Creative Leadership: Does It Clash Across Cultures?

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Abstract

As international competition, technology advancement, and the knowledge-based economy increases, creativity is becoming increasingly critical for the success of organizations all around the world. While leadership or support of individuals' immediate leaders is one of the most potent factors impacting individual creativity, the majority of previous studies examining the relationship between leadership and creativity were conducted in Western contexts and only few studies investigated the cross-cultural aspects of leadership and creativity.

This study explores the connection between traditional creativity research and cross-cultural leadership research, building toward a conceptual framework proposed for further discussion and ultimately testing. Conceptual links between participative leader behaviors, individualism-collectivism, power distance, and creativity are examined. Implications for leadership development in order to enhance organizational creativity in an international HRD context bring this article to a close.

Keywords: leadership, leader, creativity, cross-cultural, culture

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Introduction

In today's business world, creativity is becoming increasingly critical for the success of organizations. The ever-accelerating speed of change, international competition resulting from globalization, technology advancement, and the knowledge-based economy have made creativity and innovation critical factors for the survival of organizations (Ford & Gioia, 1995). In order to adapt to changing environments, organizations need creativity that drives organizational innovation and change (Amabile, 1988; Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993). When employees work with creativity, they propose novel and useful ideas, processes, and products that improve organizations' abilities to respond to external environments and, thus, adapt and compete better (Amabile, 1988; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Van de Ven, 1986). That is why organizations and governments around the globe have been putting much effort into programs and activities, aimed at increasing creativity.

While creativity is called for all around the world, concern for creativity has been very high in several East Asian countries recently because there is a perception that Asians are less creative than Westerners (Morris & Leung, 2010). As a result, people in Japan are increasingly questioning traditional classrooms and hierarchy of workplaces and asking for changes in order to increase creativity and innovation (Hashimoto, 2004). Governments of Taiwan and China have initiated efforts to foster creativity by developing creativity research programs and education centers (Morris & Leung, 2010). South Korea is also facing the creativity challenge. Many South Korean companies used to focus on imitating products created by other organizations in developed countries during rapid industrialization. They have now become top global organizations in their industries. It is necessary for them to develop novel and creative products to lead in the global markets. As an example of creativity endeavor, Kun-Hee Lee, the chairman of Samsung, a large Korean conglomerate has set 'creativity' and 'imagination' as a management agenda for the next 10 years (Park, 2010).

Where, then, does creativity come from? Creativity comes fundamentally from individual humans (Amabile, 1988). People increase productivity and living standards by developing new products or services with their creativity (Florida, 2002). While creativity mainly comes from individuals, many contextual factors including job complexity, team dynamics, leadership, and organizational culture have powerful influence on individual creativity by stimulating, channeling, or inhibiting individual creativity (Amabile, 1988; Ford, 1996; Oldham, & Cummings, 1996; Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham, 2004).

Among those various creativity-related factors, leadership or support of individuals' immediate leaders is one of the most powerful factors impacting individual creativity (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, & Kramer, 2004; Oldham, & Cummings, 1996; Shalley & Gilson, 2004). Given that creativity is an essential factor for the success of organizations and that leadership has strong influence on subordinate creativity, it should be asked how leader behaviors affect employee creativity and what kinds of leader behaviors are optimal for fostering creativity of subordinates. In other words, we need to examine what makes creative leadership. Moreover, considering the high concern for creativity in East Asian countries, one may ask whether certain leader behaviors would have the same influence on subordinate creativity regardless of their cultures.

Problem Statement

Since the late 1980s, studies on the impact of contextual characteristics on individual creativity have been increasing (e.g., Amabile & Conti, 1999; Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; Ford, 1996; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993; Zhou, 2003; Zhou & George, 2003). One of the problems, however, is that surprisingly there are not many studies investigating the influence of leadership on individual creativity considering the immediate impact of leader behaviors on subordinate creativity (Amabile et al., 2004). And while there has been a strong agreement among creativity researchers that creativity arises from complex interactions between individual factors and contextual factors such as leadership (e.g., Amabile, 1988; Ford, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993), studies testing possible interactions are very few (Tierney, Farmer, & Graen, 1999).

Moreover, the majority of previous studies examining the relationship between leadership and creativity were conducted in Western context and only few studies investigated the cross-cultural issue of leadership and creativity (Zhou & Su, 2010). Hence, it is not clear whether the relationship between leadership and creativity in non-Western cultures such as East Asian cultures is the same as in Western cultures. Researchers should identify and uncover leadership factors enhancing or inhibiting creativity in a non-Western context (Shalley & Gilson, 2004; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). This study is one such effort to address these problems.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine the conceptual relationships between leader behaviors, subordinate creativity and subordinate cultural values. Two questions guided the search for literature and resulting conceptual framework:

(a) Do the effects of certain leader behaviors on subordinate creativity vary across cultures?

