

WHO'S ON THE EXECUTIVE GLASS CLIFF? USING POLICY CAPTURING TO
EXAMINE RACE, GENDER, AND LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CRISIS.

by

NY MIA TRAN

(Under the Direction of Kecia M. Thomas)

ABSTRACT

Recent research found a greater preference for female leaders than male leaders during times of riskiness and uncertainty. This phenomenon was argued as a subsequent form of employment bias to the glass ceiling—later identified as the glass cliff (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007). However, the novelty of the glass cliff development attributed to a narrow focus on women with a few exceptions that extended to blacks (e.g., Cook & Glass, 2008). More often than not, gender and racial discourse as well as research exclude black women. This study explored the glass cliff as a complex, implicit processing model of intersecting identities (race and gender) and the influence of assigned leadership traits. A policy- capturing design was used to capture glass cliff decisions for a fictitious vacant executive position in two crisis contexts: financial and ethical crisis. One of the research questions focused on how black women fare under the glass cliff model relative to white women and black men, given her multiple disadvantage identities. Results reproduced the glass cliff as a gender bias; however cross-examination of race and gender results also supported black women's unique reality due to her distinct social location and leadership model. Black women received greater positive selection evaluations in times of financial

crisis than her gender and racial counterparts. In contrast, black men received the lowest evaluations in both type of crisis. However, when leadership traits were considered white women received greater positive evaluations than black women. The implications of these finding to understanding glass cliff decision-makings are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: Leadership, Glass cliff, Glass ceiling, Race, Gender, Policy capturing, Intersectionality, Social identity, Career development, Selection bias

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NY MIA TRAN

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Ny Mia Tran

Major Professor: Kecia M. Thomas

Committee: Karl Kuhnert
 Juanita Johnson-Bailey
 Robert P. Mahan

Electronic Version Approved:

Julie Coffield
Interim Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2015

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Do not encumber your mind with useless thoughts. What good is it to brood over the past and fret about the future? Dwell in the simplicity of the present moment. Live in harmony

with the dharma. Make it the heart of your life and experience.

Be the master of your own destiny. (Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche)

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In 2011, Diversity Inc—a leading source of business information on diversity and inclusion management—posited the simple question in an article “Where’s the diversity in Fortune 500 CEOs?” The article highlighted the representation of CEOs by race and gender across the top leading U.S. corporations. The numbers indicated an underrepresentation of minorities, as well as women, and the overrepresentation of white males as executive leaders. For centuries, white males have been preferred, if not de facto, leaders in corporate, political, military, and religious sectors (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008). Interest towards diversity in leadership did not peak until there was an increased awareness of the inequalities that impeded minorities’ leadership opportunities (Gordon & Dew-Becker, 2008; Hollander & Offermann, 1990). Initial concerns centered on workplace disparity amongst women and racial minorities in higher corporate echelons. Research later coined this phenomenon as the "glass ceiling." The glass ceiling presented an invisible barrier to prestigious positions for marginalized groups. However, pressure and demand for workplace equality did not stem from the scarcity of gender and racial minority leaders alone. The paramount issue rested on the associated consequences of race and gender based leadership discrimination that restricted marginalized groups’ opportunities to gaining power (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Some have argued that organizations have made progress toward equality; there has been increase of minority visibility at management and executive levels (i.e., breaking the glass ceiling) (Catalyst, 2012; Hesse-Biber & Carter, 2005). However, accumulated reviews have highlighted the daunting territory of promotion for minorities—especially women—when they

