CURRENT RESEARCH IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

EFFECTS OF LEADERS' SELF-SACRIFICIAL BEHAVIOR AND COMPETENCY ON FOLLOWERS' ATTRIBUTION OF CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP AMONG AMERICANS AND KOREANS

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ABSTRACT

This study develops and tests a model of followers' attribution of charismatic qualities to their leader. The model stipulates that, leaders' visions being equal, followers' attributions of charisma to their leader will be determined by their leader's individual attributes and situational contexts. Specifically, this study theorizes that leaders' attributes, such as competence and sacrifice, become an important basis for followers to infer charismatic qualities from their leader. In addition to these leadership attributes, this study also postulates that situational contexts such as uncertainty and crises perceived by followers are also conducive to their attributions. Drawing upon the theories and literature, we derived two main and three interaction-effect hypotheses; the hypotheses were tested with data from vignette studies that included 501 Americans and 259 Koreans. Consistent with the main hypothesis predictions, the results revealed that subjects attributed more charisma to their leaders when the latter exhibited greater self-sacrifice and superior competence. The results also showed moderation effects on leaders' competence by sacrifice (American subjects) and on leaders' sacrifice by situational uncertainty (Korean subjects). The implications of these findings will be discussed in detail.

Since M. Weber (1864-1920) introduced the notion of charisma, charismatic leadership has profoundly influenced generations of social scientists. Although sociologists and political scientists in the early 1960s and 1970s took the lead in the first generation of the research (Etzioni, 1975; Blau, 1963; Willner, 1968; Friedrich, 1961), it is organizational psychologists in the 1990s who have established charismatic leadership as one of the most prolific research paradigms. Cracking the code of mystical charisma, the so-called neo-Weberians (Jermier, 1993; Calas, 1993; Conger, 1989) have advanced our knowledge of it in various aspects, such as its personality correlates (House, Spangler, & Woycke, 1991), behaviors (Biggart, 1989; Conger, 1989), and types of competencies (House, 1977; Bass, 1985; Howell & Frost, 1989). Our study is part of these larger efforts attempting to understand previously unknown profiles of charisma in organizational areas.

Weber (1968) defines charisma as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (p. 241). In this definition, Weber (1968, p.242) made it clear that charisma is determined not only by the personal profiles of a leader, but also by followers' responses to and beliefs in their leaders. Followers attribute their leader's charisma through the processes of their own validation and perception. Endorsing this attribution approach, Willner (1984) also suggests that charismatic leadership is largely relational and perceptual: "It is not what the leader is but what people see the leader as that counts in generating the charismatic relationship" (p.14). Conger and Kanungo (1987) also indicate that the image of charismatic leaders is socially constructed and validated by followers' attributions. In a similar context, Ayman (1993) argues that followers have their own implicit theories on how a leader should be or behave and these implicit theories shape followers' attributions of charisma to their leader. Elaborating on this argument, Schyns and Sanders (2003, 2004; Schyns, 2001) demonstrate how followers' self-efficacy and moods affect their implicit theories on leaders. According to this follower-attribution perspective, the response of followers is the critical test of charisma. A person cannot be regarded as a charismatic leader unless followers acknowledge the person's exceptional qualities (Jermier, 1993; Bryman, 1993; Shamir, 1991; also see Etzioni, 1975, pp. 305-305). Followers' attributions operate as essential links between leaders' profiles and the social construction of charismatic leadership among followers.

In line with this follower-attribution approach, we highlight two leadership profiles based on which followers attribute charisma to their leader: self-sacrificial behavior and superior competence. We define competence as the state or quality of personal attributes such as skills, expertise, and knowledge that allow the holder to gain a competitive advantage over others (McClelland, 1961, 1976); competency is not the performance itself but constitutes the potential for performance (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). Self-sacrificial behavior is an abandonment or postponement of personal interests and privileges for the collective welfare (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999). We differentiate sacrificial behavior from competency by tying competency to a person's internal attributes such as skills, expertise, and knowledge that are not necessarily expressed in behaviors.

The goal of this study is to examine how and to what extent superior competencies and self-sacrificial behaviors demonstrated by a leader determine followers' attributions of charismatic leadership to that leader. The key questions we attempt to answer are as follows: (1) whether the

leadership profiles of sacrificial behavior and competency play an independent role in inducing followers' attributions of charisma or they have a synergy effect prompted by each other; (2) whether social and organizational contexts (e.g., uncertainties and risks) play a role in the attribution beyond the leadership profiles of competence and sacrificial behavior

In the sections that follow, we review the literature of charisma and derive specific hypotheses on the attribution of charisma. Then we will test the hypotheses with the sample of Americans and Koreans.