(b) What framework can be developed from their potential relationships?

To answer these two questions, this article first reviews previous literature on creativity, the influence of leadership on creativity, and cross-cultural leadership. Next, a conceptual framework of creative leadership depending on subordinate cultural values is examined. Last, implications for HRD and directions for future research are discussed.

Creativity

Definitions of Creativity

Researchers have studied creativity using diverse definitions (Amabile, 1988). Some researchers define creativity as characteristics of a person such as personality or traits (Amabile, 1988). Others have defined creativity as a process in which individuals engage in order to create a novel and unique product (Rogers, 1954).

While there are many different definitions of creativity, most researchers have defined creativity focusing on outcomes (Amabile, 1988). The reason why the outcome-based approach has been used widely is because it is difficult to identify and measure creativity when focusing on either personality or process (Amabile, 1988). Measuring creativity based on outcome is simpler and if we take the outcome-based approach, we can investigate which personal

characteristics, environmental factors, and problem-solving processes are related to those creative outcomes (Amabile, 1988).

One thing to note is the distinction between creativity and innovation. Many researchers use the term creativity and innovation interchangeably. However, creativity and innovation are not the same concept, although they are closely related (King, 1995). While many innovation researchers define innovation as the development and implementation of new ideas (e.g., Van de Ven, 1986), many creativity researchers distinguish creativity from innovation (e.g., Amabile, 1988; Ford, 1996; Oldham & Cummings, 1996).While creativity refers to the production of novel and useful ideas in any domain, innovation is defined as the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organization (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996). Creativity can be conceptualized as a necessary first step required for innovation (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Creative individuals may influence all stages of the innovation process, but organizational innovation requires more than creativity (Joo, 2007).

There are two elements of creativity: novelty and usefulness. Few people would question that an idea must contain some element of novelty or originality to be considered creative. To be considered as being creative in the context of creativity at work, however, novelty is not enough; ideas must also be useful (Amabile, 1988). A novel idea that has no potential value is unusual, but not creative (Zhou & George, 2003).

Following the outcome-based approach, in this study, creativity is operationally defined as the production of ideas about products, services, practices, processes, and procedures that are judged to be (a) original and novel, and (b) appropriate and potentially useful (Amabile, 1996; Joo, 2007; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Shalley et al., 2004; Woodman et al., 1993; Zhou & George, 2001; Zhou & Shalley, 2003).

Creative Leadership: Leader Behaviors Affecting Subordinate Creativity

As discussed earlier, among the contextual factors related to individual creativity, one of the most immediate and powerful factors is likely to be the leaders of the individuals; those immediate leaders direct and evaluate subordinates' work, provide access to resources and information, and affect subordinates' motivation and engagement with task in various ways (Amabile et al., 2004).

Traditional leadership research has found that general employee performance is affected by certain leader behaviors such as planning, monitoring, networking, role modeling, developing subordinates, providing autonomy, recognizing, and supporting (Amabile et al., 2004; Kim &Yukl, 1995; Kotter, 1982; Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986). In response to the increasing importance of creativity, many creativity researchers also examined how creativity of subordinates is affected by leader behaviors.

Supportive Leader Behaviors Fostering Creativity

Many creativity studies have found that supervisors' supportive behaviors positively affected subordinate creativity. Andrews and Farris (1967) found that scientists' creativity was enhanced when their supervisors listened to their concerns and allowed them to participate in making important decisions that might affect them. When subordinates received encouragement from leaders and had open interactions with leaders, subordinates tended to show high creativity (Tierney et al., 1999). Similarly, Frese, Teng, and Wijnen (1999) found that employees submitted

more creative ideas to the organization's suggestion program when supervisors encouraged employees to do so. Constructive feedback and evaluation from leaders enhanced subordinate creativity (Mumford, Connelly, & Gaddis, 2003) whereas managers' negative feedback inhibited subordinate creativity (Andrews & Gordon, 1970). Employees' creativity was increased when managers contributed to problem finding and raised subordinates' self-efficacy (Redmond, Mumford, and Teach, 1993). Similarly, supportive and non-controlling leader behaviors were found to improve employee creativity (Oldham & Cummings, 1996). When leaders were creative role models, subordinate creativity was enhanced (Jaussi & Dionne, 2003). Shin and Zhou (2003) found that when leaders showed transformational leadership (i.e., providing intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation), employees showed a high level of creativity. Effectively managing subordinates' emotions and providing intellectual stimulation was also found to enhance creativity of subordinates (Zhou & George, 2003).

