FAVORABILITY OF REPRESENTATIVE AND VISIONARY LEADERS FOLLOWING AN
ORGANIZATIONAL CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

FAVORABILITY OF REPRESENTATIVE AND VISIONARY LEADERS FOLLOWING AN

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Effective leaders are critical in ensuring the success of organizations. Particularly in crisis situations, employees look to leaders to guide the organization through hardships and achieve success in the face of challenges. I discuss and explore two main types of leadership style: visionary leadership and representative leadership. The present research consists of two experiments that investigate group members' preference for one type of leader over another. Experiment 1 replicated Halevy et al.'s (2011) research exploring general preferences for visionary and representative leaders, comparing Halevy et al.'s (2011) original leader profiles and revised versions of leader profiles that equalize competence across the visionary and representative leaders. Results partially supported the hypothesis, showing that when competence is equalized across leadership styles, there is no significant difference in favorability between a visionary and representative leader. Experiment 2 explored people's preferences for these two types of leaders in both an intragroup crisis and an intergroup crisis, extending the existing research. Results did not support the hypothesis, revealing no significant differences in leader style favorability in either an intragroup crisis or an intergroup crisis. In the control (no crisis) condition, participants significantly preferred a representative leader. However, when crisis

condition was collapsed across type of condition, participants significantly preferred a representative leader. This preference was less robust than in a no crisis scenario, indicating a possible openness to a visionary leader in a crisis compared to no crisis.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"Leaders must be close enough to relate to others, but far enough ahead to motivate them."

—John C. Maxwell

History is marked by revolutionary leaders. The most memorable events that have shaped our world typically feature a remarkable individual who serves as the face of the transformation. Whether the transformation brings about peace and serenity or upheaval and turmoil, a leader often emerges who inspires and motivates followers to work toward enacting change and achieving a common goal. Organizations often rely on leaders to inspire and instill goals in their employees that promote the welfare of the company. After a disagreement with the board of directors over allocation of product resources, Steve Jobs left Apple Inc. in 1985 and the organization subsequently suffered colossal financial losses. After Microsoft (their lead competitor) launched groundbreaking software, Apple asked Steve Jobs to rejoin their team in 1997. The company prospered enormously after Jobs returned, and continues to enjoy massive success as a result of going back to their roots and rehiring one of the original visionaries. Steve Jobs is often credited with bringing the company back from the brink of failure and leading Apple to revolutionize the technology industry. Not all leaders incite such dramatic change, thus it is important to understand what characterizes those who are able to successfully do so and in what context these leaders are the most effective.

The concept of leadership cannot be extracted from a group context, so in order for a leader to succeed, their followers must succeed as well. Perhaps the truest test of a leader is the ability to successfully guide followers through a crisis. Crises require organizational leaders to motivate their employees to work toward a common goal in order to overcome the challenge. But

what kinds of qualities do people desire most in their leaders to lead them through crises? The thesis of my research is that people prefer different leadership qualities—different types of leaders—depending on the nature of the crisis their organization or group faces.

Sometimes people seek a leader who "shakes things up" by thinking outside the box and revitalizing the group. *Visionary* leaders use their fresh and unconventional ideas to attract and motivate followers to endorse a new direction for the group, one that promises hope and success. They invite group members to join them in overhauling the status quo and starting again with a new and better focus. Other times, people prefer a *representative* leader, one who epitomizes their values and beliefs, and exhibits consistency with the group and does not demonstrate unpredictability. Representative leaders use their strong association with the organization to appeal to group members as being "one of us." The familiarity of a representative leader attracts followers that desire a leader who epitomizes their values and beliefs.

Both visionary and representative leaders could be equally qualified to lead, but their style may be more well-received depending on the state of the group, especially during different types of crises. If an organization faces a *collective crisis*, one that demands everyone to refocus their efforts in order to succeed, group members will likely value a leader who brings an innovative and unique perspective to the group. A visionary leader may be seen as the perfect solution, providing an entirely new outlook to offer a solution to the turmoil. However, if an organization faces a crisis which places them in opposition to another group, a visionary leader may be seen as too unpredictable and risky. In competitive situations like this, group members might prefer someone who is well-known to the group and who understands the inner workings of the organization. For instance, when Apple was competing with Microsoft to acquire control of the rapidly growing technology sector, they re-hired Steve Jobs in part because he represented

the foundations of the company and their core values. His familiarity with the organization and knowledge of the directions it needed to go in order to succeed facilitated his transition back into leadership. Perhaps scenarios such as this, in which an organization is measuring their success relative to an outgroup, warrant a familiar face to lead. The present research tests this possibility by presenting two types of crisis scenarios in which a visionary candidate and a representative candidate are both contenders for a leadership position. I propose that people differentially prefer a visionary leader or a representative leader depending on the type of organizational crisis they face.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership Overview

Leadership, as a concept, has proven hard to precisely and consistently define. Stogdill (1974) proposed that, "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept." Traditionally, scholars and researchers offered definitions of leadership in terms of personality traits (e.g., Bird, 1940; Drake, 1944; Geier, 1967; Stogdill, 1948) or in terms of an individual's social role in a group (e.g., Chapin, 1924; Murphy, 1941; Gibb, 1947; Likert, 1967). Over the past two decades, however, leadership research has benefitted from increased focus on blending organizational approaches with modern theoretical developments from social psychology. Specifically, leadership research has shifted from focusing on specific qualities and behaviors of individuals to framing the efficacy of leaders in terms of group processes (Hains, Hogg & Duck, 1997). From this shift there has emerged a generally agreed upon view of leadership as an interactive group process by which one individual influences others to achieve a common goal (Hains et al., 1997; Hogg & Vannippenburg, 2003; Halevy, Berson & Galinsky, 2011; Platow, Haslam, Reicher & Steffens, 2015).

