

*Researchers have been criticized for applying generic organization and management theories to public sector organizations on the basis that such theories ignore significant public-private differences. To examine the extent to which generic theories can help us better understand public-private differences, the authors applied a generic leadership theory to both a private and a public sector organization and found interesting differences between the two organizations. The authors concluded that generic theories serve the useful purpose of allowing researchers to compare and contrast public sector management issues with those of other types of organizations. Theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.*

***THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL  
CHARACTERISTICS ON LEADERSHIP  
EFFECTIVENESS MODELS***  
*An Examination of Leadership in a  
Private and a Public Sector Organization*

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**Research on public administration**, Haque (1996) noted, has been criticized for its application of generic organization and management literature and its dearth of rigorously empirical and scientific research inquiry. The critics (e.g., Denhardt, 1984; Harmon & Mayer, 1986) argue that theories from the organization and management literature do not apply equally to public and private sector organizations and that drawing on such theories precludes the formulation of a comprehensive theory of

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public administration. Others (e.g., Waldo, 1975), however, argue that public administration researchers should draw on a wide variety of theoretical perspectives, including organization and management literature, because they provide insights for professional public administrators.

Although differences between public and private sector organizations have been studied in terms of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (e.g., Balfour & Wechsler, 1990, 1991; Buchanan, 1974, 1975; Kilpatrick, Cummings, & Jennings, 1964; Rainey, 1979, 1983; Steinhaus & Perry, 1996), motivation (Baldwin, 1987), and efficiency and effectiveness (e.g., Savas, 1982; Solomon, 1986; Spann, 1977), few researchers have examined differences in leadership behavior and effectiveness. Yet, the relationship between leadership behavior and effectiveness might be significantly different between these two sectors because of differences in their environments in terms of market forces and exposure to legislation, legislatures, and civil service rules. These different environments affect, we argue, the discretion afforded leaders in these sectors, which in turn affects how they lead.

In this study, therefore, we use two large samples of managers from a private and a public sector organization to examine the relationship between their leadership behaviors and their perceived effectiveness. First, we discuss the purported differences in leadership demands between public and private sector organizations. Then, we introduce the Competing Values Framework (Quinn, 1988) as the theoretical basis for hypotheses about which leadership roles will contribute to effectiveness in public versus private sector organizations. Next, we describe the study and present the results. Finally, we discuss the extent to which this leadership theory applies to both private and public sector organizations.

### **PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS**

Rainey (1991) noted both that researchers have had difficulty identifying criteria that clearly distinguish between public and private organizations and that leading figures in organization theory have downplayed the private-public distinction. Using various dimensions, researchers have distinguished four (e.g., Fottler, 1981; Wamsley & Zald, 1973) or eight (Perry & Rainey, 1988) types of organizations. Even though Fottler (1981) and Perry and Rainey (1988) have proposed different classifications of types of organizations, they agreed that the public sector and the private, for-profit sector forms of organization represent the most distinct or

“pure” types of organizations. For the private sector, this refers to the for-profit enterprise; and for the public sector, this refers to a government agency. For the purposes of this article, we focus on these pure types of organization because significant differences between these two types have been suggested and found.

Baldwin (1987) noted three major differences between public and private sector organizations: (a) Private sector goals are less ambiguous than those in the public sector because they can be evaluated in terms of economic outcomes and because public sector leaders have to pursue multiple goals simultaneously; (b) there is more leadership turnover in public than in private organizations, not only because of the limits on time in office but also because administrative upheavals often lead to officials’ resigning voluntarily; and (c) public employees enjoy greater job security because of the existence of extensive grievance procedures. Other differences that have been explored between the two sectors suggest that public sector organizations, compared with private, for-profit organizations, tend to focus more on seniority in their reward systems (Solomon, 1986); have less flexibility in their reward systems; have to comply with the civil service system; have more specialized and invariant job designs; and have stricter reporting relationships, higher levels of accountability, more rules, more regulations, more constraints, weaker linkages between political leaders and career-level leaders, and an absence of market incentives (Robertson & Seneviratne, 1995).

Although many have made assertions about differences between public and private sector organizations, few have examined these assertions empirically. Boyatzis (1982) and Hickson, Butler, Cray, Mallory, and Wilson (1986) studied differences between public and private, for-profit organizations in terms of managerial competencies and decision-making processes. Boyatzis found that managers in the private sector demonstrated higher levels of the competencies of conceptualization, oral presentations, concern for impact, diagnostic use of concepts, efficiency orientation, and proactivity. The public sector managers in his sample showed more concern for close relationships than their private sector counterparts. Hickson et al. found that sporadic decision-making processes characterized public organizations more than private organizations and that the “public sector therefore shows signs of the uneven and political decision-making of which it is suspected” (p. 202). Rainey, Pandey, and Bozeman (1995) tested a variety of assumptions regarding public-private sector differences. Although they found many similarities, they also found that public organizations show sharply higher levels of formalization in the functions of

personnel and procurement. They noted that these functions are “heavily influenced by externally imposed bodies of law, rules, and oversight activities that are imposed on many governmental agencies” (p. 572).