Controlling Leader Behaviors Inhibiting Creativity

In contrast to supportive leader behaviors, controlling leader behaviors were found to inhibit subordinate creativity mainly through lowering intrinsic motivation (e.g., George & Zhou, 2001; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Stahl & Koser, 1978; Zhou, 2003). Controlling supervisors are those who closely monitor employees' behaviors, make decisions without subordinate input, and generally demand that subordinates follow strict rules and guidelines (Deci, Connel & Ryan, 1989). These controlling behaviors may shift employees' attention away from work and toward external concerns (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Subordinates would perceive that they are controlled by their leaders, and consequently experience low intrinsic motivation, which in turn leads to low creativity (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Zhou & Su, 2010).

For example, when supervisors provided performance feedback in a controlling manner, participants' intrinsic motivation was inhibited (Ryan, 1982; Ryan, Mims, & Koestner, 1983). Similarly, children under surveillance showed lower intrinsic motivation than those who were not monitored (Lepper & Greene, 1975). In terms of creative outcomes, children, confronted with controlling rules (e.g., being asked to be neat while painting a picture) showed significantly lower level of creativity than children who were not exposed to such rules (Koestner, Ryan, Bernieri, & Holt, 1984). Stahl and Koser (1978) and Oldham and Cummings (1996) also found that employees who worked under highly controlling managers showed low creative outcomes.

In sum, when leaders are supportive (e.g., listen to subordinates' concerns and opinions, provide constructive feedback and encouragement, and allow autonomy and participation in decision making) and behave as creative role models, subordinate creativity is enhanced. However, when leaders are controlling (e.g., closely monitor, demand strict adherence to rules, and make decisions without employee input), subordinate creativity tends to be inhibited (Shalley et al., 2004).

Influence of Culture on Creativity and Leadership

As organizations and industries have increasingly become global, it is necessary to expand the creativity research to the international and cross-cultural arena (Zhou & Su, 2010). However, the vast majority of previous creativity studies have been conducted in the U.S. or other Western countries (Shalley et al., 2004). Thus, it is necessary to examine creativity and influence of leader behaviors on subordinate creativity in non-Western cultures. In this section, I

start with the review of cross-cultural creativity research that mainly compares levels of creativity in different cultures. Following is the review of cross-cultural studies examining the influence of leader behaviors across cultures. Then, cultural value dimensions relevant to the focus of this study will be introduced.

Cross-cultural Research on Creativity

Many previous studies in the cross-cultural creativity area have attempted to find difference in creativity levels of individuals from different countries. Some researchers examined creativity of individuals using laboratory tasks and others investigated the levels of individual characteristics that are considered to be mediators of creativity. In general, research failed to show consistent findings of cross-cultural difference in individual creativity.

For example, Jellen and Urban (1989) assessed the creative potential of children from 11 countries using a Test for Creative Thinking–Drawing Production. They found that, except for children from the Philippines, those from Western countries (America, England, & Germany) showed higher scores than those from Eastern countries (China, India, & Indonesia). Similarly, Jaquish and Ripple (1984) assessed creativity of Chinese and Americans across different age groups ranging from 9 to 60 years old. It was found that Americans scored higher on fluency, flexibility, and originality across different age groups than did the Chinese. Similarly, Saeki, Fan, and Dusen (2001) compared American and Japanese college students' performance on the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT). Results showed that American students outperformed Japanese students on the test. However, the two groups did not differ on the fluency and originality, which are key indicators of creativity (Torrance, 1974); their differences in creativity came from differences in the elaboration and the abstractness scores.

Other studies found contrasting results or failed to find creativity differences across cultures. For example, Rudowicz, Lok, and Kitto (1995) observed that Chinese children from Hong Kong showed significantly higher scores than American children on the TTCT Figural Form. Similarly, Pornrungroj (1992) compared Thai children born and raised in Thailand with Thai American children born and raised in America using the TTCT Figural Form. Results showed that Thai children showed significantly higher scores than did the Thai American children on all test factors. Riquelme (2002) attempted to compare creativity of Chinese and Spanish students using graphic design task. The participants were asked to assemble alphanumeric characters, shapes, and lines into a creative figure. Creativity was rated by independent judges. Results showed that there were no differences in creativity of the figures they produced.

