchanges between the manager and workgroup members. Managerial behaviors in cohesive, homogenous, and interdependent groups likely effect the perceptions of all group members, rather than solely the perceptions of a specific employee. Conversely, in non-cohesive, heterogeneous, and independent workgroups, the manager is more likely to form differentiated exchange relationships with each employee. Cohesive workgroups have high degrees of task commitment, interpersonal attraction, and group pride (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003). In highly interconnected exchanges a manager's credibility with exchange partners has a multiplicative effect within the group. In less interconnected groups, the manager likely forms independent (additive) exchange relationships with subordinates.

Proposition 20: Complementary person-person fit between a manager and a subordinate predicts a manager's credibility within his/her subordinate workgroup.

Proposition 21: Characteristics of a manager's subordinate workgroup may serve to enhance or constrain the relationship between a manager's complementary person-person fit with individual subordinates and his/her credibility within his/her subordinate workgroup.

CONCLUSION

The model proposed here is likely the most ambitious attempt thus far to integrate extant theory by using a situational, multi-level approach. I fully expect that improvements can, and will, be made. However, the model offers several advantages relative to those currently in use. Rather than overreliance on strict theories and stale measures, which generally have not been appropriately applied in research (Gardner & Coglisier, 2009; Hambrick, 2007; Hunter, et al., 2007; Yammarino, et al., 2005), the model presented here requires researchers to explicitly develop their own arguments explaining how individuals, dyads, groups, and organizations “fit” together to generate outcomes. In the long term, this approach should help uncover generalities, as well as boundary conditions, in managerial processes more efficiently than the approach taken in the field thus far.

Manuscript 2

DYSFUNCTIONAL LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGES: REEXAMINING LEADER
AND FOLLOWER PERSONALITY AND RELATIONSHIP FORMATION

MANUSCRIPT 2 ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of follower and leader personality in the formation of dysfunctional leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships. Employee positive self-concept, in the form of core self-evaluations (CSE), is one of the strongest predictors of positive outcomes for individuals and organizations. Narcissism is a predisposition to protect an inflated self view through grandiose and self-serving behavior. I hypothesized that narcissistic leaders will form lower quality LMX relationships with high CSE employees, based on ego threat; and higher quality LMX relationships with low CSE employees, who are more submissive and obedient. No support was found for the general hypothesis of the study. Implications, study design concerns, and future directions are discussed.

“Half the harm that is done in this world is due to people who want to feel important. They don't mean to do harm- but the harm does not interest them. Or they do not see it, or they justify it because they are absorbed in the endless struggle to think well of themselves.”

T. S. Eliot (1964: 111)

“Fearful people are more dependent, more easily manipulated and controlled, more susceptible to deceptively simple, strong, tough measures and hard-line postures. They may accept and even welcome repression if it promises to relieve their insecurities.”

George Gerbner

(1981)

Organizational sciences generally view leadership as a positive downward influence process between formal leaders and followers (Yukl, 2010; Hunter, Bedell-Avers, & Mumford, 2007). However, theory and research are increasingly recognizing that leadership processes are neither entirely positive, nor entirely downward (e.g. Kellerman, 2004; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). The magnitude and publicity of recent business, religious and political leadership scandals has stimulated broad theoretical, practitioner, and public interest in destructive leadership. Organizational scholars have explored the destructive potential of leader traits (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009), motives (Ammeter, Douglas, Gardner, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2002; McClelland, 1970, 1975), and behaviors (Tepper, 2000), as well as possible negative outcomes from

transformational and charismatic leadership (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Howell, 1988) and stakeholder trust in leaders (Hall, Blass, Ferris, & Massengale, 2004). Clearly, interest in the “dark side” of leadership is growing, arguably due to increasing social and organizational recognition.

Another trend in the organizational sciences is the growing interest in relationship models of leadership. Relationship models consider not only the characteristics and behaviors of the leader and follower, but also explicitly examine the relationship between them (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, proposed by Graen and colleagues (Graen & Scheimann, 1978; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991, 1995), has been the dominant approach to understanding leader-member relationships (Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999). The first two decades of LMX research primarily focused on the outcomes of high-quality exchange relationships (Schriesheim, et al., 1999; Gerstner & Day, 1997). The last decade has seen an increase in the investigation of antecedent conditions and processes in the formation of high-quality LMX relationships. These two budding areas of leadership theory have yet to be merged, and antecedents of dysfunctional exchange relationships have not been empirically investigated.

The current study investigates the role of leader and follower dispositional characteristics as antecedent conditions to the development of LMX. This study builds on existing LMX literature by demonstrating that leaders and followers may engage in dysfunctional LMX relationships to meet their exchange needs. I examine the role of dispositions in the formation of dysfunctional LMX under the assumption that personality serves as a link between an individual’s psychological needs and their chosen behavioral

patterns to meet those needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Prior studies have investigated the formation of high-quality LMX relationships under the implicit assumption that they are inherently positive. As a result, research has primarily investigated positive follower traits and behaviors, as well as positive leader behaviors, as antecedent to LMX. In the current study, I test the hypothesis that dispositional traits may also lead to dysfunctional exchange patterns as supervisors and subordinates each attempt to satisfy their psychological needs.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Theories of political, charismatic, and transformational leadership suggest that leaders may form dysfunctional (e.g. exploitive) relationships with subordinates (Ammeter, et al., 2002; Howell, 1988; Kark, et al., 2003). Individual differences of leaders are at the core of theory related to dysfunctional and destructive leadership, and dispositional narcissism has received considerably more theoretical interest than any other purportedly hazardous leader trait. However, narcissism in organizational settings has received very little empirical attention (Blair, Hoffman, & Helland, 2008). Understanding the formation of dysfunctional leader-member relationships has important implications for both theory and practice. Dysfunctional leader-member relationships, spurred by the leader's dispositional narcissism, may harm the organization (Goldman, 2008; Lubit, 2002; Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007), subordinates (Sankowsky, 1995, 1989), and the leader his/herself (Timmerman, 1997; Blair, et al., 2008). Narcissistic leaders are proposed to seek out followers with weak self-concepts and to exploit them in an effort to create an extension of the leader's will (Maccoby, 2003). Conversely, followers with a strong self-concept pose a threat to the narcissistic leader's ego, and may

elicit a backlash from the leader (Lubit, 2002). This is especially troubling if one considers that many of the dispositional attributes associated with self-concept are also some of the strongest predictors of employee performance (Judge & Bono, 2001). Therefore, narcissists likely punish high-potential employees, as a result of ego threat, while rewarding lower-potential employees to engender their unquestioning devotion.

Concepts of Interest

Leader-member Exchange. Conceptually, LMX is a process by which supervisors and subordinates enter into and maintain social-exchange relationships. LMX relationships develop as a process of role-making between dyadic supervisor-subordinate pairs (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Underdeveloped relationships involve a primarily transactional exchange of follower performance for extrinsic rewards. As the role-making process unfolds, dyadic partners test each other through a series of progressively escalating trust-based exchanges. Relationships evolve over interactions, with early stages involving the exchange of tangible resources (e.g., money and awards) for task performance, and moving toward a partnership where status, information, and emotional bonding are exchanged between supervisors and subordinates (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). High-quality (i.e. fully developed) relationships progress into a mature phase, characterized by emotional exchange, as each partner continues to meet the other's reciprocity expectations, while low-quality (i.e. under-developed) relationships remain in the transactional stage. In the current study I propose that a third "type" of exchange relationship exists, in which the relationship is developed but dysfunctional (i.e. mature, but without positive, reciprocal emotional exchange).

