

Who Leads More and Why? A Mediation Model from Gender to Leadership Role Occupancy

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Abstract Previous research has shown that female leaders lead slightly more effectively than male leaders. However, women are still underrepresented in higher management. In this study, we seek to contribute to a deeper understanding of this paradox by proposing and testing an innovative model that integrates different research streams on gender and leadership. Specifically, we propose power motivation and transformational leadership as two central yet opposing dynamics that underlie the relation between gender and leadership role occupancy. We tested this model in a sample of 256 employees. Results provided support for the proposed relations. These findings contribute to a more detailed and comprehensive understanding for central dynamics that link gender and leadership role occupancy. Moreover, they provide important insights for interventions that are targeted at reducing the gender gap in leadership. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings.

Keywords Gender · Leadership role occupancy · Power motivation · Transformational leadership · Mediation

Although women attain equal or even higher educational levels than men and make up around 50 % of the workforce in most Western countries, they still remain underrepresented in management positions, especially in higher management (Catalyst 2012, 2013, 2014; European Commission

2013; Eurostat 2013). This is surprising since research shows that women are successful leaders who often perform equally well or even better than men in the same hierarchical position (e.g., Eagly 2007; Eagly et al. 1995, 2003). The relatively low proportion of women in public and private managerial positions can be demotivating for women, thus reducing their managerial aspirations and fostering withdrawal behaviors such as turnover (Hoobler et al. 2014; López-Zafra et al. 2009). For example, Porto et al. (2010) showed that most women believe that being a woman affects their career development. Moreover, several authors have stressed that the dearth of women in executive positions on the one hand is contrasted by a growth of female businesses with typically positive effects on sales revenue and employment (Mainiero and Sullivan 2005; Mattis 2004). In view of this paradox, it seems crucial for organizations and professionals not only to understand women's motives, but also to be aware of the loss of opportunity that women in managerial positions could bring to the organizational domain (Eagly et al. 2003; Gartzia 2010). As women usually enter the labor market with higher academic degrees than men (i.e., tertiary education; Eurostat 2013), it seems that women's skills are not being used to their full potential. This represents a loss for societies and the economy (European Commission 2012). Therefore, examining the factors that influence why some people attain leadership roles and others do not is necessary.

Thus, our purpose in this study was to develop and test a model that explains the dynamics which underlie the link between gender and leadership role occupancy. In doing so, we combine research on gender differences in power motivation and transformational leadership into an innovative model. Specifically, drawing on role congruity theory (Eagly and Karau 2002; Eagly et al. 2000), we develop the argument that power motivation and transformational leadership form opposing indirect relations between gender and leadership role

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occupancy. As our model in Fig. 1 shows, we propose that on the one hand, women may have a lower motivation to exert power and influence over others than men, as these attributes are largely associated with the masculine (i.e., agentic) gender role (Williams and Best 1990). This, in turn, should mitigate women’s ambition and chances to attain a leadership position. On the other hand, we hypothesize that women may be more likely to engage in transformational leadership behaviors than men, which are typically linked to the feminine (i.e., communal) gender role (Bass 1985; Eagly et al. 2003; Williams and Best 1990). This, in turn, may increase women’s chances and ability to achieve a leadership role. We believe that integrating these potentially opposing dynamics into a single model is important as it provides a more balanced and more detailed theoretical understanding of the processes that underlie the relationship between gender and leadership role occupancy. Moreover, from a practical perspective, fostering an understanding for the dynamics that form the gender-leadership link is crucial because it provides important insights for interventions such as training courses that are targeted at reducing the gender gap in leadership role occupancy. Importantly, while we hypothesize that the dynamics of power motivation and transformational leadership work in opposite directions, we would like to point out that we do not propose that these dynamics entirely balance out. Rather, we propose that transformational leadership is one important aspect that may reduce but not entirely equalize other factors that cause the gender gap in leadership role occupancy.