#### DISCRETION AND LEADERSHIP

Just “stating that the public and private sectors are distinct does little. The challenge involves conceiving and analyzing the possible differences, variations, and similarities” (Rainey, 1991, p. 31). We argue that the aforementioned laws, rules, and oversight activities take away more discretion from leaders in the public sector than from leaders in the private sector. Hambrick and Finkelstein (1987) defined managerial discretion as “latitude of action” (p. 371) and asserted that this is determined by the extent to which organizational characteristics constrain the behavior of the manager. A leader, for example, has little discretionary power if (a) job responsibilities are clearly specified in writing; (b) duties, authority, and accountability are documented in policies, procedures, and job descriptions; (c) pay raises do not depend on his or her recommendations; and (d) he or she does not have control over financial and nonfinancial resources. The leader has little discretionary power in those cases because the organizational characteristics substitute for the need for leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Osborn and Hunt (1975) asserted, furthermore, that “subordinates respond mainly to the discretionary influence of the leader” (p. 29) and “discount those leader behaviors which are externally determined” (p. 32). In this view, substitutes for leadership influence the impact of leader behavior on various effectiveness criteria. Leaders in public sector organizations may adopt different behaviors compared with leaders in private sector organizations because these organizations afford their managers different amounts of discretion.

Few studies, however, have empirically examined the impact of organizational characteristics on leader behavior and leader outcome criteria (e.g., Larson, Hunt, & Osborn, 1974; Osborn & Hunt, 1975), and even fewer have specifically compared leadership behavior in public and private sector organizations. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Bommer (1996) demonstrated the impact of substitutes for leadership in their study of 1,539 managers in a broad sample of organizations in the private sector. They found that whereas transformational leadership behaviors account for more variance than leadership substitutes in follower trust and courtesy, substitutes for leadership “account for substantially *more* variance than transformational leadership behaviors in the case of follower satis-

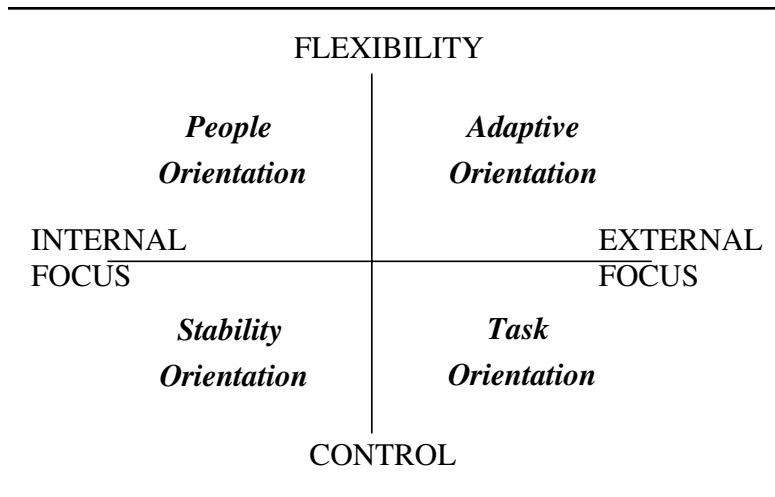
faction, commitment, role clarity, role conflict, civic virtue, conscientiousness, and sportsmanship” (pp. 273-274). The Podsakoff et al. study demonstrated that the impact of transformational leadership behaviors on a wide variety of outcome measures depends on the presence of various organizational characteristics.

Differences in organizational characteristics between public and private sector organizations, then, should also affect the relationship between leadership behaviors and effectiveness. To establish more specific hypotheses regarding the relationship between organizational sector and leadership, we turn to the Competing Values Framework of leadership roles (Quinn, 1988).

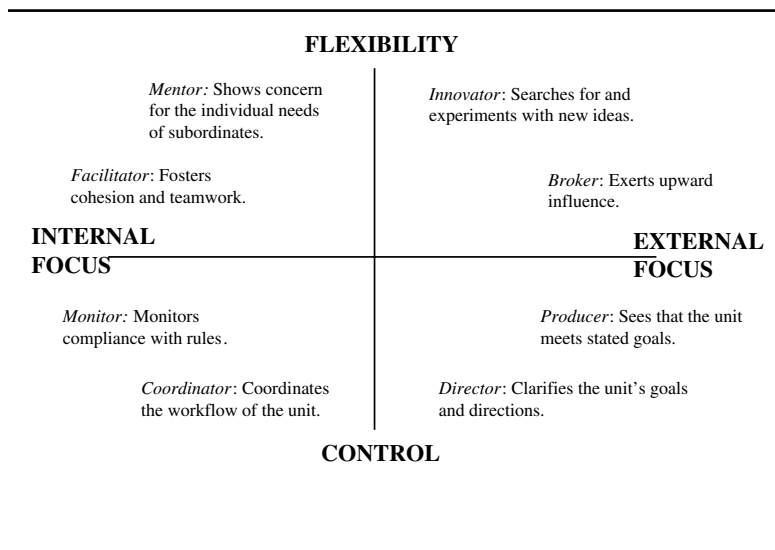
### THE COMPETING VALUES FRAMEWORK OF LEADERSHIP ROLES

Quinn’s (1988) Competing Values Framework suits the purposes of this research because it recognizes the paradoxical nature of public management (Whorton & Worthley, 1981). Just as Hambrick and Finkelstein (1987) discussed the impact of factors both external and internal to the organization on leader discretion, so does the Competing Values Framework address internal and external organizational demands on leadership. In addition to the internal and external demands, the Competing Values Framework also recognizes the paradoxical demands for both flexibility and control. These two dimensions define four distinct leadership functions that address seemingly contradictory demands in the organizational arena (see Figures 1a and 1b).

The Task Leadership quadrant is characterized by a control orientation and a focus on the environment external to the unit and emphasizes setting and attaining goals. This quadrant contains the *producer* and *director* roles. As a producer, a manager is expected to motivate members to increase production and accomplish stated goals. As a director, a manager is expected to clarify expectations, define problems, establish objectives, generate rules and policies, and give instructions. The Stability Leadership quadrant is characterized by a control orientation and a focus on the internal functioning of the unit and emphasizes monitoring and coordinating the work of the unit. This quadrant contains the *coordinator* and *monitor* roles. As a coordinator, a manager is expected to maintain the structure and flow of the system, coordinate the scheduling of staff efforts, handle crises, and attend to technical and logistical issues. As a monitor, a



**Figure 1a: The Competing Values Framework**



**Figure 1b: The Competing Values Framework of Leadership Roles**

manager is expected to know what is going on in the unit, to see if people comply with rules and regulations, and to see whether the unit is meeting its quotas.