Burns (1978) proposed two distinct perspectives on leadership that illustrate how a leader influences followers: *transformational* leadership and *transactional* leadership. A transformational leadership perspective emphasizes the importance of charisma in leaders. This approach suggests that individuals who motivate and instill passion in followers to disregard self-interest and instead prioritize working toward collective goals for the good of the organization will emerge as truly inspirational and revolutionary (Burns, 1978; Hogg, 2001).

Alternatively, a transactional perspective structures leadership as an exchange between leaders and followers, wherein leaders guide followers to successfully achieve their goals and followers allocate status and influence to the leader in an equalizing transaction (Burns, 1978; Hogg, 2001). Leaders may gain further approval from the group by conforming to group norms, receiving increased endorsement and support from followers as they identify more closely with their leader (Hollander, 1958). Scholars have identified two distinct leadership styles based on these perspectives: the *visionary* leader (transformational style) and the *representative* leader (transactional style; Halevy et al., 2011).

Visionary Leaders

Visionary leaders are exceptional trailblazers who inspire their followers through their energy and charisma. Charismatic leadership theory has received a great deal of attention in the last several decades, with a multitude of studies demonstrating the effectiveness of charismatic leaders (House 1977; Burns 1978; Bass 1985; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993; Lowe et al., 1996; Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2001; Halevy et al., 2011). These individuals are often seen as outsiders, wielding perspectives that do not always align with the rest of the group but are attractive and enticing nonetheless. In addition, visionary leaders are not averse to taking risks. For instance, when Tim Westergren was trying to launch Pandora Radio as one of the first music streaming services in 2001, the company was out of money and he had accumulated over $500,000 in credit card debt. Faced with the choice to either throw in the towel or make a drastic decision and possibly salvage the company, Westergren convinced his 50 employees to defer salaries for over two years (Weinberger, 2015). Westergren kept morale alive by repeatedly giving motivational speeches to the employees, persuading them to rally behind the startup and

believe in its success. The risk paid off and Pandora achieved Series B funding in 2004, indicating their financial stability (Weinberger, 2015).

Group members who value visionary leaders view originality and fearlessness as a progressive movement toward meaningful change (Conger, 1999). Although these leaders may enact unconventional policies, they offer an exciting viewpoint that asks followers to take a chance and explore new directions for the sake of the group's future. Westergren convinced his employees to forgo receiving a salary for the sake of the company by giving speeches that repeatedly reminded the group of the organization's goal, exemplifying the influence that visionary leaders have on their followers. By rallying support and convincing group members to work toward the organization's goals for the greater good, visionary leaders instill a sense of purpose in their followers (Halevy et al., 2011).

Representative Leaders

Despite widespread endorsement of visionary leadership, some researchers argue and have shown that group members will be more likely to endorse a leader whose behavior and attitudes are prototypical of the in-group they represent (Hains et al., 1997; Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Chang, Turan & Chow, 2015). The social identity perspective of leadership integrates theoretical contributions from social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Halevy et al., 2011) and has produced a great deal of research that supports this argument (Hains et al., 1997; Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001; Platow et al., 2015). This perspective suggests that representative individuals will emerge as leaders due to their tendency to not stray from group norms, firmly aligning themselves with the group and strongly promoting unity (Hogg, 2001; Halevy et al., 2011; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001).

Halevy and colleagues (2011) offer a more nuanced interpretation of the social identity perspective of leadership, citing group membership as the driving factor determining followers' endorsement of representative leaders. When group members identify strongly with their group, they may view representative individuals as more effective leaders than those who are seen as outsiders (Halevy et al., 2001; Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001; also see Hogg, 2010). By establishing themselves as resolutely dedicated to preserving group values and ideals, these leaders distinguish themselves through their ability to remain unshakeable in their affiliation to the group. When Steve Jobs was asked to return to Apple in 1997, his appeal stemmed largely from his strong existing association with Apple. He represented the roots of the organization, and board members and employees were likely at least somewhat familiar with his ideas and strategies because of his prior experience with the company.

Intragroup vs. Intergroup Crises

Group dynamics change dramatically in crisis situations. Stability is dissolved and uncertainty rises among group members, threatening the identity and future of the group. These scenarios often set the stage for new leadership, but people might prefer different types of leaders during different types of crises. For instance, Halevy et al. (2011) found that group members prefer visionary leaders who offer innovative solutions to representative leaders in collectively stressful situations that threaten the entire group. Conversely, they proposed that members might prefer representative leaders in divisive situations that emphasize a competition between the in-group and another group. The variation of goals and strategies that groups employ in these scenarios warrants support for these hypotheses.