different approaches: the evolutionary approach (e.g., Kenrick and Keefe 1992; Tooby and Cosmides 1992) and the sociocultural approach (e.g., Eagly et al. 2000; Ridgeway 1991; Wiley 1995). The former argues that women and men choose different social roles because of psychological differences, which represent evolved gender-specific adaptations. By contrast, the sociocultural approach concludes that women and men display psychological differences because they adapt to different social roles as expected for women and men (gender roles). Both approaches consider biological and environmental factors. Yet, evolutionary approaches focus more on distal (i.e., more remote) causes, whereas social approaches focus more on proximal (i.e., more immediate) causes. Because we want to examine the influence of power motivation and transformational leadership as explanatory, non-genetic factors in the gender-leadership-role-occupancy-relation, we focus on the latter approach.

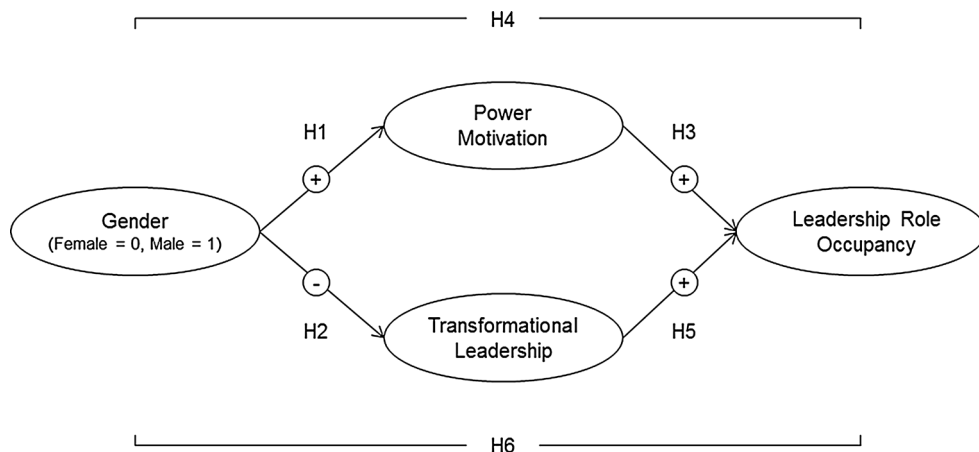
Gender roles are socially shared beliefs about attributes of women and men (Biddle 1979). They consist of a descriptive (what women and men actually do) and an injunctive (norms of appropriate conduct for women and men) component (Cialdini and Trost 1998; Cuddy et al. 2008; Eagly and Karau 2002). Through socialization, gender roles are integrated into individuals’ self-concepts and personalities (Feingold 1994). Thereby, gender roles influence individuals’ self-standards, preferences, and behaviors (Eagly 1987). Hence, people try to act in line with their gender roles and are motivated to fulfill their roles (Diekmann and Eagly 2008; Eagly et al. 2000; Evans and Diekmann 2009). The guiding principle behind this process is a maximization of utilities in social interactions. Role-congruent behavior generally goes along with positive affect, enhanced self-esteem, and positive reactions by interaction partners (Guerrero Witt and Wood 2010; Wood et al. 1997). In contrast, role-incongruent actions are socially sanctioned through disapproval (Eagly and Karau 2002; Diekmann and Eagly 2008).

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development

Gender Differences in Power Motivation and Transformational Leadership

When theorizing about gender differences in both power motivation and transformational leadership, there are two

Fig. 1 Hypothesized model of the relations between gender, power motivation, transformational leadership, and leadership role occupancy



Empirical research has shown that the gender roles of women and men still differ considerably (Bosak and Szesny 2011; Diekmann et al. 2005). Women are more associated with being concerned about the well-being of others and thereby with communal attributes such as being supportive, gentle, empathetic, or caring, whereas men are more associated with agentic attributes such as being assertive, controlling, dominant, or competitive (e.g., Bakan 1966; Deaux and Lewis 1984; Williams and Best 1990).