Some other researchers attempted to explain cross-cultural difference by measuring individual characteristics that were hypothesized to be related to or mediate creativity; their rationale was that if individuals from different cultures show different levels of these individual characteristics, and if these characteristics are related to creativity, then cultural differences in creativity may be explained by differences in these individual characteristics (Zhou & Su, 2010). For example, Zha, Walczyk, Griffith-Ross, Tobacyk, and Walczyk (2006) compared American graduate students and Chinese graduate students on the level of divergent thinking and individualism-collectivism. It was found that the American students scored higher on both divergent thinking and individualism than did the Chinese students. However, the divergent thinking measures were not significantly correlated with the individualism–collectivism

measures. Thus, the results failed to support the researchers' hypothesis that individualism–collectivism would explain why the Americans scored higher than the Chinese on the divergent thinking test. As another example, a study by Burns and Brady (1992) showed that American undergraduate students scored higher on need for uniqueness (i.e., the motive to stand out from others) than Malay undergraduate students. Although need for uniqueness was considered to be associated with creativity, Burns and Brady (1992) did not directly measure participants' levels of creativity. Thus, it is difficult to conclude that need for uniqueness mediates the relation between culture and levels of creativity. Above studies failed to show consistent cross-cultural differences in creativity at the individual level. It is still not clear whether there are creativity differences at the individual level across cultures.

Another study worth noting with regard to this complex cross-cultural creativity issue has compared Singaporeans and Israelis, and showed that both groups had similar scores on a creativity test when performing individually (Nouri, Erez, Rockstuhl, & Ang, 2008). An interesting result was that when working in a dyad, Singaporean dyads were less original than Israeli dyads, but elaborated more on each idea to stress its appropriateness compared with Israeli dyads. The result suggests that Singaporeans tend to refrain from generating novel ideas that deviate from the social norms when working in presence of others (Morris & Leung, 2010) It can be interpreted that cultural difference or the effect of culture is activated in social contexts (i.e., the interpersonal relationships) (Morris & Leung, 2010).

Considering the finding above, cultural difference of creativity may hinge on social contexts such as relationships with leaders, coworkers and other social networks in which individuals are embedded; cross-cultural research needs to go beyond examining creativity merely in terms of individual characteristics, and incorporate how social contexts may play a role in creating similarities and differences in creativity (Zhou & Su, 2010). Since the focus of this study is to examine the influence of leader behavior on subordinate creativity across cultures, it would be imperative to review cross-cultural leadership studies, examining the different effects of leadership or leader behaviors on subordinates.

Cross-cultural Research on Leadership

As most of leadership research during the past half-century was conducted in the United States and other Western countries, many scholars have noted that they need to understand how leadership is enacted in various cultures and to investigate different leader behaviors and their effectiveness across cultures (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). In general, many studies found that impact of certain leader behaviors and preferred leadership styles vary considerably as a result of different cultures while there are universally effective leader behaviors across cultures (House et al., 2004).

Muczyk and Reimann (1987) proposed that three leadership behaviors -- consideration, concern for production, and rewarding -- are universally effective; however, the effectiveness of participation (i.e., degree to which employees are involved in work-related decisions) and direction (i.e., amount of follow-up or directive behavior regarding the execution of a decision that has been made) is contingent on situations. In an empirical study, Hui, Au, and Fock (2004) found that Chinese employees reacted less negatively to and showed higher job satisfaction in low autonomy conditions compared to Westerners. Similarly, it was found that autocratic leadership and innovative climate interacted to influence employee innovative behavior in such a

way that employees showed the highest innovative behavior when autocratic leadership and innovative climate were both high (Leung, Chen, Zhou, & Lim, 2009).

Similarly, Dorfman, Howell, Hibino, Lee, Tate, and Bautista (1997) compared the effectiveness of various leadership behaviors among Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan, and the United States. They found that supportive, charismatic, and contingent rewards (i.e., positive feedback and recognition) leader behaviors were positively related to subordinate satisfaction and performance in all countries. However, it was found that the effectiveness of participative and directive leader behaviors varied across countries. Especially, participative leadership was effective only in the U.S. where individualism was high, while its effect was non-significant or negative in collectivistic countries.

In a similar vein, House and colleagues (2004) argued that people in different cultures would have different ideas about the attributes of effective leaders. By examining 62 different societies, they found that the preferred leadership styles varied as a result of cultural forces. Specifically, people from the Confucian Asian cluster (including China, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan) are likely to describe effective leaders as individuals who are charismatic, care about their teams and members (i.e., Human oriented), but make independent decisions without the input of others (i.e., less participative); in contrast, people from Anglo cluster (including the U.S., Canada, England, and Australia) desire leaders who are charismatic, highly participative, and humane-oriented (House et al., 2004). While people from both cultures expect leaders to inspire and care about people (i.e., charismatic and humane-oriented), Confucian Asians value participative leadership less than do Westerners. This finding replicates Dorfman and colleagues' study (1997) in that while there are some universally effective leader characteristics, the effectiveness of some leader characteristics are contingent on culture (Javidan, Dorfman, de Luque, & House, 2006).

