Motivation to Lead: The Impact of Situational Factors

Preston Gegenfurtner*

[September 2007]

* Preston Gegenfurtner is an undergraduate student in the College of Business Administration Honors Program at California State University, Long Beach, CA 90840. This manuscript serves to fulfill his Honors Thesis requirement. Address correspondence to Preston Gegenfurtner: gegenfur@yahoo.com.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer many thanks to Dr. Pamela Miles Homer, who assisted me and participated in every aspect of this research study. Without her knowledge and willingness to devote so much time to me, this thesis would have never been realized. I appreciate the professors who offered their classrooms as a source for my sample: Sabine Reddy, Sungwook "Sam" Min, Mary Finley Wolfinbarger, Patrick "Rick" L. Shield, and Michael L. Tomlin. I extend sincere thanks to my fellow classmates that offered ideas and productive criticism during the entire process: Michael D. Santos, Van C. Ha, Vanessa Y. Gonzalez, and Erik I. Sandoval. Finally, I thank my parents, Paul and Leovina Gegenfurtner, for their support and encouragement to extend my stay at Cal State Long Beach and undertake this challenge.
Motivation to Lead: The Impact of Situational Factors

ABSTRACT

In 2001, Kim-Yin Chan and Fritz Drasgow proposed the Motivation to Lead (MTL), an individual difference construct that primarily relies upon personality characteristics. It is conceptualized as an antecedent of a person’s acceptance of a leadership position. The following study extends this research to observe how MTL and the entire leadership framework are affected by situational factors. The impact of MTL and three situational factors are tested: rewards, task difficulty, and group experience. The data show strong main effects for group experience on both intent to accept the leadership position and the attitude toward it. There are also group experience x reward and reward x task difficulty interaction effects. Implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.
INTRODUCTION

A leader has generally been described as a person who sets the example for how an entire group of people should act. This person is the role model and delegates duties for the followers. Common adjectives (traits) to describe a leader would be confident, self-sacrificing, and courageous (Amit 2006). As illustrated in Figure 1 (Chan and Drasgow 2001, p. 482), the description of a leader almost exclusively includes personal qualities and characteristics. Thus, most of the previous literature and studies on leadership focus on personal characteristics, such as the Big Five personality characteristics and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (e.g., Goldberg 1990; Maslow 1954). The focus has typically been to define the qualities of a good leader first, and then to identify persons who fit that mold. Therefore, it is refreshing to find a study (i.e., Chan and Drasgow 2001) that centers on the leader’s ideal situation, rather than the ideal person for a leadership position.

[Insert Figure 1 about here.]

Chan and Drasgow’s article first begins by describing respondents’ own personality characteristics. Then, attention turns to those who feel most motivated to accept a leadership position. By comparing the motivated and the non-motivated, the authors are able to identify what characteristics tend to distinguish people most motivated to be leaders. While a new point of view of the concept of leadership is presented, only a single fixed leadership position is tested. That is, Chan and Grasgow (2001) fail to account for the fact that there are other (situational) variables that could influence acceptance of a leadership position.

The objective of my study is to identify whether a person’s likelihood of accepting a leadership role changes as the situation changes. Analysis of personality characteristics is interwoven into the study, as part of the data collected are identical to the original MTL study. However, I test the role of three situational factors (i.e., reward, task difficulty, and perceived
Leadership

group experience) along with the individual difference trait, MTL. Ultimately, the goal is to see how all of these factors affect a person’s intention and attitude towards being a leader.

**BACKGROUND**

Kim-Yin Chan and Fritz Drasgow (2001) create and validate an individual difference construct, the motivation to lead (MTL). A key assumption of the theory is that non-cognitive ability constructs such as personality traits and values relate to leader behaviors through the individual’s MTL, which in turn affects the individual’s participation in leadership roles and activities (Chan and Drasgow 2001, p. 481). The authors propose a broad theoretical framework for understanding leader development and individual differences in leader behavior (see Figure 1).