Existing measures of LMX appear to capture individual perceptions of the quality of the relationship (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Research has demonstrated that perceived LMX quality can be predicted by follower characteristics (Janssen & van Yperen, 2004; Schyns, Kroon, & Moors, 2008), leader and follower perceptions and behaviors (Bauer & Green, 1996; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Erdogan, Liden, & Kraimer, 2006), and trait, perceptual, and behavioral similarity between the two (Bernerth, Armenakis, Field, Giles, & Walker, 2008; Brouer, Duke, Treadway, & Ferris, 2009). Leader and follower perceptions of their LMX relationship generally have low correlations ($r = .29$, Gerstner & Day, 1997), and it seems likely that leaders and followers have differential exchange needs to be met by LMX relationships (Schriesheim, et al., 1999). In the current study, I examine the proposition that dispositional traits (i.e. personality) lead to differential exchange needs at the individual level, and may affect dyadic exchange relationships in a dysfunctional way.

Follower Self-concept. Core self-evaluation (CSE) is a higher-order construct representing a person's general self-concept and consists of four second-order factors: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). A meta-analytic review of more than 100 samples demonstrated that self-concept has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001), and self-concept has been shown to be a better predictor of job satisfaction than the Big 5 personality dimensions or trait affectivity (Judge, Heller, & Klinger, 2008). Positive self-concept predicts increased educational, health, and career outcomes, including pay and occupational status (Judge & Hurst, 2008). Individuals with high CSE generally perceive less stress and are better able to

cope with stressors in positive ways (Kammeyer-Mueller, Judge, & Scott, 2009). High CSE employees are more motivated, more active, and more productive (Erez & Judge, 2001), and are generally more satisfied with their lives (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). Generally speaking, positive self-concept has been systematically linked to favorable outcomes for the employee, their workgroup, and the organization across a large body of research.

Leader Dispositional Narcissism. Dispositional narcissism is a personality trait characterized by grandiosity, entitlement, exploitativeness, authoritarianism, a sense of superiority, and self-love and absorption (Rosenthal & Pittinsly, 2006; Watson & Biderman, 1993). Narcissism as a personality trait is distinct from pathological or clinical forms of narcissism, and abundant research has demonstrated that the general population can be reliably assessed along a continuum from low to high levels of dispositional narcissism (Raskin & Hall, 1979; Emmons, 1987; Watson & Biderman, 1993; Corry, Merritt, Mrug, & Pamp, 2008). Scholars have suggested that narcissism is abundant in, and to some degree perhaps even necessary for, positions of leadership in contemporary organizations (Kellerman, 2004; Maccoby, 2003; Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Goldman, 2008). Maccoby (2003, 2000) provides a thorough description of the narcissistic leader. He suggests that narcissists are emotionally isolated, lack empathy, and are highly distrustful of others. They constantly strive to protect a shallow and inflated sense of self-worth by aggressively defending their egos against any perceived threat. They are driven by grandiose visions of power, glory, and the admiration of others. Narcissists do not form loving, committed, or affective relationships, even with those whose admiration they crave. However, in organizational settings narcissists may possess numerous

positive qualities. Maccoby and others (Judge, et al., 2009; Lipman-Blumen, 2005; Sandowsky, 1989) have described narcissists as visionaries and charismatics, who are driven, competitive, and likely become renowned experts in their fields. Accordingly, Maccoby (2000) suggests that narcissists mirror the collective social identity of a leader.

Dispositional narcissism has been shown to predict leader emergence in military cadets (Paunonen, Lonqvist, Verkasalo, Leikas, & Nissinen, 2006) and leaderless groups (Brunell, Gentry, Campbell, Hoffman, Kuhnert, & DeMarree, 2008), as well as positive evaluations of leadership ability by expert raters (Brunell, et al., 2008). Narcissists desire power and are charismatic, confident, and goal oriented (Maccoby, 2003). It is likely that within organizations narcissists both strive for and are selected for positions of authority (Maccoby, 2000). While theorizing and popular conjecture have been plentiful, little empirical work has assessed the frequency, status, or effects of narcissists in work organizations (Blair, et al., 2008).

The LMX Relationship from the Leader's Perspective

Judge, Erez, and Bono (1998: 167) begin their theoretical discussion of the relationship between CSE and employee performance by suggesting that “Most managers would probably agree that positivity is something they value in their employees.” High CSE employees are intrinsically motivated to perform at a high standard in order to maintain their positive self-concepts (Judge, et al., 1998; Luthans & Youssef, 2007). It would follow then that *most* managers would appreciate subordinate positivity, as managers tend to evaluate LMX based on cognitive schemas related to job performance (Huang, Wright, Chiu, & Wang, 2008).

However, scholars suggest that narcissistic leaders view talented and capable employees as a threat to their dominant status (Maccoby, 2000; Lubit, 2002; Lipman-Blumen, 2005). Narcissistic leaders rely on their followers for constant praise and admiration, and seek out followers with weak or negative self-concepts who are more desiring of leadership and dominance (Maccoby, 2000). Narcissistic leaders desire to surround themselves with dependent followers who are more willing to serve as an extension of the narcissist's will (Lubit, 2002). Conversely, high CSE subordinates are independent and intrinsically motivated to perform at a high level (Judge, et al., 1998; Luthans & Youssef, 2007). They are less susceptible to fear mongering, abuse, or dependence, because they are better able to cope with stressful situations (Kammeyer-Mueller, et al., 2009; Wu & Hu, 2009). High CSE individuals are more likely to emerge as leaders themselves (Judge, et al., 2009).

I expect that narcissistic leaders evaluate LMX relationships based on follower dependence and obedience, because of their need to constantly protect an inflated self-image by dominating others, wielding power, and receiving praise and admiration. As a result, narcissistic leaders would likely view their relationships with high CSE followers less favorably than their relationships with low CSE followers. On the contrary, low narcissism leaders would likely develop high-quality LMX relationships with high CSE followers, relative to low CSE followers, because they are more stable, efficacious exchange partners.

Hypothesis 1: Leader dispositional narcissism moderates the relationship between follower CSE and leader-rated LMX, such that the relationship is positive with low narcissism leaders and negative with high narcissism leaders.

The LMX Relationship from the Follower's Perspective

Followers view themselves as having a distinct exchange relationship with their immediate supervisor, whether of high or low quality (Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Ilies, 2009). Followers assess the quality of their LMX relationship based on leader exchange behaviors. For example, leader effort towards relationship development, the delegation of important tasks by the leader, and increased autonomy over work granted by the leader increase followers' perceptions of high-quality LMX (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Bauer & Green, 1996). Two theories may elucidate the nature of the relationship between leader narcissism and follower self-concept. First, the path-goal theory of leader effectiveness is a dyadic theory explaining how leaders influence the motivation, satisfaction, and resultant performance of subordinates (House 1971, 1996). A central proposition of the theory is that:

“Leader behavior is acceptable and satisfying to subordinates to the extent that the subordinates see such behavior as either an immediate source of satisfaction or instrumental to future satisfaction” (House & Mitchell, 1974; from House, 1996: 325).