The People Leadership quadrant is characterized by a flexible orientation and a focus on the internal functioning of the unit and emphasizes mentoring subordinates and facilitating group process in the unit. This quadrant contains the *facilitator* and *mentor* roles. As a facilitator, a manager is expected to foster collective effort, build cohesion and teamwork, and manage interpersonal conflict. As a mentor, a manager is expected to develop people through a caring, empathetic orientation. In this role the manager is helpful, considerate, sensitive, open, approachable, and fair. The Adaptive Leadership quadrant is characterized by a flexible orientation and a focus on the environment external to the unit and emphasizes developing innovations and obtaining resources for the unit. This quadrant contains the *innovator* and *broker* roles. As an innovator, a manager is expected to pay attention to changes in the environment and to identify and facilitate adaptation to those changes. As a broker, a manager is expected to meet with people from outside his or her unit to represent the unit and negotiate and acquire resources for the unit. The eight leadership roles will be used to formulate the hypotheses.

## HYPOTHESES

### TASK LEADERSHIP QUADRANT

Solomon (1986) found that in the public sector, in contrast to the private sector, rewards were not distributed on the basis of performance, and fewer policies existed that promoted efficiency. She also noted that in many governmental organizations, “the pluralism in policy implementation networks, and the inadequately developed performance criteria, render the task of channeling sanctioned goal-directed activities more difficult” (p. 256). Career-level leaders in the public sector do not have control over rewards, and goals are determined by political leaders, rules, and regulations. This takes away leader discretion, makes it more difficult to direct and motivate employees, and leads to frustration with the system, as indicated by Whorton and Worthley’s (1981, p. 359) description of these oft-heard complaints of public managers: “The rules tie our hands”; “Politics undermines the intent of the project”; “I can’t motivate my people because of the freeze on wages”; and “If only I could fire Jones, then we could get this department in shape.” It seems clear, then, that public sector leaders have less discretion to get people to accomplish goals (producer) and set goals (director) than private sector leaders. Because they have less

discretion in exercising these roles, we expect that public sector leaders also do not see a strong association between these roles and effectiveness (Osborn & Hunt, 1975). Therefore,

*Hypothesis 1:* In the public sector, the producer and director roles have less impact on perceptions of effectiveness than in the private sector.

#### **STABILITY LEADERSHIP QUADRANT**

Whereas both the public and private sectors are subject to various regulations, in the public sector these regulations tend to be more pervasive and prescriptive (Whorton & Worthley, 1981). Berkley (1981) described the difference as follows: "In private administration the law generally tells the administrator what he *cannot* do; in public administration the law tells him what he *can* do" (p. 10). This means that leader discretion in public administration is limited (Pffifner & Presthus, 1967) and that public managers have to be concerned about compliance with rules and regulations. In terms of the leadership roles of the Competing Values Framework, this means different expected effects for the leadership roles in the Stability Leadership quadrant. The coordination of work in the public sector occurs largely through job descriptions and civil service regulations, whereas in the private sector, leaders have more discretion in this area. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 2:* In the public sector, the coordinator role has less impact on perceptions of effectiveness than in the private sector.

In contrast, we expect leaders in the public sector to be more concerned about compliance with state and federal rules and regulations. That is, we expect the public sector leaders to be very concerned about the processes and procedures used to achieve outcomes and to exercise discretion regarding which rules and regulations to monitor most closely. We expect them to have more discretion in this area because they do not have much discretion in the producer, director, and coordinator roles. In contrast, we would expect leaders in the private sector to be mostly concerned about outcomes and less about process and procedure. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 3:* In the public sector, the monitor role has more impact on perceptions of effectiveness than in the private sector.

### PEOPLE LEADERSHIP QUADRANT

Because public sector managers have to deal with frequently changing agendas and unstable coalitions (Ring & Perry, 1985), managing conflict and getting people to work together becomes a critical skill. Denhardt and Pregovisk (1992, p. 42) saw these skills (i.e., encouraging people to express their ideas, listening carefully to what people say, and the ability to integrate many differing but complementary ideas) as critical to public sector leadership. The Competing Values Framework role that best captures these skills is the facilitator role. Because the frequently changing agendas and coalitions offer many opportunities for career-level leaders to exercise these skills, we expect them to perform this role more frequently than leaders in the private sector. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 4:* In the public sector, the facilitator role has more impact on perceptions of effectiveness than in the private sector.

Whereas career-level leaders in the public sector have less discretion with respect to goals, procedures, and rewards, Blau (1956) suggested that rules also provide public managers with power because they can let subordinates break the rules as rewards or enforce the rules as punishment. Because public managers have less discretion in other areas, we expect them to use the discretion in this area more than managers in the private sector to show their consideration of and sensitivity to the needs of their subordinates. The Competing Values Framework role that best captures these skills is the mentor role. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 5:* In the public sector, the mentor role has more impact on perceptions of effectiveness than in the private sector.

### ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP QUADRANT

Ring and Perry (1985) asserted not only that career-level leaders in the public sector must minimize discontinuity but that they must also maintain both flexibility and adaptability to emergent strategies and other exogenous influences in an environment where political leaders and agendas change so frequently. In addition, given the volatility of the political environment, career-level leaders need to work hard at influencing their leaders to influence policy directives and demands. Leaders in the private

sector also must show flexibility and adaptability in handling market forces and need to know how to obtain the necessary financial and non-financial resources from their bosses so they can produce (Pelz, 1951). Leaders in both sectors, then, need to show adaptability and exert upward influence, albeit for different reasons. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 6:* The innovator and broker roles have a similar impact on perceptions of effectiveness in the public and private sector.