Essentially, this framework shows that MTL is dependent upon four main factors (personality, values, self-efficacy, and past leadership experience), and that these impact leadership performance (see Figure 2). I intend to demonstrate that there is a fifth antecedent factor: situational influences. Under Chan and Drasgow’s (2001) framework, these are part of the “leadership performance” section: i.e., they mediate the relationship between individual factors (e.g., MTL) and performance outcomes. There is no doubt that a situation can affect a leader’s performance; however, it is logical that someone will be motivated to lead or not lead based on the situation at hand. For example, who has not made decisions based upon the amount of monetary compensation involved? And, a typical employee would never consider a promotion at their job if they feel their salary increase is not worth added responsibilities.

[Insert Figure 2 about here.]

Based on empirical evidence, Chan and Drasgow (2001) dismiss the idea that MTL is a unidimensional concept. They divide MTL into three components that account for the individual difference social behavior: affective, social-normative, and non-calculative. Affective MTL
would suggest that a person simply enjoys leading others. Social-normative MTL defines people who feel it is their duty to lead others. The Non-calculative component of MTL accounts for people who do not consider the cost of leading in their decision (Chan and Drasgow 2001, p. 482). Based on the results of their experiment, they offer a revised model of the antecedents of MTL (see Figure 3).

Several valuable assertions about human personalities emerge from the results of their study. All of the antecedents included in the model behave as expected. For example, people who like to lead and who see themselves as having leadership qualities tend to be outgoing and sociable in nature (i.e., are extraverts), value competition and achievement (i.e., are vertical individualists), have more past leadership experience than their peers, and are confident in their own leadership abilities (i.e., have high self-efficacy).

I expand on Chan and Drasgow’s MTL framework by testing three situational factors that could affect a person’s decision to lead: the difficulty of the task, the extent of the reward, and the experience of the group. As suggested by Chan and Drasgow, I “try to examine how MTL interacts with situational factors to affect a person’s decision to lead in specific circumstances” (Chan and Drasgow 2001, p. 46). The literature provides empirical evidence that these situational factors can have considerable effects on motivation (e.g., Atkinson 1957; Schuster, Clark, and Rogers 1971; Wyer 1968).

**Expected Reward**

One of the situational factors that may affect MTL is the expected reward for leading. One model proposes that work-related benefits depend upon a reciprocal relationship between efforts and rewards at work (Van Vegchel, de Jonge, Bosma, and Schaufeli 2005). Since rewards have a considerable effect on a person’s motivation to work, it seems logical that it would have a similar
effect on leadership motivation. This Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) Model suggests that there are three main determinants of reward: money, esteem, and status control. Examples of status control include job security and career opportunities. For the sake of simplification, I focus on two of these types of reward, money and esteem.

It is natural to suspect that money impacts MTL. Previous research shows that pay can influence the amount of effort a worker puts forth. Schuster, Clark, and Rogers (1971) conclude that “(a) the more employees believe that performance factors influence pay, the harder they will work to improve their performance; (b) individuals who see pay as a satisfier will try to perform more satisfactorily” (p. 187). A leadership position is also likely an indicator of a higher level of performance. Based on this literature, I propose that:

H1: Rewards impact intent to accept a leadership position.

H2: Rewards influence perceptions about task difficulty (how challenging the task is).

