

Women's Leadership Development Training for [Program]

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Issue Statement

Hoyt and Kennedy (2008) asserted that women deal with messages related to appearance, behavior, and leadership identity that promote a loss of voice starting at a young age. More specifically, these societal messages and expectations convey constructs of effective leadership that are often associated with men (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). In a meta-analysis on leadership perceptions, men were perceived as more agentic and women were perceived as more communal. Further, agentic qualities were perceived to be leadership qualities and communal qualities were not (Koenig et al., 2011). While these perceptions of “think manager, think male” (Schein, 2001) have evolved, women still hold only 29% of executive or senior level positions among private industry (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2012), which is disproportional to the general population. What underlies the problem of disproportional representation among women leaders is that women are judged differently as leaders. Progress has been made, but overall discrimination for women leaders still exists (Duehr & Bono, 2006; Eagly, 2007; Schein, 2001).

Role Congruity Theory (RCT) explains that women are preemptively discriminated against for leadership positions because they are not perceived to hold the necessary masculine qualities. Further, when they exhibit leadership qualities that are typical of men, they are viewed negatively because they are not acting feminine (Eagly & Karau, 2002). However, when women do not tailor their leadership to fit a gendered standard, but instead exhibit leadership qualities that are considered androgynous in nature, they are viewed more favorably and authentically (Tzinerr & Barsheshet-Picke, 2014). Since messages and expectations that undermine the authentic leadership voice of females are presented at an early age, leadership development for young females is imperative.

[Program] is a volunteer non-profit camp that empowers young girls and teens through music. The community volunteers, who serve as counselors and role models, are charged with upholding and supporting the camp's mission of empowerment or finding one's authentic voice through creative expression. Due to the volunteers' various levels of experience with leading and mentoring youth, training was conducted. We hypothesized that a well-structured leadership development training would provide the volunteer mentors with the knowledge and skills on how

to use their authentic voice and realize their ability to enact change, thus encouraging the same in the campers.

Review of Related Scholarship

Gendered Leadership. The aforementioned disparity among female and men leaders is associated with discrimination of women as leaders. The first discriminatory process of RCT, which is descriptive, precedes the leader selection for stereotypically masculine leadership roles. The leader role requires a masculine leadership style; however, women are not thought to possess a masculine leadership style. Thus, women are pre-emptively discriminated against for common leadership positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Indeed, in a simulated hiring pool, hiring managers preferred male candidates over female candidates even when qualities were identical and leadership experience was unlisted (Bosak & Sczesny, 2011). Some argue that this bias is demonstrated through the over-emphasis of weaknesses in female candidates during the evaluation process to avoid hiring (Singh, Nadim, & Ezzedeen, 2012).

The second discriminatory process is prescriptive. In male-dominated industries, women are expected to lead using the masculine leadership standard (Van Engen, Leeden, & Willemsen, 2001). However, when women exhibit masculine leadership, their behavior is viewed as a violation of the feminine behavioral stereotype leading to a negative evaluation (Eagly & Karau, 2002). When perceived gender and role are congruent, performance and evaluations are improved (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Therefore, a traditional feminine role can lead to role congruence and positive evaluations for women (Eagly, 2007).

Conversely, masculine leadership styles for women can be seen as inauthentic and lead to a greater negative evaluation (Tzinerr & Barsheshet-Picke, 2014). Given the stigma of women leading due to gender incongruence, women may intentionally alter their behavior to avoid leading in stereotypically masculine settings or ways (Eagly, 2007; Van Engen et al., 2001). It is essential that women can acknowledge and validate both masculine and feminine leadership qualities, as actual leadership occurs along a continuum (Yoder, 2001). Androgyny may confer an advantage (Rosette & Tost, 2010) because it helps women manage the double discrimination by blending communal characteristics with corporate needs (Tzinerr & Barsheshet-Picke, 2014). Within an all-female sample, those who were more androgynous were perceived as leaders more often than those who were more feminine in both typically masculine and typically feminine tasks (Gershenoff & Foti, 2003), and subordinate women evaluated their managers better when they were androgynous and saw them as more authentic (Tzinerr & Barsheshet-Picke, 2014). The authors further suggest that feminine women who aspire to leadership should also adopt masculine qualities in order to be successful, further supporting RCT.