#### **OVERALL MODEL**

In addition to the specific hypotheses developed above, we also expect that public sector leaders in general have less discretion than their private sector counterparts. This leads us to hypothesize that, in general, public sector leaders will see fewer leadership roles as important for their effectiveness than leaders in the private sector. Therefore,

*Hypothesis 7:* Fewer leadership roles will affect leader effectiveness in the public sector than in the private sector.

Although we do not formulate specific hypotheses, we will examine to what extent the hypotheses hold in the eyes of the managers' subordinates and superiors. We examine the perceptions of the subordinates and superiors in addition to those of the managers themselves because research on 360-degree feedback (e.g., Antonioni, 1996; Yammarino & Atwater, 1997) indicates that these observers often have different perceptions of the situation.

### **METHOD**

#### **SAMPLE**

We will test the hypotheses in two pure type organizations, namely a Fortune 10 manufacturing organization from the private sector and a state government department from the public sector. Managers from both organizations participated in executive education programs at one midwestern university and one northeastern university. We did not assess the participants' perceptions of organizational formalization and structure directly but used the organizational type as a proxy. We do that because organizational members cannot assess the level of formalization and structure

relative to other organizations. Most of our participants have worked only in their current organization and therefore cannot judge differences in formalization and structure among organizations. We prefer, therefore, to focus on differences in leadership perceptions of managers by comparing pure type organizations of the private and public sector.

The company in the private sector is one of the big three car manufacturers and competes in the global marketplace. The managers who participated are in the lowest level of management considered for bonuses. These managers supervise both union and nonunion employees. Most of them have the authority to hire, fire, and promote subordinates and grant pay raises (within limits). Hambrick and Finkelstein (1987, p. 380) presented automobile companies as organizations in which managers have great latitude of action because of product differentiability.

The participants from the state government department are among the highest level leaders not politically appointed. They work directly under the commissioner and assistant commissioners appointed by the governor. The leaders in this department have to obey the laws, rules, and regulations that come down from their federal counterpart and from the state legislature. They execute federal and state laws by reviewing and granting permits and enforcing compliance with these laws. These leaders are part of the civil service system, and the principle of seniority is critical in decisions regarding pay raises and promotions and determining whose positions are protected when downsizing occurs. The career-level leaders in this department do not have the authority to hire, fire, or promote people and cannot grant pay raises. In addition, they experience significant pressures from powerful outside forces such as public interest groups, legislators, and business lobbies.

The two organizations strongly encouraged attendance at the leadership training, and participation of managers was close to 85%. Whereas researchers such as Baldwin (1987) and Rainey et al. (1995) had to rely on small samples from each organization they surveyed (frequently fewer than 10 managers from any given organization), we have data on 819 middle-level managers from the private sector company and 175 upper-level civil service managers. These large samples from each organization allow us to gain an in-depth understanding of the kind as well as impact of discretionary leadership behaviors in these two distinctly different types of organizations. Although it is very difficult to compare the levels of management in these two samples precisely, the scope of responsibilities in terms of budget and people and layers of staff workers below them in the organizational hierarchy seem comparable for the managers in the two samples.

Questionnaire data from the managers themselves as well as their subordinates and superiors were used to test the relationship between leadership behaviors and managerial effectiveness. Although our primary interest lies in the self-perceptions of the managers in both organizations, we also wanted to examine whether managers' perceptions of which leadership behaviors are key for effectiveness converge with those of their subordinates and superiors. On average, four subordinates and one and a half superiors provided feedback for each manager in both organizations.

The managers in the manufacturing sample are predominantly White (95%) and male (94%). They are, on average, 45 years old and have been in their current position for 3.4 years. Regarding education, 42% have a bachelor's degree, 36% a master's, and 6% a PhD. The 175 managers from the state government department represent 80% of all directors and bureau chiefs (i.e., the top civil service level of management) in that department (overall size is about 4,000 people). They are predominantly White (93%) and male (70%). Their average age is 44, and they have been in their current position for an average of 5.9 years. Forty-five percent of them have a bachelor's degree, 31% a master's, and 4% a PhD. The private and public sector samples do not differ substantially from each other on these demographic variables.

#### LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness measures in this study do not concern themselves with attempts to assess the performance of the work unit or departments that are under the supervision of the middle managers in our study. Rather, we use separate measures of *perceived* effectiveness for self, subordinates, and superiors. The effectiveness of the participating managers was assessed through five items that ask about overall performance: (a) overall managerial success, (b) overall leadership effectiveness, (c) the extent to which the manager meets managerial performance standards, (d) how well he or she does compared with managerial peers, and (e) how well he or she performs as a role model. These five items are measured on a 5-point scale in which high scores indicate higher levels of effectiveness.

Three indices of leadership effectiveness are constructed: one based on responses of the managers' subordinates, one based on responses of the managers' superiors, and one based on responses of the managers themselves. The measures of effectiveness thus indicate how effective managers are perceived to be by themselves and their subordinates and superiors.

### LEADERSHIP ROLES

We use 20 items that Quinn (1988) developed to assess the frequency with which managers perform the eight leadership roles of the Competing Values Framework. The response scale ranges from 1 (*almost never*) to 7 (*almost always*). We assess the “frequency with which” rather than “how well” managers perform the leadership roles to avoid creating tautologies with the effectiveness items. Whereas Denison, Hooijberg, and Quinn (1995) found strong support for the quadrant structure of the Competing Values Framework but not necessarily for the individual leadership roles within the quadrants, we will try to replicate the original eight leadership roles.