*Task Difficulty*

Another important situational factor may be the task itself: i.e., the difficulty level of the objective may influence the decision to lead. Even in the presence of an immense reward for completing the objective, there is little point of accepting the responsibility if it is nearly impossible to achieve. Several different theories relate to the impact of task difficulty, especially in the field of psychology. Russell and Mehrabian (1975) measure people’s desire to work in various different settings and tasks. They demonstrate that “college students doing mental tasks had a greater desire to work on easy problems than on difficult ones” (Russell and Mehrabian 1975, p. 520). Wyer (1968) focuses on the incentives and perseverance involved with task difficulty. In his literature review, he notes that previous studies conclude that the incentive for success is higher with difficult tasks. A person has little to lose but a great deal to gain by accepting a difficult task (Atkinson 1957). Wyer was able to further show that “the avoidance of
failure is the primary incentive when the task is easy” (Wyer 1968, p. 275). Marshall and Brown (2004) explore performance expectancies, which are the “expectations people have about their likely performance at an achievement-related task” (Marshall and Brown 2004, p. 348-9). They find that expectancies are insignificant when facing easy problems. In addition, low expectancies are a liability when facing difficult problems (Marshall and Brown 2004). In conclusion, I expect that task difficulty has similar effects as those associated with rewards.

H3: The difficulty of the task impacts intent to accept a leadership position.

H4: The difficulty of the task influences perceived task difficulty.

**Perceived Group Experience**

There is a well-known cliché that a leader is only as good as his/her followers. This could also relate to the perceived difficulty of the goal. Many of history’s best leaders were only good because they had loyal and effective subordinates that would carry out their orders. Unfortunately, there is little previous research related to this topic. One reason may be that it is logically obvious that a leader is nothing without the team. Often times it seems that the measure of a leader is solely judged by the success of the team. If a team fails an assignment, it is hard to argue that the leader of the team was successful. Similarly, it is unusual to identify a poor leader of a successful team. Therefore, it may be too difficult and subjective to test such propositions. One can argue this position with specific points and statistics, but ultimately the judgment of the leader’s effectiveness may be pure opinion. Despite the lack of past literature, I offer the following exploratory hypotheses:

H5: The perceived experience of the group impacts intent to accept a leadership position.

H6: The perceived experience of the group influences one’s attitude about the position.
METHODOLOGY

Subjects and Procedure

The sample consists of 265 undergraduate business administration students from California State University, Long Beach. The sample was 53% female and 45.5% male (1.5% undisclosed). Each respondent completed a four-page survey in a classroom setting (random assignment to treatments). Participants were told that the survey was being used in a research study about leadership. Each was asked to read a scenario that included the experimental manipulations (described below). When all were finished reading the scenario, they were given permission to continue the survey by answering the questions that followed. The first page of questions consisted of the intention and attitude scales. These were followed by the 27 questions used in the original MTL study and a few questions to measure the validity of the scenarios (i.e., manipulation checks). The final two questions asked for age and gender.

Stimuli Development

Eight scenarios were created in a 2 (money/esteem) x 2 (proven/not proven group) x 2 (difficult/not difficult task) factorial design involving a hypothetical situation in which the subject makes a decision on whether to take a leadership position (see Appendix). The scenarios were designed to create two levels of each of the manipulated factors: i.e., difficult/easy, money/esteem, and experienced/not experienced. The scenarios are purposefully general and vague in terms of the industry and the specific position being described. It was only important that the reader understand that there is a team that needs a leader. The scenarios are simply two paragraphs long, all versions are of equal length, and all provide an equal amount of information. For example, if four scenarios said that the team being led is experienced, the other four scenarios clearly stated that the team is not experienced.
The first manipulation presents the potential *rewards* for taking the leadership position. In half of the situations, the reward is monetary compensation. Specifically, subjects read that, “This team leader position would be accompanied by a substantial raise as well as various other benefits.” The other situations present reward with a label of “esteem”. This is intended to appeal to a person’s sense of accomplishment and self-worth. Those treatments state that, “A promotion to this team leader position is recognition of your hard work and past success.”

The second manipulated factor is the perceived *experience* of the group being led. One set of scenarios describe a situation in which the respondent is leading a team that has proven it is capable of working effectively with each other. Those scenarios read, “Your new team has worked together for one year. They know how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member has had at least three years of industry experience.” The remaining scenarios are the opposite type of group, which is inexperienced and unfamiliar with each other. Those scenarios state “Your new team has not worked together before. They will need to learn how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member generally has limited industry experience.”