According to path-goal theory, high CSE subordinates should find leader behavior satisfying to the extent that it removes roadblocks and facilitates the accomplishment of their personal work, career, and life goals. Narcissistic leaders likely pay little attention to subordinate goals, ambitions, emotions, or concerns unless they pose a threat to their own goals or ego. Ego threats may trigger narcissistic leaders to sabotage subordinates with extremely high goals (Lubit, 2002). Clearly, this type of behavior is unlikely to be

satisfying or motivating to subordinates, and should reduce their trust in, and affective orientation toward, a narcissistic leader. The norm of reciprocity (Blau, 1964), upon which LMX theory is built, suggests that if a leader is not supportive of a follower's goals, the follower will discontinue support of the leader's goals. Low levels of trust, affect, and mutual obligation toward shared goals are representative of a low quality LMX relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Second, paternalistic leadership theory suggests that followers may view leaders as parental figures through transference (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Transference is a psychological process by which followers come to view a leader as a parental figure, both caring and authoritative, and in return give unquestioning obedience and loyalty. Paternalistic leadership is contingent on a follower's lack of a dominant, independent self-concept (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008). Through transference, followers with weak or negative self-concepts increase their own perceived self-worth through their association with a powerful and charismatic leader (Sankowsky, 1989). Narcissistic leaders are experts at exploiting the process of transference (Maccoby, 2004, 2003). Individuals with low CSE are attracted to the grandiose, confident, and charismatic nature of a narcissistic leader, and through transference artificially increase their own feelings of self-worth by their association with the leader. Low CSE employees likely view narcissistic leaders as highly capable and effective and view their relationships with the leader as instrumental to their well being. In sum, followers likely appraise their relationships with narcissistic (or non-narcissistic) leaders based on their own self-concept. High CSE followers are likely to view their relationship with a highly narcissistic leader as inequitable, unsatisfying, and of poor quality, relative to low CSE

followers. Conversely, low CSE followers should develop higher-quality LMX relationships with narcissistic leaders, because they view the leader as instrumental to their own self-concept.

Hypothesis 2: Leader dispositional narcissism moderates the relationship between follower CSE and follower-rated LMX, such that the relationship is positive with a high narcissism leader and negative with a low narcissism leader.

METHOD

Sample and Procedure

Employees from the sales departments of 68 stores from the Shenzhen, China branch of an international automobile parts company were recruited to participate in a research study. Data in the current study were collected as part of a larger research collaboration. Each department had one direct supervisor, who oversaw and directly interacted with each sales employee. Prior to participation, employees received an email from the research team, as well as from the human resources department of the branch, explaining the purpose of the study. Additionally, employees were informed that the study was voluntary, would be conducted during work hours, and their responses would be confidential. A total of 59 supervisors (87%) and 240 subordinates (88%) agreed to participate in the study. Data were collected at two time points, with one month in between. At time 1, subordinates provided demographic information and responded to the CSE items, and supervisors responded to dispositional narcissism items. At time two, supervisors and subordinates responded to LMX items.

Measures

All measures were translated from English to Chinese using Brislin's (1980) translation – back-translation procedure. The English-based measures were first translated into Chinese by a bilingual industrial-organizational (I/O) psychologist. A second bilingual (I/O psychologist) back-translated the measures into English, and the two English versions were compared by two additional I/O psychologists. High agreement was reached between the original and back-translated English versions. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities (internal consistency) for all study variables are reported in Table 1.

Leader-member Exchange. Leader and follower LMX were assessed using the 8-item LMX-8 (Bauer & Green, 1996). The LMX-8 is based on the widely used LMX-7 (Scandura & Green, 1984), with the seventh item split to avoid “double-barreling.” Items were scored on a 7-point, Likert-type scale from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. A sample item is, “I have a good working relationship with my supervisor (this team member).”

Dispositional Narcissism. Employee dispositional narcissism was measured using the NPI-16 (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006), a short-form version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI, Raskin & Hall, 1979). The NPI has been the most common assessment tool for narcissism in nonclinical samples, as well as in organizational research. Further, the scale generally produces high internal consistency (Raskin & Hall, 1979; Emmons, 1987; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Watson & Biderman, 1993). Ames et al. (2006) were able to demonstrate similar and acceptable internal, discriminant, and

predictive validity using a 16-item measure, when compared to the commonly used 40-item scale. Both the NPI and NPI-16 use a forced-choice response format. In the current study, items from the NPI-16 were converted to a 5-point, Likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* using the positive (i.e. narcissistic) responses from the forced-choice scale. This was done to reduce problems in the translation, back-translation process and to maintain consistency in the survey format. A sample item is, “I am more capable than other people.”

Core Self-evaluations. Follower CSE was measured using the Core Self-evaluation Scale (CSES, Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thorsen, 2003). The CSES is a 12-item scale designed to more briefly (relative to combined measures of locus of control, emotional stability, self-efficacy, and self-esteem) capture a person’s generalized self-concept. A growing body of research, primarily conducted by Michael Judge and colleagues, has demonstrated that the CSES is a valid assessment of a person’s generalized self-concept (Judge, et al., 2003; Judge et al., 2008). Responses varied from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* on a 5-point, Likert-type scale. A sample item is, “When I try, I generally succeed.”

Control Variables. As LMX relationships develop over time, subordinate and supervisor workgroup tenure may affect the maturity of the exchange relationship. Additionally, subordinate age and gender, as well as supervisor gender, may affect reports of LMX from both parties to the extent that they affect behavior, socio-relational maturity, and workplace perceptions. This may be especially true in a collectivistic, patriarchal society, such as China. Therefore, these variables were collected as part of the current study.

Table 2.1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Subd Age	32.60	4.41	--								
2 Subd Gen ^b	.58	.50	.09	--							
3 Subd Tenure	1.82	1.61	.45**	-.01	--						
4 Supv Gender	.76	.43	-.00	.01	-.05	--					
5 Supv Tenure	2.69	1.99	-.11	-.00	.11	.07	--				
6 Subd CSE	3.69	.46	.05	.07	-.06	.15*	-.04	(.72)			
7 Supv Narc	3.15	.52	.15*	.14*	.14*	-.09	.14*	.05	(.84)		
8 Subd LMX	5.18	.96	-.05	.06	-.00	.22**	-.01	.13*	.06	(.83)	
9 Supv LMX	5.49	.91	.07	-.12	.03	.05	.12	.05	.22**	.07	(.91)

Note. N = 175. Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients appear in the diagonal

in parentheses. Gender was coded as 1 = male and 0 = female.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Analyses

Recently, researchers have proposed the use of hierarchical data analysis techniques for examining employees nested in groups, even if all variables are collected at the individual level, to control for confounding effects of group membership (Hofmann, 1997; Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). In the current study, intra-class correlation coefficients (ICC) are .18 for subordinate-rated LMX and .70 for supervisor-rated LMX, suggesting respective weak and very strong group membership effects. The larger ICC for supervisor-rated LMX might be expected due to a single rating source (i.e. the leader) at the group level, when compared to individual ratings for subordinate LMX. The ICC for supervisor ratings is strong enough to suggest possible halo effect, nonconscientious responding, or other rater biases, which may act to restrict inter-group dependent variable range for the supervisor LMX hypothesis. Accordingly, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) was used to test the hypotheses. All independent variables were grand-mean centered in order to aid in interpretation of the coefficients (Hofmann & Gavin, 1998).

Hypothesis 1 proposes that subordinates with a positive self-concept will report a low quality LMX with a narcissistic supervisor, while followers with a weak self-concept will report a higher quality LMX relationship with a narcissist. This hypothesis was not supported. See Table 2 for results. Neither subordinate CSE nor supervisor narcissism predicted subordinates' ratings of LMX quality, nor did the two interact in the predicted way. Supervisor gender was positively and significantly predictive of subordinate ratings of LMX, suggesting that in Chinese samples employees may view their hierarchical relationships with male superiors more favorably than with female superiors.

Table 2.2: Results of Moderated Hierarchical Linear Modeling for Subordinate LMX

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	t
Sub Age	-.03	.02	-1.66	-.03	.02	-1.61
Sub Gender	.10	.13	.79	.11	.13	.84
Sub Tenure in Workgroup	.02	.04	.42	.02	.04	.41
Supv Gender	.46	.19	2.49*	.44	.19	2.36*
Supv Tenure in Workgroup	-.03	.03	-.82	-.02	.03	-.76
Sub Core Self-Evaluation	.21	.14	1.47	.21	.14	1.50
Supv Narcissism	.19	.13	1.49	.20	.13	1.49
Sub CSE X Supv NARC				.29	.22	1.29
R^2	.00			.01		
ΔR^2				.01		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Hypothesis 2 proposes that supervisors with higher levels of trait narcissism will form low quality relationships with high CSE employees and higher quality relationships with low CSE employees. Conversely, those with low and average levels of narcissism will form high quality LMX relationships with high CSE employees. This hypothesis was not supported. Supervisor narcissism did positively and significantly predict supervisor rated LMX, suggesting that narcissists view their dyadic relationships more favorably than individuals with lower levels of trait narcissism. However, subordinate CSE did not predict supervisor LMX quality, and no support for the proposed interaction effect was found. Implications and potential causes of null findings for Hypotheses 1 & 2 are discussed below.