As with the effectiveness items, the leadership role items were aggregated by organizational role. That is, the responses of all subordinates for each item for a given manager were averaged into one subordinate score, and the same was done for the superiors. We did this because we want to understand leadership effectiveness expectations from three organizational role perspectives (Keller, 1986, p. 719).

### CONTROL VARIABLES

Because we want to examine the relationships between leadership roles and perceptions of leadership effectiveness, we need to rule out alternative explanations of perceptions of leadership effectiveness. Past studies have demonstrated that sex (e.g., Dobbins & Platz, 1986; Eagley & Johnson, 1990), age, managerial experience, and level of education affect perceptions of leadership effectiveness (e.g., Bass, 1990). Therefore, we include those four variables as control variables in this study.

## RESULTS

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

We used LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) to analyze the data because it takes measurement errors into consideration, gives parameter estimates based on the maximum likelihood method, and provides various indices of the extent to which the proposed covariance structural model fits the data. In this study, we used five indices to assess the goodness of fit of the covariance structural model: (a) chi-square value and its *p* value,

(b) chi-square divided by degrees of freedom, (c) root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), (d) incremental fit index (IFI), and (e) comparative fit index (CFI).

The most common goodness-of-fit index is the chi-square value. The rule of thumb is that if the  $p$  value of the chi-square statistic is greater than .05 (i.e., the chi-square value is nonsignificant), then the proposed model is acceptable (Hayduk, 1987). However, because the traditional chi-square test is very sensitive to sample size, a variety of indices that take sample size into consideration have been developed. Marsh and Hocevar (1985) suggested using chi-square divided by degrees of freedom, where values of less than 5.0 indicate good fit between model and data. Browne and Cudek (1993) suggested using the RMSEA as the principal goodness-of-fit index. They suggested that a value of RMSEA of less than .05 indicates a close fit and that values up to .08 represent reasonable errors of approximation in the population. In addition, because Bollen (1986, 1989a, 1989b) and Bentler (1990) have shown that IFI and CFI are much less dependent on sample size, we also used IFI and CFI to assess the fit between the data and the model. The values of IFI and CFI can vary between 0 and 1, with values closer to 1 indicating a close fit between data and model.

By using a LISREL model that combines factor analysis and path analysis (Bollen, 1989a), we can evaluate (a) the discriminant and convergent validity of leadership roles and leadership effectiveness, and (b) the significance of the relationships between leadership roles and leadership effectiveness. To accomplish these two purposes, we followed the two-step procedure suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). First, the measurement model is tested with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for all latent constructs. Once the measurement model is judged to be a good fit, we go on to test the significance of the relationships between the latent constructs.

#### CFA

We performed six CFAs on the leadership roles and leadership effectiveness items—namely, one each for the managers themselves, their subordinates, and their superiors—and repeated this for each sample. The eight leadership role model, however, did not generate a good fit with the data. The modification indices indicated that the fit between model and data could be substantially improved by allowing the producer, director, and coordinator items to load on the same factor. These leadership roles lie

close to each other in the Competing Values Framework, and we labeled this factor *goal-orientation* in the subsequent LISREL analyses. The results of this second CFA improved the overall fit and limited extremely high correlations between the latent factors. Table 1 shows the factor loadings for the individual items for all three organizational role groups in the manufacturing and government samples as well as the goodness-of-fit indices.

The goodness-of-fit indices for the CFAs for the manufacturing and government samples all demonstrated good fit between model and data and showed that the data confirm the proposed six-factor structures for both samples and all three organizational role groups. Examination of the latent construct correlations supported the discriminant validity of the constructs because individual tests of the correlations indicated that they were significantly lower than 1.0 (Bagozzi, 1980). Furthermore, the CFAs for the effectiveness items confirmed that those five items are adequately represented by one common factor for all three groups in both samples.

#### MEANS, CORRELATIONS, AND RELIABILITIES<sup>1</sup>

Table 2 shows the means for the leadership roles and effectiveness measures. The public and private sector managers have similar means, and few means differ from each other at a statistically significant level. Table 3 shows the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the leadership roles and effectiveness index for all three groups in both samples. With only one exception, all Cronbach's alphas exceed the recommended .70 level (Nunnally, 1978).

#### LISREL ANALYSES

Table 4 shows the path coefficients from the LISREL analyses for both samples. The self results are juxtaposed, as are the subordinate and superior results.

The test of our hypotheses requires comparison of the estimates of the structural equation parameters from the public and private sector samples. We compared the parameters by conducting multiple two-group analyses and investigating changes in chi-square values. For example, to examine whether parameter estimates for the association between the innovator role and perceptions of effectiveness for the managers themselves differed significantly between the public and private sector organizations, we ran two analyses: one in which the parameter estimate of the impact of the