Visionary leaders can provide a sense of direction in times of uncertainty. Halevy et al. (2011) showed that group members prefer visionary leaders to representative leaders during

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single-group (hereafter referred to as *intragroup*) crisis scenarios in which the group or organization must band together collectively to overcome a challenge. When groups are faced with the possibility of total failure, an enthusiastic leader who offers a unique perspective and innovative solutions provides an ingenious resolution. A lack of similarity to prior leaders or to other members of the group is what makes visionary leaders appealing to followers who are hoping for a turnaround. In fact, their originality is what distinguishes them as viable candidates in light of the apparent failure of prior leadership. In these instances, a representative leader may be viewed as "more of the same" and not granted as much credibility due to a lack of novelty.

Intergroup crises position one group against another, causing in-group members to prioritize their success over a pertinent out-group. In these situations, representative leaders can provide stability and a sense of reaffirmed group identity, making them more favorable to a group seeking a unified stance against another group. Chang, Turan and Chow (2015) tested whether group members would prefer marginally representative leaders or dramatically representative leaders in an intergroup competition (presidential election). They found that participants preferred a candidate who was steadfastly representative of the group in every aspect to a more moderate candidate. Although this study did not present an *intergroup crisis* scenario, it provides support for the notion that when group members are in conflict with another group, they will value a leader who holds unwaveringly to the core values of the in-group.

Overview and Limitations of Previous Research

Halevy, Berson & Galinsky (2011) investigated the conditions under which people might prefer a visionary leader or a representative leader. In Study 1, Halevy et al. hypothesized that participants would be more likely to endorse a visionary leader than a representative leader. They tested this hypothesis by presenting participants with written descriptions of two candidates, one

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who typified a visionary leader and one who typified a representative leader (See Appendix D). Participants were asked to imagine that they were members of a sorority or fraternity at their university and to indicate which candidate they would nominate as president of their group. They found that participants preferred the visionary leader significantly more than the representative leader, indicating that participants prefer a visionary leader over a representative leader when both are presented in a context that pits the two styles against each other.

Halevy et al. (2011) sought to replicate their results from Study 1 in a second study using a personal crisis scenario and an intragroup crisis scenario. They hypothesized that participants in both conditions would endorse a visionary leader over a representative leader. They tested this by randomly assigning participants to either a personal crisis condition or a group crisis condition. Those in the personal crisis condition imagined themselves trapped alone in a burning building, while those in the group crisis condition imagined a similar scenario in which they escaped the fire, but the building was destroyed, creating a group crisis. Participants then received the same candidate profiles used in Study 1 and were again asked to rate their preference of the two leaders. Participants in both the personal crisis scenario and group crisis scenario preferred the visionary leader to the representative leader, and those in the group crisis scenario endorsed the visionary leader to a greater degree than participants in the personal crisis scenario. The findings from Halevy et al.'s (2011) Study 1 and Study 2 show that people generally prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader, and this preference increases when group members face an intragroup crisis.

Although Halevy et al. (2011) discovered crucial information about leadership styles, the experiments held noteworthy limitations. The manipulation used in Halevy et al.'s (2011) research lacks true equality between the candidate profiles presented to participants. The

visionary candidate is characterized by phrases such as "exceptionally persuasive and well argued," while the representative candidate is presented as having "typical communication and persuasion skills" (Halevy et al., 2011; see Appendix D). The representative candidate is also described as "seldom [having] opinions of her own regarding the future of the organization" while her visionary counterpart has "distinct opinions and attitudes" and "a vision for the future of the organization" (see Appendix D). It is argued here that a quality confound in the manipulation fails to present these leaders equally, and that the visionary candidate was presented as more competent than the representative candidate rather than simply having an alternate *style* but equal competency. This confound automatically weights the visionary leader as more appealing than the representative leader, calling into question the conclusion that people generally prefer visionary leaders to representative leaders. Pretest data showed that Halevy et al.'s visionary and representative candidates differed significantly in competency ratings (*M*=3.96 for visionary and *M*= 3.65 for representative; $t(35) = 2.252$; $p = .031$) while the candidates presented in revised profiles did not (*M*=4.17 for visionary and *M*=4.16 for representative; $t(35) = .208$; $p = .836$).

Secondly, participants in Halevy et al.'s (2011) Study 2 read priming material prior to reading leadership candidate profiles. Specifically, they were asked to imagine themselves trapped in a burning building, then asked to then write down how they felt (Halevy et al. 2011; p.897). In the subsequent task, participants were asked to indicate whether they would elect a visionary or representative individual as the next leader for a fraternity or sorority. The priming material may have exaggerated the effects of the crisis manipulation by using such a dramatic scenario (i.e., the threat of burning alive in a building). The present research removed this element by using crisis scenarios that directly relate to the subsequent task of choosing an

organizational leader. Participants read a scenario depicting an organizational crisis, then indicated their preference for one of two candidates to be the next leader of the organization.

Lastly, Halevy et al. (2011) demonstrated that participants favored visionary leaders over representative leaders following an intragroup crisis. However, they did not test the favorability of these types of leaders in an *intergroup* crisis situation, wherein one group is in direct opposition to another. The present research contributes to the existing literature by simultaneously testing the favorability of visionary and representative leaders in both intragroup and intergroup crisis situations.