As gender roles describe how women and men should behave, they have a considerable impact on people's goals and strivings (Eagly and Karau 2002). Particularly relevant in our context is the notion of power motivation, that is, people's desire to have authority, impact, and influence over others (McClelland 1985; Miner 1978). This striving for power and impact on others is largely congruent with the male gender role, but not with the female gender role. Thus, because gender roles motivate expectancy confirmation and self-regulatory processes (Eagly 1987; Eagly et al. 2000) and in line with previous research (Eagly et al. 1994; Schuh et al. 2014), we expect that the lack of fit with the female gender role might lead women to have lower power motivation even in today's world. Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1 (H1) Gender relates to power motivation in the way that men report higher power motivation than women.

Despite ongoing changes in the world of work, the leader role is mainly associated with agentic attributes (Heilman 2001; Koenig et al. 2011; Schein 2001). Role congruity theory (Eagly and Karau 2002) describes the disadvantages of and prejudices toward women that emerge from the incongruence between the female gender role (communal attributes) and the leader role (agentic attributes). Specifically, this lack of congruity leads to two forms of prejudice: First, women are ascribed less leadership potential than men, and second, they are evaluated less positively than male leaders. This prejudice toward women can seriously diminish women's self-confidence (Garcia-Retamero and Lopez-Zafra 2006, 2009; Hannah et al. 2008), negatively affect their career decisions (Evans and Diekmann 2009; Lips 2000; Van Vianen and Fisher 2002), and lead to a double standard (when they want to be perceived as very competent, women have to perform better than men) and a double bind (to be tough *and* nice at the same time; Eagly and Karau 2002). One possibility for female leaders to cope with this prejudice is to enrich their leadership behavior with communal properties. One leadership style that incorporates such communal aspects is transformational leadership (Bass 2008). For example, transformational leaders show concern for their followers' interests and perspectives when taking important decisions

(Kirkman et al. 2009). Moreover, they build followers' skills and abilities through mentoring and coaching and create a climate that allows employees' to voice and develop their own ideas (Bass 1985). Finally, transformational leaders are adept at creating a strong sense of belongingness and foster mutual support among followers (Shamir et al. 1993). In sum, at the heart of the transformational leadership style is a focus on the development and interests of others. In line with this view, recent studies by Kovjanic et al. (2012, 2013) have shown that this leadership style successfully addresses and satisfies followers' fundamental psychological needs, which, in turn, enhances followers' satisfaction and work engagement.

As transformational leadership behavior produces less incongruence between the leader role and the gender role for women, women should exhibit more transformational leadership behavior than men (Eagly and Karau 2002; Eagly et al. 2003). Thus, our second hypothesis states:

Hypothesis 2 (H2) Gender relates to transformational leadership in the way that women are higher on transformational leadership than men.

Power Motivation, Transformational Leadership, and Leadership Role Occupancy

Motivation is a primary driver of human behavior; it forms the direction, the intensity, and persistence of human's actions (Kanfer 1990). Power motivation describes interpersonal differences in the desire to influence others (McClelland 1985; Miner 1978). Individuals with strong power motivation like to have impact and authority and strive to attain positions that provide this. Therefore, power-motivated individuals should possess stronger aspirations for leadership positions and should show more effort and investments to acquire skills and qualifications that enable them to attain these positions. And in fact, individuals high in power motivation participate more frequently in formal leadership trainings, seek opportunities to talk to mentors and coaches, view successful managers as appealing role models (van Iddekinge et al. 2009), are more likely to choose careers that involve teaching others (Winter 1973), and are more likely to demonstrate greater persistence in pursuing leadership tasks (Chan and Drasgow 2001). Additionally, research has shown that power motivation is related to promotions into management positions (Miner 1978), to the management level attained 16 years later (McClelland and Boyatzis 1982), and whether a person attains a leadership position or not (Schuh et al. 2014). Therefore, we predict that:

Hypothesis 3 (H3) Power motivation positively relates to leadership role occupancy.