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

Research on charismatic leadership indicates that a comprehensive understanding of charismatic leadership requires the following aspects of human agency and structural forces (Jermier, 1993; Beyer, 1999; Trice and Beyer, 1986): (1) a set of appealing ideas or visions; (2) profiles of an extraordinarily gifted person; (3) a set of followers and their mechanisms of attribution; and (4) social contexts such as crises and uncertainties. In the review of each aspect, we will highlight the processes through which and the conditions under which followers infer charismatic leadership from their leaders.

Weber singles out *vision* as the most important component in charismatic authority: "The bearer of charisma enjoys loyalty and authority by virtue of a mission (or vision) believed to be embodied in him" (1968, p.1117). Leadership researchers also agree that vision is a primary source of charismatic leadership (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bass, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). A leader's vision contrasts an idealized future with the current state; the visualized gap, in turn, drives followers to follow the path leading to the better future. The vision also enhances a common organizational identity among followers, invoking the shared stake in their future. As followers experience more motivational boosts and common identity with a vision, followers will try to interpret the sources and are likely to attribute the credit to the charismatic qualities of their leader, who initiated the vision.

A salient vision is just the first step for the charismatic leader. Once a vision is articulated, charismatic leaders should be able to communicate and plant it in the minds of followers. Only when a vision is communicated thoroughly, so that followers own it, can those followers believe in the powerful presence of an idealized future and devote themselves to its implementation (House, 1977; Bass, 1985). Before followers decide to accept the vision as their own, however, they want to verify their leader's ability to realize the vision; therefore, they will seek out relevant information from various sources concerning their leader's competence (Bass, 1985; House, 1977), inspirational confidence (Berlew, 1974; Conger, 1989), dominance (House, 1977), and rhetorical ability (Conger, 1989). Weber (1968) also draws attention to this issue of credibility by defining charisma as a special personal quality or gift *endorsed by God,* by virtue of which followers consider their leader extraordinary and supernatural. We also postulate that, as a leader demonstrates more competencies, followers are likely to perceive their leader's ability to realize the vision to be more credible, and thus attribute charisma to their leader.

Charismatic leaders also take on high personal risks and engage in self-sacrificing activities to communicate their commitment to the vision (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999). Compared with other

leadership behaviors such as articulating and communicating an ideological goal or vision, showing high expectations and confidence in followers, taking extraordinary risks and setting a personal example of the values inherent in the vision (Biggart, 1989; Conger, 1989; Puffer, 1990), sacrifice has received little research attention (see Halverson et al. 2004 for an exception). Despite this lack of research, self-sacrificial behaviors by leaders are known to be crucial in priming and mobilizing followers' voluntary participation in their own sacrifices, especially when none are willing to commit personal sacrifices in crises and uncertainties. Choi and Mai-Dalton's (1999) study shows that self-sacrificial behaviors have been common practices by most historic corporate gurus in various organizational domains such as (a) the division of labor, (b) the distribution of rewards, and (c) the exercise of power (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999); they also maintain that self-sacrifice by a leader is one of the most prominent leadership behaviors for heightening followers' perceptions of charisma in their leader. Leaders are perceived to be credible when they devote themselves to a position in a disinterested manner and show a real concern for their followers' needs, rather than for their own self-interest. Following this research lead on sacrificial leadership, we propose that the more that leaders are prepared to take on higher personal risks or incur higher costs across the domains, the more likely are followers to perceive them to be charismatic in the sense of being worthy of trust and obedience.