The Present Research

The present research consists of two experiments designed to replicate and extend the findings of Halevy et al. (2011). Experiment 1 tested Halevy et al.'s (2011) hypothesis that, in general, people prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader. I presented participants with either Halevy et al.'s original profiles of a visionary leader and a representative leader (see Appendix D) or with revised profiles that depict equal competence between the visionary and representative leader (see Appendix E). The revised profiles allow for an examination of leadership style independent of competence. Experiment 2 tested the new hypothesis that in an *intragroup* crisis, people prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader, while in an *intergroup* crisis, people prefer a representative leader to a visionary leader.

It is important to note that representativeness and vision are not proposed here to be mutually exclusive qualities in all leaders in every scenario. Acknowledging that both of these characteristics are important for individuals in leadership positions, the present research is not seeking to polarize the concepts. Rather, the focus of this research echoes Halevy et al.'s (2011) intentions to specifically examine scenarios in which vision and representativeness are separated

and group members are forced to choose between the two. Indeed, the very purpose of this type of manipulation is to more precisely determine which scenarios warrant certain leadership qualities as more important than others. The goal of this research is to provide a more complete understanding of whether organizational crisis circumstances dictate whether group members prefer visionary or representative leaders.

I conducted both experiments using Mechanical Turk, a web service sponsored by amazon.com that allows people to complete studies posted online. Samples were limited to residents of the United States. Mechanical Turk has been shown to be as reliable as other sampling methods for collecting survey data (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011).

CHAPTER THREE: EXPERIMENT 1

Experiment 1 tested Halevy et al.'s hypothesis that, in general, people prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader. To test my hypothesis, I replicated Halevy et al.'s Study 1 procedures with two exceptions. First, I reframed the role-play scenario in a workplace setting. Second, I presented participants with either Halevy's leadership profiles (see Appendix D) or with revised profiles that depicted equal competence between the visionary and representative leader (see Appendix E). Participants then endorsed their preferred leader using the leader endorsement scale created by Halevy et al. (2011). I predicted that participants would rate the visionary leader more favorably than the representative leader in the original profile condition *and* in the revised profile condition.

Method

Participants and Design

Participants over the age of 18 and residents of the United States were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in exchange for monetary compensation. I randomly assigned participants to one of two conditions in a 2 (profile version: original profile, revised profile) x 2 (type of leader: visionary, representative) mixed model design with profile version serving as a between-subjects factor and type of leader serving as a within-subjects factor.

Procedure

Experiment 1 closely replicated the methodology of Halevy et al. (2011), but included the revised representative and visionary candidate profiles. Upon beginning the experiment on MTurk, participants imagined that they worked at a company that was asking employees to vote on the next president of the organization (See Appendix C). Participants then read descriptions of

the two final candidates for company president. They received either Halevy et al.'s (2011) leadership candidate profiles (See Appendix D) or the revised leadership candidate profiles (See Appendix E). After reading the profiles, participants then endorsed their preferred leader using the leader endorsement scale created by Halevy et al. (2011). Specifically, participants endorsed leaders by responding to four questions for each candidate: "A (B) will be a good leader for the organization," "I would vote for A over B," "I personally like A (B)," and "I prefer to see A rather than B as the president of the organization." Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). I averaged responses to the four items for the visionary and representative candidates to create two separate measures of leader endorsement (i.e., favorability of visionary leader, favorability of representative leader). I also collected basic demographic information including gender, age and race.

Manipulation Check

In order to ensure that the leader candidate profiles effectively manipulated vision and representativeness, I used the same manipulation checks used by Halevy et al. (2011), but modified them to fit an organizational setting. This check consisted of two questions pertaining to each candidate: "A (B) offers a new vision for what the organization needs to accomplish" and "A (B) is highly representative of the organization." Both versions of the profiles successfully conveyed the intended visionary style for Candidate A and representative style for Candidate B. There was a significant interaction effect for leader vision by profile condition, $F(1, 119) = 58.03, p < .001$. Planned comparisions revealed that Candidate A was perceived as significantly more visionary than Candidate B in the original profiles ($M = 4.23, SD = 0.96$ vs. $M = 2.57, SD = 1.20, F(1, 119) = 49.18, p < .001$) as well as the revised profiles ($M = 3.85, SD = 1.02$ vs. $M = 2.95, SD = 1.23, F(1,119) = 14.29, p < .001$). There was no interaction effect for leader representativeness by profile condition. Candidate B was perceived as significantly more representative than Candidate A ($M = 3.87, SD = 1.16$ vs. $M = 2.83, SD = 1.26$) in both versions of the candidate profiles, $F(1,119) = 27.36, p < .001$.

Leader Favorability

Halevy et al. (2011) hypothesized and found that in general, people prefer visionary leaders to representative leaders. Thus, I predicted that participants in both the original profile condition and the revised profile condition would more strongly endorse the visionary leader than the representative leader. I tested this prediction by performing a 2 x 2 multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) on the mean leader endorsement ratings with type of leader (visionary,

representative) serving as a within-subjects factor and profile version (original, revised) serving as a between-subjects factor. I created an overall measure of leader favorability for each participant by averaging their responses to the four leader preference questions for each type of leader. Cronbach's alpha for favorability of visionary leader was 0.86, while favorability of representative leader yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91. Neither of these alphas could be increased by removing any items.