Another study by Shin and Zhou (2003) also showed an important finding with regard to the leadership and creativity issue. The researchers investigated whether individual differences in South Korean employees' conservation value moderated the relation between transformational leadership and employee creativity. Conservation refers to the extent to which individuals value tradition, security, and conformity (Schwartz, 1992). Interestingly, it was found that the positive impact of transformational leadership on employee creativity was especially strong for employees with high conservation value. It was argued that transformational leadership, which includes intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence (Bass, 1985) might be especially effective to promote creativity of conservation-oriented employees because it fulfilled their expectations of traditional paternalistic leadership (Zhou & Su, 2010).

In sum, these contrasting findings in non-Western and Western cultures clearly illustrate that influence of certain leader behaviors and preferred leadership styles vary across cultures. These preferred leadership styles in people's mind affect how subordinates accept and respond to certain leader behaviors; the acceptance of the leader behaviors, in turn, influences the effectiveness of the leader (Dorfman et al., 1997; House et al., 2004; Shin & Zhou, 2003).

Impact of participative leader behaviors. A key distinction between cultures found in cross-cultural leadership research is people's attitudes toward participative leadership (Zhou & Su, 2010). Participative leaders are leaders who often consult with, ask for suggestions, and

obtain information from subordinates for important decisions (Dorfman et al., 1997). While charismatic and supportive leadership seem universally effective across cultures, people's attitudes toward participative leadership are notably different. While participative leadership tends to be viewed very favorably and is considered to enhance subordinate satisfaction and performance in Western cultures, the effectiveness of participative leadership appears non-significant or even negative in East Asian cultures (Dorfman et al., 1997; House et al., 2004; Muczyk & Reimann, 1987; Zhou & Su, 2010).

If we look back at the leadership-creativity research, we can find that the researchers did not distinguish participative leader behaviors from supportive leader behaviors. If we use the dimensions used in cross-cultural leadership research (e.g., Dorfman et al., 1997; House et al., 2004), the creativity leadership researchers used the term supportive leader behaviors as a broad dimension of leader behaviors, which included both participative and humane-oriented leader behaviors.

Thus, I argue that if we distinguish participative leader behaviors from supportive leader behaviors and measure their impact on subordinate creativity, we may find interesting cross-cultural differences in the relationship between leader behaviors and subordinate creativity. This leads to review cultural values distinguishing different cultures and propose how the cultural values may moderate the influence of certain leader behaviors on subordinate creativity.

Creative Leadership across Cultures

Based upon the theoretical links between creativity research and cross-cultural leadership research reviewed in the previous section, I propose that the impact of leader behaviors on subordinate creativity may vary depending on subordinates' cultural values in such a way that the effect of participative leader behaviors on subordinate creativity will be less pronounced for subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance than subordinates with low collectivism or low power distance.

Cultural Values

As discussed above, it was found that people's preferred leadership styles and their responses to certain leader behaviors varied as a result of cultures. Culture includes values, rituals, heroes, and symbols and is manifested in institutions of society such as governments, legal systems, educational systems, family structures, and religious organizations (Hofstede, 2001). Among these various factors, values are the core of culture (Xin, 1996). Values are defined by Hofstede (1980) as "a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (p. 18). One should, then, ask which values differentiate one culture (e.g., Confucian Asian) from another (e.g., Anglo) and may change people's preferred leadership styles and the impact of certain leader behaviors on subordinate attitude and performance including creativity.

In his seminal study, Hofstede (1980) identified four cultural values through the analysis of a morale survey of IBM employees from 40 countries. He labeled them individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity. Although there were other researchers who investigated cultural values before Hofstede (e.g., Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961), Hofstede's study was the first large-scale empirical cross-cultural study and it provided a basis for numerous follow-up studies (House et al., 2004).

I argue that among four cultural values developed by Hofstede (1980), individualism-

collectivism and power distance are particularly relevant to the issue of leadership and creativity. That is because power distance explicitly addresses the relationship between superiors and subordinates. And individualism-collectivism, which was found to be correlated with power distance (Hofstde, 1980), is also related to values such as conformity to environment, maintaining harmony, and respecting elders and superiors that may shape individuals' interpersonal relationships with their leaders (House et al., 2004). These two cultural value dimensions also broadly distinguish between Confucian Asian cultures and Anglo cultures. Specifically, individuals from Confucian Asian cultures are typically higher in collectivism and power distance compared to those from Anglo cultures (Hofstede, 1980). These cultural value dimensions will be briefly reviewed below.