Androgynous Leadership as Transformational. Transformational leadership is a style of leading that develops trust, encourages collaboration and empowerment, and demonstrates confidence in a positive future through role modeling and mentoring (Bass, 1999). The transformational leadership style has four sub-themes: *idealized influence* or role modeling and promoting a futuristic vision and consistent values; *inspirational motivation* or the ability to inspire others, maintain optimism, and demonstrate confidence; *intellectual stimulation* or the ability to encourage reflection on problems in novel and creative ways and challenge individuals

to improve performance; and *individualized consideration* or exhibiting feelings and personal attention for the needs of others as it relates to developing their skills and obtaining their aspirations (Bass, 1999; Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996). Although transformational leadership has elements of feminine leadership, it is more commonly held as androgynous (Carli & Eagly, 2011). Therefore, individuals who exhibit androgynous leadership traits are more likely to be transformational leaders (Gartzia & Van Engen, 2012). Additionally, females are more often perceived as transformational leaders than men (Bass et al., 1996; Eagly, Johannesen, & Van Engen, 2003; Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006; Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004).

One explanation of why transformational leadership is more common among women is because it incorporates relationships. Although a combination of agentic and communal qualities is advantageous to both men and women, a lack of androgyny leads to more unfavorable reviews for women leaders (Kark, Waismel-Manor, & Shamir, 2012). Transformational leadership encourages task completion while supporting the stereotypes of femininity, which in turn yields a higher-level of gender congruence (Eagly et al., 2003; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Van Engen & Willemsen 2004). Furthermore, among the specific sub-descriptions of transformational leadership, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation fit well with the female stereotype of nurturing (Van Engen, Van Der Leeden, & Willemsen, 2001). Conversely, inspirational motivation has been linked more to perceptions of men's leadership (Vinkenbunrg, Van Engen, Eagly, & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2011). Thus, it may be advantageous for women to combine inspirational motivation with the more gender congruent sub-descriptions of transformational leadership in order to meet the expectations of effective leadership (Vinkenbunrg et al., 2011).

Description of Application

An overarching goal of [Program] is to help young females find their authentic voice. Anderson and Kim (2009) stated that effective leadership development for youth must include experiences that “allow them to explore their interests, discover their authentic selves, develop autonomy, and increase their decision-making power in a steadily advancing and nonthreatening environment” (p. 18). To accomplish the aforementioned goal, volunteer mentors must have a sense of self as a leader and understand strategies for creating this progressive and safe space for the campers. To this end, the model for youth leadership development by Van Linden and Fertman (1998) and later expanded by Ricketts and Rudd (2002) was used.

While this framework was designed for adolescents, the original authors indicate it can be applied to adult learners. The expanded model identifies the stages of learning in leadership development: awareness, interaction, and integration. The first stage of *awareness* operates on the premise that learners have not actively thought about leadership concepts and works to educate them on leadership qualities and characteristics. The next stage of *interaction* is based on the assumption that learners begin to think of themselves as leaders, reflect on their qualities, and continue to learn more about leadership. The final stage of *integration* promotes synthesis of their learning and work to improve their leadership abilities. Further, the model indicated five dimensions of leadership development of which this training focused on *leadership information* and *leadership attitude* (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002). Additionally,

three outcomes were established to accomplish the goal of training the camp volunteers. They were:

1. Participants will be able to recognize and demonstrate both traditional and non-traditional leadership qualities;
2. Participants will feel empowered to self-identify as a leader and be able to assess their own qualities of leadership regardless of a position of authority; and
3. Participants will refine leadership skills and model strategies to be employed during camp.

