CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU) POLICE DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP EVALUATION

By

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Abstract

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Leaders have the ability transform lives and societies and can motivate people for greatness or terrible things. Within a California State University police department, Chiefs of Police are important decision makers that can influence and shape the departments norms, values, goals, behaviors and attitudes. A leadership evaluation (N = 333), was used to explore the effects of leader prototypicality, officer self-uncertainty and social identity continuity through union leadership evaluations. The initial hypothesis that social identity continuity positively predicts group identification and is moderated by leader support was supported. However, the second hypothesis that the relationship between prototypical leaders and officer self-uncertainty will be mediated by perceived social identity continuity was not supported. These findings are supported by previous research literature, in that leaders play an important role in CSU police departments so that officers feel highly identified today, tomorrow and through the future.

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Introduction

Police officers across the United States are faced with changing social and political issues and equipped with outdated methods to address them. Most importantly to note, Black individuals, specifically young black men, within the United States experience disproportionately higher rates of police contact, arrests and incarceration even while encompassing significantly lower percentages of the United States population (Brennan Center for Justice, 2021). Even more staggering, Black people are over three times more likely to be killed by police when compared to white people (Brennan Center for Justice, 2021). With the constantly evolving social climate, officers must address issues ranging from economic, social and technological crimes all of which require new skills and the ability to quickly analyze challenging situations with flexibility (Ransley & Mazerolle, 2009). Traditionally, police officers throughout the United States have practiced a wide breadth in their use of lethal force, in that officers simply needed to demonstrate a subjective *reasonable standard* for using force. This reasonable standard has simply been defined for years as that another person would also use, support and justify the use of deadly force in the same situation that the police officer finds themselves in. However, cries throughout the nation are now being heard for in-depth police reform, with over half the states enacting at least one or more statewide legislative policing reforms to ensure more uniform policies within the respective jurisdictions (Brennan Center for Justice, 2021).

In 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed the landmark bill, AB392 (“Use of Force Standards”), which refined and transformed the guidelines under which

the use of deadly force by a police officer can be used. This bill adjusts the subjectivity of the 'reasonable standard' and instead includes the totality of the circumstances leading up to the use of lethal force, only when *objectively* reasonable in the defense of human life (Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, 2021). AB392 asserts that the use of lethal force by a police officer must include all facts that are known to the police officer at the time, including the conduct of both the subject and the officer, leading up to the use of deadly force. While the language has been adjusted, this policy still leaves significant room for interpretation and subjectivity, and thus, officers face much uncertainty in how to interpret the situation and when to justifiably use lethal force.

In February of 2017, the Department of Homeland Security 287(g) demonstrated a desire to establish strengthened relationships with law enforcement agencies across the United States in an effort to enforce immigration policies (American Immigration Council, 2021). Law enforcement agencies across the country received new instructions on community policing and how to abide by the regulations set forth by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (American Immigration Council, 2021). This put several officers in uncomfortable positions, especially officers working in 'sanctuary cities' or declared sanctuary states. Sworn to abide by federal laws, but under authority of the California State University (CSU) system, CSU officers find themselves in a proverbial gray area of law enforcement and immigration reform. Former CSU Chancellor Timothy P. White indicated that campus police officers will act as an intermediary between outside immigration officials and concerned students and faculty (Edwards, 2017). The roles and futures of CSU police officers remains unclear at best,

displaced between the dynamic forces of the CSU and federal regulations, leaving many officers looking towards their leadership for guidance and certainty.

Leadership has the potential to dramatically transform lives and societies. It also has the potential to motivate people to do both great and terrible things (Hogg, van Knippenberg & Rast, 2012). From a workplace point of view, leaders are the important decision makers who make judgements on promotions, tenure, and job assignments and (perhaps most importantly), leaders are critical for the success of their organizations (van Knippenberg, 2011; Rast, Gaffney, & Hogg, 2013). This work defines leadership relationally such that it identifies a relationship in which some people can influence others to accept new goals, attitudes, and values (Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003). As Hogg and Reid (2006) suggest, the leader is often the most influential person in a group. An effective leader has influence over the attitudes, behaviors and destiny of group members (Fielding & Hogg, 1997). A leader can call group members to action and shape new norms, values, goals, behaviors, and attitudes (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Emphasizing the importance of effective leadership through social influence, Hogg (2010) suggests that effective leadership drives social influence and change within groups. Leaders play a large role in group functioning and social change; however, leadership research has traditionally examined the individual traits a leader possesses which allow them to effectively lead a group of followers and has paid less attention to the group processes involved in effective leadership.