The results partially supported my predictions. There was a significant interaction effect of favorability by condition, $F(1,119) = 10.63$, $p < .001$. The means for this interaction effect are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

Means of Simple Effects Tests for Experiment 1

Condition		Favorability of Visionary Leader	Favorability of Representative Leader
Halevy Profiles	Mean	3.76*	3.09*
	Std. Deviation	0.94	1.09
	N	61	61
Revised Profiles	Mean	3.23	3.65
	Std. Deviation	0.91	1.05
	N	60	60
Total	Mean	3.50	3.37
	Std. Deviation	0.96	1.10
	N	121	121

Note. * indicates a significant effect

As displayed in Table 1, participants rated the visionary leader more positively ($M =$ 3.76, $SD = 0.94$) than the representative leader ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.09$) in the original profile condition, $F(1,119) = 8.12$, $p = .005$. However, in the revised profile condition that equated the competence of the two leaders, participants did not express a significant difference in favorability ratings for the visionary leader ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.96$) versus the representative leader ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.05$), $F(1,119) = 3.12$, $p = .08$.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPERIMENT 1 DISCUSSION

Experiment 1 tested the hypothesis that people generally prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader, even when competence is held constant. I expected to find a significant main effect of type of leader, indicating that people more strongly endorsed the visionary leader than the representative leader. I did not predict a type of leader by profile version interaction effect. The results partially supported my hypotheses. I did find a significant interaction effect, indicating a difference in favorability between leadership style between the two versions of the profiles, dependent on condition.

Specifically, participants who received Halevy et al.'s (2011) original version of the leaders' profiles preferred a visionary leader significantly more than a representative leader. This simple effect supported my predictions, replicating the original findings from Halevy et al.'s (2011) study. Participants who received the revised versions of the candidate profiles, which controlled for the discrepancy in competence discovered in the original profiles during pretesting, did not demonstrate a difference in preference between the two types of leaders. If the analyses had supported these predictions, the results would have indicated that people generally prefer a visionary leader, even when the representative leader is equally competent.

The results did not fully support Halevy et al.'s conclusions from their original 2011 study, that people generally prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader. When competence is equalized between a visionary and representative leader, there appears to be no significant preference for either leadership style. This pattern of results could reveal a general variance in the value that individuals place on vision and representativeness in their leaders. That is, certain people may simply consider vision to be more important in a leader, while others

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consider representativeness to be more important. Based on these findings, visionary leaders do not seem to be unequivocally superior to representative leaders in all scenarios.

Importantly, in the revised profile condition, participants expressed a slight (albeit nonsignificant) preference for the representative leader ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.05$) to the visionary leader ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.96$). However, both of the conditions tested here presented the leadership styles in a stable organizational context. Under conditions of intergroup or intragroup conflict, people may prefer one leadership style over another. Experiment 2 will test this possibility.

CHAPTER SIX: EXPERIMENT 2

Experiment 2 extended Halevy et al.'s (2011) research by examining people's preference for different leadership styles under different kinds of crisis. Specifically, Experiment 2 tested the new hypothesis that in an *intergroup* crisis, people prefer a representative leader to a visionary leader, while in an *intragroup* crisis, participants prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader.

Experiment 2 replicated the basic procedures from Halevy et al.'s (2011) Study 2, with three exceptions. First, I reframed the crisis manipulation to a workplace setting in which the participant must vote for a new company leader. Second, the crisis manipulation occurred as a relevant event in an organization, rather than as an unrelated prime. Third, I manipulated the type of organizational crisis to create three (rather than two) experimental conditions: intergroup crisis, intragroup crisis and no crisis. Finally, I presented participants with the new descriptions of a visionary and representative leader that I developed to hold competency constant. In keeping with my hypothesis, I predicted that participants would rate the visionary leader more favorably than the representative leader in the intragroup crisis condition. Conversely, I predicted that they would rate the representative leader more favorably in the intergroup crisis condition.

I repeated the process used in Experiment 1 to create an overall measure of leader favorability. I averaged each participant's responses to the four leader preference questions for each type of leader, producing an overall measure of leader favorability for the visionary leader and the representative leader. Cronbach's alpha for favorability of the visionary leader was 0.87, while favorability of the representative leader yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. Neither of these alphas could be increased by removing any items.

Method

Participants and Design

Participants who are over the age of 18 and residents of the United States were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in exchange for monetary compensation. I randomly assigned participants to one of three conditions in a 3 (type of crisis: intragroup, intergroup, no crisis) x 2 (type of leader: visionary, representative) mixed model design with type of crisis serving as a between-subjects factor and type of leader serving as a within-subjects factor.

