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EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP STYLE, TEAMWORK AND LEARNING PREFERENCES – A CASE FROM A UNIVERSITY IN CHINA

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This study explores the effects of Chinese transformational leaders' preference in teamwork, and creative learning activities and leadership style. Three types of leadership styles, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, were measured using Bass and Avolio's (2004) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Student participants were questioned on their preferences of teamwork based on their leadership styles and the type of teaching styles that they preferred. Data analyses indicated that while behaviors associated with transformational leadership motivated followers, the results did not significantly relate to a leader's propensity to support teamwork. In addition, creative learning activities were not preferred by participants who experienced laissez-faire leader behavior. The conclusion suggests that the Chinese university has yet to develop transformation leadership education and creative learning might not be the immediate answer for education improvement in China.

INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates the influences of Chinese student leadership style in individual learning on team building. Teamwork has been viewed as an important tool in university education and many universities include teamwork to develop students' interpersonal skills. Bucic, Robinson & Ramburuth (2010) explore the effect of leadership style of a team leader on team-member learning in organizations, they assert that the leadership style of a team leader affects team cohesion, perceptions of learning, and learning-related performance within the team. They concluded that more research is necessary to examine the leadership styles and their impact on subordinates and on team-level learning and performance outcomes. Bucic et al (2010) posit there is a cascading effect of leadership style on the lower levels of employees; therefore, management can adjust their leadership styles to achieve organizational goals. They recommend that further study of leadership and leadership styles on team learning is essential to better understand the dynamics of team's effectiveness. Indeed, more work is necessary to promote effective team management education (Holt & Willard-Holt, 2000). This paper is built on the prior research to explore the effect of leaders' role on a team for Chinese learners.

Different techniques are introduced to address team learning. For example, problem-based learning method, originally developed in medical schools, is commonly used in business education. The focus of this method is to learn through the process of solving a particular problem (Sherwood 2004). While a team based approach is another commonly used method in classrooms and is designed to develop an effective team with specific instructions to solve a particular problem (Fink 2002). Goltz et al. (2008) assert that an integrated model of both teaching methods is effective in team building and argue that recognition of individual differences is an important process of team building education. Thamhain (2004) further suggests that

team leadership is an essential factor to have an effective team and an effective team leader can satisfy team member's personal and professional needs. However, O'Connor and Yballe (2007) posit that team projects are undercut by student culture; self and group leadership are essential in team building but there is more work to be done to improve students' team competencies and attitudes.

TRANSFORMATIONAL VERSUS TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLES

Transactional leadership is based on a reward system in which the desired behaviors of followers result in promotions as well as increases in salaries and benefits, while undesirable behaviors are punished by pay cuts, demotions, and terminations. This implies that transactional leaders do not seek to motivate followers because, under their leadership, followers' objectives are to avoid punishment or gain extrinsic rewards. Since transactional leadership is conditioned by an employee's level of fear or desire and tends to result in a decrease in employee performance and satisfaction (Bass 1997). On the other hand, a transformational leadership is a style in which a leader provides inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration towards followers to accomplish goals (Avolio and Bass 2004). Followers under transformational leadership can achieve higher level needs that produce higher level follower satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment in individuals (Bass, 2000; Bryman, 1992) and teams (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Indeed, Fernandes and Awamleh (2004) found that transformational leadership has a strong affect on job satisfaction.

Prior research suggests that transformational behaviors are inclusive in transactional leadership styles and may be used to maximize leadership effectiveness; thus, allowing both leadership styles to be used in conjunction with one another. Transformational leadership is not, however, a

substitution for the transactional leadership style (Avolio, Waldman, & Einstein, 1988; Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1989). Rather, it builds upon and augments transactional leadership in achieving the desired goals (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Bass (1995) asserts that contingent rewards and management-by-exception are the two components of transactional leadership. The first component: contingent rewards, emphasizes task completion that is based on an expected reward or sanction system; and the second component: management-by-exception, is utilized when a leader takes action only when there is a major deviation from expectations. Nevertheless, trust can also be developed between transactional leaders and followers if rewards are consistently delivered as promised (Bass, 1985).