Individualism-collectivism. Hofstede (2001) provides the following definitions of individualism and collectivism:

> Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: Everyone is expected to look after him/herself and her/his immediate family only. Collectivism stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. (p. 225)

In individualistic cultures, people are viewed as independent and possessing a unique pattern of traits that distinguish them from other people (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, people in collectivistic cultures view themselves as inherently interdependent with the group to which they belong (Goncalo & Staw, 2006).

Because the individual's identity is closely linked to the group in collectivistic cultures, the main goal of the person is not to maintain independence from others, but to promote the interests of the group (Davidson, Jaccard, Triandis, Morales, & Diaz-Guerrero, 1976). There is greater emphasis on following shared rules in order to maintain harmony in the group; people in collectivistic cultures are therefore not motivated to stand out from their group by competitive acts of achievement (Goncalo & Staw, 2006).

In contrast, most people in individualistic cultures assume that their identity is a direct consequence of their unique characteristics; because individualistic cultures stress one's self and one's unique needs and desires, people in individualistic cultures strive for recognition by achieving beyond the norms of the group, while collectivists are more motivated to understand and maintain the norms for the interests of the group (Goncalo & Staw, 2006). Thus, while conformity is often considered negatively in individualistic cultures, uniqueness can be viewed as deviance from the standard in collectivistic cultures (Kim & Markus, 1999). Thus, people in individualistic cultures tend to resist social pressure and maintain their opinions in the face of opposition while people in collectivistic cultures might consider it rude and inconsiderate not to yield to others (Goncalo & Staw, 2006).

Power distance. Power distance refers to "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 98). The term power distance was borrowed from the work of Mulder (1977) (Hosftede, 2001). According to Mulder (1977), power is "the potential to determine or direct the behaviors of another person or other persons" (p. 90). Power distance

determines how much hierarchical inequality people will accept and consider as proper, such as the distribution of prestige, social status, wealth, the class system, and access to universal rights (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994).

In a low power distance society, inequality is viewed as something that should be minimized while in a high power distance society, inequality is viewed as the basis of societal order (Hofstede, 2001). Thus, members of a high power distance society tend to accept inequality in the social hierarchy and control of people with low power by people with high power (Hofstede, 2001). In organizations, employees in high power distance cultures tend to respect and obey their leaders; they are likely to be afraid or at least unwilling to disagree with their supervisors (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994, Hofstede, 2001). With regard to a preferred leadership style, most individuals in low power distance cultures prefer a more participative or consultative one while most individuals in high power distance cultures prefer persuasive/paternalistic leadership (Hofstde, 2001). It was also found that employees in high power distance cultures would report their bosses to be more autocratic and paternalistic than would employees in low power distance cultures (Hofstde, 2001). It should be noted that we should distinguish between formal and informal participation when linking power distance to participation preference. Power distance was not correlated with organizational members' preferences for formal participation structures (e.g., participation through union representative or workers' councils); however, individual employees' preferences for informal consultation with their leaders were negatively related to power distance (Hofstede, 2001).

The degree of centralization of authority was also affected by the power distance value. Organizations in a high power distance culture would have more and steeper hierarchical levels than would organizations in a low power distance culture (Brossard & Maurice, 1974). In addition, another work-related value was found to be correlated with the power distance. Individuals in high power distance cultures would be more task-oriented and less people-oriented because the role of a manager in a high power distance organization is to initiate structure (e.g., tell people what to do rather than ask for their views) (Hofstede, 2001).

Cultural Values Moderating the Influence of Participative Leadership on Creativity

Moderating effect of individualism-collectivism. One main cultural value which may moderate the relationship between leadership and subordinate creativity is individualism-collectivism. As discussed above, people in individualistic cultures tend to resist social pressure and maintain their opinions in the face of opposition while people in collectivistic cultures might consider it rude and inconsiderate not to yield to others (Goncalo & Staw, 2006).

As a result, employees in individualistic cultures are likely to resist leaders' directions and controls whereas those in collectivistic cultures are more likely to accept and respect their leaders' authority to make decisions (Morris & Leung, 2010). Therefore, participative leader behaviors would positively affect motivation of subordinates with low collectivism whereas participative leader behaviors would not affect significantly or would affect even negatively motivation of subordinates with high collectivism.