The final manipulation factor is the *difficulty* of the task that will be assigned to the respondent’s group. Half of the scenarios describe a difficult task: “Your team will be responsible for completing a difficult new project. There are no established procedures for completing this sort of project. Successful completion of the project is essential for the future growth of the company.” The other half of the scenarios describe an easy assignment for the group: “Your team will be responsible for completing standard, straightforward projects. There are established procedures for completing the tasks. Your success is not considered essential for the future growth of the company.”
Measures

After reading one scenario, respondents were asked a number of questions about their intentions, their attitude about the position, and some general beliefs (all 9-point scales unless indicated otherwise). The first three questions assess the likelihood that the respondent would accept/not accept the leadership position in the scenario (3 items; $\alpha = .87$). The next five questions measure the overall impressions of the leadership position (overall attitude: “positive/negative”, “good/bad”, “pleasant/not pleasant”; $\alpha = .94$). Two items captured impressions of the position in terms of enjoyment (“exciting/boring” and “fun/not fun”; Spearman-Brown Reliability Coefficient = .88). The next set of questions include potential descriptive statements about the leadership position (9-point disagree/agree scales). These measures were collapsed into three (summated and averaged) construct scales: fun perceptions (“will be fun”, “will be exciting”, “will be interesting”; $\alpha = .89$), reward perceptions (“will boost my esteem”, “will be fulfilling”, “will be good for my career”; $\alpha = .88$), and perceived task difficulty (“will be difficult” and “will be challenging”; Spearman-Brown Reliability Coefficient = .86).

The next 27 questions were taken directly from the MTL survey first administered by Chan and Drasgow (2001). These assess the extent to which the respondent agreed or disagreed with the statement about their personality. The first nine questions are designed to measure Affective-Identity MTL. It essentially measures how much a person strives to be a leader simply because their personality causes them to. It includes questions such as “I usually want to be a leader in the groups that I work in”, or reverse-scaled questions like “I am definitely not a leader by nature” ($\alpha = .85$). The next nine questions seek to measure non-calculative MTL, which considers whether a person is motivated to lead based on benefits and rewards: e.g., “I am only interested to lead if there are clear advantages for me” and “I never expect to get more privileges
if I agree to lead a group” (7 items; α = .81). [Two of the questions did not appear to have a strong correlation with the rest of the statements so they were excluded from the final construct scale.] The final nine questions are the social-normative MTL measures, which assess whether someone has a sense of responsibility to be a leader. Examples include “I feel that I have a duty to lead others if I am asked” and “I would never agree to lead just because others voted for me” (9 items; α = .77).

RESULTS

Test of MTL Model

Using regression analysis, I checked the validity of the original MTL scales by using intent and attitude as dependent variables. The results support past evidence, as all three MTL scales have a significant relationship with intent to accept the position: affective-identity ($b=.277$, $t=4.193$, $p<.001$), non-calcultative ($b=.133$, $t=2.17$, $p=.031$), and social-normative ($b=.108$, $t=1.641$, $p=.102$). Attitude toward the position also yielded positive results: affective-identity ($b=.180$, $t=2.75$, $p=.006$) and social-normative ($b=.220$, $t=3.37$, $p=.002$). These results are important because tests of the key hypotheses are dependent upon a valid MTL assessment.

In a separate ANOVA, I tested the assumption that MTL is an individual difference construct. By separately using each MTL dimension as a dependent variable, the analysis determines whether MTL was affected by the experimental manipulations. The results confirmed there were no significant main or interaction effects for any of the three MTL dependent constructs, thereby supporting that MTL is a stable “trait” unaffected by the situational manipulations.