According to Bass & Avolio, (1990), transformational leadership is comprised of four central components: charisma, inspiration, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Charisma or idealized influence is the most important component of transformational leadership, whereby leaders earn the trust and respect of followers who are excited about the vision and personally motivated to complete the tasks as assigned. The second transformational component, inspiration, is focused on leaders sharing and promoting their vision with optimism and enthusiasm. The third component of transformational leadership is individualized consideration, in which the leaders identify individual followers' needs and abilities, mentoring them with personal attention. Finally, through intellectual stimulation, the leader encourages creativity, innovation, and challenges conventional wisdom, teaching followers to think on their own and analyze problems from their own personal perspective.

Prior research suggests that transformational leaders have the characteristic to develop trust and to earn trust from their followers by demonstrating competence, benevolence and integrity, and trust, being an integral attribute of a transformational leader (Bass 1997; Sendjaya, 2005; Casimir et al. 2006;). Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fette (1990) found transformational leaders are better than transactional leaders in developing follower trust.

Team collaboration is common in today's business setting. An effective leader should be able to motivate team members to achieve common goals (Bass 1997). Yang et al (2010) posit that transformational leaders consider mainly on individual member followers, but the influences can cascade

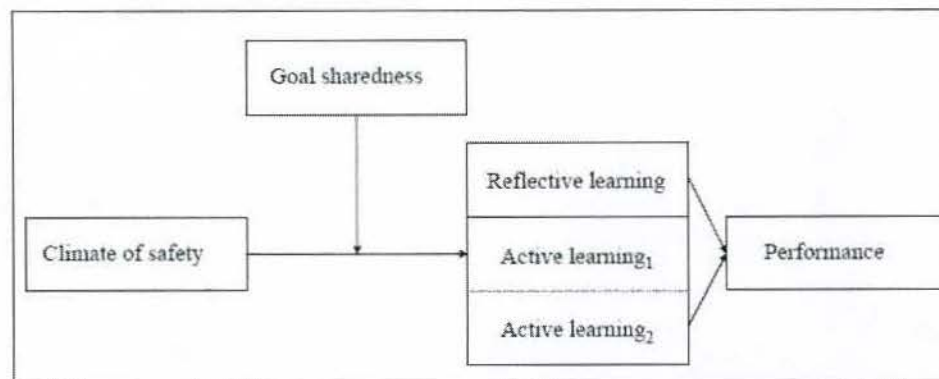
to the team. Tjosvold, Tang, & West (2004) suggest that shared vision and reflexivity are complementary foundations for team success. Rajagopal (2006) asserts that an effective team is governed by factors such as, common feeling, motivation, commitment, and collaborative attitude. Arnold, Barling, & Kelloway (2001) assert that transformational leadership in a team is an effective way to develop trust and commitment among members so as to improve the efficacy of a team. Hsu and Mujtaba (2007) have similar findings. They studied the relationship among team transformational leadership, team trust, job satisfaction, and team commitment in software development teams in the United States of America. They found that team transformational leadership is strongly and positively correlated to team empowerment and trust in software development teams. The authors suggest that a similar study can be done in other countries to explore differences in findings. Wang & Xi (2007) also found that a trusted leader is an important mediator of the effects of transformational leadership on performance. Trust within a team can improve team effectiveness due to better synergy, information sharing, and also reduces conflict among team members (Costa et al. 2001, Curseu & Schrujjer 2007). Finally, the effectiveness of a team can improve financial performance of a firm (Johnston et al. 2007, Jandaghi et al. 2008). Ellis et al., (2003) posit that individual characteristics such as personality and cognitive behavior can influence functional team process.

TEAM LEARNING

Edmondson et al. (2007), summarizes three different approaches toward team learning: the first approach is "learning curve research at the group level", that is., the team learns from its experiences. The second approach is "task mastery", where the team comes together and develops solution for the task base on collective knowledge. The third approach is the "learning as group process", whereby a team exhibits reflective and/or active learning behaviors. Reflective learning is a precondition of active learning. The Figure illustrates this relationship. However, a team can have neither reflective nor active learning behavior, and a team can be reflective but not actively learning. Herre (2010) suggest that further research should explore the learning behaviors of teams.