**TABLE 1**  
**Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of All Latent Variables and Fit Indices**

<i>Leadership Role</i>	<i>Self</i>		<i>Subordinates</i>		<i>Superiors</i>	
	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>
<b>Innovator</b>						
X1: Experiments with new concepts and procedures	.647	.682	.734	.827	.750	.850
X2: Does problem solving in creative, clever ways	.796	.841	.795	.923	.802	.839
X3: Comes up with inventive ideas	.722	.876	.814	.930	.821	.907
<b>Broker</b>						
X4: Influences decisions made at higher levels	.804	.698	.789	.801	.828	.812
X5: Gets access to people at higher levels	.606	.597	.720	.791	.663	.704
X6: Exerts upward influence in the organization	.756	.933	.845	.925	.803	.860
<b>Goal-orientation</b>						
X7: Gets the unit to meet expected goals	.683	.590	.805	.717	.807	.723
X8: Sees that the unit delivers on stated goals	.712	.624	.740	.784	.809	.810
X9: Clarifies the unit's priorities and direction	.754	.821	.840	.931	.822	.754
X10: Makes the unit's role very clear	.714	.805	.823	.913	.767	.836
X11: Anticipates workflow problems, avoids crisis	.565	.726	.668	.786	.703	.792
X12: Keeps track of what goes on inside the unit	.538	.598	.738	.762	.720	.781
<b>Monitor</b>						
X13: Maintains tight logistical control	.620	.587	.760	.855	.709	.768
X14: Compares records, reports, and so on to detect discrepancies	.619	.730	.647	.716	.637	.822
X15: Monitors compliance with the rules	.744	.753	.685	.848	.664	.662
<b>Facilitator</b>						
X16: Facilitates consensus building in the work unit	.707	.767	.833	.850	.809	.848

X17: Surfaces key differences among group members, then works participatively to resolve them	.690	.738	.831	.773	.811	.868
X18: Develops consensual resolution to openly expressed differences	.716	.678	.799	.825	.794	.831
Mentor						
X19: Shows empathy and concern in dealing with subordinates	.798	.887	.868	.926	.824	.907
X20: Treats each individual in a sensitive, caring way	.840	.823	.910	.972	.874	.948
Leadership effectiveness						
Y1: Meeting of managerial performance standards	.623	.762	.797	.919	.779	.867
Y2: Overall managerial success	.787	.781	.906	.940	.840	.919
Y3: Comparisons with the person's managerial peers	.662	.703	.829	.839	.833	.830
Y4: Performance as a role model	.610	.566	.841	.850	.779	.846
Y5: Overall effectiveness as a manager	.848	.802	.926	.934	.903	.892
Goodness-of-fit indices						
$\chi^2$	886	642	1,306	698	1,261	809
<i>df</i>	326	326	326	326	326	326
$\chi^2/df$	2.7	2.0	4.0	2.1	3.9	2.5
RMSEA	.04	.07	.06	.08	.06	.09
CFI	.93	.86	.94	.92	.93	.87
IFI	.94	.86	.94	.92	.94	.87

NOTE: RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, CFI = comparative fit index, IFI = incremental fit index. All of the factor loadings in this table are from the standardized solution. For Private, they are calculated from null of 8,954.329 with 406 *df* in Self; null of 15,818.137 with 406 *df* in Subordinate; null of 14,654.991 with 406 *df* in Superior. For Public, they are calculated from null of 2,602.157 with 406 *df* in Self; null of 4,826.225 with 406 *df* in Subordinate; null of 4,168.001 with 406 *df* in Superior. All of the factor loadings are significant at or below  $p = .01$ .

**TABLE 2**  
**Leadership Role and Effectiveness Means and**  
**Same-Level Cross-Organizational T-Test Comparisons**

	<i>Self</i>		<i>Subordinates</i>		<i>Superiors</i>	
	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>
Innovator	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.8
Broker	4.8	4.6**	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
Goal-orientation	5.2	5.2	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.2
Monitor	4.5	4.8**	4.7	5.1**	5.1	5.0
Facilitator	5.2	5.0*	4.8	4.8	4.8	5.1**
Mentor	5.4	5.5	5.1	5.5**	5.4	5.4
Effectiveness	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.8*	4.0	3.9

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**TABLE 3**  
**Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients**  
**for Leadership Roles and Effectiveness**

	<i>Self</i>		<i>Subordinates</i>		<i>Superiors</i>	
	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>
Innovator	.76	.84	.82	.92	.83	.90
Broker	.76	.77	.83	.87	.81	.83
Goal-orientation	.82	.85	.89	.93	.90	.91
Monitor	.69	.72	.74	.85	.71	.79
Facilitator	.74	.77	.86	.86	.85	.89
Mentor	.80	.84	.88	.95	.83	.92
Effectiveness	.83	.84	.93	.95	.91	.94

innovator role on perceptions of effectiveness was constrained to be the same for both samples and one in which the parameter estimate was not constrained to be the same. We then examined whether the two analyses generated a significantly different chi-square value. If the chi-square value did change significantly between the two analyses, then we concluded that that particular parameter was significantly different for the two samples. We conducted this type of comparison for all leadership roles for the managers themselves and their subordinates and superiors.

Because the producer, director, and coordinator roles loaded on the same factor, we evaluate the support for Hypotheses 1 and 2 simultaneously and find that they receive support. The path coefficients for the

**TABLE 4**  
**LISREL Path Coefficients for Effectiveness Perceptions**

	<i>Self</i>		<i>Subordinates</i>		<i>Superiors</i>	
	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Public</i>
Innovator	.15				.12	
Broker	.28	.16	.29	.31	.25	.35
Goal-orientation	.35	.28	.34	.33	.66	.68
Monitor	-.19	.26	-.10		-.33	
Facilitator		.30	.14			
Mentor	.14		.21	.24		
Sex	.06					
Age			-.07		-.13	.16
Education						
Years in position						
$R^2$	.39	.55	.66	.72	.62	.66

NOTE: Only the statistically significant paths are shown.

goal-orientation role are highly significant and positive for the managers themselves and their subordinates and superiors in both samples. This means that the frequent performance of the goal-orientation role has a strong association with perceptions of effectiveness, regardless of organizational type. Multigroup comparisons showed that the path coefficients for the goal-orientation role are significantly different between the public and private sector organizations for the managers themselves and in the expected direction ( $\Delta$  chi-square = 7.220,  $\Delta$  *df* = 1,  $p < .01$ ). This means that the managers in the public sector do not think that their performance of the goal-orientation role affects effectiveness as much as their private sector counterparts do. Our finding of the weak relationship perceived by public managers between goal-orientation role and effectiveness may result from their low confidence in goal competencies (Boyatzis, 1982). Because their perceptions of goal competencies are lower than private managers', it is not surprising that the relationship between goal-orientation and effectiveness is less pronounced for public managers. However, we did not find significant differences between the subordinates and superiors between the two samples.

