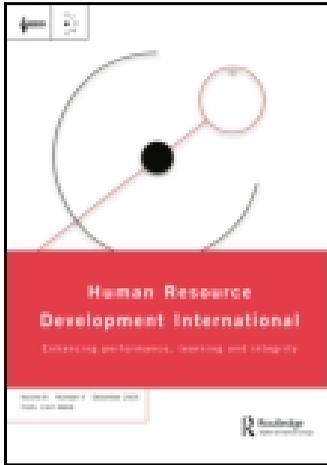


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Culture and leadership: women in nonprofit and for-profit leadership positions within the European Union

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Research has shown that women commonly hold positions of leadership within nonprofit organizations, while men typically hold the leadership positions within for-profit organizations. However, little research on women's leadership roles has been conducted within European Union countries. The purpose of this article is to examine women's leadership positions within nonprofit and for-profit organizations within the European Union and, using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, to further investigate a potential correlation between national culture and female leadership. Fifty-one companies were examined based on type, country characteristics and gender dominance. A significant difference was found between organization type (nonprofit/for-profit) and organizational dominance (masculine/feminine). The findings suggest that the European Union has patterns of gendered leadership positions similar to patterns found previously in the USA. However, countries that were characterized as feminine had more than expected nonprofit organizations, while masculine countries had more for-profit organizations.

Keywords: gender; leadership; Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Within the global community, many organizations are actively working toward the elimination of workplace inequality, discrimination and prejudice (Bartlett 2009; Gregory 2003). Nevertheless, social norms with regard to gender roles have yet to be ameliorated. Stereotypical feminine behaviour is traditionally associated with non-leadership or support roles (Bosak and Sczesny 2008; Johanson 2008). Sayers (2012) stated, 'Entrenched societal sexism causes all of us to harbor unconscious bias about the capabilities and proper gender roles of women' (519). This sexism creates a dichotomy for women who are actively seeking leadership positions – they feel they must try to balance masculinity, which is valued in leaders, and femininity, which is ascribed to non-leaders (Callahan, Hasler, and Tolson 2005). Additionally, Guy, and Newman (2004) suggested that gender stereotypes are related to industries that possess soft (feminine) or hard (masculine) skills. It is not surprising, then, that women are still underrepresented as leaders within organizations.

For example, although women represent approximately 47% of the US workforce, they held only 14.4% of the senior executive positions of Fortune 500 companies and were only 7.6% of the Fortune 500 top earners in 2011 (Chandler 2011), and, just a year earlier in 2010, they only held 2.4% of the CEO positions within the Fortune 500. According to The ABC (2009), the nonprofit sector comprises approximately 6% of the

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overall workforce, with 73% of nonprofit employees being women. Eagly and Carli's 2008 study asserts that women within the European Union represent approximately 4% of the C-Suite compared to 6% representation in USA during the same time frame. Although the representative percentage differs from study to study, a lack of equal representation is clear.

Further, within the female-dominated nonprofit sector in USA, women represent 45% of the chief executive officers (CEOs) and, in nonprofit organizations in which the budget exceeds \$25M, only 21% of CEOs are women (TWHP 2009). The vast majority of nonprofit organizations with budgets less than \$5M is found locally and addresses the arts, children, animal welfare, poverty and other social initiatives (Van Buren 2004). This suggests that biases with regard to leadership persist even in the 'softer' environment of the nonprofit sector.

To date, a great deal of research has been conducted with regard to women and leadership in organizations within the USA (Van Buren 2004). This research generally reinforces popular assumptions regarding the conscious and subconscious beliefs about femininity, which further demonstrates that when women do hold leadership positions, these positions are typically within nonprofit organizations (Sayers 2012, 522). The literature exploring gendered leadership within the nonprofit sector has been somewhat minimal (Themudo 2009). Nevertheless cross-national data on gender and nonprofit organizations suggests a link between empowerment of women and nonprofit participation – the more empowerment afforded women, the stronger the nonprofit sector, and the higher the involvement of women in the sector (Cutura 2012; Themudo 2009).