FIGURE

Model on Team Learning Behavior (Herre, 2010, p. 106)



Herre (2010) surveyed 187 employees of 27 teams and found that transformational leaders have positive effect on individual group members but this positive feeling does not necessarily cascade into the entire team. Although transformational leadership is a person-oriented leadership style, the concept does not explicitly include the team aspect or prescribes leadership behaviors that address team processes. Black et al. (2006) suggest that both leaders and members are important in developing strategic organizational resources and competencies; thus, specific leadership styles can either expedite or be relatively ineffective for promoting team learning

relationship between leadership styles and marketing practices, found that transformational and transactional leadership styles has a positive association with different marketing practices, but passive/avoidant leadership has no effect on marketing practices. The authors suggest managers should maintain those marketing programs that match managers' leadership. Hendel et al. (2005) found transformational leaders make compromises during conflict management. However, there is limited research on different leadership styles and learning preferences. This investigation seeks to bridge the research gap.

LEARNING STYLES AND LEADERSHIP

Business education researchers recognize the importance of learning styles. There is a large body of knowledge in teaching and learning styles. For example, Felder and Silverman (1988) assert that different teaching methods are necessary to engage students in class; mismatches will cause poor student performance and professor frustrations. The authors posit that certain teaching methods are applicable to most students, such as motivate learning, student encouragement, small group learning and balanced theory with concrete information.

A popular approach to understand individual learning styles is Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which classifies individuals using four scales: 1) Extroversion, 2) Sensing/Intuition, 3) Thinking/Feeling and 4) Judging/Perceiving to explore personality preferences (Myers 1987). Grasha (1996) identified independent, dependent, collaborative, avoidant, facilitative and competitive as possible learning styles. Dunn et al. (1995) concluded, after reviewing forty-two different experimental studies conducted by thirty-six different researchers, that student learning experiences can be enhanced when the teaching methods are compatible with learning preferences of the students. Lindgreen et al. (2009) studied the

LEADERSHIP IN CHINA

Chhokar et al. (2007) report that people in China endorse strong charismatic and team-oriented leadership; the authors suggest that Confucian ideology has also greatly influenced Chinese civilization. For example, treating others the way one wants to be treated is a virtue widely respected in Chinese society, this is similar to other religion believes. The authors report that people in China are collectivistic, emphasizing group/family ties as the most important aspect in society, which is consistent to the findings by Hofstede (2001). However, not all groups within a person's community are treated equally. Blackman (1997) asserts that people in China only feel obligated to those who are in-group members, such as family, neighbors, classmates and co-workers, but not necessarily to anyone outside of the in-group. Therefore, trusting relationships are mainly prevalent among in-group members (Mente 1994).

Hofstede (2001) classifies the Chinese culture as high power distance, which is one that values formal status and tolerates power inequalities. In this type of culture, the larger the power distance, the more autocratic the relationship. The people of China learn from a young age to accept authority and follow orders from those higher in power. These values are stressed by members of the family and society, who demand compliance, respect, and obedience from children at

an early age (Christie et al., 2003; Hong, 2004; Liu, 2003; Yang, 2006).

According to Yan and Hunt (2005), leadership effectiveness in collectivistic and high power distance cultures are measured by social norms and leaders tend to support social traditions, harmony, and equality. Changes in rules in a work place, such as equality improvement, individual recognition, and outcome orientation would be viewed as ineffective because individuals are not accustomed to having control and this would violate social norms. Studies have shown that Chinese managers tend to be autocratic decision-makers and enterprises are rule-oriented (Hofstede, 2001; Yang, 2006).

Cullen, Sakano and Tekenouchi (1996) find that individuals in Japan may behave differently when interacting with their out-group compared to individuals in Western countries, signifying a difference in behaviors in different cultures. Prior leadership theory studies also suggest that what works in one culture may not be applicable in another culture (Dorfman 1996, House et al. 1999).

Autocratic leaders expect everyone to "follow the rules." They do not favor employee empowerment as it may threaten their own status and power in an organization (Liker 2004). Liu (2003) suggests that bureaucracy within Chinese state-owned enterprises is so strong that simple decision-making is passed upwards through multiple levels of management. Hofstede (2001) explained that the more autocratic is a manager, the less subordinates would reject her or his direction. However, autocratic leadership does not translate into trust. In fact, research finds autocratic leadership behaviors correlate positively with the level of dissatisfaction of followers due to lack of trust in their leaders (Doney, Cannon, & Mullen, 1998). Lau, Liu & Fu (2007) reports that autocratic leadership is the least preferred leadership style because, though there may be compliance, there is no commitment. For example, Chinese managers may believe subordinates can do a task, but leaders do not necessarily trust their subordinates to be responsible for the task (Wang & Clegg 2002).