Table 2.3: Results of Moderated Hierarchical Linear Modeling for Supervisor LMX

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	t
Sub Age	.02	.01	1.86	.02	.01	1.91
Sub Gender	-.06	.10	-.57	-.05	.10	-.54
Sub Tenure in Workgroup	-.10	.02	-.39	-.01	.03	-.22
Supv Gender	.06	.23	.25	.05	.23	.22
Supv Tenure in Workgroup	.05	.05	1.00	.05	.05	1.02
Sub Core Self-Evaluation	.06	.08	.66	.05	.09	.58
Supv Narcissism	.41	.19	2.13*	.41	.19	2.17*
Subd CSE X Supv NARC				.11	.20	.56
R2	.01			.01		
ΔR^2				.00		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

DISCUSSION

Overall, study results provide very little support for the hypotheses proposed above. Several potential causes may contribute to the lack of significant findings. In the remainder of this section I will discuss each, as well as highlight potential future research questions that may further clarify the formation of dysfunctional LMX relationships. It is worth noting that, due to the modification of the NPI in the current study, it was not possible to directly compare the mean narcissism scores in the Chinese sample to typical mean scores in U.S. and other western countries.

First, there is an obvious concern that due to the collectivistic social norms in China narcissism is less prevalent in the current sample than might be expected in Western populations. Lower mean levels of narcissism could make it difficult to test the theoretic tenets of the hypotheses, as there is a requirement for “some” narcissistic leaders in order to reject the null hypothesis. Additionally, reduced variance in the sample might diminish statistical power, making it less likely that a statistically significant result could be obtained without a very large sample. Descriptive statistics suggest that narcissistic personality is both present and variable in the Chinese sample used in the current study. Mean narcissism scores were 3.12 ($SD = .56$, range 1.81 to 5.00) for subordinates and 3.15 ($SD = .52$, range = 1.50 to 4.19) for supervisors on a 5-point Likert-type scale. While it is possible that collectivistic culture limited the ability of the current study to find the expected relationships, a cursory look at the data suggests that this was not the reason for null findings in the current study.

Second, it may be that the high power distance between supervisors and subordinates in Chinese culture makes narcissistic leader behaviors seem more “normal” or tolerable. High power distance may also influence the frequency and/or intimacy of behavioral interactions, such that subordinates and supervisors do not interact in the same manner that Western-based leadership theories assume (Hunter, Bedell-Avers, & Mumford, 2007). Further, with a social norm of higher power distance the expectations of a quality relationship between superior-subordinate dyads may differ in a Chinese population from those put forth in LMX theory. That is, Chinese employees may not expect or desire the trust-based, emotionally invested “friendships” with supervisors described in LMX theory. Cross-cultural examinations of the formation of LMX relationships, with particular focus on dispositional antecedents and behavioral exchange components may help clarify some of these questions.

Third, while a sales force seemed like an ideal setting to find high levels of narcissism when designing the current study, it is possible that narcissism was too pervasive in the current study. Person-vocation Fit Theory (Holland, 1992) suggests that individuals self-select into careers that match their personality and meet their psychological needs. There was no significant difference between supervisors and subordinates in mean level of dispositional narcissism, suggesting that narcissists may gravitate towards specific career fields (i.e. sales) where their personality is best suited. Narcissists are outcome-oriented and charismatic, and tend to set high goals for themselves and others. These dispositional tendencies likely lead to success at both sales and front-line sales management. Sales forces are generally highly individualistic and the need for a strong dyadic partnership with one’s immediate supervisor might be much

lower than in other types of work. Therefore, a sales sample may have created a situation where neither the supervisors nor subordinates have a high need for well developed LMX relationships, and as a result do not value them. Further, Maccoby (2000) and Lubit (2002) each suggest that narcissists tend to gravitate towards other narcissists in hierarchical relationships, but do not form committed, trusting exchange relationships with them (e.g. Michael Douglas and Charlie Sheen in *Greed*). Future studies might examine the effect of deviant personality on LMX formation, the role of deviant personality in vocational choice, and the cross-section of the two (e.g. deviant organizational cultures).

Finally, most personality and organizational leadership scholars agree that in small doses narcissism is healthy, and may even be necessary for positions of leadership. Perhaps the levels of narcissism that can lead to dysfunctional outcomes in organizational settings, and in particular supervisor-subordinate relationships, are above the levels measured by the NPI and other dispositional narcissism measures. In subordinates, CSE and dispositional narcissism were strongly correlated ($r = .27, p < .001$), suggesting that the NPI-16 is measuring lower levels of narcissism similar to positive self-concept. The current study attempted to examine dysfunctional outcomes which may be more likely to occur at higher degrees of narcissistic personality. Future studies might examine the relationship between leader success and failure across a wider range of trait and clinical narcissism, relying heavily on the statistical techniques common in Latent Trait and Item Response Theories. Doing so may help bring to light the grey area between the “healthy” narcissism necessary for positions of leadership and the destructive forms so common in anecdotes of disgraced leaders.

It is also noteworthy that supervisor narcissism was positively correlated to subordinate age, gender, and tenure within the workgroup. While the current study does not offer evidence of the nature of the relationship between supervisor narcissism and subordinate demographics, it does seem likely that narcissists seek out a specific prototype follow (Maccoby, 2000). Future research might specifically focus on the link between narcissistic personality in supervisors and recruitment, selection, and retention of subordinates by demographic characteristics. This line of research might be particularly useful in terms of EEO compliance, glass ceiling effects, and race and gender in the workplace.

Despite interesting and ambitious theoretical tenets, this study was unable to provide additional insight into the role leader and follower dispositions might play in the formation of dysfunctional leader-member exchanges. However, conducting the study has brought to bear a multitude of confounding factors leading to a broad array of potential future studies.

Manuscript 3

LEADING BAD APPLES: EXAMINING THE BOUNDARY CONDITIONS
OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

MANUSCRIPT 3 ABSTRACT

Ethical leadership is a topic of increasing concern to theory and practice. However, scholars and practitioners alike have yet to examine the role of follower dispositions as a boundary condition to ethical leadership in organizational contexts. The current study seeks to fill this void by examining the interaction of bad apple follower traits- Machiavellianism and dispositional narcissism- as a potential boundary condition to ethical leadership in organizations. Results did not support the hypothesis that bad apples would desire to exit workgroups with ethical leaders, or the hypothesis that bad apples are affected differently by ethical leadership than other employees. Implications and future directions are discussed.

“Ethics is not definable, is not implementable, because it is not conscious; it involves not only our thinking, but also our feeling.”

V.W. Setzer

In light of the publicity surrounding recent scandals within business, governmental, religious, and not-for-profit organizations, interest in ethical leadership has increased dramatically. Leadership experts, news pundits, and leaders themselves have all rushed to answer the question, “What is wrong with our leaders?” Governments around the world are stepping in to regulate the behavior of leaders, though they continue to find unethical behavior within their own ranks. New laws and regulations increase executive criminal liability for the actions of organizations and their employees. What is missing from the rush to reform leaders is any dialogue regarding the role of followers. Scholars have previously criticized leader-centrism in organizational research, suggesting that leadership is a myth, a cultural byproduct of Western idealism, or that leadership is simply an idealized perception of followers (e.g. Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003). It seems self-evident that some followers may not need, desire, or respond to some forms of leadership, though the preponderance of leadership theory suggests otherwise (Hunter, Bedell-Avers, & Mumford, 2007). The current study aims to examine the boundary conditions of ethical leadership, under the assumption that leadership is both an existent and contingent force in organizations (Bass, 2008; Hackman & Wageman, 2007).