Hypothesis 3 receives support. In the government sample, the monitor role has a strong positive association with perceptions of effectiveness, whereas it has a significant negative relationship with effectiveness in the manufacturing sample. Managers in the government sample clearly see the monitor role as important for their effectiveness. Surprisingly, their

subordinates and superiors do not see a strong relationship between the monitor role and effectiveness. Multigroup comparisons showed that for the managers themselves, the change in chi-square was highly significant ( $\Delta$  chi-square = 13.759,  $\Delta$  *df* = 1,  $p < .001$ ). This result confirms the hypothesis that the monitor role has a stronger effect on perceptions of effectiveness in the public than the private sector. In addition, in the subordinate and superior samples, the monitor role has a significantly stronger negative association with effectiveness in the private than the public sector organization.

Hypothesis 4 also receives support. In the self-comparison, the facilitator role has a positive impact in the government sample and no impact in the manufacturing sample. This confirms Denhardt's (1984) assertion that facilitation is a key skill for public sector employees. However, in the subordinate comparison we see the reverse, and in the superior comparison the facilitator role has no impact. Multiple group comparisons show that the effect for the managers themselves is significant ( $\Delta$  chi-square = 2.794,  $\Delta$  *df* = 1,  $p < .10$ ).

Hypothesis 5 does not receive support. The mentor role has the same effect in the subordinate and superior comparisons in both samples and a significant impact in the self data in the manufacturing sample but not the government sample. Multiple group comparisons, however, did not find any significant differences between the two samples on the mentor role.

Hypothesis 6 receives strong support. Whereas the innovator role has a small but significant impact on self and superior perceptions of effectiveness in the private sector organization but not in the public organization, multiple group comparisons showed that these differences were not significant. The broker role has a significant positive impact in both the public and private sector organization in the effectiveness models of the managers themselves as well as their subordinates and superiors, and multiple group comparisons show no significant differences between the two samples.

The results show support for Hypothesis 7 because, in each comparison, the manufacturing sample has more leadership roles with a statistically significant impact on perceptions of effectiveness. This supports the notion that public sector managers themselves as well as their subordinates and superiors believe they have less leadership discretion overall than their private sector counterparts.

The control variables do not have much of an impact on any of the dependent variables. Age has a negative impact on subordinate and superior perceptions of effectiveness in the manufacturing sample and a

positive impact on superior perceptions of effectiveness in the government sample. The only other control variable that has an effect is the sex variable in the self-perceptions equation of the manufacturing sample.

## DISCUSSION

We explored the extent to which a generic organization management theory can help us understand differences in the association between leadership behaviors and perceptions of effectiveness using large samples of managers from a purely public and a purely private sector organization. Consistent with our hypotheses, we found that managers in the public sector see a weaker association between the goal-orientation leadership role and effectiveness and a stronger association between the monitor and facilitator leadership roles and effectiveness than their private sector counterparts. Also consistent with the hypotheses, we found that the innovator and broker roles had a similar impact in both samples and that fewer leadership roles have a significant impact on perceptions of effectiveness in the public sector organization than in the private sector organization and that this was true for the managers themselves as well as their subordinates and superiors. These findings are consistent with the notion that in public sector organizations, managers believe they have less discretion in exercising leadership than in private sector organizations and in turn point to the need for theories to explicitly address the role of organizational characteristics.

Interestingly enough, the subordinate and superior results do not show the same differences in perceptions as between the managers themselves. For instance, whereas public managers do not see as strong a relationship between goal-orientation role and effectiveness as private managers, the subordinates and superiors all stressed the importance of the goal-orientation role as much as their counterparts in the private organization. This indicates that subordinates and superiors in the public sector may have expectations of their managers similar to those of their counterparts in the private sector. The intensive competition among states to attract and keep businesses in their states, especially, compels public managers to take a more competitive posture. Some managers in the agency we studied indeed confessed that they felt increasing pressure from the governor's office as well as from their subordinates to be more competitive in goal achievement. On the other hand, the fact that the managers in the public sector have stressed the goal-orientation role less suggests that they do not

feel as much latitude of action on the goal-orientation role as their counterparts in the private sector. This shows us the tough realities facing public managers: Despite strong role expectations, they feel their hands are tied.

Another interesting finding is the consistently strong positive association between the goal-orientation and broker roles and effectiveness in both samples and for managers, subordinates, and superiors alike. It seems that task orientation (i.e., the goal-orientation role) and influencing one's superiors (i.e., the broker role) constitute key leadership behaviors regardless of context. This result provides support for those arguing in favor of generic theories of management.

Although we expected the public sector managers to see a stronger association between monitoring and effectiveness, we had not expected the negative association in the private sector sample. One possible explanation might be that public sector managers associate monitoring with observing rules and regulations whereas private sector managers associate monitoring with closely supervising people. Because monitoring compliance with rules and regulations is more impersonal, it may be seen as a more positive activity than closely supervising people.

Finally, superiors in the two samples seem to view older managers differently. The superiors in the public sector seem to find older managers more effective, whereas the reverse holds in the private sector. We suspect that age in the public sector organization reflects the seniority principle of the civil service system.