Being the third largest economy in the world (China Daily 2007), China has been exposed to Western philosophy. Many decade-long economic reforms have expanded Chinese employees' definition of a successful leader. While traditional values continue to be highly respected in China, Western ideologies are now acceptable. For instance, individual contributions now routinely are acknowledged and rewarded (Chhokar 2007). Most business case studies, developed after 1999 and used in MBA programs in China, are CEO-centered, which is a departure from traditional Chinese culture (Liang & Lin 2008). Furthermore, the Chinese government requires at least 30 percent of executive MBA courses be taught by visiting faculty from the United States. Therefore, Chinese leaders are influenced by Western education and philosophy. For example, Sofo (2005) examined nearly 300 Chinese educational and business leaders' thinking styles and

suggested that Chinese business leaders were just as creative and independent as Western leaders. On the other hand, the Chinese education leaders scored themselves to be more comfortable with accepting rules and decisions without question, while Chinese business leaders preferred to be more exploratory in searching for solutions. This result suggests that business leaders in China have adapted the more creative Western style for problem solving, and yet the educators in China have not caught up with the change in modern China.

CHINESE LEARNING PREFERENCES

There are conflicting research results for Chinese students learning preferences. Chinese students are widely written as rote and passive learners. Choo (2007) suggests Western teaching style in business school is incompatible with Chinese students' learning styles and what they are experiencing in China. Chinese students have different learning styles than their western counterparts, and language barriers can influence their learning achievement. It appears that the student preference is changing. Zhang (2006) finds Chinese students prefer teaching styles that are creativity-generating and that allow collaborative work.

Humphreys, Jiao & Sadler (2010) investigated a question of preferred leadership styles of American and Chinese students. The research found the American students preferred transformational leadership while the Chinese sample considered passive leadership as more acceptable than the transformational leadership. Interesting to note that both American and Chinese students desire transformational leadership over passive behaviors, but the Chinese students are much more willing to accept truly disengaged leaders. Ho (2010) found that Chinese students prefer Chinese professors over American professors even the students perceive American professors are better qualified. This raised a question of what leadership style is preferred in China culture.

HYPOTHESES

Chinese culture is classified as high power distance; therefore, people in China are transactional leaders who have two leadership dimensions: contingent rewards and management-by-exception. Walumbwa et al (2004) suggest that Chinese doesn't commonly practice transformational leadership, however, the Chinese moral and benevolent leadership techniques are very similar to the transformational leadership methods that emphasize inspiration and individual considerations. Bor-Shiuan et al (2004) conclude that Chinese employ paternalistic leadership that involves authority, control and image building, which is different from Western transformational leadership styles. The research results are not conclusive. Therefore,

Hypothesis 1: Chinese students are more likely to exhibit transactional leader traits than transformational leader traits.

Prior research suggests that transformational leaders have the ability to obtain trust from followers and motivate them as a team. Bucic, Robinson & Ramburuth (2010) conclude that leadership styles are important to team level learning and transactional leadership style leaders invite feedback learning. However, there is scant literature as to whether transformational leaders prefer teamwork themselves. Therefore, the next hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2: Chinese students who have a transformational trait are more likely to prefer an assignment requiring teamwork than individual assignment.

Transformational leaders inspire other people therefore they are posited to prefer active and reflective teaching styles. The research results for the learning style preference of Chinese students have been mixed (Choo 2007, Zhang 2006). Further, there is a limited research on the learning preferences of Chinese with transformational leader traits. The third research question is to explore if transformation leaders prefer active learning.