Some have also argued that contexts such as uncertainty and crisis are conducive to the emergence of charismatic leadership, and that followers' perceptions on such contexts prompt their attributions of charismatic leadership (Blau, 1963; Jacobsen & House, 2001; Willner, 1984; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Conger, 1993; Halverson, Holladay, Kazama, and Quinones, 2004). Weber has explicitly pointed this out by indicating that a charismatic leader is likelier to emerge under certain conditions of distress and crisis (1968, p. 1112). When an organization faces crises and uncertainties, charismatic leaders leverage such situations to advocate a new vision of the future (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993; Hunt, Boal, & Dodge, 1999). Shils (1965) also indicates that charismatic qualities are more likely to be attributed to a leader when the vision articulated by the leader presents "an order-creating, order-disclosing, order-discovering power, under such uncertainties and crises" (p. 204). According to these arguments, perceptions of charisma among followers would be stronger when the situations followers perceive in their organization are uncertain or risky. For instance, when followers frame a situation negatively, full of distress and crisis, the situation is more conducive to the emergence of charisma. By contrast, if followers frame a situation positively by perceiving the stable growth of opportunities rather than threats or crises, they will perceive their leader to be charismatic only if he or she convinces followers of the need for a more promising future with constructed crises. As such, when uncertainties and crises increase the distress experienced by followers, followers are more likely to seek someone who can resolve the challenges.

HYPOTHESES

The literature on charismatic leadership shows that charisma motivates followers by showing them a better future with salient visions. A leader's vision becomes more salient when it is framed in a context to save an organization from current crises and protect it from future uncertainties; crises and uncertainties are therefore conducive to the emergence of charisma. Under enormous situational uncertainties and crises, the vision advanced by charisma is accepted among followers as an appealing solution to the current crises and uncertain future. As such,

charisma is born in the minds of followers when a leader begins to convince followers of a better future with vision. Faced with a new vision and before committing themselves to the vision, however, followers also want to verify their leader's ability to realize the vision. Our study postulates that the competencies and sacrificial behaviors demonstrated by the leader are among the most influential sources from which followers infer their leader's credibility. We also propose that as a leader's attributes become more transcendental in the eyes of followers, the followers perceive the leadership to be more credible and thus attribute greater charisma to that leader.

This study does not investigate the sense of vision itself. Instead, assuming that the effectiveness of auch a vision is held constant across leaders, we investigate the mechanisms and functions of leaders' competencies and sacrifices in determining followers' attributions of charismatic leadership. As indicated above, followers' attributions of charisma to a leader depend on their perceptions of the leader's ability to realize the vision. The followers' assessment of a leader's credibility is in turn gleaned from their perception of the leader's competencies and self-sacrifice behavior:

Hypothesis 1: As followers perceive greater competence in their leaders, they are more likely to attribute that competence to the leaders' possession of charisma.

Hypothesis 2: As followers observe more sacrificial behaviors on the part of their leaders, they are more likely to attribute those behaviors to the leaders' possession of charisma.

We also hypothesize that competencies and sacrifices will interact with each other in a positive, synergetic way. Competencies without sacrifice may not be persuasive enough to draw followers' convictions to a leader's vision, because followers might suspect the leader's real motivations; sacrifice without competency also breeds doubts among followers about the likelihood of a leader's ability to actualize his or her visions.

Hypothesis 3 (Moderation Effect of Competency with Sacrifice): As leaders demonstrate more personal competencies and show sacrificial behaviors, followers are more likely to attribute them to their leader's possession of charisma.

In addition to these hypotheses, this study also addresses the interaction effects of sacrifice behaviors and competencies by contexts. As discussed, situational contexts facilitate the emergence of charismatic leaders. Charisma is more likely to emerge when followers perceive the situation to be increasingly uncertain and risky. The more uncertain and risky the situations, the more salient the leader's sacrificial behavior and competencies. Because situational uncertainties and risks trigger followers' instincts to protect their psychological safety zones, they pay more attention to the sources (e.g., sacrifice and competency) that resolve these problems.

Hypothesis 4 (Moderation Effect of Uncertainty with Competency): As a situation becomes more uncertain and unfavorable, followers will attribute leaders' competencies to their possession of charisma.

Hypothesis 5 (Moderation Effect of Uncertainty with Sacrifice): As a situation becomes more uncertain and unfavorable, followers will attribute leaders' sacrifices to their possession of charisma.

This study tests the hypotheses with samples drawn from the U.S. and Korea. The literature on cross-cultural leadership indicates that sacrifices requested of leaders are more demanding in a collectivistic society, whereas the competence of leaders is more salient in a meritocracy-oriented, individualistic society (Erez & Somech, 1996; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Hofstede, 1993; Leung & Bond 1984). Compared with North America, Korea is known as a collectivistic society where people are accustomed to sacrifice their personal benefits for the collective welfare, and these cultural demands are more heavily imposed on the social elite. Korea is also recognized as a strong uncertainty-avoidance society whose people feel threatened easily by uncertain or unknown situations, whereas the U.S. is a relatively weak uncertainty-avoidance society whose people accept uncertainty as a normal feature of life and feel comparatively comfortable in ambiguous situations (Hofstede, 1993; Cho & Yoon, 2001). Our speculation is that the combination of Korea's orientation toward collectivism and strong uncertainty avoidance make Koreans more inductive to sacrifice and uncertainty, whereas Americans are more responsive to individual competencies. At this preliminary stage, we do not formalize these speculations into hypotheses. Instead, we will explore them by examining data.