In the past, research on female leadership representation of within for-profit and nonprofit organizations in the European Union has been limited. Recently, however, attention has been drawn to the underrepresentation of female leaders within the European Union. Van der Vleuten (2007) remains puzzled by the European Union's lack of progressiveness regarding the 'formulation and implementation of gender policies' (vii). According to a 2012 study conducted by the Eurobarometer, '88% of Europeans and 90% of UK respondents believe that, given equal competences, women should be equally represented in the top jobs in business' (Reding 2012). Although the European Union has upheld legislative reforms that encourage gender-neutral criteria for selecting non-executive leaders (BBC 2012), the attempts to create gender balance amongst leadership ranks have, as with USA, not yet yielded substantive practical results.

Given the timeliness of this topic, specifically within the European context, we have used Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory to further investigate masculine/feminine aspects of culture as a lens for gendered leadership within the European Union. More specifically, the research question that guided this study was: Are women in less masculine countries (as defined by Hofstede's cultural dimension of gender) in the European Union more likely to hold positions in Fortune 500 companies as compared to nonprofit organizations? Through exploring the cultural dimension of gender, masculinity and femininity characteristics, of European Union countries that possess Fortune 500 organizations, we hypothesized that perceived leadership abilities and positions closely correlate with gender representation within the for-profit and nonprofit sectors.

Theoretical framework

The effects of culture have been long studied by academics in various fields. Recognizing the significance of culture is essential within our global world. Many researchers have attempted to determine the various components associated with culture, yet the debate for

a universal definition of culture is still ongoing. Well-cited theorists, (Adler and Bartholomew 1992;) explain that culture is a collection of various components that differ from individual to individual; hence, what one individual views as a composition of culture is not translated to another individual.

Allaire and Fisirotu (1984), Moore and Lewis (1952), Schein (2001) and many others have developed comprehensive definitions, theoretical frameworks and models related to components that define culture. Theorists have long recognized that culture is a collection of various components. While many instruments have been created to determine cultural components (e.g. GLOBE (House et al. 2004), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2004) and Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) Values Orientation Theory (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961)), Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, which measures culture through the Values Survey Model, has remained the most frequently used approach. Thus, for the purpose of this study, Hofstede's definition of culture will be used. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) defined culture as, 'the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others' (9).

Geert Hofstede, a highly accredited Dutch cultural researcher, began studying the various impacts of national and organizational culture in the late 1960s during a consulting venture with IBM. Since his initial research for IBM, Hofstede conducted his study in over 76 countries (Hofstede 1991). Although Hofstede's original research objective was not to study culture, his investigative results proved to be unique and reliable related to themes amongst cultures and potential dimensions of culture. Theorists have criticized Hofstede's research citing some of the following issues: inability to define culture (Baskerville 2003), limited sample (Smith, Trompenaars, and Dugan 1995), methodological error (Blodgett, Bakir, and Rose 2008) and outdated nature of results (Hofstede 1998). Yet, despite these criticisms, Hofstede used 'theoretical reasoning, base data, and statistical treatments to arrive at his conclusion' (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, xi). Thus, we feel it offers an adequate lens for our purposes in the present study.

Hofstede's cultural dimensions attempt to explain both societal and organizational constructs and further assist in providing information related to influencing cultural factors. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory is unique in the sense that it is not limited to a set number of cultural dimensions. In fact, since Hofstede's development of this theory, additional dimensions have been added. Currently, the dimensions that Hofstede has identified include power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010). Between 2010 and the present day, Hofstede has expanded his findings to six dimensions that have influenced culture. This added dimension is indulgence versus restraint; however, additional research is needed to reinforce the validity of this cultural component. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) addressed the intertwined nature of these components on country culture.

Definitions of cultural dimensions

Collectivism, the opposite of individualism, refers to 'a society in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lives continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty' (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 515). In turn, *individualism* is 'a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family only' (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 519).

Femininity, the opposite of masculinity, is defined as ‘a society in which emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life’ (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 517). On the other hand, *masculinity*, is ‘a society in which emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success’ (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 519).