#### **THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**

Although many researchers have implicitly and explicitly (Bass, 1997) assumed that theories of leadership apply to all different types of organizations, our study supports Rousseau's (1978) and House's (1991) call to explore the impact of organizational context variables on micro-organizational phenomena by showing that organizational sector influences which leadership roles affect perceptions of effectiveness. Although some leadership roles may have more universal application, the effects of other leadership roles may be unique to either the public or private sector.

In our study, we saw that the goal-orientation and broker roles play a central role in perceptions of effectiveness in both organizations as well as in the perceptions of managers themselves and their subordinates and superiors. These roles would support the proponents of applying organization and management theories to both private and public organizations.

The differences we found in the self-perceptions of the managers and on the monitor role for the subordinates and superiors, however, also support the critics, in that they point to unique effects of the type of organization on perceptions of leadership effectiveness.

Whereas we have applied a generic leadership theory from the organization and management literature, future research should also incorporate other leadership characteristics deemed unique to public leadership. Denhardt (1984) strongly argued that public leadership differs significantly from private leadership, especially in the need for integrity and democratic responsibility. Measures will need to be developed to assess these characteristics. Finding that such variables play a significant role in one but not other types of organizations would provide even stronger support of the critics' point of view.

#### **PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The results of our study also point to two important practical implications. First, the issue of discretion has implications for leadership training programs. Our study shows, for example, that a leadership training program that emphasizes task orientation (i.e., the goal-orientation role) as a key leadership attribute might find useful application in our private sector company, but it would ignore some of the realities in the sample from our government agency. For public sector managers, a training program intended to improve individual managers' task orientation might not be sufficient. For them, to be more effective leaders, both personal development and institutional support should go together. Given the perception of limited managerial discretion of public managers, the institutional support system becomes more crucial in developing their leadership.

Second, awareness of the managers' leadership effectiveness models can also help top management be more successful in implementing changes in their organizations. For example, in the government agency we studied, many of the assistant commissioners (i.e., the politically appointed leaders) were really interested in getting new ideas about improving permitting and enforcement from the career-level leaders in our study. However, the leadership effectiveness models of the career-level leaders show that they see no significant relationship between innovation and effectiveness. The assistant commissioners can use the results of this study to explore reasons why the career-level leaders do not see the need for innovation.

In sum, it is both important for top management to be aware of the leadership effectiveness models of their employees and to understand how structural aspects of their organization shape these effectiveness models.

#### **LIMITATIONS**

We have used general behavioral items to assess the various leadership roles. Although this has the advantage of allowing comparisons across samples, it may mask significant differences in the substance of leadership in these organizations. For example, in the private sector the main substance would be market-driven productivity, and this might be clear to managers, subordinates, and superiors alike. In the public sector, however, the substance of leadership might be more ambiguous. In the department we studied, subordinates may think of leadership as issuing permits and fining violators. Superiors, on the other hand, may think of the number of legislative requests that receive prompt and correct responses when they think about leadership. Therefore, we have a general sense of which leadership roles are important, but it would be helpful to also conduct research on the meanings of the different leadership roles in private versus public sector organizations.

Finally, whereas the managers in the two samples seem to have many similarities in terms of demographic variables and organizational responsibilities, we do not know the exact extent of differences in job scope and responsibility. Furthermore, some of the observed differences between the two samples (e.g., ability to grant pay raises) reflect differences between the sectors and not characteristics of the managers. No matter the explanation, though, comparability of the samples is a concern.

#### **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Consistent with Rousseau (1978) and House (1991), we believe that organizational-level variables affect the amount of discretion leaders have and that research should, therefore, pay serious attention to these variables. Whether researchers examine transactional and transformational leadership behaviors (e.g., Atwater & Yammarino, 1993; Hater & Bass, 1988), influence tactics (e.g., Schmidt & Yeh, 1992; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Tracey, 1992), Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory (e.g., Wakabayashi & Graen, 1984), or role-set expectations (e.g., Pfeffer &

Salancik, 1975; Tsui, 1984; Tsui & Ohlott, 1988), one should explore the impact of organizational-level variables.

We suggest, therefore, that researchers, whenever possible, include respondents from dissimilar types of organizations in their studies to address the question of the universality of their findings more directly and empirically. It is only through these types of studies that we can improve our understanding of the universality and locality of our models of leadership. Studies such as ours represent small steps in that direction, but many more studies are needed to see to what extent generic organization management theories can help us better understand similarities and differences between public sector and other types of organizations.

Second, from our personal experiences with the two organizations studied, we know that although the items we used capture important general aspects of the leadership demands our respondents face, they do not capture the richness of the leadership frustrations and joys our respondents discussed in the seminars. Leadership research will be enriched to the extent that we explore and understand the meanings of, for example, the goal-orientation role in private versus public sector organizations. Denhardt (1984), for example, argued that goals are determined differently in the public than in the private sector. He asserts that, whereas private sector managers concern themselves with accomplishing goals for individual and/or organizational advantage, the public sector managers concern themselves with pursuing publicly defined societal values. Future research should, therefore, explicitly address the extent to which these qualitative differences affect the leadership behaviors of managers.

Finally, future research should increase the number of organizations studied. Although our sample contains a broad sampling of managers within two large, complex organizations, we compared only two organizations, one each from the public and private sectors. Because we relied on only one organization from each setting, the findings might reflect the idiosyncratic characteristics of the individual organizations. Future research should try to combine sampling from a broad range of organizations with reasonably sized samples for each organization. This approach would greatly improve the generalizability of the study.

We believe generic organization management theories serve the useful purpose of allowing us to explore empirically presumed differences between organizations in various sectors. Using generic theories, however, should not lead us to close our eyes to unique characteristics of organizations in specific sectors.

## NOTE

1. The complete table with all the means, standard deviations, and correlations for the managers themselves and their subordinates and superiors is available from the authors upon request.

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