Manipulation Checks

In order to confirm that the scenarios conveyed the intended messages to the respondents, it was necessary to perform manipulation checks. Six questions positioned after the MTL questions
assess the effectiveness of the scenario. The manipulation regarding group experience was effective \((F(1,260)=57.17, p<.001)\), as respondents were able to distinguish between the scenarios with experienced groups \((M=4.36)\) and scenarios with inexperienced groups \((M=6.03)\). Respondents were also able to distinguish between monetary rewards \((M=6.54)\) and esteem \((M=5.37, F(1,265)=19.65, p<.01)\). The difficulty of the task was also effective, but weaker than the other two manipulations \((F(1,163)=11.45, p=.01)\). It also shows some unplanned interaction effects with group experience \((F(1,263)=6.47, p=.01)\), along with 3-way reward x difficulty x experience interaction \((F(1,263)=4.81, p=.03)\).

The final two questions of the study serve to confirm that the scenarios are equivalent in terms of detail and informativeness. The results were as desired as there are no significant main or interaction treatment effects for these two dependent variables.

**Hypothesis Tests**

First, I analyze the effect of the three experimental manipulations on the five (dependent) construct scales: intent to accept the leadership position; attitude toward the position; belief of how challenging the position will be; belief of how fun the position will be; and belief of how rewarding it will be. In each of the tests, the three MTL variables are included as covariates (ANCOVA). Therefore, I show that MTL and situational factors combine to affect the dependent variables (see Figure 4).

[H1 tests the effects of the reward manipulation on MTL. As it turns out, different types of reward do not have a significant impact on the respondent’s intent to accept the position. Reward type does, however, have a significant main effect on how challenging the respondent perceives the task \((F(1,265)=9.40, p=.01)\). Respondents believe that tasks with esteem rewards \((M=7.67)\) are more challenging than tasks with monetary rewards \((M=7.01)\).]
The second set of hypotheses (H3 and H4) examines the same effects proposed for the task difficulty manipulation. Unfortunately, there are no significant main effects on MTL. I’ll discuss some of the possible explanations for this later in the Discussion section.

The strongest main effects occur with the third set of hypotheses (H5 and H6) that tests the impact of respondents’ perceptions of the experience of the group being led. Experience influences intent to accept the position \( (F(1,246)=6.747, p=.01) \). People are more motivated to accept a leadership position with an experienced team \( (M=7.40) \) than with an unproven team \( (M=6.88) \). Similar effects emerge for overall attitude towards the leadership position \( (F(1,252)=4.65, p=.03) \) and enjoyment-related impressions \( (F(1,265)=5.11, p=.02) \). Respondents have a more positive attitude about a position with a proven team \( (M=6.57) \) than with an inexperienced team \( (M=6.24) \). They also believe they would get more enjoyment with a proven team \( (M=7.00) \) than with an unproven team \( (M=6.52) \).

It is encouraging to see there are also some interesting interactions. For example, the group experience x reward interaction has a significant impact on the respondent’s belief of how fun the position is \( (F(1,264)=3.98, p<.05) \), and on the belief of how challenging the position is \( (F(1,265)=4.01, p<.05) \). With inexperienced groups, leaders think positions offering monetary rewards \( (M=6.30) \) are more fun than those offering esteem rewards \( (M=5.89) \). On the other hand, leaders for experienced groups recognize more fun with esteem rewards \( (M=6.32) \) than with monetary rewards \( (M=5.85) \). Challenging beliefs do not change between the two groups; however, the difference of opinion is much higher with the experienced group. Positions with esteem rewards are thought to be more challenging than those with monetary rewards \( (M=7.77 \text{ versus } M=6.67) \), respectively).

There is also a reward x task difficulty interaction effect for the challenging belief scale \( (F(1,265)=5.89, p=.02) \). In scenarios with monetary rewards, respondents find the easy tasks to
be less challenging than the difficult ones ($M=6.59$ versus $M=7.42$). Logically, this is expected and would be perplexing if the results were opposite. For the esteem rewards scenarios, there were no significant differences between the two task groups ($M=7.78$ versus $M=7.56$ for the easy and challenging tasks, respectively).