Neo-charismatic leadership models (House & Aditya, 1997) are explicitly leader-centric and characteristically ignore important aspects of followers (Meindl, 1995). Brown and Trevino (2006) propose a model of ethical leadership explaining how leader

dispositions interact with context to engender ethical leadership, and subsequently followers' ethical behavior. Absent from their propositions is any mention of follower dispositions, perceptions, or attitudes. Instead, followers are painted as willing recipients of leadership. Similarly, Uhl-Bien and Carsten's (2007) model of follower reactions to unethical leader behavior suggests that followers may *actively* oppose or *passively* ignore, accept, comply, or cope with unethical leader behavior. Neither model offers an explanation for followers who *actively* support or engage in unethical behavior. Trevino and Brown (2004) go so far as to suggest that "bad apples" (i.e. unethical employees) are a myth. Recognizing the increasing legal and social responsibility placed on leaders for the actions of their followers, it seems prudent to ask, "Can leaders encourage bad employees (i.e. bad apples) to behave ethically?" The reality or mythology of the bad apple employee deserves empirical attention before scholars endorse the rush to place blame squarely on formal leaders and the organizational climate they create (Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, & Chonko, 2009). Accordingly, the purpose of the current study is to examine follower bad apple personality traits- Machiavellianism and dispositional narcissism- as boundary conditions to the relationship between ethical leadership and follower behavior.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct through followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and

decision-making” (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005: 120). Ethical leaders are both moral persons, representing their personal character and altruism, and moral managers, representing their proactive attempts to influence follower ethical and unethical behavior (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leaders serve as models of appropriate behavior for followers, and reward and punish follower actions in accordance with ethical standards. While all neo-charismatic leadership approaches (e.g. transformational, spiritual, and authentic) propose an explicitly moral element, ethical leadership is distinct in that ethical leaders also use transactional exchanges to facilitate ethical behavior (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Followers learn appropriate behavior through a social learning process (Bandura, 1977), as leaders model and reward socially responsible behavior (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leadership theory assumes, based on broad evidence in organizational research, that employees generally value supportive, fair, just, and ethical work environments. Therefore, ethical leadership is expected to lead to normative ethical behavior as employees mimic the role behaviors of the leader.

Empirical research has supported the propositions of ethical leadership theory, demonstrating that ethical leadership results in a multitude of positive outcomes for subordinates and organizations. Ethical leadership increases follower task performance and citizenship behavior (Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog, & Folger, 2010), and reduces employee workplace deviance (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009; Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leadership is positively related to subordinates’ willingness to engage in extra effort, satisfaction with the leader, and reports of leader effectiveness (Toor & Ofori, 2009). Ethical leadership positively impacts the organization’s ethical climate, resulting in increased subordinate job satisfaction and

affective commitment to the organization (Neubert, et al., 2009). Ethical leaders increase followers' feelings of psychological safety, resulting in increased voice behavior (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). Subordinates of ethical leaders are more optimistic about the future of the organization, as well as their place within it (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008).

Bad Apple Personality Traits

Previous organizational research has used the term “bad apple” to describe unethical individuals in organized settings (Tang, Chen, & Sutarso, 2008; Trevino & Brown, 2004). Organizations operate as interconnected formal and informal networks of interdependent socio-political relationships, which can be exploited for personal ends to the detriment of coworkers or the organization (Mayes & Allen, 1977; Pfeffer, 1992). Bad apples are employees with a predisposition (i.e. personality trait) to exploit social and political exchanges, to seek personalized outcomes to the detriment of others, or to engage in behaviors that directly harm coworkers or the organization. The personality traits of Machiavellianism and narcissism fit the above description of bad apple followers.

Machiavellianism. Elaborating on the political nature of man proposed by Niccolo Machiavelli in *The Prince*, Christie and Geis (1970) painted a picture of Machiavellian individuals within organizations as self-serving, contriving, and manipulative. Machiavellianism (Mach) is a dispositional tendency to distrust others and to use amoral manipulation to seek increased social control and status (Dahling, Whitaker, & Levy, 2009). High Mach individuals exploit the social and political nature of

people, organizations, and informal social systems to achieve personal success. They are concerned only with maximizing their own profits, and will exploit their economic partners by withholding information and exploiting information asymmetry (Sakalaki, Richardson, & Thepaut, 2007). In work contexts, high Mach employees are less satisfied with their jobs (Gable & Topol, 1987; Gemmill & Heisler, 1972; Heisler & Gemmill, 1977), are more willing to steal from work (Fehr, Samson, & Paulhus, 1992; Harrell & Hartnagel, 1976), and view violations of professional and workplace ethical standards as more acceptable (Winter, Stylianou, & Giacalone, 2004). In general situations, high Mach individuals are less ethically-oriented (i.e. concerned with making ethical decisions) (Rayburn & Rayburn, 1996), are more tolerant of risk (Tang, et al., 2008; Tang & Chen, 2008), and are less likely to help others in need (Wolfson, 1981).

Dispositional narcissism. Dispositional narcissism (DN) is a personality trait characterized by self-love and absorption, a sense of superiority, suspicion and distrust of others, entitlement, exhibitionism, authoritarianism, and the exploitation of social reciprocity norms (Raskin & Hall, 1979; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Watson & Biderman, 1993). DN is positively related to getting ahead motives (i.e. hedonistic, economic, and political goals) and negatively related to getting along motives (i.e. communal goals) (Roberts & Robins, 2000). Research has shown that DN is not generally related to task performance; however, DN is positively related to performance in highly self-enhancing situations (Wallace & Baumeister, 2002). “Narcissistic” has been used as a synonym for unethical decision making by management scholars (e.g. Holian, 2006), and high DN individuals report making less ethical decisions (Brown, Sautter, Littvay, Sautter, & Bearnes, 2010). In workplaces, high DN individuals frequently cause feelings of anger,

frustration, and inadequacy in their coworkers (Brown, 1998). High DN individuals are less able to forgive others' transgressions (Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell, & Finkel, 2004), and are more prone to responding with violent and aggressive acts when confronted with an ego challenge (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Ruiz, Smith, & Rhodewalt, 2001). They are overconfident, seek high risk/reward situations, and possess an exaggerated internal locus of control and sense of invulnerability (Campbell, Goodie, & Foster, 2004; Rose, 2007; Watson, Sawrie, & Biderman, 1991).

Interaction of Ethical Leaders and Bad Apple Followers

Theory in organizational behavior suggests three possible outcomes when ethical leaders and bad apple followers interact in work contexts. First, the two may avoid each other during the entry and selection process, examined below as the avoidance hypothesis. Second, bad apple followers may not respond to influence attempts by ethical leaders, examined below as the boundary hypothesis. Third, ethical leaders may influence bad apple followers to display normatively appropriate behavior through organizational socialization processes, examined below as the unconditional hypothesis. As explained below, each of the hypotheses is plausible based on available theory, and it is possible that ethical leadership interacts with bad apple personality traits differentially.