METHOD

Experimental Design and Subjects

The current research is based on a vignette study in which 501 Americans (352 students and 149 employees) and 259 Koreans (120 students and 139 employees) constitute the final samples. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of the following eight conditions: 2[self-sacrificial leader behavior (S): yes versus no] x 2[organizational uncertainty (U): high versus low] x 2 [leader competence(C): high versus low]. To manipulate the independent variables in the eight (2x2x2) cells of this factorial design, we provided different scenarios on each cell.

Each scenario consisted of four paragraphs (see Appendix for an example). These scenarios pertained to a situation facing an electronics company and a leadership episode about the company's president. The first paragraph illustrated the general information about the electronics company. This portion was the same for all eight scenarios. The second paragraph described the business environment facing the company, and the employee's perceptions of the resulting organizational uncertainty as either favorable or unfavorable. The third paragraph profiled the president of the company as either competent or incompetent. The fourth paragraph illustrated the leader's behaviors as either self-sacrificial or non-sacrificial. Self-sacrificial leader behavior was treated by adding incidents of self-sacrificial behaviors to the behaviors prescribed for the non-sacrificial leaders.

Procedures

The study involved two groups of subjects, students and industry employees. The U.S. student subjects were undergraduates enrolled in a large mid-western university, and the Korean student

subjects were undergraduates enrolled in several universities in Korea. The U.S. industry subjects were white-collar employees of accounting and manufacturing firms located in the mid-west and the east. The Korean industry subjects were also white-collar employees of manufacturing firms in the Seoul area.

The U.S. and Korean studies were designed independently, at different times. Nevertheless, we used the same procedures for both. For the student subjects, the scenarios and questionnaire were administered either in classroom settings or on a take-home basis. Each subject was randomly assigned to one of the eight scenarios. The subjects were required to think of themselves as employees of the company while they were reading the scenarios, and to respond to the questionnaire immediately after reading the materials. The student subjects were given extra credit for participation and were told that the purpose of the study was to investigate how people react to various types of leaders. When in-class administration was not feasible (e.g., in a physical conditioning class), the complete study packet (consisting of the instrument, letter of introduction, consent form, return envelope, and participation credit card) was distributed to each prospective student. These subjects completed the instrument on a take-home basis and returned the completed questionnaires in the envelopes provided. For the industry subjects, complete study packets were distributed to prospective subjects through the human resource personnel of the participating firms. Each subject returned the completed questionnaire directly to the investigators, using the pre-stamped envelope provided in the study packet. In the US study, 637 subjects among 740 participants (457/500 students and 180/240 industry employees; 91% and 75% response rates respectively) returned the complete packages; in the Korean study, 316 subjects among 380 participants (156/180 students and 160/200 industry employees; 87% and 80% response rates respectively) returned the packages.

Among the US students, 39 subjects were dropped because they had already participated in a similar study in different classes. In addition, two filter items were used in the instrument, to detect cases that involved arbitrary responses. For example, one filter item read: "He has been the president of the company for one year." In all of the scenarios, it was clearly indicated that the president had been in the position for one month. Hence, the subjects who responded positively to this question were eliminated. This screening procedure eliminated an additional 61 students and 26 industry participants, reducing the initial sample sizes, respectively, to 357 (students) and 154 (employees). Finally, listwise deletion of missing values reduced the final samples to 501 (352 students and 149 employees). Similar procedures reduced the original size of the Korean sample from 300 (151 students and 149 employees) to 259 subjects (120 students and 139 employees). Aanalysis did not reveal any significant differences in key variables (i.e., manipulations and response variables) between the deleted subjects and those included.