do break into prestigious leadership roles (e.g., Davis & Watson, 1982; Kulich, Trojanowski, Ryan, Haslam, & Renneboog, 2011; Thomas, Johnson-Bailey, Phelps, Tran, & Johnson, 2013). For example, women who have climbed to the top of the corporate ladder were more likely to experience adversity beyond the glass ceiling, called the glass cliff. The glass cliff theory proposes that women are more likely to be placed at the top of corporate structures during times of risk, failure, and uncertainty (e.g., Ryan & Haslam, 2005; Ryan & Haslam, 2007). Research scholars contest that the glass cliff may pose a greater threat toward the professional development and advancement of minorities than the glass ceiling. For instance, the appointment of minorities into precarious leadership positions may reinforce gender and racial stereotypes of incompetence (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2010; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Despite growing attention surrounding the glass cliff phenomenon, research and theory development on the topic is still in its infancy. The glass cliff theory has been argued as a gender bias of differential preference between men and women in precarious leadership roles. Moreover, the gender comparison is normally of white men to white women, excluding black men and black women. To date, only one study has empirically examined each group separately and how they fare relative to each other under the glass cliff paradigm. Recently, an archival study examined the relationship between of the glass cliff and intersectionality of race and gender for unwinnable political seats (e.g., risky position) in the U.K. General Elections across three years (2001, 2005, and 2010) (Kulich, Ryan, and Haslam, 2013). Their results suggested that black and minority ethnic (BME) women in U.K. politics were more likely candidates for unwinnable political seats than either white women or BME men candidates. This present study is distinct from Kulich and colleagues (2013) research such that the intersectionality of race and gender and glass cliff is examined in an organizational context rather than in the political arena. Although

there are glass cliff studies that have examined crisis in an organizational setting but they exclude examination of intersecting identities and mostly focused on the same type of company crisis—a poor financial company performance (i.e., falling stock or share prices). For example, one study by Cook and Glass (2008) evaluated how the appointment of black executive leaders versus white executive leaders impacted share price perceptions. Their findings supported glass cliff effects across race; black executives, compared to their white counterparts, were more likely to be selected during financially stressful situations. However, the Cook and Glass study did not examine the intersectionality of gender and race. Other studies have included leadership traits and gender factors in understanding glass cliff decision-making (Haslam & Ryan, 2008). Across the accumulated literature, the studied factors (i.e., type of crisis, race, gender, leadership trait) were not explored simultaneously using a within-subject design to understand glass cliff decision-making. This study aims toward filling this research question and methodology gap. A policy-capturing approach was used to infer the importance (weight) of factors from individual's actual leadership evaluations (decisions). The initial literature review and hypothesis are aligned with previous glass cliff studies (i.e., gender preference). The latter hypotheses proposed the glass cliff as a model of identities that operate interdependently with organizational factors (i.e., types of crisis) and individual factors (i.e., the candidate's gender, race, and leadership traits).

A Review of the Glass Cliff

The organizational literature has provided statistical evidence of minorities continuously encountering and combating the glass ceiling; an invisible barrier of prejudice and discrimination, often inadvertent, preventing women and people of color from rising up the ranks of corporate America in spite of their accomplishment and merits (Eagly, Karau, Makhijani, 1995; Kanter, 1977; Ryan, Haslam, & Postmes, 2007, see also Morrison, White, & Van Velsor,

1987). In an effort to combat the glass ceiling and its pervasive effects, organizations' upper management has become more and more heterogeneous. In 2011, women occupied 51.4% (up from 17% in 1972), and blacks 8.4% of management, professional and related positions in the U.S. labor force (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). The labor census also indicates a change in higher order ranks, women occupying 24.2% of executive positions in American corporations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). These recent statistics seem like progressive markers toward the career advancement and equality movement for both gender and racial minorities. Regardless of increasing attention and value placed on diversity, programs targeting minority leadership development and advancement are rare in corporate settings (Acker, 2006). Furthermore, research surrounding minority leadership is limited in academia (Hoyt & Chemers, 2008). It would be premature to state that inequality is no longer present within organizations, especially at the executive leadership selection process. Therefore, it's imperative that the paper discusses the state of leadership diversity in America's top corporations.