Long-term orientation, as opposed to short-term orientation, refers to ‘the fostering of pragmatic virtues oriented toward future rewards, in particular perseverance, thrift, and adapting to changing circumstances’ (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 239). *Short-term orientation* is ‘the fostering of virtues related to the past and present, such as national pride, respect for tradition, preservation of face, and the fulfilling of social obligations’ (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 239).

Power distance is ‘the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally’ (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 521).

Finally, *uncertainty avoidance* is ‘the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. One of the dimensions of national culture— weak to strong’ (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 522).

Femininity versus masculinity

Most important to this study are the dimensions of masculinity versus femininity. Wood noted (2009), ‘Terms such as women and men are troublesome because they imply that all women can be grouped together and all men can be group together’ (19). The notion of categorization into distinctive groups is reflective of cultural research, specifically regarding cultural dimensions. Within masculine societies, a greater emphasis is placed upon achievements, valour, assertiveness and material reward. Success within masculine countries is focused on competing with others. Femininity is the term used by Hofstede (1998) for societies that are consensus-oriented, specifically pertaining to relationships in terms of cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and overall quality of life.

Our mutual interest in female leadership representation, specifically focusing on culture, has guided this study; however, consideration of additional cultural factors indirectly impacted the cultural dimension associated with masculinity and femininity, given their intertwined nature. This dimension addresses roles and values related to gender and the gap between men and women. Highly masculine countries in the European Union include Hungary and Austria, while more feminine countries include Sweden, Norway, and The Netherlands. More specifically, this study explored the extent to which gender (categorized as masculine and feminine) is correlated with leadership roles in for-profit and nonprofit organizations in European Union countries by masculine characteristics.

According to Hofstede (1998), although the roles of gender are defined by societal constraints, the differences between the male and female sexes are universal. The dimension of masculinity/femininity was recognized during Hofstede’s initial study. The research conducted thus far by the Values Survey Model displays the major differences between masculinity and feminine behaviours. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) recognized that the masculine pole is often associated with high earnings, constant recognition, opportunity for high-level advancement and challenging workplace assignments. The feminine pole is often associated with working relationships (cooperation), family importance and security for one’s future welfare. Traditional and modern day societies are contributing factors to the constraints placed upon males and females.

Although Hofstede (1998, 2010) explains that behaviours are not transferable amongst all individuals, his theories provide foundational themes that explain common cultural structures.

A great deal of research has been conducted highlighting the impact of culture on gender roles and gender construct (D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Kashima et al. 1995). Theorists maintain the viewpoint that perceptions of women and their roles within leadership are based upon national culture (Dorfman as cited by House, Wright, and Aditya 1997). Simone de Beauvoir (1973) noted that, 'One is not born woman, one becomes one' (301). Psychologists and sociologists have reinforced the belief that sex is determined while gender is constructed, based upon various environmental factors, specifically those related to one's culture (Ortner and Whitehead 1981; Pagliassotti 1993).

Turesky, Cloutier and Turesky (2012) highlighted the relationship of cultural dimensions, specifically gender, in terms of female leadership, specifically addressing feminine and masculine norms. Additionally, as cited by various researchers (Billing and Alvesson 2002; Garcia-Retamero and Lopez-Zafra 2009), countries that are considered to be feminine are often more accepting of female leadership. The World Economic Forum (2010) addressed this notion by highlighting that Nordic countries topped their counterparts in terms of feminine leadership, while masculine countries such as Italy, ranked 97th in terms of opportunities for women.

Research questions

The guiding research question for this study was: Are women in less masculine countries (as defined by Hofstede's cultural dimension of gender- masculine and feminine) in the European Union more likely to hold senior executive positions in Fortune 500 companies as compared to nonprofit organizations? To address this question, we addressed the following supporting questions:

- (1) Are women more commonly found within leadership positions in nonprofit organizations?
- (2) Are men more likely to hold leadership positions within for-profit organizations?
- (3) Are countries classified as feminine more likely to have women in leadership positions within nonprofit and for-profit organizations?
- (4) Are countries classified as feminine more inclined to have the ratio of men to women distributed similarly within leadership positions?
- (5) How do these findings relating to the position of women in organizations pertain to cultural and social biases?