Measures

Three scales were adopted from two versions of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or MLQ (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1995). The scale for charisma was adopted from the MLQ-5X (Short Form; Bass & Avolio, 1995). Bass and Avolio reported convergent and discriminant validity of the MLQ Form 5X based on analyses of over 2,000 cases. The items are measured on a five-point scale (1 = Not at all and 5 = Frequently if not Always): (1) He inspires loyalty to the organization; (2) He acts in ways that build your respect; (3) He is an inspiration to people; (4)

He inspires personal loyalty; (5) He instills pride in being associated with him. To ensure the cross-cultural validity of the measure, the MLQ items were translated back to back into Korean and English by bilingual individuals. Reliability levels are .93 for the U.S. and .83 for the Korean sample.

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks

Manipulation checks were conducted with the U.S. sample with respect to the three independent variables: self-sacrificial leader behavior, leader competence, and organizational uncertainty. For each of them, there were three manipulation check items. These items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree). Significant differences were obtained for self-sacrificial leader behavior vs. no self-sacrificial behavior (students: M = 6.41, sd = .64 vs. M = 3.22, sd = 1.19; industry: M = 6.02, sd = .71 vs. M = 2.74, sd = 1.19), high leader competence vs. low leader competence (students: M = 6.13, sd = .75 vs. M = 2.99, sd = 1.11; industry: M = 5.81, sd = .78 vs. M = 3.03, sd = 1.22), and high organizational uncertainty vs. low organizational uncertainty (students: M = 5.16, sd = 1.14 vs. M = 2.52, sd = .98; industry: M = 5.23, SD = 1.15 vs. M = 2.83, sd = 1.17). All differences were statistically significant at p<.001 (N = 352 for students, N = 149 for industry employees).

With the Korean sample, there was one manipulation check item for each of the three independent variables, and these items were measured on a 5-point scale (1 = Not at all and 5 = Frequently if not Always). Significant differences were obtained for self-sacrificial leader behavior vs. no self-sacrificial behavior (students: M = 3.03, sd = .0.74 vs. M = 2.07, sd = 1.34; industry: M = 2.96, sd = 0.87 vs. M = 1.87, sd = 1.01), high leader competence vs. low leader competence (students: M = 3.05, sd = 0.67 vs. M = 2.56, sd = 0.91; industry: M = 3.13, sd = 0.76 vs. M = 2.45, sd = 1.02), and high organizational uncertainty vs. low organizational uncertainty (students: M = 3.12, sd = 0.88 vs. M = 1.68, sd = 0.98; industry: M = 3.14, SD = 1.01 vs. M = 1.99, sd = 1.21). All differences were statistically significant at p<.001 (N = 120 for students, N = 139 for industry employees) (see Appendix 2 for more detailed information on manipulation check analyses).

Main Analyses

Table 1 reports the results testing the key hypotheses. To test the hypotheses, the attribution of charisma is regressed on the three treatment variables and the three interaction effect terms for the Korean and U.S. subjects, controlling for the industry-versus-student effect. In the analysis, the three treatment variables are transformed respectively into dummy variables, and low treatments on each variable are omitted for regression. To build up greater variance and statistical power, the industry is transformed again into a dummy variable, and the student category is omitted. Given that the data were collected independently, the analysis is done separately for the U.S. and Korean samples.

Hypothesis 1 predicts the main effect of competency, whereas Hypothesis 2 predicts the main effect of self-sacrifice. In support of the predictions, the greater the competence and sacrifice of the leader, the stronger the perception of the leader's charisma in the minds of followers. The results are consistent across both the U.S. and Korean subjects. Compared with the effect of competency, a leader's sacrifice strengthens the attribution more than a leader's competence; the standardized regression coefficients indicate that the effect of sacrifice is greater than that of competence (.59 vs. .37 for US; .46 vs. .23 for Korea).

Table 1. Unstandardized and Standardized (in parentheses) OLS Coefficient Estimates from Regressing the Attribution of Charisma on Relevant Independent Variables

Independent Variables	US (n = 501)	Korea (n = 259)
Industry	-.380 (-.184)***	-.163 (-.113)[+]
High Sacrifice (HS)	1.114 (.590)***	.665 (.463)***
High Competence (HC)	.711 (.376)***	.343 (.239)*
High Uncertainty (HU)	-.001 (.002)	.253 (.176)
HS*HC	-.309 (-.144)**	-.113 (.070)
HS*HU	.166 (.076)	-.340 (-.217)*
HC*HU	-.185 (.085)	-.230 (-.142)
Constant	1.782 ***	2.111 ***
R Square	.400	.131

+ p < .10, p <.05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Note 1. Industry, High Sacrifice, and High Uncertainty are dummy variables; their omitted categories are student, low sacrifice, and low uncertainty.