The format of the training reflects a Socratic seminar. In line with feminist pedagogy, we aimed to mitigate power differentials between facilitator and participants through the use of social learning, which challenges the hierarchical knowledge transfer by making the participants the experts. We chose this feminist pedagogy for the single-sex participant group in order to promote a safe-space and facilitate learning by encouraging synthesis of life experiences and use of authentic voice (Foley, 2004). Another pedagogy we used to guide this training was appreciate pedagogy, which has been used to support leadership development by focusing on past positive experiences and projecting from those towards a positive future (Yballe & O'Connor, 2004). This pedagogical approach encourages participants to become energized, engaged, and positive about their futures (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000). We assert that the participants cannot be empowered by the training facilitator, but must actively choose to empower themselves, which for this training is operationally defined as identification of authentic voice (Bay-Cheng, Lewis, Stewart, & Malley, 2006) and development of an inclusive leadership definition (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008).

Guided by the literature, the use of an all-female environment is intentional to cultivate a safe space (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008) as it mitigates concerns related to male-domination (Foley, 2004). As participants arrived, they were given a "True Colors" assessment to fill out and score while they waited for the training to start in an effort to operationally define components of their personality that may impact how they interact with others. Due to time constraints, participants were given a packet of information on the personality profile to read at their leisure. The formal training began with a "Scream Circle" activity, an icebreaker that the volunteers do with campers. The training activity was prefaced with instructions that growing up, girls can often be told to be quiet and at camp, they are encouraged to use their voice. This is reinforced by a rule that campers are never to be told to be quiet, or to lower their voices. Each female is asked to take a turn and scream in a manner reflective of her personality, which provides the participant with an opportunity to practice using authentic voice (Bay-Cheng et al., 2006). When women feel comfortable and safe to express their opinions, share their experiences, and use their voice without retribution, it can lead to increased self-esteem and empowerment (Denner, Meyer, & Bean, 2005; Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008; Rorem & Bajaj, 2012).

The second activity called "Name that Leader!" asked participants to reflect on a leader and to write it on a notecard. They then wrote 3 qualities that define that person as a leader. Building on the individual reflection, participants were divided randomly into four small groups to discuss the leaders and the qualities they identified. Each group compiled a list of qualities on a flip chart to present to the entire group for discussion. This appreciative methodology was designed to challenge participants to think about whom they perceive as leaders and why in order

to raise awareness of leader models and the positive qualities they possess (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000). Each list of leadership qualities was posted around the room during the training to serve as a reminder of how they individually and collaboratively defined leadership. By creating a more inclusive leadership definition through interventions that transcend the traditional framework of leadership, more women will self-identify as a leader and become more empowered to possess greater confidence and assertiveness to lead (Conner & Strobel, 2007; Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008; Rorem & Bajaj, 2012).

Participants were then asked through a "Personal Leadership Discussion" to share with the large group a story of how they used leadership in the last 12-months. This activity served as an opportunity to connect qualities from the first exercise with positive personal stories, and allowed peer-to-peer education to augment learning (Foley, 2004; Yballe & O'Connor, 2004). Further, this activity allowed the more experienced participants to act as role models, which supports female leadership development (Latu, Mast, Lammers, & Bombari, 2013).

Case studies as an appreciative activity can help participants practice leadership through simulations and group discussions to foster change beyond the training context (Yballe & O'Connor, 2004). Accordingly, the group was randomly divided into four sub-groups and given one of four potential camp scenarios to work on. The leadership case studies focused on issues such as supporting creativity and voice, inclusivity, boundaries, accountability, and critical conversations. Within the small groups, participants discussed and came to a consensus on how they would handle the situation during camp. One representative then presented the scenario and their solution to the larger group. During the presentations, participants had an opportunity to respond by asking questions or providing other resolutions. As a final activity, each participant wrote a personal leadership mission statement on a notecard which they took with them to refer to in the future. As a debriefing activity, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences throughout the training and provide one word that summed up how they felt. Throughout the training, participants were asked to reflect and discuss leadership and their experiences in order to help them articulate who they are as leaders, thus encouraging a sense of empowerment (Foley, 2004; Mertens & Wilson, 2012).