Further, following the work of Schuh et al. (2014) and combining Hypotheses 1 (men have higher power motivation than women) and 3 (power motivation has a positive relation to leadership role occupancy), we predict that:

Hypothesis 4 (H4) Gender has an indirect relationship with leadership role occupancy mediated by power motivation.

For being an effective leader, certain behaviors are more relevant and successful than others. One style that has been found to be particularly effective in directing and motivating followers' actions is transformational leadership (Bass 1985). Transformational leaders act as inspirational role models, consider their employees individually, and support their employees' development. Furthermore, they motivate their employees through an effective communication of a positive vision for the future. Finally, transformational leadership is one of the most researched leadership behaviors and studies consistently show positive relations to followers' satisfaction, motivation, and performance (Avolio 1999; DeGroot et al. 2000; Felfe 2006; Judge and Piccolo 2004; Lowe et al. 1996; Podsakoff et al. 1996; Wang et al. 2011). Transformational leadership relates positively to team and organizational performance (Wang et al. 2011) and influences organizational performance through organizational learning and innovation (García-Morales et al. 2012). Because of these positive effects, people who show transformational leadership behaviors should be particularly likely to advance into a leadership role and to keep this position (Bass 2008). Thus, we predict:

Hypothesis 5 (H5) Transformational leadership is positively related to leadership role occupancy.

Taking into account the previous argument that transformational leadership is positively linked to leadership role occupancy implies that individuals showing high levels of transformational leadership behavior should be more likely to emerge as leaders. Furthermore, transformational leadership enables female leaders to cope with the incongruity between the female gender role (communal) and the (agentic) leader role (Eagly and Karau 2002). Therefore, female leaders tend to show higher levels of transformational leadership behavior than men (see Hypothesis 2). Taken together with the previous argument (Hypothesis 5), this implies beneficial consequences for women's leadership role occupancy. Combining both lines of arguments leads to the assumption that transformational leadership mediates the relation between gender and leadership role occupancy. This mediational path might be beneficial for women's representation in leadership positions. Therefore, we propose that:

Hypothesis 6 (H6) Gender has an indirect relationship with leadership role occupancy mediated by transformational leadership.

To test our hypotheses, we conducted a survey among employees from various organizational and occupational backgrounds.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited within Spain from existing contact networks, a method of recruiting participants used in previous research (Escartín et al. 2013). Participants were sent a link to an online survey by e-mail and were invited to take part in a study on leadership behavior and asked to also forward the link to their colleagues. The questionnaire was designed to allow participants to record their responses in approximately 10 min. A total of 280 participants took part in the survey. Due to missing information in one or more demographic variables, 24 participants were excluded from the analyses. Thus, our final sample consisted of 256 employees (i.e., 155 women and 101 men) with a mean age of 34.58 years ($SD = 9.86$). Participants worked in different sectors with the most frequent being service (35.20 %) and public administration (18.40 %), and 30.50 % of the participants had a limited contract. Average tenure was 12.25 years ($SD = 9.66$). Participation was completely voluntary and anonymous. In exchange for their participation, participants were offered a brief summary of the study results.

Measures

All measures were administered in Spanish following the procedures outlined by Brislin (1980). All responses were made on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Power Motivation

Following previous studies (McClelland et al. 1989), we used the 16-item dominance scale of the personality research form (PRF) by Jackson (1974) to measure power motivation. Sample items are "I have little interest in leading others" (reverse coded), and "In an argument, I can usually win others over to my side" ($\alpha = .83$).

Transformational Leadership

To measure transformational leadership, we used the 20-item transformational leadership scale of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass and Avolio 1997). Following prior studies that suggest that a single transformational leadership factor adequately represents

this concept (e.g., Bono and Judge 2004; Judge and Piccolo 2004), we used the overall measure in our study ($\alpha = .89$). The participants rated themselves on each behavior. Sample items are “I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished,” and “I suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments.” ($\alpha = .89$).