Research process

This study uses quantitative methodology to compare nonprofit and for-profit gendered leadership within the European Union.

The first author began this study by collecting information concerning countries that comprise the European Union. In February of 2011, when this study began, there were 27 countries that comprised the European Union. All member countries of the European Union contained both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. The first author then researched current information regarding global Fortune 500 organizations. During the time this study was conducted, information regarding global Fortune 500 organizations

was available, but the most current publication of this list was 2010. The author utilized the *CNN Money* (2010) report to determine which member countries of the European Union had global Fortune 500 organizations. After identifying countries on the list of global Fortune 500 companies, noteworthy nonprofit/non-governmental organization's (NGOs) within those countries were identified from an article entitled *European NGO's futures: a study of Europe's leading NGOs and their contribution to policymaking in Brussels*.

In accordance with *CNN Money's* (2010) article and *SIGwatch's* article (2008), which explores popular European NGOs, the following eight countries contain both Global Fortune 500 companies and noteworthy nonprofit organizations: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. From determining the countries that had Fortune 500 organizations and noteworthy nonprofit organizations, the authors then classified the eight countries into two categories: masculine and feminine. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) categorize countries according to a masculinity index based upon factor scores from 14 items on the Values Survey Model. Thus, we separated the countries based upon that index score (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 141–143) following Hofstede's classification of which countries were described as 'masculine' or 'feminine' While such a dichotomous classification is simplistic, the present study did not seek to explore the nuances of the strength of a country's cultural dimension regarding masculinity. Rather, the research questions here focused simply on whether there were differences in positional leadership patterns in countries that met Hofstede's classification for being either masculine or feminine. In a greater sample size, more nuanced explorations looking at gendered leadership differences within the continuum of masculine/feminine countries may be particularly informative.

We then examined organizational websites of for-profit and nonprofit organizations to determine the ratio of males to females in leadership positions (see Table 1). All organizational websites that provided information regarding organizational composition (CEOs, CFOs, directors, etc.) were included in the study. Organizations that did not provide information regarding leadership were not included in this study. It is important to note that leadership was defined under the following website categories: Board of directors, directors, board of governance, board of volunteers and corporate leadership team.

Upon collecting available information regarding organizational leadership composition, the researchers then calculated the ratio of males to females in leadership positions within each organization. If the leadership of an organization comprised of a ratio of males to females that was anything other than equal, the company was categorized as the majority gender (e.g., Organization X has 10 male leaders and 9 female leaders, thus Organization X is male dominated, 10:9).

Initially, this study began with a large sample size; however, given the research criteria and lack of noteworthy nonprofit organizations, the sample size diminished significantly. Additionally, lack of website data regarding leadership representation also decreased the initial sample size. As shown in Table 2, 41 for-profit and 10 nonprofit companies were analysed. In addition, companies from 16 feminine countries and 35 masculine counties were analysed. Lastly, 9 female-dominant and 42 male-dominant companies were analysed.

Data analysis

The initial, planned analysis was a 2 (company type) \times 2 (country characteristic) \times 2 (gender domination) analysis of variance. In this analysis, the dependent variable was the percentage of females on each company's board of directors, directors, board of

Table 1. Company website information.