Hypothesis 3: Chinese students who exhibit transformational leadership traits are more likely to prefer active teaching styles than they are to prefer other teaching styles. Chinese students who have a transformational leadership trait prefer teaching methods that are more of an active style.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in a comprehensive regional university in China. The university cooperates with foreign universities through the College of International Cooperation to offer bachelor degrees in the degree completion format where 75% of the course credit hours are accepted for transfer to an American university through the articulation agreement between the two universities. Students enrolled in the program must attend at least ten classes (or 25 % of their course credit hours) through an American university. These

classes were taught by American instructors from the partner university. The students in this study enroll in the joint venture program and have at least six classes from the partner university when taking the survey.

One hundred twenty students from three different business major classes participated in this study. The students were given a questionnaire that was divided into three parts: to assess the students' perception of local versus overseas instruction methods (part 1), students' preference of overseas instructors' teaching methods versus teaching methods of local instructors (part 2), and students' perception of teaching effectiveness of local or overseas instructors (part 3).

The survey instrument also requested information on demographics and a listing of active classroom activities, such as motive learning, multiple teaching methods, balance of concrete information and abstract concepts, teamwork opportunity, and applaud creative solutions (Felder and Silverman 1988). The students also were administered the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to measure their leadership characteristic. The survey questionnaire and the MLQ instrument were translated into Chinese by local bilingual English instructors. Most of the items in the attitude assessment were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, from never (0) to always (4). Specific yes and no answers were requested when students were asked to choose between overseas instructors and local instructors.

Bass (1985) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to measure the components of transformational and transactional leaderships. Since its development, the MLQ has received extensive evidence of its reliability and validity and is commonly used in leadership research (Bryman, 1992; Bass & Avolio, 1997). The MLQ assesses the leadership behaviors that motivate followers to achieve desired goals and focuses on individual behaviors as perceived by followers. Although MLQ 5X is commonly used in business environment, the instrument has also been used in academic settings to measure the leadership styles of students. (Pounder 2008, Walumbwa & Ojode 2000, Salter et al, 2010).

Felder and Silverman (1988) suggest certain classroom activities can promote active learning and applicable to all learners. These teaching techniques in table 1 address the needs of all, including Chinese learners and are used in this investigation as active learning activities stated in Table 4.

TABLE 1

Teaching Activities That Can Help All Students

Teaching Activities	Teaching Styles
Motivate Learning	Organization
Provide a balance of concrete information	Content
Balance material that emphasizes practical problem-solving methods with materials that emphasizes fundamental understanding	Content
Provide explicit illustrations of intuitive and sensing patterns, and encourage all students to exercise both patterns	Content, student participation
Provide concrete examples of the phenomena the theory describes or predicts and present applications	Content, student participation
Use pictures, schematics, graphs and simple sketches liberally before, during and after the presentation of verbal material. Provide demonstrations and hands-on, if possible.	Presentation, student participation
Use computer-assisted instruction	Content, student participation
Don't lecture extensive in class, provide time for students to digest the material	Student participation
Classroom activities, such as group discussion	Student participation
Exercises drills in class and provide open-ended problems for class discussion.	Perspective
Team assignments	Student participation
Recognize creative answers, including incorrect ones.	Perspective
Know student's learning styles and apply teaching methods according to student's need	Perspective

Source: Felder and Silverman, 1988

DATA ANALYSIS

More than one third of the respondents were under age 22 and the remaining were between 22 and 25 of age; 53% were males and 47% were females. About 45% of the students were in their junior year of college, 26% were

sophomores, and 29% were seniors. The sample result is summarized in Table 2. All mean scores are lower than the composited mean scores as presented by MLQ 5X technical manual (Avolio, & Bass, 2004) except for, Management-by-Exception (passive) and (active), factors.

TABLE 2

Summary of Transformation and Transactional Leadership Scores (N=120)

	Sample Mean	Std Deviation	Technical Manual Mean
Contingent Reward	2.38	0.66	2.87
Management-by-Exception (passive)	1.60	0.64	1.03
Management-by-Exception (active)	1.76	0.58	1.67
Effectiveness	2.22	0.64	2.74
Satisfaction	2.36	0.76	3.08
Extra Effort	2.17	0.82	3.07
Intellectual Stimulation	2.23	0.69	2.78
Idealized influence (behavior)	2.00	0.60	2.77
Inspirational Motivation	2.44	0.66	2.78
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	1.96	0.61	2.94
Individualized Consideration	2.23	0.61	2.85
Laissez-faire	1.20	0.63	0.65