Literature Review

Leader Traits

Leadership is an important feature of groups and is the source of influence within groups. Well-known leaders throughout history have changed and shaped the world, and will continue to do so, demonstrating their established influence. Leadership positions are also important to an organization and are paramount for the success of the organization or group. Traditional leadership literature has concentrated on the unique, individual qualities that make someone a leader, and how this individual can shape their followers (Hogg, 2001), often ignoring the processes of followership (Collinson, 2006) and therefore only concentrating on the leadership traits rather than the dynamic interactional relationship between leader and follower.

Past leadership literature has examined the role of the leader in facilitating the appropriate exchange of resources between the leader and followers (Burns, 1978), and uses the importance of high-quality relationships as a focal point on worker attitudes towards their occupation (Martin, Thomas, Charles, Epitropaki, & McNamara, 2005). Different types of leadership traits and personalities may play a significant role in how leaders are perceived by their followers. For example, charismatic leaders may have the ability to increase followers' productivity and output, especially towards achieving group-related goals (Jung & Sosik, 2006) and are typically viewed as agents of change because they often use unconventional and innovative processes to achieve goals and visions (Conger & Kanungo, 1993). Transformational leaders have the ability to change or transform their group towards the collective common goal (Conger & Kanungo, 1987).

Within an organization context, plethora of research suggests that transformational leaders have a great impact and influence on employee motivation and performance (Kark, Shamir & Chen, 2003).

Leaders are also viewed and categorized based on followers perceptions, which stem from schemas - subjective cognitive frameworks that include all the characteristics that followers associate with a leaders. Leader categorization theory (Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984) proposes that leadership schemas are a crucial determinant of leader success. For example, (give example of a leader schema). Once a follower has a leadership schema in place, they will compare all potential leaders to that schema which may prescribe the perceived the success or failure of that leader. For example, if an individual holds a schema that a great leader is a white male, this may prove problematic for people seeking leadership positions that do not fit that schema, therefore automatically disqualifying them from holding the qualities of that leadership schema (e.g., women, people of color) (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Leadership is more than an individual person leading others to success - it is a dynamic relationship between a leader and followers in that they both actively rely on each other to create the conditions under which mutual influence is possible (Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005) and together play a fundamental role in constructing a shared identity (Collinson, 2006). A leader cannot exist without a group or without followers. Group membership provides a shared and collective identity – a social identity, from which people derive a part of their self-concept (Hogg, 2011). Because people garner a large part of the self-concept from their social identities and group memberships, and

leaders are typically the faces of their groups, leaders play a large role in enacting social identity.

Social Identity Perspective

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) defines the self-concept as partially prescribed by the social groups an individual belongs to. These group memberships provide us with an idea of who we are, which forms the self-concept, and therefore builds an evaluative sense of social identity. Social identity is "the evaluative part of the self-concept through which people define themselves in terms of what their group is (the ingroup) and what their group is not (the outgroup)" (Gaffney & Hogg, 2017, p.3). Through these group memberships, we are able to derive and evaluate our behaviors, social norms, beliefs and values to determine what is expected and accepted, in comparison to the relative ingroups and outgroups. These group memberships allow us to have a sense of who a person should be, and how to act and feel (Hogg & Reid, 2006). For example, a police officer within a police department may identify as an officer, viewing themselves as disciplined, law-abiding and fearless, but when they are at a softball game, they may view themselves as a softball player and team member, focusing on athleticism, skill and team spirit. The groups that people belong to prescribe a social identity that becomes integrated into their self-concept, which influences values, norms and traditions associated with the social identity in question (Reicher, 2004), forming the ingroup prototype. A prototype is a "fuzzy set of attributes" that represent the core identify of each group and distinguishes one group from another (Hogg, 2001).

Prototypes describe the ideal group member and are consensual to the extent that members of a group share the same cognitive representation of the group (Hogg, 2001).