As previously discussed, motivation is one of the most important components of individual creativity; it makes "the difference between what an individual can do and what one will do" (Amabile, 1988, p. 133). And motivation depends substantially on the work

environment including leadership (Amabile, 1988; Amabile et al, 2004). Linking participative leader behaviors, motivation, and creativity, I argue that while participative leader behaviors foster motivation and thus, creativity of subordinates with low collectivism, the motivation and creativity of subordinates with high collectivism would not be affected significantly by participative leader behaviors.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, I propose:

Proposition 1: The effect of participative leader behaviors on employee creativity will be less pronounced for employees with high collectivism than employees with low collectivism.

Moderating effect of power distance. Power distance is another cultural value which may moderate the impact of leader behaviors on subordinate creativity. As discussed above, members of a high power distance organization or society tend to accept inequality in the social hierarchy and control of people with low power by people with high power (Hofstede, 2001).

In organizations, therefore, subordinates with high power distance are likely to respect and obey their leaders and prefer persuasive/paternalistic leadership style. The role of a manager in high power distance cultures is to initiate structure (e.g., tell people what to do rather than ask for their views) (Hofstede, 2001). In contrast, individuals with low power distance tend to prefer participative leader behaviors and expect leaders to ask their input when making important decisions (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994, Hofstede, 2001). Following the discussion above regarding participative leader behaviors, subordinate collectivism, motivation, and creativity, I argue that participative leader behaviors would positively affect motivation and creativity of subordinates with low power distance whereas the motivation and creativity of employees with high power distance would not be changed significantly by participative behaviors of leaders.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, I propose:

Proposition 2: The effect of participative leader behaviors on employee creativity will be less pronounced for employees with high power distance than employees with low power distance.

Overall, I have argued that the relationship between leader behaviors and subordinate creativity will be moderated by subordinate cultural values. Specifically, the effect of participative leader behaviors on creativity will be less pronounced or even negative for subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance than for subordinates with low collectivism or low power distance. While minimal empirical research has been conducted to investigate how cultural values may moderate the relationship between leader behaviors and subordinate creativity, I have provided theoretical basis to support the relationship.

Conceptual Model

The links have been drawn between the conceptual underpinnings of participative leader behaviors, cultural values (e.g., collectivism, power distance), and subordinate creativity. The links show a conceptual model for how cultural values may moderate the impact of leader behaviors on subordinate motivation and thus, creativity. See Figure 1.

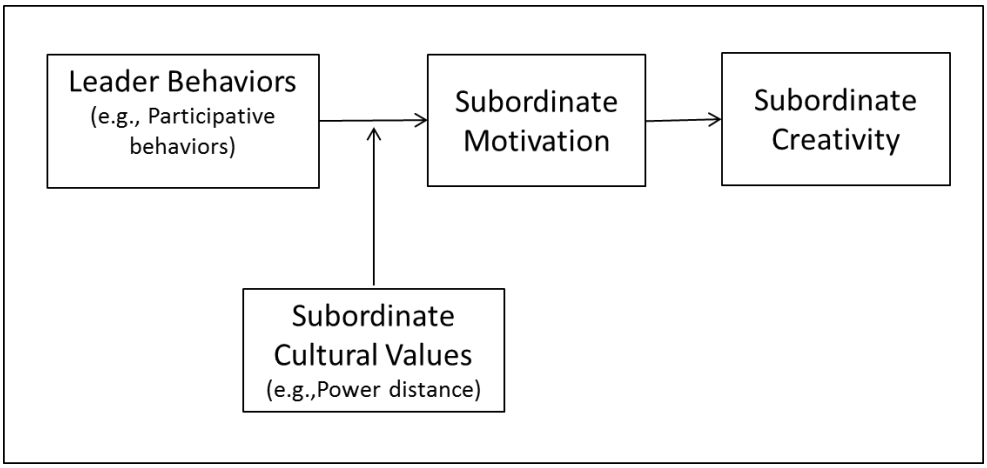

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the moderating effect of cultural values between leader behaviors, subordinate motivation, and subordinate creativity.

As shown in Figure 1, the beginning block in the conceptual model is the behaviors of leaders. Leaders exhibit varying levels of participative behaviors including consulting with, asking for suggestions, and obtaining information from subordinates for important decisions. The extent to which leaders show these participative behaviors would vary depending on the leaders' personalities, previous work experiences, training experiences, individual cultural values or culture of the organization the leaders belong to.

Next, the cultural values of subordinates such as collectivism or power distance moderate how the leader behaviors influence subordinates' motivation. Because subordinates with low collectivism and low power distance would prefer participative leadership, non-participative leader behaviors could harm their motivation. However, subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance are likely to accept and respect their leaders' authority to make decisions. Thus, non-participative behaviors of leaders would not be so harmful to motivation of subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance. It may be even that non-participative leader behaviors would increase motivation of subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance when combined with supportive leader behaviors because leaders who are non-participative and supportive may fulfill subordinates' expectation of paternal leadership. Lastly, the heightened motivation of subordinates leads to greater creativity on the part of the subordinates.