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS AND ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF HYPOTHESES

The sample had mean scores for the transactional leader behaviors of contingent reward, management-by-exception (active), and management-by-exception (passive) of 2.38, 1.60, and 1.76, respectively. Avolio and Bass (2004) reported corresponding composite means of 2.87, 1.03, and 1.67. Two out of three transactional leader behaviors are above the norm while contingent reward behavior is below. This might suggest that the current sample of individuals tends to have transactional leader behaviors more than the norm. The mean laissez-faire leader behavior sample scores is 1.2, which is almost twice as the reported composite mean. This could suggest that the current sample exhibits non-leadership to a greater degree than the norm. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected.

To test the second hypothesis, participants' Idealized Influence Attribute scores were used if their scores were the

same or more than the composite mean of the MLQ manual. According to Avolio, & Bass, (2004) the Idealized Influence Attribute factor includes acting in ways to earn trust from followers and displaying a sense of power and confidence. Therefore, the higher the Idealized Influence Attribute score, the higher level of the trust characteristic. The Pearson correlation is a measure of the strength and direction of association that exists between two variables. Pearson correlation is used to test the two variables which are individual leadership traits and teamwork preference. Inter-correlations among the leader behaviors and teamwork preference are presented in Table 3. As shown in table 3, students with transaction leadership behavior - Contingent Reward preferred teamwork while students with Management-by-exception and Laissez-faire had a negative preference of teamwork. The students who have transformational leadership traits do not have statistical correlation with teamwork opportunities. Therefore, the second hypothesis is not supported.

TABLE 3

Pearson Correlations Among Leadership Factors and Teamwork (N=120)

	Team Work Opportunity
Contingent Reward	0.21(*)
Management-by-Exception (passive)	-0.17
Management-by-Exception (active)	-0.19(*)
Effectiveness	0.12
Satisfaction	0.06
Extra Effort	-0.11
Intellectual Stimulation	0.11
Idealized Influence (behavior)	-0.001
Inspirational Motivation	0.13
Idealized Influence (Attributed)	-0.04
Individualized Consideration	0.05
Laissez-faire	-0.28(**)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

The last hypothesis concerned whether Chinese transformational leaders prefer active learning. A Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the correlation among Idealized Influence behaviors (attribute and behavior), and the active learning activities that were ranked according to their preferences. The active learning activities are derived from Felder and Silverman (1988). The summary

matrix is shown in Table 4. The result did not find any statistical significant correlation between active learning and transformational leader trait. The Laissez-faire leadership trait has a statistical significantly negative correlation with Teamwork Opportunity and Applaud Creative Solutions activities.

TABLE 4

**Pearson Correlation Coefficients between
Activities Learning Activities and Leadership Traits (N=120)**

	Idealized Influence (Attributed)
Expertise in subject matter	0.039
Professionalism	0.05
Real world experiences	-0.041
Care towards students	0.055
Willingness to help	0.046
Availability for students	-0.07
Motivate learning	0.032
Multiple Teaching methods	0.034
Demonstration of learning material	0.166
Learning materials and handouts	0.141
Balance of concrete information and concept	0.018
Balance material that emphasizes practical problem-solving method	0.031
Use multi-media visual aids and handouts	-0.064
Not lecturing and write all the time, but to provide time for students	-0.03
Team work opportunity	-0.044
Applaud creative solutions	0.054
Talk to students	-0.101
Constructive feedback	-0.05
Idealized influence (behavior)	0.256(**)
Laissez-faire -	0.004

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

DISCUSSION

This study found that the participants exhibited higher levels of non-leadership traits, which might be due to their young age and level of education. Wang & Clegg (2007) found that age and level of formal education are moderate factors in the development of trust in Chinese followers. Sivasubramaniam, et al. (2002) found groups that started out as laissez-faire will have group performance become worse over time having a negative impact on both team potency and performance. On the other hand, teams with transformational leaders tend to perform better over time. The authors conclude that external supervision to provide direction and structure at the start of a work project can develop team leadership potential. Goltz et al (2008) found coaching of students to resolve conflicts and encouraging open communication are keys to success of a team. Therefore, the authors suggest that self-analysis by the group can be challenging but it is an effective tool in team building with team members becoming more confident in themselves and the team over time.