The Avoidance Hypothesis. Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition model proposes that individuals are attracted to and selected into organizations based on their fit with the organization and its members. When misfit occurs, individuals are likely to attrit voluntarily or involuntarily from the organization. Relevant theory and research tend to support this proposition for relationships between ethical leaders and bad apple

followers. For example, narcissistic followers are attracted to narcissistic leaders (Maccoby, 2000; 2003) and Machiavellian individuals self-select into career fields with high potential for economic opportunism and power wielding (Tang, et al., 2008). Ethical leaders communicate high ethical expectations to followers and proactively influence socially responsible follower behavior. Ethical leaders also proactively seek to build an ethical work climate. While avoidance seems ideal for both parties, research on organizational commitment has demonstrated that individuals may remain in organizations for transactional reasons (i.e. high pay or benefits), due to sunk costs (i.e. retirement plans), or for lack of external opportunity (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Somers, 1993). Assuming that bad apple employees may enter into workgroups where the direct supervisor engages in high levels of ethical leadership, it seems likely that those employees would desire to exit.

Hypothesis 1: Follower bad apple personality traits moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and follower turnover intentions, such that the relationship is positive for high bad apple followers and negative for low bad apple followers.

The Boundary Hypothesis. When an ethical leader and a bad apple employee occupy the same workgroup, it seems prudent to ask, will the bad apple behave ethically (to capitalize on the reward structure) or will he/she continue to behave unethically (to pursue his/her own interests tangentially)? Essentially, two competing hypotheses are presented. The first is based on the dominant and stable role of personality, such that the effect of ethical leadership is limited (i.e. boundary condition) by bad apple personality

traits. The second is based on socialization processes, such that ethical leaders have a positive effect on all employees, including bad apples.

Personality is the dispositional tendency to choose goals, and manifest behaviors in pursuit of those goals, relative to satisfying intrinsic needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The preponderance of research suggests that personality is relatively stable from early adulthood onward, though moderate changes occur based on genetics, life stages, and socio-cultural context (Caspi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005). Research suggests that bad apple traits are well established by early adulthood, remain relatively stable afterward, and may be partially determined by demographic and biological factors (see, for example Tang, et al., 2008; Tang & Chen, 2008; Dahling, et al., 2008; Brown, et al., 2010; Emmons, 1987; Ang & Yusof, 2006). Considering that the average person remains in an organization for only about four years (BLS, 2008a) and may change jobs as many as 15 times over the course of their career (BLS, 2008b), it seems unlikely that an employee's personality would be dramatically affected by their tenure with a single leader. Risk tolerant attitudes, self-serving motives, and the pursuit of rewards and status should limit the influence of ethical leadership on bad apple employees. The confrontational, competitive, self-absorbed, and power hungry nature of bad apples is likely to lead them to view an ethical leader as an adversary or an obstacle. Accordingly, they should be unmotivated or unwilling to model the supervisor's behavior (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). Therefore, ethical leadership and bad apple followership may interact in such a way that ethical leaders have no impact on bad apple followers.

Hypothesis 2: Follower bad apple personality traits moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and follower deviance, such that the relationship is negative for low bad apple followers and insignificant for high bad apple followers.

The Unconditional Hypothesis. An alternate (i.e. competing) hypothesis suggests that ethical leadership will lead to the socialization of bad apple followers who choose to remain in the workgroup. Organizational socialization is the process by which outsiders are transformed into participating and effective organizational members (Feldman, 1976). During the socialization process employees learn appropriate role behaviors and group norms and values (Feldman, 1981). Though personality is relatively stable, socialization theory suggests employees can learn to enact their personality within the organizational context in productive and suitable ways. Mach and DN have both been found to predict leadership emergence (Bedell, Hunter, Angie, & Vert, 2006; Paunonen, Lonnqvist, Verkasalo, Leikas, & Nissinen, 2006; Brunell, Gentry, Campbell, Hoffman, Kuhnert, & DeMarree, 2008), and to have positive applications in organizations (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009). Empirical evidence also suggests that socialization processes may positively affect Mach employees' ethical decision making (Winter, et al., 2004). Ethical leadership, as opposed to other forms of neo-charismatic leadership, appears ideal for eliciting normative behavior from bad apple followers due to the use of transactional exchange. The rewards and recognition ascribed to socially responsible behavior by ethical leaders might encourage normative behavior by bad apples, even if only in the pursuit of their individual goals. The result would be an amplification effect, where the negative relationship between ethical leadership and employee deviance would be

stronger in bad apple employees because of their increased deviant behavior in the absence of an ethical leader.

Hypothesis 3: Follower bad apple personality traits moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and follower deviance, such that the negative relationship is stronger for high bad apple followers, relative to low bad apple followers.

METHODS

Sample and Procedure

Employees from the sales departments of 68 stores from the Shenzhen, China branch of an international automobile parts company were recruited to participate in the study. Each department had one direct supervisor, who oversaw and directly interacted with each sales employee. Prior to participation, employees received an email from the research team, as well as from the human resources department of the branch, explaining the purpose of the study. Additionally, employees were informed that the study was voluntary, would be conducted during work hours, and their responses would be confidential. A total of 59 supervisors (87%) and 240 subordinates (88%) agreed to participate in the study. Data were collected at two time points, with one month in between. At time 1, subordinates provided demographic information and responded to the personality items. At time 2, subordinates responded to ethical leadership and turnover intention items, and supervisors rated subordinates on workplace deviance.

Measures

All measures were translated from English to Chinese using Brislin's (1980) translation – back-translation procedure. The English-based measures were first translated into Chinese by a bilingual industrial-organizational (I/O) psychologist. A second bilingual (I/O psychologist) back-translated the measures into English, and the two English versions were compared by two additional I/O psychologists. High agreement was reached between the original and back-translated English versions. All items in the leader and follower instruments were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities (internal consistency) for all study variables are reported in Table 1.

Ethical Leadership. Ethical leadership was measured using the 10-item Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS; Brown, et al., 2005). Responses varied from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. A sample item is, “Disciplines employees who violate ethical standards.” Consistent with previous research, individual employee responses were aggregated at the workgroup level to determine the level of ethical leadership displayed by each manager (Piccolo, et al., 2010; Mayer, et al., 2009; Neubert, et al., 2009).

Dispositional Narcissism. Employee dispositional narcissism was measured using the NPI-16 (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006), a short-form version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI, Raskin & Hall, 1979). The NPI has been the most common assessment tool for narcissism in nonclinical samples, as well as in organizational research. Further, the scale generally produces high internal consistency

Table 3.1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Age	32.60	4.41	--							
2 Gender ^b	.58	.50	.09	--						
3 Workgroup Tenure	1.82	1.61	.45**	-.01	--					
4 Narcissism	3.12	.56	-.06	.01	.02	(.85)				
5 Machiavellianism	2.36	.58	-.04	.07	.03	.44**	(.84)			
6 Ethical Leadership	4.32	.64	.07	.05	.00	.06	-.10	(.93)		
7 Turnover Intention	1.68	.82	.02	-.08	-.01	-.12	-.07	-.22**	(.91)	
8 Workplace Deviance	1.39	.43	-.08	.13*	-.04	-.03	.07	-.21**	.02	(.85)

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Note. N = 240. Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients appear in the diagonal in parentheses. Gender was coded as 1 = male and 0 = female.

(Raskin & Hall, 1979; Emmons, 1987; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Watson & Biderman, 1993). Ames et al. (2006) were able to demonstrate similar and acceptable internal, discriminant, and predictive validity using a 16-item measure, when compared to the commonly used 40-item scale. Both the NPI and NPI-16 use a forced-choice response format. In the current study, items from the NPI-16 were converted to a Likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* using the positive (i.e. narcissistic) responses from the forced-choice scale. This was done to reduce problems in the translation, back-translation process and to maintain consistency in the survey format. A sample item is, “I am more capable than other people.”

Machiavellianism. Employee Machiavellianism was measured using the 16-item Machiavellianism Personality Scale (MPS; Dahling, et al., 2009). Responses varied from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. A sample item is, “I am willing to be unethical if I believe it will help me succeed.”