Companies	Website
AEGON GROUP	http://www.aegon.com/
Allianz	http://www.allianz.be/
Amnesty International	http://www.amnesty.org/
ArcelorMittal	http://www.arcelormittal.com/
Aviva	http://www.aviva.com/
AXA	http://www.axa.com/
Barclays	http://group.barclays.com/
BASF	http://www.basf.com/
BEUC	http://www.beuc.org/
BNP Paribas	http://bank.bnpparibas.com/
BP	http://www.bp.com/
BPCE	http://www.bpce.fr/
Carrerfour	http://www.carrefour.com/
CNP	http://www.cnp.fr/
Consumer International	http://www.consumersinternational.org/
Deutsche Bank	http://www.db.com/
Dexia	http://www.dexia.com/
Deutsche Post DHL	http://www.dpdhl.com/
Earthwatch Worldwide	http://www.earthwatch.org/
ECEAE	http://www.eceae.org/
EDF Energy	http://www.edfenergy.com/
Enel	http://www.enel.com/
ENI	http://www.eni.com/
E.ON	http://www.eon-energy-trading.com/
Eurogroup for Animals.	http://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/
European Environment Bureau	http://www.eeb.org/
Fiat	http://www.fiat.com/
Friends of the Earth	http://www.foe.org/
GDFSUEZ	http://www.gdfsuex.com/
Global Witness	http://www.globalwitness.org/
Greenpeace	http://www.greenpeace.org/
Health Action International	http://www.haiweb.org/
HSBC	http://www.hsbc.com/
Human Rights Watch	http://www.hrw.org/
ING	http://www.ing.com/
Legal & General	http://lgen.client.shareholder.com/
Lloyds Banking Group	http://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/
Metro	http://www.metro.net/
Munich Re	http://www.munichre.com/
Netwerk Vlaanderen	http://netwerkvlaanderen.be/
Pesticide Action Network	http://www.pan-europe.info/
Peugeot	http://www.theofficialboard.com/
Prudential	http://www.prudential.com/
RBS	http://www.rbs.co.uk/
RWEAG	http://www.rwe.com/
Santander	http://www.santander.com/
Shell	http://www.shell.com/
Siemens	http://www.siemens.com/
Societe Generale Group	http://www.societegenerale.com/

(continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Companies	Website
Telefonica	http://www.telefonica.com/
Tesco	http://www.tesco.com/
Total	http://total.com/
Transparency International	http://www.transparency.org/
Transport and Environment	http://www.transportenvironment.org/
UniCredit.	http://www.unicreditgroup.eu/
Vodafone	http://www.vodafone.com/
Volkswagen	http://www.volkswagen.com/
World Economic Forum	http://www.weforum.org/

Table 2. Organization type by gender dominance.

	Female dominated	Male dominated
For profit	3	38
Nonprofit	6	4

Table 3. Chi-square results.

	Pearson chi-square value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>ES</i>
Org Type × Org Dom	15.35	1	0.000	0.549
Org Type × Country Dom	2.33	1	0.12	0.127
Org Dom × Country Dom	0.43	1	0.514	0.091

governance, board of volunteers and corporate leadership team. However, upon inspection of the data collected, it was determined that to properly analyse the data, chi squared analysis was required. Chi squared analysis was utilized based on a number of factors. First, the percentage of females on some company's board of directors was not available or was 0. Second, Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the dependent variable indicated that the error variance was not equal across all groups.

As shown in Table 3, three separate chi squared analyses were utilized to determine whether differences existed based on organization type (nonprofit/for-profit), organizational dominance (masculine/feminine) and cultural dimension based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (masculine/feminine).

The chi squared analysis noted that there was a significant relationship between organization type (nonprofit/for-profit) and organizational dominance (masculine/feminine), $\chi^2(1, N = 51) = 15.35, p = 0.000$. Follow-up examination found that a greater than expected number of male-dominated companies were for-profit. Likewise, a greater than expected number of female-dominated companies were nonprofit. The effect size was 0.549.

There was no significant difference for organization type (nonprofit/for-profit) and cultural dimension based on Hofstede's Country Dominance (masculine/feminine), $\chi^2(1, N = 62) = 2.33, p = 0.127$. The effect size was .194. There was also no significant difference for organizational dominance (masculine/feminine) and cultural dimension

based on Hofstede's country dominance (masculine/feminine), $\chi^2 (1, N = 51) = 0.43, p = 0.514$. The effect size was 0.091.

Results

Several patterns concerning the level of female leadership within nonprofit and for-profit organizations emerged from this study. The findings pointed to previous research (Eagly 2007; Zagorsek, Jaklic, and Stough 2004) that has been conducted primarily within USA about the leadership role of women within organizations. The results of the present study indicated that women are more likely to hold leadership positions within nonprofit organizations of the European Union as opposed to for-profit organizations. Nevertheless, Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture, based on the dimension of gender, did not predict that countries classified as feminine had more women in leadership positions in either nonprofit or for-profit organizations.