Because people are motivated to view the self favorably (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979), they are motivated to view their ingroup prototypes favorability. This motivation drives groups to seek positive distinctiveness for the ingroup – to view the ingroup as different from and better than relevant outgroups.

Self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) describes the process through which social and self-categorization occurs. When group membership becomes salient, self-categorization depicts the process of group members depersonalizing their identities and then categorizing themselves and other group members based on the group prototype, and then acting in accordance to that established prototype (Hogg & Reid, 2006). For example, if striving for integrity and accountability are part of a group's prototype, group members will strive to align their behavior with that standard. Depersonalization is when group members internalize the prototype as part of the self. Members stop viewing the unique traits of each individual, and will view them as a collective whole of the prototype instead, thereby comparing all group members to the their prototype (Hogg, 2006; Hogg & Gaffney, 2018). Group members are motivated to adhere to prototypical behaviors to maintain their role within the group while engaging in actions that favor the group and self (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). The most prototypical members of the group, those viewed as being the closest to the group prototype, are an important source of information to other members and are viewed as the prototypical *leaders* of the group.

Leadership

Prototypical leaders are important for group-relevant information such that they inform members of the norms, indicating who they are and who they are not (Hogg, van Knippenberg, & Rast, 2016) while also representing a groups identity and modeling for the group in terms of attitude and behavior (Gaffney & Hogg, 2017). Leaders of the groups embody the natural prototypical qualities of that group better than others and may wield more influence (Hogg, 2006; Hogg, 2001; Turner, 1991). Because they embody the prototypical qualities of the group, leaders are generally the source of influence in their respective groups (Hogg, 2006) and are also more trusted by the group members than other members.

The social identity perspective on leadership and identity leadership research (Hogg, 2001; Reicher, Haslam & Hopkins, 2005) asserts that group leaders tend to be the most prototypical group members, as they embody ingroup similarities while also maximizing outgroup differences.

Prototypical group leaders will garner more support from their subordinates, particularly because members trust and believe that the leader has the best interest of the group at heart, sometimes even and will trusting the leader even if they fail (Gaffney & Hogg, 2017; Gaffney, Rast & Hogg, 2018; Barreto & Hogg, 2017). When group members strongly identify with their leader through relational identification, this process will increase the perception of the leader's charisma. Charisma is a multidimensional trait in which the leader is perceived as highly representative of the group, and can induce motivation in their followers (Jayakody, 2008; Steffens, Haslam & Reicher, 2014).

Charismatic leaders have the ability to induce positive changes within their group, including motivation and performance and in turn, become even more influential in their group (Jung & Sosik, 2006; Nohe, Michaelis, Mengis, Zhang & Sonntag, 2013). Prototypical leaders have the ability to change or adjust any existing group prototype through several means such as rhetoric or making comparisons to "deviant" outgroups (Hogg et al., 2012). These comparisons to deviant outgroups increases ingroup favoritism, indicating that the leader may be working with the best interest of the group (Hogg, 2003). With this position of influence, a prototypical leader may have substantial and particular interest over group members, even if the leader expresses a deviant attitude or position.

A leader who shifts to a non-normative positive may find themselves at the beginning of an identity change or shift, perhaps indicating to their followers that they are no longer a prototypical leader (Reicher & Hopkins, 1996). However, there are situations that even a nonprototypical leader can still maintain and garner support from followers. When members feel uncertain about a situation, they may change their preference for non-prototypical leadership in order to maintain group identity (Rast et al., 2012).

Uncertainty-Identity Theory

The feeling of self-uncertainty is often troubling and bothersome, and individuals are naturally motivated to reduce it. Uncertainty identity theory (Hogg, 2000, 2007; Grant & Hogg, 2012) posits that people often experience self-related uncertainties as an uncomfortable drive state which is a motivator for group identification and group membership (Hogg, 2007). One of the most effective ways of reducing uncertainty about