Turnover Intentions. Employee turnover intention was measured using four items from Kelloway, Gottlieb, and Barham (1999). Responses varied from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. A sample item is, “I am thinking about leaving this organization.”

Workplace Deviance. Managers rated each employee using a non-self-report measure modeled after Bennett and Robinson’s (2000) commonly used measure of workplace deviance (Stewart, Bing, Davison, Woehr, & McIntyre, 2009). Responses varied from *Never* to *Daily*. Four of the 15 original items were removed because they were not relevant to the organizational setting and type of work performed by the evaluated employees. A sample item is, “Acted rudely towards someone at work.”

Control Variables. A large body of research on bad apple traits, personality in general, and cognitive development suggests that demographic factors such as age and gender may affect the development of narcissistic and Machiavellian personality traits. Additionally, as leadership processes and leader-follower relationships develop over time, employee tenure in a workgroup may also confound the effects of ethical leadership. Accordingly, subordinate age, gender, and workgroup tenure are included as control variables.

Analyses

Recently, researchers have proposed the use of hierarchical data analysis techniques for examining employees nested in groups, even if all variables are collected at the individual level, to control for confounding effects of group membership on the dependent variable (Hofmann, 1997; Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). In the current study, intra-class correlation coefficients (ICC) are .20 for turnover intention and .47 for workplace deviance, suggesting respective moderate and strong group membership effects. The larger ICC for workplace deviance might be expected due to a single rating source (i.e. the leader) at the group level, when compared to individual ratings for turnover intention. Accordingly, all study hypotheses were tested using hierarchical linear modeling (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Independent variables were grand-mean centered to aid in interpretation of the coefficients (Hofmann & Gavin, 1998).

As expected, significant negative correlations were found between ethical leadership and the dependent variables ($r = -.22$ for turnover intention; $r = -.21$ for workplace deviance; see Table 1). This finding provides support for previous research

demonstrating that ethical leadership reduces employee deviance and increases employee commitment. An expected significant positive correlation between the bad apple personality characteristics ($r = .44$ for Mach and DN) was also found. No significant relationship was found between the control variables (subordinate gender, age, and workgroup tenure) and either of the bad apple personality traits. However, a significant positive relationship between gender and workplace deviance was found ($r = .13$), suggesting that males exhibit more deviant behavior at work than females.

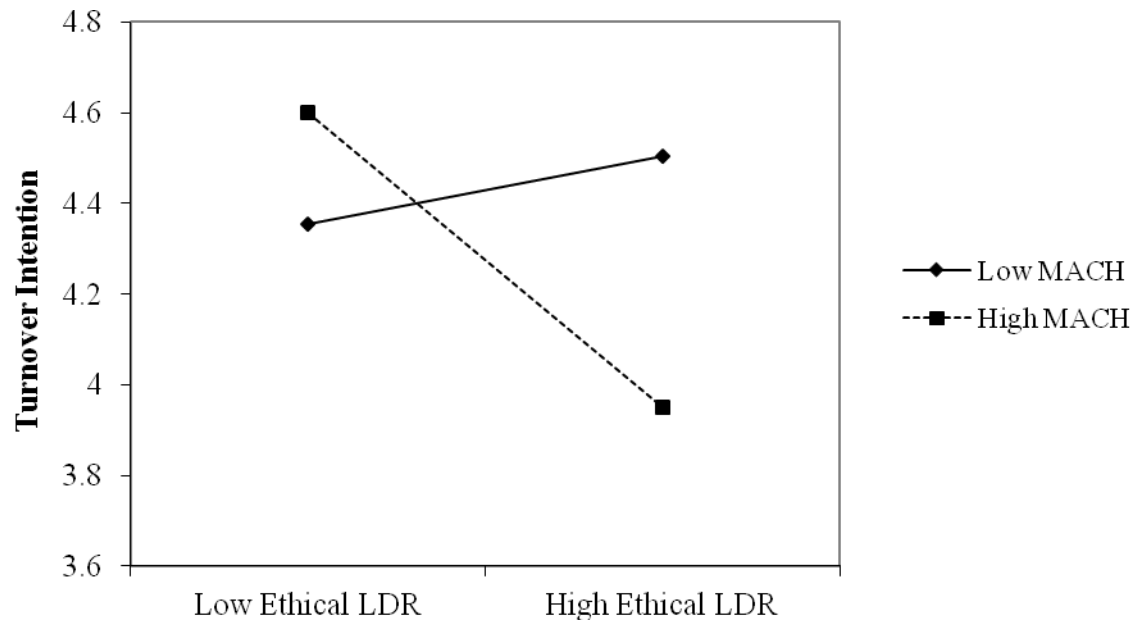
The Avoidance Hypothesis. Hypothesis 1, the avoidance hypothesis, predicted that bad apple personality traits would moderate the negative relationship between ethical leadership and subordinate turnover intention. A significant and negative correlation between ethical leadership and turnover intention was found (see Table 1), providing evidence that ethical leadership does reduce subordinate turnover intentions. In a model with subordinate Machiavellianism and ethical leadership, neither significantly predicted turnover intention (see Table 2, Model 1). Adding the interaction term (Table 2, Model 2) revealed a significant interaction effect between ethical leadership and subordinate Mach on turnover intention. However, as Figure 1 demonstrates, the hypothesized interaction effect was not supported. Instead, ethical leadership had an insignificant effect on low Mach followers' turnover intentions, but significantly reduced turnover intentions of high Mach followers. Similar results were found for high and low DN followers (see Table 3 and Figure 2). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Implications and possible explanations are explored in the discussion section below.

**Table 3.2: Results of Hierarchical Linear Regression for Employee Turnover
Intention Moderated by Employee Machiavellianism**

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	T
Sub Age	.01	.02	.47	.00	.02	.25
Sub Gender	-.11	.10	-1.09	-.12	.10	-1.29
Sub Tenure in Workgroup	-.02	.03	-.56	-.01	.03	-.41
Ethical Leadership	-.22	.20	-1.12	1.08	.50	2.17*
Sub Machiavellianism	-.10	.08	-1.18	2.20	.81	2.70**
EL X Sub MACH				-.54	.19	-2.87**
R ²	.00			.02		
ΔR^2				.02		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Figure 3.1: Interaction Effect of Ethical Leadership and Follower Machiavellianism on Turnover Intention



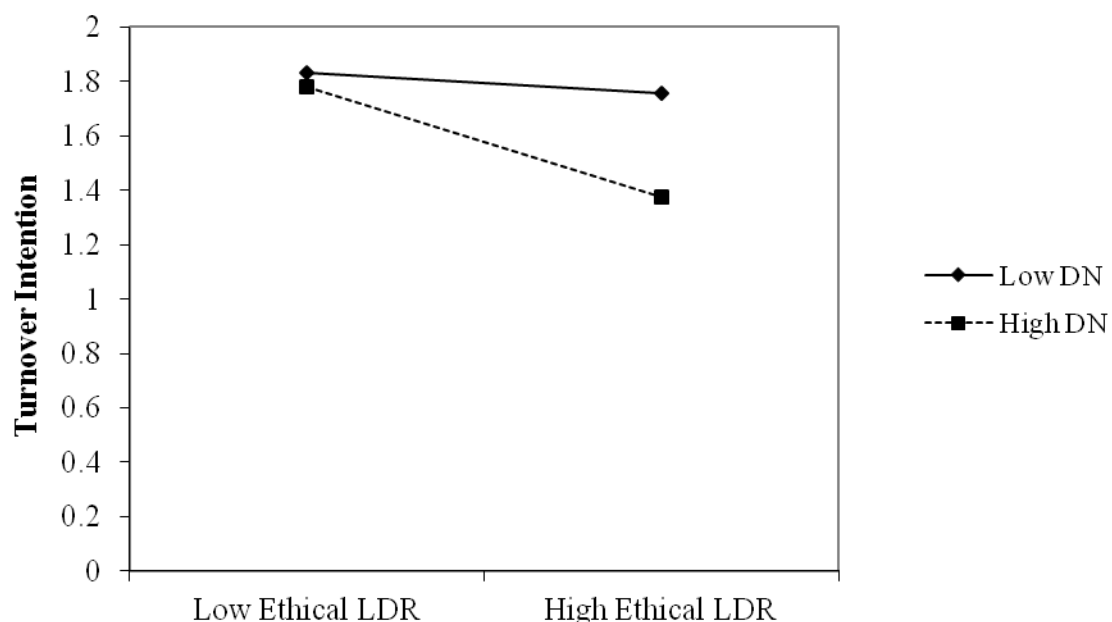
**Table 3.3: Results of Hierarchical Linear Regression for Employee Turnover
Intention Moderated by Employee Dispositional Narcissism**