Leadership Role Occupancy

Following previous research (e.g., Avolio et al. 2009; Judge et al. 2002; Schuh et al. 2014), to assess leadership role occupancy, participants had to indicate whether they were in a leadership position or not, coded as 0 (*no leadership position*) and 1 (*leadership position*): “Do you hold a position in your organization that is considered managerial or supervisory (e.g., work group leader, team leader, manager, director)?”

Gender

Participants also indicated their gender. We coded this variable as 0 for *female* and 1 for *male*.

Control Variables

We controlled for several variables that were not of direct theoretical interest but may influence the results of our hypotheses tests. Specifically, we controlled for participants' age (in years) because age relates to leadership role occupancy (e.g., Schuh et al. 2014). Further, we included dummy coded industry variables as a control because the proportion of men/women in leadership positions varies by industry (e.g., Warner 2014). Importantly, as we will describe below, the results of our hypotheses tests were essentially the same with and without the control variables.

Statistical Analysis

We used ordinary least square regressions to test the hypothesized relationships involving continuous dependent variables and logistic regression analyses for relationships involving dichotomous outcomes. Moreover, we bootstrapped confidence intervals to test the proposed indirect effects. All analyses were performed with the PROCESS macro for SPSS (see Hayes 2012, 2013). Given the directional nature of our hypotheses, we used one-tailed significance tests (Hair et al. 2009).

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and intercorrelations of all variables. In line with prior research, results showed that gender was significantly related to

leadership role occupancy ($r = .18$; $p < .01$): Men were more likely to have leadership role occupancy than women.

To test our hypotheses, we first examined the relationships of gender with power motivation (H1) and with transformational leadership (H2). In line with the hypotheses, gender had a significant relation to power motivation ($b = .14$, $SE = .08$, $p > .05$) and to transformational leadership ($b = -.10$, $SE = .06$, $p < .05$, see Table 2, Steps 1 and 2). Men ($M = 3.37$, $SE = .06$) had higher power motivation than women ($M = 3.23$, $SE = .05$). In contrast, women ($M = 4.18$, $SE = .04$) were higher in transformational leadership than men ($M = 4.07$, $SE = .05$).

In the second step, we examined whether power motivation (H3) and transformational leadership (H5) predicted leadership role occupancy. Results provided support for these hypotheses. Both power motivation ($b = .68$, $SE = .31$, $p < .05$) and transformational leadership ($b = .96$, $SE = .43$, $p < .05$) significantly related to leadership role occupancy, even after controlling for gender (see Table 2, Step 3).

Next, we explored the proposed indirect effects of power motivation and transformational leadership (H4 and H6). To test the indirect effects, we conducted bootstrap analyses based on 1,000 bootstrap samples (Hayes 2012, 2013). The proposed indirect effects were significant: Results showed that gender had a significant indirect effect with leadership role occupancy through power motivation [H4; indirect effect = .10, $CI_{90\%} (.01, .28)$] and through transformational leadership (H6; indirect effect = $-.10$, $CI_{90\%} [-.28, -.01]$).

Supplemental Analysis

To establish further confidence in our results, we followed Becker's (2005) suggestion and conducted supplemental analyses testing our hypotheses without control variables. The results remained essentially unchanged and provided further support for our hypotheses. Specifically, consistent with H1 and H2, gender was significantly related to both power motivation ($b = .14$, $SE = .08$, $p < .05$) and transformational leadership ($b = -.11$, $SE = .06$, $p < .05$). Further, and in line with H3 and H5, both power motivation ($b = .59$, $SE = .29$, $p < .05$) and transformational leadership ($b = .92$, $SE = .40$, $p < .05$), were positively related to leadership role occupancy when controlling for gender. Finally, bootstrap analyses supported the proposed indirect effects via power motivation [indirect effect = .09, $CI_{90\%} (.01, .25)$] and transformational leadership [indirect effect = $-.10$, $CI_{90\%} (-.26, -.01)$], which provided evidence for H4 and H6.