the self is through identification with self-relevant groups (Grant & Hogg, 2012) which tell an individual about their identity and their place in society (Turner et al., 1987). Highly entitative groups are groups that make their status as a group obvious because they have a very clear prototype and clear boundaries (Hogg, 2007), as well as distinct member behavior and attitudes that are clearly prescribed (Lickel, Hamilton, Wiedzorkowska, Sherman & Uhles, 2000). By belonging to and identifying with a highly entitative group, people can cognitively represent themselves as group prototypes, which tells them how to think, feel, and what to do and what to expect from others (Hogg et al, 2010). Entitative groups are powerful, and can even indicate to members who they are and what their place in society is, especially since these groups tend to work as a single entitativity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). By ascribing to the group prototype, individuals understand who they are and who they are not (Gaffney & Hogg, 2017) as a way to reduce the uncertainty that they feel. Comparing the self to others is a key aspect in uncertainty reduction (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985) states that individuals are constantly motivated to understand and be aware of themselves, and will turn to a highly entitative group to assist in understanding their own attitudes and opinions, or to determine proper courses of action that are important to the self-concept. For example, feeling uncertain about enforcing the law would relate to the self-concept if being a police officer was important to an individual. However, for an accomplished violinist, enforcing laws may not be an integral part of their identity, and therefore does not cause feelings of uncertainty. Uncertain individuals will attempt to identify with the group as a whole and turn to who they believe is prototypical (Hogg & Gaffney, 2014).

Rast, Gaffney, Hogg and Crisp (2012) found that although a prototypical leader is more preferred and will be bestowed with more positive characteristics that increases follower trust and support (Gaffney & Hogg, 2017), under uncertainty, the prototypical leader advantage may weaken, such that people equally prefer prototypical and non-prototypical leaders (Rast, Gaffney, Hogg & Crisp, 2012). When individuals are uncertain, they look to their leader for direction to resolve task-related ambiguity and need leadership to help resolve their self-uncertainty. Turning to the in-group members also reduces the uncomfortable feeling of uncertainty (Hogg & Abrams, 1993) but also allows members to have a sense of being connected to one's past, present and projected self (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). Understanding what a group has experienced in the past helps frame an identity for the future, and is crucial for an individual sense of self (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). When the past cannot be relied upon for contemporary situations, a feeling of nostalgia may result and create a longing for the "good old days" which increases in-group identification while also clearly defining those that do not belong or identify strongly with the past (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015).

Identity Continuity

The way in which policing, particularly within the California State University system, is changing. As a result of this, police departments – including Cal Poly Humboldt, are understaffed and having difficulty securing top leadership positions (Pedraza, 2022). CSU police departments have instituted several changes, both internally and externally, making them nontraditional microcosms that outside hires may have difficulty assimilating to and understanding. For example, many police departments

within the CSU system have instituted new policies such as a relaxed stance in uniforms, to move away from the military-look of traditional policing, to a "soft look" uniform that is distant from the traditional uniform used (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Recommendations from the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) also states, "Law enforcement agencies should acknowledge the role of policing in past and present injustice and discrimination and how it is a hurdle to the promotion of community trust." The overall way that policing is now conducted and lead in California college campuses' may pose threats to the identities of police officers as they are challenged to acknowledge their past policing practices as wrong, and may undergo feelings of discomfort as they redefine both themselves individually, and collectively as a department.

The self is defined by both individual ("I") and collective ("we") feelings, particularly within organizational workplace settings. Self-continuity is about having a sense of "I" through whatever changes, enduring the test of time (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). Threats to self-continuity are experienced with discomfort and even impaired psychological functioning (Scharfetter, 2003; Sims, 2003).

By identifying as a collective entity, individuals enjoy a stabilized sense of self, striving for an environment that is unchanging through time and situations (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg & Bobbio, 2008). The formation of a collective self-identity is the basis of forming (and motivation to have) a collective group identity, particularly if the groups are viewed as relatively stable and unchanging over time (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015).

A constant and stable collective identity allows and individual to closely draw together the past, present and future of the identity. Particularly when facing change, group members may become quite sentimental when reflecting on the past, longing for the old days or things that have been "lost" from the group (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). Values, systems and expectations are passed down through the generations with a sense that the defining features of their groups identity remain preserved (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg & Bobbio, 2008). For example, a police officer with a strong sense of identity continuity may envision the policing and practices from years past as superior, and believes they remain that way today and will remain the same in the future. However, to assume that individuals and groups within an organizational setting, remain unchanging is not realistic. Groups, like individuals, do experience collective change over time and may incur resistance based upon how the change has been implemented.