Reflections of the Practitioner

The training went smoothly although there were minor tweaks to the schedule. Participants were engaged, asked questions, and contributed to the activities. They demonstrated interest in others' experiences and willingly shared their own experiences as part of the Socratic approach to learning. Overall, the training appeared to shift awareness, encourage authentic voice, help them identify, develop, and demonstrate leadership skills, and to assist them in preparation for their volunteer roles. A majority of participants indicated their opinions of leadership changed as a result of the training, and that they had learned something about themselves as leaders.

The feedback from the participants indicated some change in leadership recognition and awareness. Through a social learning model, participants were able to broaden their definition of leadership and included more non-traditional transformational qualities within the leadership concepts. At the beginning, the majority of the participants identified leaders in authority

positions. However, as the training progressed, multiple participants indicated that they had learned that they could demonstrate leadership skills without needing to lead a group, reflecting a sense of empowerment to self-identify as a leader regardless of an authority position. Further, the transformational leadership qualities identified during the small-group discussions were demonstrated and modeled during the case studies, which simulated situations during camp.

Finally, participants described leadership qualities they planned to use during camp and then within the next year to two. Participants planned to use more feminine and transformational leadership qualities during camp, indicating a thought for the need to support and encourage the campers. However, participants overwhelmingly reported their plan to also use more masculine leadership qualities in the immediate future, indicating some thought to situational adaptation of leadership skills, and a recognition of both traditional and non-traditional leadership qualities.

Recommendations

The first outcome of this training only sought to facilitate an increase in awareness for recognition of traditional and non-traditional leadership, but given the participants' experiences using and practicing transformational leadership, it would be beneficial to revise the first objective to include androgynous leadership and to modify traditional and non-traditional to masculine and feminine. Inclusion of androgyny is especially interesting given the linkages to effectiveness and authenticity for women leaders. In conjunction with objective 1 revision, we recommend that the training include a discussion on gender stereotypes as an effective way to incorporate the intersectionality of gender and leadership. However, keeping in mind the Socratic approach, we caution against the facilitator directing the discussion on gender stereotypes, but facilitating it in a way that allows the concept to emerge from the participants' discussion. An open-ended question about societal perceptions of leadership related to their constructed list of leadership qualities may be the gentle prompt needed to encourage this discussion if it does not naturally emerge.

Due to the success of social learning and the effectiveness of more seasoned volunteers sharing their experiences, we recommend that the training remain participatory and the inclusion of participants with varied backgrounds continue. Many of the more experienced participants exhibited a transformational style, and provided examples of its effectiveness when leading in various situations. We in turn saw leadership qualities associated with transformational leadership demonstrated during the case studies. They also emerged as desirable for use in the immediate future by the majority of the group. Since the transformational leadership style can be taught (Bass, 1991), we recommend that it is included in the training.

Some of the participants indicated that the case studies were the most effective activity, and a few participants indicated a need for revised cases. We recommend that content-specific case studies be used to further help participants refine leadership skills and model strategies for camp. For example, scenarios from previous camps can be used. Additionally, given how participants planned to use different styles of leadership for camp and post camp, we recommend that the training incorporate various contexts for participants to reflect, discuss, practice, and plan for leadership in different situations. Additionally, we recommend considering the addition of an objective that seeks to address participants' reflection and understanding of leadership

adaptation. Due to time constraints, the personal leadership discussion was modified to include only a large group discussion and a short debriefing. We suggest that future trainings look at ways to extend time allotted to group discussion to provide more meaningful reflection and synthesis. Finally, to provide empirical evidence on the reliability of this approach to women's leadership development, we recommend replication of the training with an evaluative research component.

Conclusion

Many community leadership development programs are focused on networking rather than development (Porr, 2011). However, this leadership training was designed to prepare women volunteers to lead during a single-gender youth camp and tailored specifically to target the societal messages believed to disempower women. While trainings cannot change how women are evaluated as leaders, it can attempt to affect how women choose to lead. We believe that this form of training can encourage participants to develop an authentic leadership style that is more androgynous instead of gendered to either masculine (traditional) or feminine (non-traditional). Additionally, we believe that when trained volunteers use a more transformational style of leadership, it can serve as a catalyst for empowering young females to find their authentic voice and ability to lead in various situations.

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