Even with a manipulation that specifically addresses rewards, there are no significant effects for the reward-related belief scale (this is discussed further below).

**DISCUSSION**

The intent of this study is to provide insight into the motivations of a person willing to lead. The findings have potentially significant implications for how employers hire their employees and promote them to leadership positions. In industries where it is essential to be critical during the hiring process, this may be especially important. When labor supply is greater than labor demand, employers will want to be able to entice the “cream of the crop”.

One of the surprising, and perhaps disappointing results of the study is the lack of significance for the reward factor. It seems blatantly obvious that most of our society is driven by money. Money often serves as a symbol of status both in work and in life. One reason why the results may have failed to attain significance is that the manipulation wasn’t consistent with the other two. While the other two manipulated factors (task difficulty and level of experience) represent low versus high levels of the specific factor, the reward manipulation represents two types of rewards, esteem and money. The initial intent was to distinguish individuals who value monetary compensation from those who preferred to be happy and satisfied by less superficial means. But, the reward manipulation here merely distinguished a job with monetary compensation from one with esteem enhancing power. It may have been better to manipulate amount of monetary reward (i.e., a job described as offering a lot of money versus a job without a lot of money). It seems logical in our society that most would prefer the money, but at least the
distinction would have been clear cut. With a manipulation of money versus esteem, respondents may have assumed that a job has more esteem if it offers more money. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive, so the tested effects probably suffered. According to the results of H1, reward is not a significant predictor of a person’s intent to accept a leadership position. This seems logically flawed and the result would surely change if the manipulation is set up differently.

This same flaw is likely the culprit for the lack of significance for the respondent’s reward-based beliefs. This dependent construct was supposed to measure whether the position offered in the scenario is considered rewarding. Part of the reason may be that the set of questions that measures these beliefs tends to lean toward esteem-related beliefs (“will be fulfilling”, “will be good for my career”). Therefore, any beliefs about how rewarding the position is weren’t changed because the scenario did not offer alternatives that were different enough from each other.

I find it very interesting that the task difficulty manipulation also did not yield significant effects. Is it possible that most people do not take this into consideration when deciding whether to be a leader? Perhaps it isn’t a factor by itself, as there are several conflicting views in the literature related to this concept. The task difficulty x reward interaction may be the important effect to explore. As one author put it (Wyer 1968), incentives are generally higher with more difficult tasks. If one is able to accomplish leading a group to succeed with a different assignment, a person with high desires to esteem may be satisfied. However, this interaction effect did not emerge, likely due to a flawed reward manipulation.

It may also suggest that previous research studies measuring motivations to work may not be correlated with motivations to be a leader. It is often said that the best workers don’t always make the best leaders. Being a leader requires a different set of skills related to communication
and management, with less time devoted to using technical skills. Therefore, some workers who become leaders have the tendency to micro-manage. They are unwilling to give up control of specific tasks and details. These leaders may have a different level of confidence to lead a team than traditional leaders.

It was encouraging, however, to see positive results. The data suggest that rewards do affect how challenging the person thinks the task is. Positions with esteem rewards are perceived to be more challenging than those with monetary rewards. From an employer’s standpoint, this could be beneficial because only individuals who enjoy a challenge will apply for esteem positions. These people are probably driven by a sense of pride and accomplishment. It likely filters out people who are only motivated by money and who might be less reliable when it comes to more difficult tasks. This is consistent with the previous literature that concludes incentives are higher with more difficult tasks. Employers should keep this in mind when determining an initial offer of salary. A high reward may cause more people to be overconfident in their ability to lead. This may generate a higher volume of less qualified applicants, thus employers will have to be extra careful to identify the best leaders.