Change, similar to a fine wine, should be experienced deliberately and gradually. Group members who experience rapid collective or organizational change may feel a direct threat to their collective self-continuity (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg & Bobbio, 2008). Threatened group members may react to the organizational change with staunch resistance, feeling that the very core of who they are is at risk of being lost. If group members continue to feel "their" group still belongs to them, and themselves to the group, they may be welcoming to changes of various magnitudes. For effective organizational change to occur, leaders are typically prototypical, perform group-oriented acts (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003) and use rhetoric consistent with the collective

identity of the group (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg & Bobbio, 2008). However, nonprototypical leaders may still be effective change agents under the appropriate conditions (Syfers, Rast, & Gaffney, 2021).

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Social identity continuity will positively predict group identification and the relationship is moderated by leader support. Among those who only weakly support their leader, as social identity continuity increases, group identification will increase. However, those who strongly support their leader will identify strongly with their group regardless of social identity continuity.

Hypothesis 2

The relationship between leader prototypicality and officer self-uncertainty will be mediated by perceived social identity continuity. Social identity continuity will mediate the relationship between leader prototypicality and self-uncertainty, such that leader prototypicality will positively predict social identity continuity, which in turn, will negatively predict uncertainty.

Methods

Participants and Design

Participants

A sample of California State University Police Officers (N = 133) who were bargaining unit 8 members within the Statewide University Police Association during May to September, 2017 comprised this study. The items covered below were used in the secondary data analysis and hypotheses, however, there were more items in the survey that were used for other purposes.

Participants were recruited through the Statewide University Police Association and completed an online survey using Qualtrics software. “Leaders” were defined as the current, non-bargaining Unit 8 leadership within their respective departments (identified as leaders that because of their leadership status, could no longer belong to the Statewide University Police Association). Sworn officers at 18 California State Universities participated.

Survey. Qualtrics, an online survey platform and experimental design website, was used to conduct the experiment as well as to securely store the data.

Design. This correlational design, which relies on regression analyses.

Procedure

Informed consent. Participants were provided informed consent which stated that upon indicating their consent, they would take part in an evaluation regarding the personal perceptions of leadership within their respective departments. Following the informed consent, the Police Officers completed the survey.

Measured Variables

Leadership support

A 7 item measure of perceived leader support was administered to police officers. Adapted from Rast et al. (2012). (1) The leaders represent the interests of officers within the department well. (2) The leader fits in well with officers in the department. (3) I trust these people as leaders. (4) I am in support of these leaders. (1= *Strongly disagree*, 7= *Strongly Agree*) ($\alpha = .97$).

Leader Prototypicality

A 5 item leader prototypicality scale was used and adapted from van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005). (1) The leadership represents what is characteristic about police officers at (insert CSU name). (2) The leadership is a good example of what it means to be a police officer at (insert CSU name). (3) The leadership stands for what officers at (insert CSU name) have in common. (4) The leadership is representative of officers who work at (insert CSU name). (1= *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*) ($\alpha = .97$).

Self-uncertainty Scale

Police officers reporting feels of self-uncertainty using a 5-item self-uncertainty scale from Rast et al. (2012). This scale measured the effect of reported self-uncertainty and appeared as follows: (1) I am uncertain about myself. (2) I am uncertain about my future. (3) I am concerned about my future. (4) I am worried about my future. (5) I am uncertain about my place in the world. (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*) ($\alpha = .81$).

Social identity continuity

A 5 item measure of perceived social identity continuity was administered to police officers. The measure was adapted from Sani et al, 2007 and Smeekes and Verkuyten, 2013. (1) It is clear to us where we intent to go in the (insert CSU name) Police Department's future. (2) We are clear about the identity the (insert CSU name) Police Department will have in the future. (3) We are clear about where the (insert CSU name) Police Department is heading in the future. (4) It is clear to us what we can do to help the development of a 'we' feeling in our department. (5) It is clear to us what we can do to achieve the goals that the department has set for the future. (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*) (α = .98).