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, zero-order correlations, and reliabilities

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Age	34.58	9.86	–										
Health ^a	.13	.33	.06	–									
Trade ^a	.04	.19	–.03	–.07	–								
Service ^a	.35	.48	–.03	–.28***	–.14*	–							
Public administration ^a	.18	.39	.09	–.18**	–.09	–.35***	–						
Consulting ^a	.03	.16	.03	–.06	–.03	–.12*	–.08	–					
Manufacturing ^a	.01	.09	–.03	–.03	–.02	–.07	–.04	–.02	–				
Finance ^a	.03	.16	–.14*	–.06	–.03	–.12*	–.08	–.03	–.02	–			
Gender ^b	.39	.49	.11 ⁺	–.04	–.07	–.01	–.01	.06	.02	.06	–		
Power motivation	3.28	.61	.01	–.08	–.03	–.07	.14*	–.05	.01	.04	.12 ⁺	(.83)	
Transformational leadership	4.14	.45	.01	.07	–.05	.06	.02	–.06	.07	–.05	–.12 ⁺	.34***	(.89)
Leadership role occupancy ^c	.21	.41	.26***	–.03	–.05	.01	–.00	.09	.06	.03	.18**	.21**	.18**

$N = 256$. Internal consistency estimates (Cronbach's alphas) are displayed on the diagonal in parentheses

⁺ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Two-tailed

^a No = 0, Yes = 1

^b Female = 0, male = 1

^c Nonleader = 0, leader = 1

Discussion

Regarding gender and leadership, there is a paradox. First, women have been found to use more effective leadership styles than men (Eagly et al. 2003). Second, studies have shown that a higher representation of female leaders is financially beneficial for organizations (Carter and Wagner 2011; Dezsö and Ross 2012; Joy et al. 2007; Krishnan and Park 2005). Third, recent research indicates that organizations with more female leaders are more philanthropic and have a more genuine corporate social responsibility, leading to positive outcomes not only for enterprises, but and maybe even more important, for society as a whole (Matsa and Miller 2013; Soares et al. 2011; Williams 2003). However, despite these facts, women are still underrepresented in management positions (e.g., Catalyst 2013; European Commission 2013), and many countries are now sensitive to this issue and have pursued laws or regulations in order to counter such underrepresentation. For instance, the Spanish Organic Law on gender equality of 2007 (Article 75) has strongly recommended that large companies gradually change the membership of their boards until each gender makes up at least 40 % by 2015 (Organic Law 3/2007 of March 22, 2007 on effective equality between men and women). Nevertheless, limited success if any has been achieved (European Commission 2013).

Against this background, the aim of the present study was to shed some light on the paradox of the so-called

“female advantage of leadership” (Eagly 2007; Eagly et al. 2014) and the remaining underrepresentation of women in management. In support of our hypotheses we found gender differences in both power motivation and transformational leadership: Men were higher in power motivation than women, whereas women were higher in transformational leadership than men. Furthermore and as predicted, both power motivation and transformational leadership were positively related to leadership role occupancy. More importantly, and extending previous research, we predicted and found that both power motivation and transformational leadership mediated the relation between gender and leadership role occupancy.

In fact, these results suggest two opposing forces for leadership role occupancy: On the one hand, because men's stronger desire to have authority and influence of others, the route via power motivation contributes to a higher representation of men in leadership positions. On the other hand, because women are more likely to show transformational leadership behaviors, the route via transformational leadership facilitates women's representation in leadership roles. Nevertheless, in reality (and as also indicated by the results of the present study), women are still underrepresented in leadership position. This suggests that women's advantage regarding transformational leadership behavior cannot fully offset the influence of power motivation and other factors such as overt or subtle discrimination (King et al. 2012; Rudman et al. 2012) that