Table 1 also reports the results of testing interaction hypotheses among the three independent variables, controlling for the main effects and the industry effect. Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5 predict the interaction effects of sacrifice by competence, uncertainty by competence, and uncertainty by sacrifice, respectively. The pattern of significant interactions suggests that U.S. and Korean subjects respond differently to the same leadership treatment. Koreans show a significant interaction of sacrifice with uncertainty, whereas Americans show a significant interaction of sacrifice with competence. The interaction of high competence with high uncertainty did not attain statistical significance across the two samples.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Charisma Attributions across the Conditions

	Sacrifice			
	High Competence		Low Competence	
	High Uncertainty	Low Uncertainty	High Uncertainty	Low Uncertainty
U.S. Sample (Mean = 4.02; SD = .69)				
Student (n = 174)	4.2 (.65)	4.3 (.64)	4.0 (.75)	3.9 (.73)
Industry (n = 80)	4.1 (.60)	3.8 (.68)	3.7 (.64)	3.6 (.70)
Combined (254)	4.2 (.64)	4.2 (.69)	3.9 (.73)	3.8 (.73)
Korea Sample (Mean = 3.55; SD = .67)				
Student (n = 66)	3.3 (.82)	3.9 (.86)	3.5 (.64)	3.8 (.60)
Industry (n = 69)	3.5 (.57)	3.8 (.58)	3.4 (.63)	3.2 (.68)
Combined (n = 135)	3.4 (.71)	3.8 (.66)	3.5 (.63)	3.5 (.69)
	No Sacrifice			
	High Competence		Low Competence	
	High Uncertainty	Low Uncertainty	High Uncertainty	Low Uncertainty
U.S. Sample (Mean = 2.82; SD = .79)				
Student (n = 178)	3.4 (.68)	3.6 (.73)	2.7 (.84)	2.7 (.76)
Industry (n = 69)	2.6 (.92)	2.9 (.66)	2.7 (1.0)	2.8 (.61)
Combined (n = 247)	3.2 (.83)	2.9 (.65)	2.7 (.88)	2.5 (.83)
Korea Sample (Mean = 2.95; SD = .80)				
Student (n = 54)	3.5 (.65)	3.3 (.55)	3.2 (.45)	2.9 (.78)
Industry (n = 70)	3.1 (.42)	3.1 (.42)	3.1 (.42)	2.9 (.89)
Combined (n = 124)	2.9 (.89)	2.9 (.89)	3.1 (.58)	2.9 (.82)

Recall that Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5 all hypothesize positive interactions, i.e., a synergetic effect when both effects are combined. However, the results in Table 2 do not support the predicted directions. The leader's sacrifice tends to increase charisma perceptions among Korean followers when they perceive less situational uncertainty. That is, the leader's sacrifice facilitates followers' attributions of charisma more when the situation they face is certain and favorable than when it is uncertain and risky. This interaction pattern for the Korean sample implies that situational uncertainty plays a complementary role for self-sacrifice, especially when a leader's self-sacrifice is low. Similarly, contradicting Hypothesis 3, a leader's competence and sacrifice do not help each other in a synergetic way, even for the U.S. sample. They also play a complementary role for each other when sacrifice suffers from deficiency.

Sacrifice shows the largest effect among the three independence treatments for both the U.S and the Korean samples, suggesting the existence of some ceiling effect tied to sacrificial leadership behavior. Controlling for this main effect, the two samples show an interesting difference in their interaction patterns. For instance, when a leader shows sacrifice, an increase in competence does

not play a positive role among the U.S sample, whereas when a leader shows no sacrifice, competence strengthens charisma attributions. A smilar pattern apprears for uncertainty among the Korean sample: when a leader shows sacrifice, reduced uncertainty helps followers attribute more charisma to their leaders, whereas when a leader shows no sacrifice, such a change does not play a major role in their attributions of charisma. These findings dovetail with the conventional cross-cultural argument that Korea is a highly context-dependent society avoiding ambiguous situations and unfamiliar risks, whereas the U.S is a low context-dependent society pursuing a meritocracy based on individual competence (Hofstede, 1993; Cho & Yoon, 2001).