Conclusions and Implications for HRD

The need to enhance creativity is particularly important for organizations today. Global competitions and the accelerating speed of technology advancement require organizations to foster creativity of their members in order to adapt to changing environments. Considering the powerful impact of leaders on subordinate creativity, finding the links between leadership and subordinate creativity is very important. Moreover, organizations are becoming more globalized by exporting products to foreign consumers, opening offices in foreign countries and hiring diverse work force, each of whom has different cultural values. Therefore, finding and developing right leader behaviors across cultures has important implications for HRD practitioners and managers in order to maximize creativity of organizational members.

First, from the review of creativity research and cross-cultural leadership research, one common theme is that supportive leader behaviors are universally effective not only for general subordinate performance but also for subordinate creativity. Supportive leader behaviors such as showing concern for subordinate, listening to their needs and recognizing and rewarding their effort are valued and effective in all cultures. Although this is not very surprising, HRD practitioners and managers should keep this finding in mind. Organizations should encourage and provide with training programs their leaders to demonstrate supportiveness to their subordinate and create supportive work environment in order to foster creativity.

Second, leaders should carefully consider cultural values of subordinates when managing their creative performance. Creativity research argued that participative behaviors of leaders are universally effective for creative performances of subordinates. However, based on the findings of cross-cultural leadership research, I suggest that the effectiveness of participative leader behaviors may have few beneficial effects or may actually have adverse effects on creativity of subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance. People with high collectivism or high power distance tend to expect their leaders to take responsibility in making important decisions and let them focus on the tasks. As an effort of matching right leadership types with subordinates, for example, subordinates with high collectivism or high power distance might be identified through use of assessment instruments. Then, their managers can take individualized or selective approach to managing their work. Before starting tasks, discussing with subordinates about their expectations toward the roles of managers and themselves in decision making processes may also be beneficial. For expatriate managers who are sent to foreign countries with high collectivism or high power distance culture, organizations should educate them what to consider regarding cultural differences and how to properly manage and adjust their leadership style to meet the expectation of their local subordinates. Being aware of this cultural contingency will help managers to identify which leadership behaviors are likely to enhance or inhibit subordinate creativity.

Although I proposed a theoretical model and suggested implications for the cross-cultural management of creativity, the study here clearly requires empirical testing since there have been few empirical studies examining this cross-cultural creativity issue. Interestingly, there was a recent study, which showed seemingly contradictory results to the argument in this paper. It was found that empowering leadership positively affected Chinese employees' psychological empowerment, which, in turn, enhanced the employees' intrinsic motivation and creative process engagement; both intrinsic motivation and creative process engagement contributed to employee creativity (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). As Zhang and Bartol studied a slightly different set of leader behaviors than those studied in this study, it is still not clear which type of leadership style is more conducive to employee creativity in China and other East Asian countries. Future research should test the arguments proposed in the study by directly comparing the leader behaviors, subordinate motivation and creativity with matched samples from Eastern Asian countries and Western countries. While cross-sectional survey studies are definitely needed, longitudinal field studies and controlled field experiments are also needed to address the issue of causal directions.

In addition, future work is needed to examine whether there are any changes in cultural values of people from different societies, which may in turn, adjust their preferred leadership styles or expectations toward leaders. It has been more than thirty years since Hofstede (1980) analyzed his first data set and about ten years since the GLOBE study was published (House et

al., 2004). The rapid globalization and the advancement in communication technology including television and internet have brought to people's lives cultural artifacts from other cultures such as fashion items, music, dramas, and movies. People are now becoming increasingly exposed to different cultural values conveyed by those cultural artifacts while they stay in their home societies. Although it may be difficult to change the overall pattern of cultural values in a whole society, young generations may show somewhat different values than their older generations because they tend to frequently use the communication technologies and thus more likely to be exposed to the content from other cultures,. Thus, it would be fruitful to examine whether or not cultural values have shifted and if so, what caused the shift and how the shift affected people's minds and behaviors.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the newly emerging literature on cross-cultural creativity by linking creativity research and cross-cultural leadership research. Future empirical research is needed to reveal the complex relations among individual cultural values, leader behaviors, and creativity. As these complex relations are revealed, organizations may be able to find and train better leader behaviors to foster their members' creative potential and to benefit from their novel and useful ideas across cultures.

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