Table 2 Results of regression analyses testing H1 to H6

	Step 1 Power motivation (H1)		Step 2 Transformational leadership (H2)		Step 3 Leadership role occupancy ^a (H3–H6)	
	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>b</i>	SE
Intercept	3.26***	.16	4.09***	.11	−10.63***	2.02
<i>Controls</i>						
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.07***	.02
Health ^b	−.15	.13	.14	.10	−.09	.63
Trade ^b	−.08	.22	−.06	.16	−.35	1.21
Service ^b	−.07	.10	.10	.07	.27	.46
Public administration ^b	.16	.12	.09	.09	−.14	.53
Consulting ^b	−.23	.24	−.07	.18	1.42	.87
Manufacturing ^b	.06	.44	.42	.32	1.47	1.52
Finance ^b	.10	.25	−.04	.18	1.13	.98
<i>Predictors</i>						
Gender ^c	.14*	.08	−.10*	.06	.78*	.34
Power motivation	–	–	–	–	.68*	.31
Transformational leadership	–	–	–	–	.96*	.43
<i>R</i> ²	.04		.04		–	
Nagelkerke <i>R</i> ²	–		–		.24	

N = 256

* *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001. One-tailed

^a Nonleader = 0, leader = 1

^b No = 0, Yes = 1

^c Female = 0, male = 1

bring women in a disadvantageous position when it comes to attaining leadership roles.

As outlined in the theory section, we assume that the different levels of power motivation in women and men are largely based on the different gender roles of women and men. Even in today's world with the profound changes that have occurred in the labor market, the attributes and behavior that are seen as desirable for women and men still differ (Bosak and Sczesny 2011; Street et al. 1995). These gender roles do not only lead to prejudice toward female leaders (i.e., double bind and double standard) because of the lack of fit between the female gender role and the leader role (Eagly and Karau 2002). They also influence individuals' behavior via expectancy confirmation and self-regulatory processes (Eagly 1987; Eagly et al. 2000). Role-incongruent behavior is often socially sanctioned and disapproved of (Wood et al. 1997). For example, agentic women are prone to experience a backlash effect (Rudman and Glick 2001). Thus, although agentic women are perceived to be competent, they are liked less (loss on the warmth-dimension, see Stereotype Content Model, Cuddy et al. 2008; Rudman et al. 2012). Accordingly, the deviation from gender roles is costly, especially for agentic

women who deviate from gender norms (Rudman et al. 2012).

Nevertheless, the results of our study indicate that a more positive future may lie ahead as leadership roles will probably incorporate more transformational leadership behaviors in order to be more effective, which may include a demand for leaders to become more androgynous (Gartzia 2010). In doing so, the prevailing definition of leadership as more "male biased" (Koenig et al. 2011) might change into a more inclusive definition that will incorporate more female characteristics (Lopez-Zafra et al. 2009). Hence, this will make such a definition more suitable for women, reducing the incongruity of role expectations for women and might enhance the likelihood of experiencing situation that can increase their power motivation (Eagly 2007; Schuh et al. 2014).

Practical Implications

Our results also have important practical implications. Although gender roles are difficult to amend and have only marginally changed over recent decades (Diekmann et al. 2005; Swazina et al. 2004), prior research suggests that

both power motivation and transformational leadership can be fostered through practical interventions such as leadership development programs. For example, a structured training course designed to increase the desire to assume leadership positions showed positive effects on power motivation (Miner 1978). These effects remained in follow-up studies more than 1 year after the program, and were equally strong for female and male participants (Miner 1978). These programs included various components such as lectures, self-reflections, discussions, and mentoring sessions (Miner 1978; cf. Hoobler et al. 2014; Noe 1988). Therefore, the development of structured leadership programs for women, which focus on power motivation on the one hand and on coping strategies for handling the double bind and double standard on the other hand, may be a promising way to increase power motivation in women and thus their likelihood to attain leadership positions.