O'Connor and Yballe (2007) recommend that students need to learn about themselves and leadership to accomplish team goals effectively. The start-up phase of a project is

important in team building. This study confirms that when forming a new group, professors should understand the needs of students, their cultures and assign them into groups that group members can work together successfully. Avolio & Bass (2004) suggest that leadership behavior can be changed and further developed into transformational leadership behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to train Chinese students at an early age to develop higher leadership skills in college. Examples of instilling transformational leadership behavior are to focus the training on staying aware of other members' needs, building effective communication within a team, and participating in creative thinking.

Participants, who have transformational traits, did not prefer teamwork in this study. Avolio & Bass (1995) suggest that transformational leaders can be trusted by followers, however, that does not necessarily mean leaders actually prefer teamwork and trust the members of their team. This supports the finding of Wang & Clegg (2002) who also stated that Chinese leaders might not trust their team members to complete assigned tasks. Hofstede (2001) additionally asserts that although Chinese society is collectivistic team-oriented, people may not necessarily trust their own team members. Kuo (2004) argues that leadership

styles, team social capital structures, team diversity and team member commitment have impacts on team effectiveness; therefore, team leader behavior is crucial to a success of team. This study supports the finding that Chinese leaders do not trust members of an out-group (Blackman 1997, Mente 1994). On the other hand, the participants, who exhibit a much higher level of non-leadership trait than the norm, have a negative correlation with teamwork preference. This may indicate that the participants who display non-leadership traits are looking for leaders to guide them. Latour and Rast (2004) argue that effective leaders must have followers who have competencies in specific skills, and must put in place training programs to advance critical thinking of followers. This might help to explain why the participants who have the transformation leadership traits do not prefer teamwork because they might not trust the abilities of other participants who have the non-leadership traits.

This study did not find any correlation between participants' leadership behaviors and active learning activities. It is widely addressed that Chinese students are rote and passive learners. Their learning styles, attitudes towards teachers, lectures materials, language barriers, family influence, and social attitude toward failure are much different from the Western learners (Watkins 2000, Biggs 1994). Redding (1990) summarized that people in China have five characteristics in their thinking and learning behavior: a focus on perception of the concrete, non-development of abstract thought, emphasis on specifics, central focus, and a desire for harmony. It is important for educators to lead their Chinese students to move away from passive toward active learning, which is an important attribute of a transformational leader

LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations of this study. First, it is common that the external validity in this type of research might be restricted since the students were from a single university in China and the findings should not be generalized for the broader population. To improve the external validity, Chinese students from different universities and workplaces could be recruited in future research. In addition, the number of transformational trait students in this sample was very limited; therefore, future studies should have a larger sample of students to include more transformational trait students. Further, not all students have taken the leadership class as offered by the program, and most students have limited leadership experiences other than working in team works in classes. The students are third year business students who are developing leadership skills and therefore, their leadership attribute might be different from adults. However, Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, (2006) indicate that youth, including adolescents do possess a perspective on leadership.

CONCLUSIONS

There are several conclusions from this study. First, the study found that some Chinese students might lack of leadership training and their cultures could have a negative influence on their team. One implication of this finding is that educators should consider students cultures as well as learning and leadership styles while forming teams to avoid frustrations among the team members. Secondly, trust is an important attribute in all cultures, especially between leaders and followers. Because trust is a two-way street, the leader relying on the follower to carry out an action and the follower relying on the leader's direction, both individuals need to learn to work in a way that is effective. In understanding the differences of cultures between China and the Western world, we may better address weaknesses in working relationships that can be strengthened through understanding leadership and learning styles. Finally, educators should understand that Chinese students might have a different learning style from the American students; therefore, different teaching approach to the Chinese students might be necessary.

Welsh-Huggins (2008) reported that international students at U.S. universities are at an all-time high of 624,000; and 55 percent surveyed universities reported increases in students from China, the most from any country. New York Times (2012) reported that foreign students contributed US\$21 billion a year to the national economy, and some universities; for example, University of Pennsylvania has 15% of new students are from other countries and Chinese nationals make up 11% of University of Washington's first year class. It is likely that management educators would have students from China in classes, student cultures and leadership styles should be considered when assigning students into teams.

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