Procedure

Upon beginning the experiment in MTurk, participants in the intragroup crisis condition were asked to imagine themselves in a workplace scenario in which their organization's lead supplier has just declared bankruptcy, crippling the company's revenue. In addition, the president of the organization abruptly resigned, creating a collective crisis by exacerbating the damage the company faces in profits. (See Appendix A). The organization is asking employees to vote for a new leader in order to ensure the company's survival, a decision that will affect the company as a whole. After reading profiles of the two potential candidates (see Appendix E), participants were asked to endorse their preferred leader using the same eight-item scale used in Halevy et al. (2011) and in Experiment 1 of the present research. I predicted that participants in the intragroup condition would rate the visionary candidate (Candidate A) as favorable to the representative candidate. This prediction is in line with the hypothesis that in intragroup contexts, visionary leaders provide group members with hope during times of crisis and are more favorable than representative leaders, who may be seen as too "typical" of the group and not exceptional enough to incite meaningful change.

Participants in the intergroup crisis condition were asked to imagine themselves in a workplace scenario in which their branch is competing with another branch for the highest profit gain, after which point the lower achieving branch will be dissolved. In order to avoid being laid off from the company, the employees have the opportunity to vote for a task leader to increase their chances of success (See Appendix B). After reading the same candidate profiles as the participants in the intragroup condition (See Appendix E), participants in the intergroup condition were also asked to endorse the leaders using the same eight-item scale used by Halevy et al.'s (2011) and in Experiment 1. I predicted that participants in the intergroup condition would rate the representative candidate (Candidate B) as favorable to the visionary candidate. This prediction is in line with the hypothesis that in intergroup contexts, a visionary leader who carries the risk of straying too far from the group norm becomes a liability and therefore less favorable, while a representative leader who embodies the values of the in-group and reaffirms the group's identity is seen as "one of us."

Participants in the no crisis condition were asked to imagine themselves in a workplace scenario in which they are simply being asked to vote for a new organizational leader (See Appendix C). This condition served as a control for the crisis conditions.

Manipulation Check

I used the same manipulation checks that were used in Experiment 1 to assess the perceived vision and representativeness of each candidate and to ensure that each leadership style was effectively portrayed. As in Experiment 1, the profiles successfully portrayed the intended visionary style for Candidate A and representative style for Candidate B. Candidate A was perceived as significantly more visionary than Candidate B ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.00$ vs. $M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.10$) across all crisis conditions, $F(1, 203) = 18.73$, $p < .001$. Likewise, Candidate B was perceived as significantly more representative than Candidate A ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.05$ vs. $M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.15$) across all crisis conditions, $F(1, 203) = 70.92$, $p < .001$.

Leader Favorability

To test the hypothesis that people prefer a visionary leader in an intragroup crisis but prefer a representative leader in an intergroup crisis, I conducted a 3 (type of crisis: intragroup, intergroup, no crisis) x 2 (type of leader: visionary, representative) MANOVA on the favorability ratings for each leader. I expected to find a significant type of crisis x type of leader interaction effect. I predicted that participants in the intragroup crisis condition would endorse the visionary candidate to a higher degree than the representative candidate, while participants in the intergroup crisis condition would endorse the representative candidate more than the visionary candidate. I also expected participants in the no crisis condition to endorse the visionary candidate to a higher degree, as this reflects the hypothesis tested in Experiment 1 and is in line with Halevy et al.'s (2011) hypothesis that people generally prefer visionary leaders to representative leaders.

The results did not support my predictions; the type of leader x crisis condition interaction effect did not reach significance, $F(1, 203) = 2.15$, $p = .119$. To further test my hypothesis, I conducted simple effects tests comparing favorability ratings of the visionary and representative leaders in each crisis condition. The means for these tests can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Means of Simple Effects Tests for Experiment 2

	Condition	Favorability of Visionary Leader	Favorability of Representative Leader
No Crisis	Mean	3.00*	3.87*
	Std. Deviation	0.99	0.99
	N	65	65
Intragroup Crisis	Mean	3.33	3.61
	Std. Deviation	1.00	1.05
	N	68	68
Intergroup Crisis	Mean	3.18	3.51
	Std. Deviation	0.99	1.05
	N	73	73
Total	Mean	3.17	3.66
	Std. Deviation	1.00	1.04
	N	206	206

Note. * indicates a significant effect

As shown in Table 2, participants showed a significant preference for the representative leader ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.99$) in the no crisis condition, $F (1, 203) = 14.70$, $p < .001$. Participants did not express a significant preference for the visionary leader ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 1.00$) over the representative leader ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 3.61$) in the intragroup crisis condition, $F (1, 203) = 1.6$, $p = .21$. They demonstrated a similar pattern in the intergroup crisis condition, $F (1, 203) = 2.27$, p

= .13, showing no significant difference in preference for the representative leader (M = 3.51, SD = 1.05) over the visionary leader (M = 3.18, SD = 0.99).

In addition to testing my hypothesis, I also conducted some supplemental exploratory analyses to examine preferences for leadership style in the context of any crisis (i.e., intragroup *or* intergroup) versus no crisis. Specifically, I ran a 2 (crisis condition: crisis, no crisis) x 2 (type of leader: visionary, representative) MANOVA, with type of leader serving as the within-subjects factor and crisis condition serving as the between-subjects factor. The analyses revealed a main effect of type of leader, F (1, 204) = 18.38, p < .001. As found in the previous analyses, the participants preferred the representative leader (M = 3.66, SD = 1.04) to the visionary leader (M = 3.17, SD = 1.00). This main effect was qualified by a significant crisis condition x type of leader interaction effect, F (1, 204) = 4.31, p = .039.