Group identification

A 9 item measure of group-identification was administered to police officers. The measure was adapted from Hogg and Hains (1996). (1) Overall, I have favorable impression of (insert CSU name) police department. (2) I would stand up for the (insert CSU name) Police Department if it were criticized. (3) I identify strongly with being a(n) (insert position) in this department. (4) I feel a sense of belonging as a(n) (insert position) in this department at (insert CSU). (5) Being a(n) (insert position) in this police department is an important part of my life. (6) I fit in well with other officers in this police department. (7) Overall, I feel very similar to other officers in this police department. (8) I identify strongly with officers in this police department. (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*) (α = .90).

Demographics

Finally, police officers were asked to report their demographic information including their race, gender and age. The mean age in the sample was 40 and ranged from ages 23 to 62. Most participants in this study were self-described as male (82%) or female (12%) and approximately half of those surveyed selected their race as white (49%) or Hispanic (21%).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's alphas, and correlations among variables

Variable	Mean	SD	**α**	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Social Identity Continuity	3.92	1.99	.98				
2. Leader Support	4.03	2.12	.97	.83***			
3. Group Identification	5.19	1.42	.90	.63	.72		
4. Self-uncertainty	2.16	1.11	.81	-0.22	-0.27	-0.19	
5. Leader Prototypicality	3.81	1.99	.97	.81	.94***	.72	-0.27

Note. $N = 333$. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Results

Data Screening

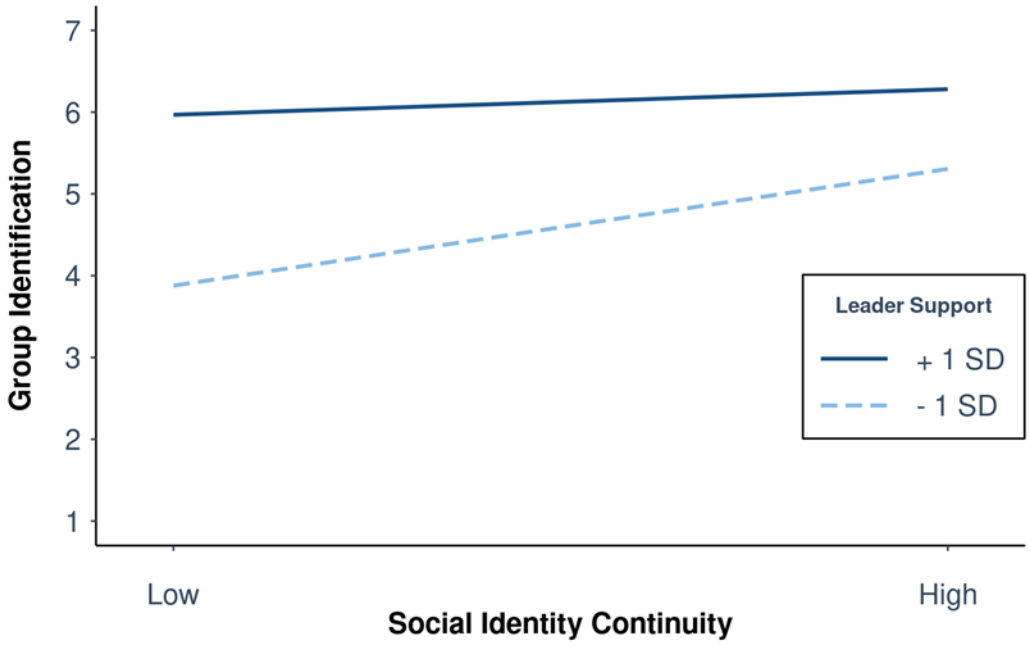
All variables were screened in normality assumptions for regression including qq plots, histograms, skewness and kurtosis. All data fell within acceptable ranges for ANOVA, which is a robust test.

Hypothesis 1

I hypothesized that social identity continuity would positively predict group identification and this relationship would be moderated by leader support. The overall model consisting of measured social identity continuity and measured leader support predicting group identification was significant, $R^2 = .0.538$, $F(2, 156) = 92.964$, $p < .001$. There is a main effect of continuity such that as social identity continuity increases, so does group identification ($b = .073$, $t = .577$, $p = .564$) and the interaction approached significance, ($\Delta R^2 = -.007$, $t = -1.865$, $p = .064$) thus given the prediction, simple slopes broken down relationship further. Social identity continuity positively predicts group identification when people weakly support their leader ($b = .123$, $t = 2.70$, $p = .008$); however, among strong supporters of their leader, social identity continuity does not predict group identification ($b = .126$, $t = .577$, $p = .564$).