We found that countries that were classified as masculine were more likely to have for-profit organizations than nonprofit organizations. Our research also showed countries that were considered to be feminine were more likely to have nonprofit organizations than for-profit organizations.

Statistical and practical significance

The chi square indicated a difference based on organizational type (nonprofit/for-profit) and organizational dominance (masculine/feminine), $\chi^2 (1, N = 51) = 16, p = 0.000$. The practical significance of this study is extremely applicable to modern day misconceptions and beliefs related to gender leadership within the organizational sector (for-profit versus nonprofit). The ratio of organizations dominated by males as compared to females was overwhelming for-profit organizations. Additionally, it is important to note that a greater than expected number of nonprofit organizations were dominated by females and a fewer than expected number of nonprofit organizations were dominated by males.

The chi square for organizational type (for-profit/nonprofit) and Hofstede's Cultural Dimension based on country dominance (masculine/feminine) was not significant, $\chi^2 (1, N = 62) = 2.33, p = 0.127$. The chi square for country dominance based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions and Organizational Dominance (male/female) was not significant, $\chi^2 (1, N = 51) = 0.425, p = 0.514$.

The chi square for country type (masculine/feminine) based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimension and Organizational Type (nonprofit/for-profit) was significant, $\chi^2 (7, N = 62) = 0.24.798, p = 0.001$. Country 1, Belgium, had a greater than expected number of nonprofit organizations and a less than expected number of for-profit organization. Countries 2 (France- feminine) and 3 (Germany-masculine) also had a greater than expected number of for-profit organizations.

Discussion

This research reinforced commonly held beliefs pertaining to the social norms relating to the representation of female leaders within both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. It is important to note that the research also challenged commonly held beliefs about cultural dimensionality and organizational type. 'Essentialist understandings of gender are dangerous not only because they mask diversity among women, but also because they treat

gender identity as rigid and defined by a limited set of characteristics.' (Torchia, Calabro, and Huse 2011, 313).

According to existing research (Bradshaw, Murray, and Wolpin 1996; Salamon 1994), the representation of female leaders within nonprofit organizations differs significantly from that of their male counterparts. For example, nonprofit organizations, which typically support a value-based mission and vision, are perceived as more likely to employ women in upper level leadership positions due to the soft nature skills that these organizations support and due to the fact that nonprofit organizations are predominantly female (TWHP 2010). Although the importance of soft skills, typically classified as feminine, are instrumental within organizations, it is essential to remember that this skill is not reflective of all members of the female sex. Additionally, although soft skills are important in both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, this skill set does not outweigh the benefits of hard skills, regardless of employment sector. In fact, the findings presented here suggest that women are also underrepresented in leadership positions within the nonprofit sectors of the European Union. And, as with USA, women are more likely to be leaders within nonprofit organizations of the European Union compared to for-profit organizations.

Many researchers have noted (Weber and Crocker 1983; Hilton and von Hippel 1996) the prevalence of stereotypes and the deeply rooted societal constructs that these stereotypes reinforce. While negative stereotypes of women as leaders have improved, the durability and transferability of these deeply rooted stereotypes persists. While challenging the dominant paradigm is essential in moving towards change, Hilton and von Hippel (1996) recognized the vast implications of disproving the status quo rather than reinforcing cultural norms.

In a 1996 survey, Cox and Katz stated, 'A 1996 survey of 188 of the U.S.'s richest nonprofits conducted by the Chronicle of Philanthropy found that women made up just 16% of the chief executives surveyed. Not only were there fewer female executives, but their median salary was almost \$30,000 less than the average male executive' (p. 36). Whereas organizations within the profit-generating sector (business, economics, etc.) are more likely to employ males who conform to the masculine norm.

Limitations

Though the statistical and practical significance results of this study suggest important correlations, there are some recognizable limitations that should be addressed. This study was limited to eight countries out of the possible 27 countries that comprise the European Union due to the selected organizational criteria. Additionally, although the vast majority of these countries have flourishing economies, most of these economies did not support Global Fortune 500 organizations. The eight countries which did have Global Fortune 500 organizations were much more industrialized, thus reflecting business practices similar to that of USA. Perhaps more importantly, although our categorization suggests a dichotomy of masculine/feminine countries, these eight countries vary in strength of masculinity/femininity and, therefore, are not necessarily representative of both poles of this cultural dimension. A greater sample of Fortune 500 organizations and nonprofit organizations could have possibly yielded more statistically significant findings.