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	T
Sub Age	.01	.02	.39	.00	.02	.07
Sub Gender	-.10	.10	-1.11	-.11	.09	-1.19
Sub Tenure in Workgroup	-.02	.03	-.59	-.01	.03	-.42
Ethical Leadership	-.20	.19	-1.05	.53	.41	1.31
Sub Narcissism	-.19	.09	-2.08 [*]	.80	.43	1.86
EL X Sub Narc				-.23	.10	-2.33 [*]
R ²	.02			.02		
ΔR^2				.01 ^a		

* p < .05 ** p < .01

a. Due to rounding to two decimal places.

Figure 3.2: Interaction Effect of Ethical Leadership and Follower Dispositional Narcissism on Turnover Intention



Interaction Hypotheses. Two competing hypotheses were presented to explain the interaction of bad apple followers and ethical leaders, in terms of effect on employee workplace deviance. Hypothesis 2 proposed that ethical leaders would reduce workplace deviance in low bad apple followers, but have no effect on high bad apple followers. Hypothesis 3 proposed that ethical leaders would reduce workplace deviance in both high and low bad apple followers, but the effect would be amplified for high bad apple followers due to increased deviance in the absence of an ethical leader. The significant and negative correlation between ethical leadership and workplace deviance (see Table 1) provides evidence that ethical leadership does reduce employee workplace deviance. Tables 4 and 5 report the results of hierarchical linear modeling analyses for the interaction of ethical leadership with employee Mach and DN, respectively. The

Table 3.4: Results of Hierarchical Linear Regression for Employee Workplace Deviance Moderated by Employee Machiavellianism

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	T
Sub Age	-.01	.01	-.83	-.01	.01	-.03
Sub Gender	.07	.03	2.04*	.08	.03	2.36*
Sub Tenure in Workgroup	.03	.02	1.23	.02	.02	1.15
Ethical Leadership	-.32	.14	-2.27*	-.06	.03	-1.76
Sub Machiavellianism	-.02	.04	-.48	-.02	.04	-.70
EL X Sub MACH				.16	.27	.64
R ²	.01			.03		
ΔR^2				.02		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 3.5: Results of Hierarchical Linear Regression for Employee Workplace Deviance Moderated by Employee Dispositional Narcissism

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	T
Sub Age	-.01	.01	-.84	-.00	.01	-.46
Sub Gender	.07	.03	2.09	.08	.03	2.32*
Sub Tenure in Workgroup	.03	.02	1.23	.02	.02	1.07
Ethical Leadership	-.31	.14	-2.27*	-1.13	.57	-1.98*
Sub Narcissism	-.03	.05	-.51	-1.12	.79	-1.42
EL X Sub Narc				.26	.18	1.44
R ²	.01			.06		
ΔR^2				.05		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

interaction of ethical leadership and either bad apple trait did not significantly predict employee workplace deviance. Therefore, neither Hypothesis 2 nor Hypothesis 3 is supported. The significant correlation between ethical leadership and employee deviance, suggests that ethical leaders affect the behavior of all followers. When coupled with insignificant differences in slope between high and low bad apples (i.e. an insignificant interaction), it appears that the behavioral gap between high and low bad apples remains consistent with or without ethical leadership. Implications and future directions are discussed in the next section.

DISCUSSION

Overall, study results provide very little support for the hypotheses proposed above. Several potential causes may contribute to the lack of significant findings. Despite disappointing findings, the current study elucidates several research questions that may further clarify the interaction of ethical leaders and bad apple followers in work settings. The avoidance hypothesis was not supported and surprisingly the data from this study suggest that ethical leaders reduced turnover intention in high bad apple followers, but not in their low bad apple counterparts. Additionally, no significant interaction was found between ethical leadership and bad apple personality traits on employee workplace deviance. While surprising, there are at least four likely causes for the current results, each of which points out areas for future study that will help further refine the relationship between ethical leadership and bad apple followers.

First, as noted above high bad apple followers and ethical leaders are unlikely to occupy the same workgroup due to selection effects (Kristoff-Brown, Zimmerman, &

Johnson, 2005). One explanation for high bad apple followers who remain in a workgroup with an ethical leader is that they are committed to their jobs for pragmatic reasons, commonly referred to as continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). As a result, those bad apples that are able to leave have already done so, and those that remain are highly committed for reasons other than the leader. Future studies should examine the relationship between ethical leadership and turnover intention as a three-way interaction of ethical leadership, employee personality and commitment.

Second, highly exploitative individuals may choose to stay in workgroups with an ethical leader. Ethical leaders communicate very specific expectations and reward very specific behaviors. Bad apple employees are adept at manipulating social exchange expectations to their own advantage, especially in pursuit of rewards and recognition. Bad apple employees may view ethical leaders as gullible, and use their straightforward, transactional leadership style against them. The result would likely take the form of a “two-faced” employee, who presents his/herself to the supervisor in a normative way, but behaves in a deviant way outside of the view of the supervisor. Future studies should examine ethical leadership and bad apple employees using multisource ratings of deviance, including supervisor, peer, customer, and other appropriate rating sources.

Third, most personality and organizational leadership scholars agree that at lower levels bad apple personality traits are healthy, and may even be necessary for success in certain organizational roles. Perhaps the levels of bad apple personality that lead to destructiveness in work settings are above the levels measured by the instruments used in the current study. The aggressiveness and confidence needed for success in a competitive sales environment, like the one worked in by employees in the current study, are more

accurately measured by scales frequently used in organizational research. The current study attempted to examine dysfunctional outcomes which may be more likely to occur at higher degrees of bad apple personality traits. Future studies might examine the relationship between ethical leadership and deviance across levels of employee personality using measures designed to assess a wider range of the latent construct. The statistical techniques common in Latent Trait and Item Response Theories may help to further clarify how employees are arrayed across dimensions of bad apple personality constructs, helping bring to light the grey area between the “healthy” levels necessary for success in some positions and more destructive forms.

Finally, while the mean, standard deviation, and internal consistency of the dispositional narcissism and Machiavellianism scales (see Table 3.1) suggest that bad apples are present in the Chinese population, personality psychologists have noted strong differences in the self-concepts and attributions of Asian and Western cultures (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). As a result, researchers are giving increased attention to cross-cultural validation of personality items, especially in Asian cultures (Cheung, Leong, & Ben-Porath, 2003). It is quite possible that a high or low score on the scales used in the current study may be tapping into a different psychological characteristic in Chinese workers based on cultural manifestations of self-concept, attribution style, cognitive frameworks, and socio-cultural norms (Sue & Chang, 2003). There is currently no indigenous measure of dispositional narcissism or Machiavellianism in Asian cultures, nor cross-cultural validation of Western measures. Future research should examine if the types of bad apple employees described in the

current study exist in Asian workforces, and if so, how prevalent they are relative to Western workforces.

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