Figure 1

Group Identification by Social Identity Continuity and Leader Support



Hypothesis 2

Leader prototypicality positively predicted social identity continuity (b = .687, t = 3.50, p < .001). However, because continuity did not predict uncertainty (b = -.056, t = -.718, p = .480), the results of the mediation are inconclusive, thus hypothesis two is not supported.

Discussion

Although this study's hypotheses were not fully supported, some results were partially consistent with predictions.

I hypothesized that among those who only weakly support their leader, as social identity continuity increases, group identification will also increase. However, those that strongly support their leader will also identify strongly with their group regardless of social identity continuity. There was a main effect of continuity such that as social identity continuity increases, so does group identification and the interaction approached significance.

These findings may be because police officers are highly identified and may quickly condemn leaders or fellow group members whose actions are viewed as non-prototypical, particularly if there is a perceived threat to the future of policing. If a leader is not viewed as representative, officers may instead identify with one another for confirmation on how to think, act and feel in situations and therefore can quickly identify those who do not ascribe to the same group norms. For example, in October of 2019, nine out of ten officers at Humboldt State University cast a vote of no confidence in Police Chief Donn Peterson, with morale estimated to be at an "all-time low" (Rock, 2019). An officer is quoted as saying, "Our officers look to the Chief for guidance and leadership, but he has fallen short of the standards they and the University community deserve" (Rock, 2019). If a leader is viewed as outside of the collective police identity, and not carrying the essence of that identity into the future, that leader may not be as trusted and

supported as compared to leaders that are more representative of the group (Syfers, Rast & Gaffney, 2021).

Hypothesis two was not supported during this study, in that that the relationship between prototypical leaders and officer self-uncertainty would be mediated by perceived social identity continuity.

The findings for hypothesis two are not particularly surprising in that when a leader is viewed as prototypical, followers may have less uncertainty and may be generally less concerned about the future of the group. Previous studies have shown that when a group is faced with change, a prototypical leader is trusted to carry the group forward (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). However, as Rast et al., (2012) discusses, when followers are uncertain, they may follow any leader, even one that is not representative of the group because perhaps, any leader is better than none.

It is possible that within the police departments themselves that the above hypothesis stands true. However, because of limited sample sizes there was not enough data to do a sufficient analysis. Limited by these sample sizes and given the nested design, it would have been better to do a different type of analyses.

Limitations

One limitation of the current study is that a limited number of responses were recorded. Traditionally, the annual SUPA Leadership Survey has been used to spotlight weak or troublesome leaders within the CSU system. Those that respond to the survey are typically officers that have extreme positive or negative views of their leader and are searching for a way to have their opinion heard. The results if extremely positive or

negative, have been traditionally used in the media or other avenues in an attempt to garner change within the administration.

In the same vein as the above limitation, it is challenging to compare responses from all CSUs to one another, due to the unique environments that each campus has. For example, a CSU police department in southern California may have very different experiences than a CSU located in Humboldt County due to variances in department size, student populations and types of crimes and public interactions. A leader that is viewed as prototypical at one CSU may not be viewed as favorably at another CSU, even if leadership style remains constant. The types of policing that occur within the different CSU police departments is also an important contributing factor since campuses are located in different types of areas including rural and urban.

Future Directions

Law enforcement would greatly benefit from further studies that specifically examine the leadership requirements within unique microcosms of police departments not just in the California State University system, but throughout the United States. Given the rising calls for police reform country-wide, it's of significant importance that leaders be effective change agents within police departments to guide officers into a new future of policing, but that officers view the leaders as representative of their department.

Very few studies exist within social psychology that examines the dynamic relationship between police officers and their leaders. Future studies would benefit departments to help understand the impacts of things like officer self-uncertainty and how that may impact their feelings towards being an officer and community engagement

efforts. Ultimately, it is time for change in police departments across the United States and additional studies may help provide improved trainings and identify great leaders that will set high standards of ethics and responsible policing to save lives.

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