DISCUSSION

In this study, we investigated processes and mechanisms explicating how followers attribute charisma to a leader. To examine those, this study postulates that, given a good vision, a leader's competency and self-sacrifice will strengthen the credibility of the vision, which in turn facilitates followers' attribution of charisma to their leader. We stipulate that the information on competency fosters followers' attribution of their leader's ability to accomplish the espoused vision, while that on self-sacrifice promotes their attribution of the leader's true motive. Acknowledging that uncertainties and crises are conducive to the emergence of charismatic leaders, our study also proposes that situational contexts play a moderating role in the attribution. Building upon the theory and literature, we develop and test the hypotheses on the main effects (i.e., competence and sacrifice) and interaction effects (i.e., competence by sacrifice, competence by uncertainty, and sacrifice by uncertainty).

The findings indicate that, as leaders show sacrificial behaviors and competencies to a greater extent, followers perceive the leaders as more charismatic. This finding holds true across both the U.S. and Korean samples. Our findings also indicate that the main effect of sacrificial leadership is more robust than that of competence, across the U.S. and Korean subjects. Consistent with findings in a number of charismatic leadership studies (e.g., House, 1977; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Conger, 1989; House & Shamir, 1993; Chipello, 1987; Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998, 1999), our study documents that one of the most pervasive profiles fostering charismatic leadership in contemporary corporations is self-sacrificial behavior. All in all, the findings from the current study and other research suggest that sacrifice is one of the prominent leadership behaviors upon which leaders can rely, across Western and Asian societies, especially in order to build trust, to earn a place as a role model, to mobilize followers' loyalty and dedication to their company, and to develop followers by stimulating transcendental shifts to meet their purposes (Burns 1978; Bass 1985; Javidan, 1992; Yukl, 1994).

The three interaction hypotheses predicted that the leadership factors (i.e., competence, sacrifice, and uncertainty) would induce followers to attribute greater charisma to their leader in a synergetic way. Inconsistent with the predictions of the hypotheses, however, the directions of the two significant interaction effects run in the opposite way. The pattern of interaction shows that sacrificial leadership works as a ceiling for other leadership attributes: Only when sacrificial leadership is low do other leadership profiles such as competence and uncertainty plug in and compensate for the lack of sacrificial behavior. In addition to the strong main effect of sacrifice, this ceiling effect indicates again that self-sacrifice is one of the most powerful leadership behaviors for most leaders across the U.S. and Korea. When a leader shows a greater self-

sacrificial leadership, the leader's sacrifice is good enough to bring out followers' attributions of charisma, regardless of other leadership practices.

The interaction effects suggest that Koreans and Americans respond differently to the given leadership profiles: When a leader shows sacrifice, perceptions of reduced uncertainty strengthen the attribution of charisma among the Korean subjects, whereas perceptions of competence prompt the U.S. subjects to such attributions. Net of the main effect of sacrificial leadership for both the Korean and US subjects, this difference suggests that Koreans are more responsive to situational contexts of reduced uncertainty, while the U.S. subjects are more responsive to a leader's individual competence. The results dovetail with cross-cultural research findings that Koreans are more apt to be uncertainty avoiders, whereas Americans are more apt to be individual-competency builders (Hofstede, 1993). Future studies should be designed to investigate the implications of this finding more explicitly.

This study is subject to several limitations which future studies should address. First, the study used experimental scenarios. The advantage of the scenario method is that it allows the experimenter to precisely manipulate the independent variables. The experimenter can achieve a high level of specificity and accuracy in the treatment of independent variables, and can keep other variables constant. However, its disadvantage is the artificiality of the manipulation, which poses a threat to the construct validity of a manipulation (Judd, Smith & Kidder, 1991). This validity depends on the extent to which subjects perceive leader behaviors and organizational settings in the scenarios to be real and valid. Furthermore, artificiality limits the extent to which the research results are generalizable and broadly applicable, a threat to the external validity of the research. In addition, treatment of independent variables could be more realistic if a real person, not a "paper person," were to be used in future experiments. For example, Howell and Frost (1989) had a real person perform charismatic leader behaviors in front of their subjects in an experiment that used an in-basket exercise. Alternatively, presenting scenarios on videotape or in multimedia computer settings could increase subjects' involvement in and emotional connections to the simulated settings. Second, although we have used a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) for this study, there is a need to verify the study's validity by using different questionnaires for the perception of charisma. In the literature, the definitions of charisma differ across researchers, and the concept has been operationalized in many different ways (e.g., Bass, 1985; Howell & Frost, 1989; Clover, 1990; Puffer, 1990; Yukl, 1991). Considering that the construct of charisma is an umbrella term that encompasses various dimensions of ideal leadership, future studies should include such constructs as emotional responses—e.g., personal liking and trust. These conceptual refinements will in turn contribute to improving the construct and the discriminant validity of charismatic leadership. Finally, the Korean study was completed after the U.S. study, and the sequential nature subjects the study to some unplanned confounding especially, in regard to manipulation. Special caution should be exercised when readers draw inferences involving on comparisions between the Korean and the U.S. findings.