I followed up on this interaction effect by conducting a series of planned comparisons. In the no crisis condition, participants preferred the representative leader (M = 3.88, SD = 1.00) over the visionary leader (M = 3.00, SD = 0.99), F (1, 204) = 14.79, p < .001. This difference was attenuated, although still significant, in the crisis conditions, F (1, 204) = 3.87, p = .05. Participants still preferred the representative leader (M = 3.56, SD = 1.05) to the visionary leader (M = 3.25, SD = 1.00).

CHAPTER EIGHT: EXPERIMENT 2 DISCUSSION

Experiment 2 tested the hypotheses that people prefer a visionary leader in an intragroup crisis and during times of no crisis, but prefer a representative leader in an intergroup crisis. The results did not support my hypotheses; I did not find the predicted type of leader x crisis condition interaction effect. While participants in the no crisis condition significantly preferred a representative leader, participants demonstrated no significant difference in leader favorability between the two leadership styles in the intragroup crisis scenario or the intergroup crisis scenario.

One reason for the absence of a significant favorability for one leadership style over the other in the crisis scenarios may relate to the leader profiles used in this study. Perhaps in a crisis, people want a leader who is clearly competent enough to handle the crisis, and the revised profiles equalized competence to such a degree that both of the candidates presented as equally good choices. This focus on competence could explain why Halevy et al. (2011) reported a preference for the visionary leader (portrayed as highly competent) over a representative leader (portrayed as less competent) in a personal crisis and in a group crisis.

In the supplementary analyses, when the crisis conditions were combined to create one general crisis condition, participants *did* prefer a representative leader significantly more than a visionary leader. These results contradict Halevy et al.'s (2011) findings as well, but for potentially different reasons. Perhaps in a crisis employees value security and stability more than vision and innovation. While a visionary leader may provide a sense of hope and promise for the future, their outside perspective and unconventional style of leadership may not provide the

necessary sense of stability and security that a representative leader provides. Thus, in a crisis, employees might prefer a representative leader.

CHAPTER NINE: GENERAL DISCUSSION

The two experiments examined employees' leadership style preferences in various organizational climates. The first experiment tested the hypothesis that controlling for uneven competency depictions in Halevy et al.'s (2011) leader candidate profiles would reveal a similar pattern to their original results, wherein employees would favor a visionary candidate to a representative candidate. The second experiment tested the hypothesis that employees would prefer a visionary leader in an intragroup crisis scenario and in a no crisis scenario, but would favor a representative leader in an intergroup crisis scenario.

Employees do not seem to significantly prefer a visionary leader to a representative leader when competence is equal. In fact, the results from these experiments indicate that when both types of leaders are presented as equally competent, employees demonstrate a preference for a representative leader. These findings contradict Halevy et al's (2011) conclusion that employees generally prefer a visionary leader. Rather, my findings suggest that employees might actually favor a leader that is more prototypical of the rest of the group in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

Although my hypotheses were not supported by the data, the present research contributes new knowledge to the existing organizational leadership research through its examination of employees' preference for vision and representativeness. Successful leaders are often characterized by their style of leadership, and—more specifically—as visionary and representative. However, it can be difficult to determine which of these traits is *more* responsible for a leader's success. By separating these traits and limiting employees to indicate a preference for one trait or the other, the present research more precisely examined which quality is valued

more in various organizational settings. Based on the findings presented here, it seems that while vision and representativeness are both important to followers, representativeness may be slightly more important.

The line of research offers important practical and theoretical contributions to the corporate community. Organizations tend to allocate certain advantages to leaders, including higher salaries, more opportunities for advancement, and higher status. From an employee's perspective, this elevated prestige may be automatically interpreted as a symbol of distance from the rest of the group. Perhaps employees do not want a leader that seems even further removed because of their leadership style. That is, employees may not always value a leader that is known for groundbreaking ideas and a penchant for overturning the status quo—but rather one that they can more closely relate to and believe in because of an inherent familiarity. The practical implications of this possibility are extremely pertinent to leader selection practices. By more fully understanding employees' perspectives toward certain leadership traits and tendencies, organizations can select more effective leaders. Although employees are not always consulted or involved in hiring processes, their preference for different leadership styles provides important insight for hiring decisions.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

A notable limitation of the present studies concerns the crisis vignettes. It is not clear whether the intragroup crisis scenario was perceived as purely a collective crisis with no intergroup elements, or whether the intergroup crisis scenario was perceived as intended, with no collective crisis elements. It is possible, then, that people do in fact differentially prefer visionary and representative leaders in an intragroup versus and intergroup crisis, but that participants in Experiment 2 did not clearly distinguish between the intragroup and intergroup crisis scenarios.

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Including a manipulation check would have revealed the extent to which participants viewed each type of crisis as either intragroup or intergroup. Future studies should pretest various crisis scenarios to determine how well the vignettes represent intragroup and intergroup crises.

Future research could investigate how additional organizational contexts affect preference for visionary and representative leadership styles. For example, people might favor specific leadership styles in certain industries (e.g., perhaps in the military, people prefer a representative leader to a visionary leader). Examining specific industry contexts would reveal whether these differences exist. Cultural differences may also play a role, and future studies should investigate whether people in collectivist or individualist cultures prefer visionary or representative leaders. These factors may affect how organizations evaluate and select leaders whether a crisis exists or not, and such research may therefore provide insight into valuable tools for leadership development practices.