The main effect for group experience is apparent, as people have much more favorable attitudes toward positions with experienced team members. Even though there was not much previous research to support this assertion, these results are expected. An experienced team would make tasks seem easier, and more challenging tasks could be accomplished. More interesting is the interaction effect between experience and reward. This may be a function of the type of reward involved. The rewards x group experience interaction effect on challenge-related beliefs is consistent with the main effect discussed earlier. Money causes people to believe that positions will be less challenging, even when the experience of the team comes into play. Apparently, “challenge” and “fun” opinions tend to be on opposite sides of the scale. The fun
belief could be explained by the idea that guiding an inexperienced team will be more work (and less fun) than working with a proven team. Therefore, money is more of a reward motivator when the leader needs to do more work.

As noted above regarding the nature of the reward manipulation, it is possible that esteem could be just as rewarding as money in challenging situations. There are examples in college and professional sports of people accepting head coaching positions with teams that definitely need a lot of help. Especially for coaches who had the opportunity to coach elsewhere, it seems that they have a certain sense of pride in developing a winning team from a foundation that is losing. These coaches likely prefer esteem as a reward than money (especially if they have managed to earn high salaries in the past). Bill Parcells, an NFL coach who recently retired his position with the Dallas Cowboys, had left coaching positions with the New York Giants, New England Patriots, and New York Jets after leading them to winning seasons. Each time he went on to accept positions with teams that had a talent for losing.

The business world has several examples of executives who enjoyed the thrill of bringing a struggling company out of ruin. Perhaps our most famous recent savior is Steve Jobs, chief executive of Apple Computers. Since taking the reins in 1997, Jobs has steered the company back to the top of the industry with such innovations as the iPod and iMac (Piller 1998). Anne Mulcahy has accepted the chief executive position with Xerox Corporation to “lead them from the brink of bankruptcy back to profitability and growth” (Robbins 2005, p. 360). Therefore, employers should evaluate their current team situation to determine/predict what kind of people will be attracted to a leadership position. The situation could attract either those attracted by money, or leaders that are driven by the challenge to succeed.

It is worth mentioning that I explored the possibility that the MTL components (affective, social-normative, and non-calculative) mediate the relationship between the situational factors
and dependent constructs. Under these conditions, situational factors would have an effect on the person’s MTL (see Figure 5). It is not unreasonable to think that different situations could affect the various antecedents of MTL. For example, a leader that has a difficult task might experience higher stress levels. Emotional stability is an antecedent of MTL in Chan and Drasgow’s model (see Figure 3). However, analyses (Baron and Kenny 1986) do not support the notion that MTL serves as a mediator between the situation and leadership intent/attitude. This supports the notion that MTL is an individual difference construct that is not affected by external factors such as the situations manipulated here. As independent variables, MTL and situations separately influence intentions and attitudes (see Figure 4).

[Insert Figure 5 about here.]

**Limitations and Future Research**

One limitation of this study was the relatively narrow sample of respondents. The vast majority of the respondents were college-age individuals who probably have limited leadership experience. According to Chan and Drasgow, one of the antecedents of MTL is past leadership experience. The situations I am describing would be more relevant to experienced professionals that might have varying responses to accepting a leadership position. A person in their 30s or 40s may be influenced by past leadership opportunities or the observance of their own leaders. Another study should attempt to obtain a sample of workers that have graduated college and have been in the workforce for a few years or more. The examples I give of leaders that accept positions with difficult tasks are people in their 40s and 50s. A person’s MTL, like some personality traits, could change over time as priorities become different for people who get older and start families.

Obviously, there are countless ways to expand upon this study by altering the situations. As mentioned above, the reward manipulation was limited by its design (i.e., esteem versus money).
A future study should include amount of reward as the tested factor. This would better isolate the difference between monetary rewards and esteem. Determination of exactly how much money would motivate a person to be a leader is also warranted. Other situational factors that could be important to people might be company size, location, industry, and overall work environment. Any one of these could affect a person’s leadership-based intentions alongside MTL.
REFERENCES


FIGURE 1

Chan and Drasgow’s Theoretical Framework of Leadership

* Source: Kim-Yin Chan and Fritz Drasgow (2001)
FIGURE 2*

Chan and Drasgow's Original MTL Model

Figure 2. A general model of antecedents to the motivation to lead (MTL). No specific paths are hypothesized from specific personality factors and values to MTL.