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APPENDIX 1

MICRO ELECTRONICS, INC. (Scenario 1: high uncertainty x high competence x self-sacrificial behavior)

Micro Electronics is a medium-sized company that manufactures and distributes disk drives and a line of specialized products for microcomputers. The company currently has 200 employees and is regarded as one of the leading companies in the industry. In the past twenty years, the company enjoyed steady growth due to the continuing expansion of the market.

In recent years, however, there have been rapid advances in technology which have enabled other companies to enter the market with highly competitive prices. Furthermore, foreign competition has increased rapidly. As a result, sales have declined radically, and last year the firm experienced a large loss. Many long-term customers have either switched to different suppliers or significantly reduced purchases. This has driven the company into unprecedented financial hardship which could lead to bankruptcy if left unmanaged. Employees are pessimistic about their futures and the company.

Bill Stuart (Mr. Kim) has been the president of the company since last month. He has worked in this industry for 25 years, the last 10 years at Micro Electronics. He holds a master degree in business administration and electrical engineering from a prestigious university. Both insiders and outsiders of the company feel that Bill's (Mr. Kim's) background fits well with the needs of the current job. He understands the electronics market and the industry very well, and possesses outstanding technical expertise.

As new president, Bill (Mr. Kim) initiated the following actions: He cut his salary to the base pay and gave up all of his bonuses and benefits. In addition, he ordered the special dining section, reserved for the president and senior executives, closed and he gave up the company car which formerly had been reserved for his personal and official use. It is now available for business-related use by the employees. He expanded the present research unit, formerly headed by a middle manager, to the Department of Research and Development, now headed by a Vice President, and he downsized the units that had unreasonably grown over the years. Finally, he decided to tightly control all expenditures. Through a presidential memo, he requested that all employees share the difficulties of the needed adjustment.

APPENDIX 2

Notice that the manipulation check in the Korean study was not the same as that employed in the US study. The key difference is that three items per each independent variable were employed in the US study, whereas only one item of the three was employed in the Korean study. As previously noted, the Korean study was designed after the completion of the US study; as a result, we believed that the manipulation results in the US study were so apparent for each of the nine items that one item for each independent variable would be sufficient in the subsequent study conducted in Korea.

In the US study, the items to measure self-sacrifice included: "The president has given up his legitimate privileges."; "He set an example of self-sacrifice."; and "He has given up his benefits and bonuses." Competence was, in turn, measured by three items: "The president's overall qualifications meet the high standards for the president."; "He has the education and expertise that are needed to run the company," and "He understands the market and industry very well." Finally, the items to measure organizational uncertainty were as follows: "The company is in a sate of crisis," "The performance of the company has seriously declined," and "The business environment for the company is favorable" (reverse coded). The Korean study employed only the first item of each independent variable.

For the US study, the first item of the self-sacrifice manipulation showed a significant difference between high- and low-sacrifice leaders (M = 3.25, sd = 1.38 vs. M = 6.59, sd = .92, p <.001); low and high competence (M = 3.34, sd = 1.40 vs. M = 6.28, sd = .88, p <.001); and low and high uncertainty (M = 2.25, sd = 1.19 vs. M = 5.37, sd = 1.72, p <.001).

APPENDIX 3

Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation Matrix for Key Variables

USA SAMPLE	Charisma	Competence	Sacrifice	Uncertainty
Charisma	1.000			
Competence	0.383**	1.000		
Sacrifice	0.548**	0.187*	1.000	
Uncertainty	0.031	-.025	0.024	1.000
Mean	2.55	4.42	4.52	4.03
SD	0.72	1.73	1.90	1.67
KOREA SAMPLE	Charisma	Competence	Sacrifice	Uncertainty
Charisma	1.000			
Competence	0.603**	1.000		
Sacrifice	0.489**	0.382**	1.000	
Uncertainty	0.031	0.087	-.093	1.000
Mean	2.53	2.82	2.41	2.57
SD	0.67	0.95	1.08	1.25

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