In addition, it would be compelling to investigate the differences in leader preference from various personnel positions in an organization. For example, instead of portraying scenarios from an employee's perspective, future research might frame similar scenarios from an executive employee's position. In actual organizational settings, higher-level employees are more likely to be in charge of hiring decisions. If these individuals value certain leadership styles over others, it is important to examine how the decision makers' preferences line up with those of the employees to determine the best fit for an organization.

Finally, I think it would also be prudent for future research to investigate the effects that visionary and representative leadership styles have on multi-level leadership environments. A growing body of research has examined how certain organizational and group contexts benefit from several leaders as opposed to one or a few, sometimes referred to as "shared leadership"

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(see Anderson & Sun, 2015; Choi, Kim & Kang, 2017; and Pearce & Sims, 2002). Future studies could contribute to the overall body of leadership research by incorporating elements from the present research (i.e., crisis manipulation) to assess if and how certain leadership styles compliment or oppose each other in certain contexts, and the effects that these relationships have on the rest of the group.

Summary and Conclusion

Leadership style often has a profound influence on group members, and therefore a significant impact on an organization's outcomes. The present research examined two prominent styles, visionary and representative, in the context of different types of organizational crisis. Although the results of these studies did not fully support the hypotheses, future research should continue investigating the complex working relationship between leadership styles and employee response. The information drawn from such research may contribute knowledge of great importance for the organizational community.

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APPENDIX A: INTRAGROUP CRISIS SCENARIO

Imagine you are an employee at Brighton Inc., a supplier of consumer goods. Brighton is facing

two major setbacks that have thrown it into a crisis, jeopardizing the company's future and the

future of all of its employees.

First, your lead supplier just declared bankruptcy and has halted all shipments indefinitely. This

supplier accounted for 65% of the company's profits, creating a huge deficit. If Brighton fails to

raise profits sufficiently to account for the 65% deficit by next quarter, the company will be

forced to shut down and everyone, including you, will be laid off.

Second, your company president has unexpectedly resigned in the midst of the supply crisis,

further crippling the company by vacating his leadership position so suddenly.

You are being asked to vote on a new company president. It is crucial for this new president to

lead the organization to increase profits quickly. Two candidates are being considered for this

position, Candidate A and Candidate B. Please read the following descriptions of these

candidates and answer the questions that follow.

Imagine you are an employee at Brighton Inc., a large supplier of consumer goods with branches in several cities. The company is undergoing a merger, and is eliminating certain branches to decrease shipping costs.

Your branch and another branch in a different city are the two lowest performing branches in the organization. The board of directors has decided that whichever branch shows less improvement in profits by next quarter will be dissolved and members of that branch will be laid off.

The board is presenting an opportunity for the employees to elect a task leader in order to develop and implement a plan to improve your branch's chance of increasing profits. You are being asked to vote on a task leader to help your branch outperform the competing branch.

Two candidates are being considered for this position, Candidate A and Candidate B. Please read the following descriptions of these candidates and answer the questions that follow.

APPENDIX C: NO CRISIS SCENARIO

Imagine you are an employee at Brighton Inc., a supplier of consumer goods. Your organization's president recently accepted a promotion to a position in the corporate headquarters, leaving a vacancy for his position. You are being requested to vote on a new company president. Two candidates are being considered for this position, Candidate A and Candidate B. Please carefully read the following descriptions of these candidates and answer the questions that follow.

APPENDIX D: HALEVY ET AL. (2011) CANDIDATE DESCRIPTIONS

<u>Visionary Candidate:</u> Candidate A often inspires coworkers to act on behalf of the organization, and has a vision for the future of the organization. This candidate is exceptionally persuasive and well argued. Considered somewhat of an outsider, Candidate A has distinct opinions and attitudes compared to other members of the organization. Although they do not represent what other members have in common, this candidate is committed to the organization wholeheartedly.

<u>Representative Candidate:</u> Candidate B often takes part in actions to enhance the welfare of the organization, although this individual seldom has opinions of their own regarding the future of the organization. Candidate B has typical communication and persuasion skills and represents what is characteristic about the organization. This candidate has opinions and attitudes that are highly similar to those of other members, and identifies strongly with the organization. People often associate this candidate with the organization.

APPENDIX E: REVISED CANDIDATE DESCRIPTIONS

<u>Visionary Candidate:</u> Candidate A often inspires coworkers to act on behalf of the organization, and has an innovative vision for the future of the organization. This candidate is persuasive, well-argued, and is considered somewhat of an individualist that has distinct opinions and attitudes compared to other members of the organization. Although they do not always represent what other members of the organization have in common, this candidate is fully committed to the organization.

<u>Representative Candidate:</u> Candidate B often takes part in actions on behalf of the organization and has a vision for the future of the organization that is representative of the collective values of the employees. Candidate B is persuasive, well-argued, and represents what is characteristic about the organization. This candidate has opinions and attitudes that are highly similar to those of other members, and identifies strongly with the organization. People often associate this candidate with the organization.