A second limitation of this study is that leadership within nonprofit and for-profit organizations can differ in terms of contextual meaning. Failure to initially define the criterion associated with leadership led to a struggle between determining whether leadership should be defined by a board of executives, directors, operational specialists or other

similar positions. Additionally, the role of leaders within nonprofit and for-profit organizations also differed in terms of roles and responsibilities. Although an individual might be referred to as a leader by holding a position within an organization does not mean that individual is employed by that organization. Being a leader on the board of executives within for-profit organization could be considered to be different than leadership within nonprofit organizations. Often times, leadership within for-profit organizations was limited to a board of executives while leadership in nonprofit organization was expanded to a board of governance or board of volunteers. Thus, when it came to categorizing leadership, it was difficult to differentiate the commonalities and differences between these various boards.

The method of acquiring resources should also be addressed, since information regarding organizational leadership was solely located through the use of the World Wide Web. Although all of the organizations listed in *CNN Money's* (2010) article and *SIGWatch's* article claim to have updated websites, it is difficult to verify that information, since it is constantly evolving. Thus, the data used in this study could be incomplete, out of date, or inaccurate.

Lastly, differentiating between nonprofit organizations from non-governmental organizations was not possible for this study. From the data used in the present study, a clear difference between these organizations could not be made. All nonprofit and non-governmental organizations were categorized under the heading of nonprofit organizations. It is important to recognize that the manner in which these organizations are defined could alter the number of countries that were included in this study.

Implications

Although Bem (1975) explains that gender stereotypes pose great inaccuracy, the concept of masculinity versus femininity still upholds years after Bem's study. Schein (2001) determined that when individuals think of managers, they first think of males; hence, the saying, 'think manager, think male.' Unfortunately, many (Carli and Eagly 2002; Eagly and Carli 2007; Gibson 1995; Oakley 2000) still believe that women use 'feminine leadership styles', thus reinforcing misconceptions and stereotypes.

Women advance more slowly within the workplace environment and are less likely to hold leadership positions within organizations than males (Bem 1975). Although many support the idea of workplace equality, underlying assumptions are frequently made which impede the path of female success. The assumptions being made about women's roles within the workplace revolve around a variety of aspects including sector of employment type, competencies based on gender, soft/hard skills, etc. Gender itself has nothing to do with effective leadership. Instead, effective leaders are those who can balance being people and task oriented (Callahan, Hasler, and Tolson 2005, 515).

The climb to organizational leadership that women journey upon is much different than that of their male counterparts. The female journey is often focused upon reinforcing feminine characteristics such as nurture, passion, respect, etc. (Callahan, Hasler, and Tolson 2005, 515). Males typically excel within organizational environments at a quicker pace than females due to the fact that they are perceived to embody characteristics that are seen as respectable, logical and profitable (Schein 2001). Executive leadership positions for women will continue to be elusive until societal norms are challenged and marginalization, whether purposeful or not, is addressed.

Reinforcement of stereotypes

Globally, the suppression of women differs to various degrees. In fact, each culture possesses common perceptions related to gender roles, but that is not to say that roles within cultures are entirely similar. However, there are a number of similarities between the inequalities that women face within the USA and the European Union in relation to organizational leadership.

Both males and females are expected to conform to their society's biases surrounding the perception of masculinity and femininity. Those who fail to conform to these common viewpoints of masculine and feminine traits are often seen as outsiders, making the journey towards acceptance and achievement challenging. Ford (2006) explains that regardless of organizational sector, women face a difficult journey within the workplace. Ford (2006) further expanded his research to explain that women within the workplace continue to lag behind men in terms of rank, positionality, leadership, etc.