In a similar vein, prior studies suggest that transformational leadership behaviors can be enhanced through specifically designed programs (Barling et al. 1996; Dvir et al. 2002). For example, in a field experiment, Barling et al. (1996) conducted a training program of a 1-day group session and four individual follow-up sessions. Compared to a control group, results showed that participants in the training group received significantly higher ratings on transformational leadership from their followers after the training. Dvir et al. (2002) found very similar effects on participants' transformational leadership behaviors in their evaluation of a three-day workshop on transformational leadership. Two further studies examined whether charismatic leadership can be trained. As charisma is one component of transformational leadership (e.g., idealized influence), the study results show relevant implications for the training of transformational leadership (Bass 1999). Frese et al. (2003) trained two groups of midlevel managers ($N = 25$, and $N = 22$, respectively) in short sessions to create a vision for their departments and to effectively communicate this vision to their employees. They were trained, for instance, in using gestures, repeating the vision, using metaphors and variations of speed and loudness. The effects were calculated using peer feedback (from the other participants in the training sessions who were listening to the inspirational speeches before and after training) and researcher codings of video recordings of the speeches. Across both studies, the trainings showed specific effects on the items that were part of the training but not on non-trained items (e.g., structure of the speeches). As only female managers participated in the two studies, no specific gender differences were analyzed. Finally, Antonakis et al. (2011) report two studies of managers ($N = 34$, Study 1) and MBA students ($N = 41$, Study 2) who were trained to behave charismatically when giving a speech. They were

asked to deliver the speeches after (in Study 1) and before and after the training (Study 2). They were assessed by their coworkers ($N = 321$) in Study 1 and by independent assessors ($N = 125$) in Study 2, respectively. Both studies revealed positive results with an average effect size of .6 and controlling for leader sex did not have any influence. Male and female leaders thus seem to have equally benefitted from the trainings.

In sum, there is evidence that power motivation as well as transformational leadership can be fostered. In light of these findings, we believe that our study, highlighting the dynamics of power motivation and transformational leadership, indicates promising ways toward a more even contribution of women and men in leadership position.

Limitations and Further Research

Our study, like all research, also has some limitations. First, one could argue that our sample of Spanish employees might be a constraint with regard to generalization. Spain differs slightly in terms of Hofstede's (2001) masculinity dimension (with an index of 42 in Hofstede's study), which captures gender role differences and a preference for traditionally male role requirements, from other western societies such as Germany (66), the United States of America (62), or Great Britain (66). However, our results are in line with previous research that used either samples of different countries or were meta-analyses (Eagly et al. 2003; Lowe et al. 1996; Schuh et al. 2014). Further, a recent review on gender and leadership found similar results for studies conducted in Spain and those conducted in other Western societies (Hernandez Bark et al. 2014). Therefore, we are confident that our proposed model is not restricted to Spain but is rather generalizable to other Western societies. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to compare our findings to countries with different cultures and both more equalitarian and more traditional gender roles such as China, Turkey, or Sweden.

Second, we used self-report survey data which might be prone to influences of common method variance (Podsakoff et al. 2003). However, because some of our key variables such as gender and leadership role occupancy are objective in nature and were collected via anonymous questionnaires, it is unlikely that our results were influenced by common source variance. Nevertheless, we would like to encourage future longitudinal or even experimental studies that may not only entirely rule out the influence of common source variance (e.g., through multi-source ratings or experimental manipulations) but also clarify causal relations in the proposed mediation model.

Future research may also explore whether and how additional factors may influence the proposed mediational model. In particular, we believe that examining the factors

that could moderate the relations between power motivation, leadership role occupancy, and transformational leadership might be promising avenues for future research. For example, leaders' group prototypicality (i.e., the degree to which they are representative for their group; Hogg 2001) might influence these relations in the way that highly prototypical individuals profit more from high power motivation. Additionally, how power and leadership are defined in a particular organization (e.g., based on organizational culture) might be important factors that impact these relations. Finally, a closer examination of the factors that influence the development of power motivation may provide important insights for how to design effective and efficient measures to enhance women's ambition to attain a leadership role. Our results are a first step on the way to a better understanding of gender differences in leadership role occupancy and we hope to stimulate future research to ultimately contribute to more fairness and balance in society.

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