* Source: Kim-Yin Chan and Fritz Drasgow (2001)
FIGURE 3*

Chan and Drasgow's Revised MTL Model

* Source: Kim-Yin Chan and Fritz Drasgow (2001)
FIGURE 4

Proposed Model of Situations as a Moderator

Situational factors:
- Rewards
- Task difficulty
- Group experience

MTL:
- Affective
- Social-normative
- Non-calculative

Intent
- Attitude
- Challenging belief
- Fun belief
- Rewarding belief
FIGURE 5

Proposed Model of Situations as a Mediator

- Situational factors
- Personality
- MTL
- Intent/Attitude
APPENDIX

Experimental Scenarios

Monetary Reward, High Experience, High Task Difficulty

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

This team leader position would be accompanied by a substantial raise as well as various other benefits. Your new team has worked together for one year. They know how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member has had at least three years of industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing a difficult new project. There are no established procedures for completing this sort of project. Successful completion of the project is essential for the future growth of the company.

Esteem Reward, High Experience, High Task Difficulty

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

A promotion to this team leader position is recognition of your hard work and past success. Your new team has worked together for one year. They know how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member has had at least three years of industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing a difficult new project. There are no established procedures for completing this sort of project. Successful completion of the project is essential for the future growth of the company.

Monetary Reward, High Experience, Low Task Difficulty

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

This team leader position would be accompanied by a substantial raise as well as various other benefits. Your new team has worked together for one year. They know how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member has had at least three years of industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing standard, straightforward projects.
There are established procedures for completing the tasks. Your success is not considered essential for the future growth of the company.

**Esteem Reward, High Experience, Low Task Difficulty**

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

A promotion to this team leader position is recognition of your hard work and past success. Your new team has worked together for one year. They know how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member has had at least three years of industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing a difficult new project. There are no established procedures for completing this sort of project. Successful completion of the project is essential for the future growth of the company.

**Monetary Reward, Low Experience, High Task Difficulty**

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

This team leader position would be accompanied by a substantial raise as well as various other benefits. Your new team has not worked together before. They will need to learn how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member generally has limited industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing a difficult new project. There are no established procedures for completing this sort of project. Successful completion of the project is essential for the future growth of the company.

**Esteem Reward, Low Experience, High Task Difficulty**

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

A promotion to this team leader position is recognition of your hard work and past success. Your new team has not worked together before. They will need to learn how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member generally has limited industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing a difficult new project. There are no established procedures for
completing this sort of project. Successful completion of the project is essential for the future growth of the company.

**Monetary Reward, Low Experience, Low Task Difficulty**

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

This team leader position would be accompanied by a substantial raise as well as various other benefits. Your new team has not worked together before. They will need to learn how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member generally has limited industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing standard, straightforward projects. There are established procedures for completing the tasks. Your success is not considered essential for the future growth of the company.

**Esteem Reward, Low Experience, Low Task Difficulty**

You are a member of a work team that was created and has been working together for two years. Throughout the two years the team has gradually learned to work efficiently and was consistently outperforming all other teams in the company. The leader of the team delegated tasks evenly and all members seemed to pull equal weight in completing projects. Now you are being asked by the company to lead a different team.

A promotion to this team leader position is recognition of your hard work and past success. Your new team has not worked together before. They will need to learn how to effectively collaborate to complete projects. Each member generally has limited industry experience. Your team will be responsible for completing standard, straightforward projects. There are established procedures for completing the tasks. Your success is not considered essential for the future growth of the company.