'Women are damned if they become leaders because they no longer fit the social construct of femininity and damned when they are perceived to be feminine because they are believed to lack the masculine sex-traits necessary to be successful in leadership' (Eagly and Carli as cited in Van Buren 2004, 17). Further examination of the literature shows a systematic oppression of women. The structures that are in place are male dominated, and thus the journey towards upper level management, as described by Riedel (Karsten 2006), is more tedious for women since the leaders determining a woman's fate are typically males.

Organizations have unintentionally, and sometimes intentionally, devalued the work of female leaders through their underrepresentation in upper level management or their equal representation within various organizational sectors. As Adler (Karsten 2006) states, 'Change, whether societal or organizational, whether sweeping or subtle, requires tremendous courage.' From a feminist perspective, we believe that critically reflecting upon gender differences in relation to leadership is essential. The first step in correcting the injustices that women face within the workplace is acknowledgement that gender is a product of culture while sex is biologically determined. Thus, acknowledgement and understanding of this basic principle can lead to progression in all aspects of society which reinforce the underrepresentation of females.

Business case for diversity

'Organizational, or corporate, cultures have been a fashionable topic in the management literature since the early 1980s' (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010, 47). Globalization has flattened borders and boundaries, thus increasing access to various cultures. As globalization continues to break down invisible boundaries and diminishes borders, the need for becoming culturally competent employees and world citizens has become more prominent than ever. Many organizations based in USA have become transnational enterprises, thus increasing the importance of cultural competence in terms of international relations and organizational development. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) noted that, '...unintended conflicts often arise during intercultural encounters...which happen although nobody wants them and all suffer from them' (208). To improve international relations, it is extremely important that organizations understand how culture affects their interpretation of the world and social norms. To make a business case for diversity, it is first essential to acknowledge that all cultures are different. Cultures embody various aspects and no two cultures are alike. Organizations that fall into the

mainstream of what might be socially acceptable for their country might fall outside of the acceptable bounds of social normalities within other cultures.

Diversity within any organization setting is essential to promoting creativity, culture awareness, profitability, etc. (McLeod, Lobel, and Cox 1996). Homogenous groups of individuals typically do not challenge or critique conventional ideas of others, thus resulting in lack of differentiated opinions that can affect the bottom line of any business. While diversity practices are essential, it is important to note that individuals should be developed based on their merit rather than the stereotypical gender roles that they might embody, as Adler (Karsten 2006) states, ‘As we have always known, but perhaps conveniently forgotten in other eras, our task is to seek out and grow the types of leaders our time in history requires, not to inequitably prejudice either men or women as a ready-made, guaranteed solution.’

Impact on human resource development

The findings of this study have implications for HRD research and practice. As noted above, there are clear implications for stereotypes and diversity; but there are also practical implications with regard to organizational culture development, mentoring, succession planning and more. Since our findings regarding women in leadership positions are consistent with earlier US-based research, we echo previous calls for leadership development for women, for succession planning to target moving women into senior positions, and for culture change initiatives to create less oppressive work environments for women.

Our study, however, also noted the prevalence of for-profit organizations in masculine countries and nonprofits in feminine countries. This has implications for research in particular. From a national HRD perspective, it would be important to identify if this pattern persists in a broader sample from more countries to determine the possible role of HRD in facilitating balance or growth in desired sectors.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research reinforced earlier findings regarding gendered leadership found in USA. Women were more likely to hold leadership positions within nonprofit organizations. Yet a country’s cultural classification as ‘feminine’ did not predict a higher level of women in executive leadership positions. Instead, the findings showed that feminine countries were more likely to have more nonprofit organizations and masculine countries were more likely to have more for-profit organizations.

This study scratches the surface of a global issue that could be further examined to better understand the positionality of women in global leadership. As addressed by Rosener (1999), ‘Nontraditional leadership style can be effective in organizations that accept it’ (9). While many organizations are creating initiatives to increase gender leadership representation within the workplaces, we contend that the leadership status of women within organizations (nonprofit and for-profit) worldwide is a worthwhile topic to further analyse, follow and understand. Additionally, from a country level, the findings associated with the ratio of for-profit and nonprofit organizations by country classification (e.g. masculine vs. feminine) is a topic for further exploration.

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