Women and people of color are moving into management level positions; however, current demographics of upper leadership ranks—corporate directors, executives, and board members—illustrate a much thicker glass ceiling. A closer examination of larger prestigious corporations, excluding small businesses and non-profits, show that women represent 3.8% ($n=19$), and blacks 1.2% ($n = 6$) of Fortune 500 CEOs (Catalyst, 2012). This report indicates the rarity of minorities achieving executive leaderships in powerful, high revenue companies. Indeed, labor statistics showed signs of improvement toward increasing visibility of diversity in leadership. On the other hand, research reveals no fairy tale story for women and people of color who do reach the top of the corporate ladder (Rosette & Livingston, 2012). Organizations recognize “diversity is good for business,” but subtle forms of racial and gender discrimination

still permeate corporate practices (Acker, 2006). Given this notion, organizational researchers have included the importance of exploring discrimination at higher ranks. New studies indicated minorities confronting separate leadership-related obstacles—that is, the glass cliff—upon breaking the glass ceiling (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

The glass cliff theory originally stemmed from an archival study done by Ryan and Haslam (2005) in a response to a published report on Britain’s top 100 companies stock prices and leadership. Judge (2003) proclaimed that mere leadership by women executives led the company’s stock prices to plummet. Ryan and Haslam warranted a more in depth analysis and suggested taking the *contextual nature* of the company into consideration. They explored the same archival data and provided an alternative explanation. Contrary to Judge’s claim, they concluded that women are appointed into leadership positions under pre-existing distressed organizational situations. Ryan and colleagues (2005) described this phenomenon as the ‘glass cliff’—an “equally invisible, barrier beyond the glass ceiling” in which women are selected into risky leadership roles. A *risky leadership role* is conceptualized as a role on an organization’s executive board of directors with consistently declining performance versus a role in an organization with continuing success (Haslam & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Haslam, 2005). Women and minorities who do take on these risky leader roles are more likely to be placed “under the microscope” for greater scrutiny and are subjected to discrimination and prejudices.

Contrary to the assertion of the existence of the glass cliff, one study evaluated the glass cliff hypothesis across a sample of CEO appointments across U.S. corporations from 1992 to 2004 and found no evidence of the glass cliff (Adams, Gupta, & Leeth, 2009). The authors concluded that, “men and women appointed to the CEO position at US firms are on a level playing field, at least in terms of the financial health of the firm they are appointed to lead” (p.

10). Their findings provided a valuable perspective on women in leadership, but the study did not capture the nature of the decision making for CEO leaders. Their finding of equal appointments between males and females does not provide insight into the reality of leadership decision-making rather it only provides descriptive analyses of the phenomenon. Ryan and Haslam (2009) responded to the previous authors' skepticism toward the universality of the glass cliff. In support of the manifestations and the associated issues of the glass cliff, the authors noted that "a focus on economic data alone provides no insights into the social, organizational, and psychological processes that we hypothesized might contribute to the emergence of glass cliffs" and that "the lack of universality does not imply 'lack of problem', and the robustness of various experimental findings leads to our conviction that glass cliffs are neither trivial nor rare" (p. 14).

Prevalence of the Glass Cliff

Case studies have illustrated the prevalence of the glass cliff in the workplace. The selection of female candidates for executive leadership roles during risky times is not an uncommon practice in corporate America as one may expect. In 2000, Xerox was facing bankruptcy, collapsed profitability, and litigations. The organization desperately needed organizational change and improvement. As a result, corporate board members appointed Anne Mulcahy as Chief Operating Officer (COO) in an attempt to brave the organizational "perfect storm" (George & McLean, 2005). The former COO was appointed as a last attempt by Xerox to overcome the crisis. Mulcahy's decisions and plans to improve the company's performance were not short of criticism and doubt by business analysts. Similarly, in the late 1990s, Carly Fiorina experienced the glass cliff when she was appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of HP when the organization was starting to lose ground and reputation to their competitors in the

information technology industry (Fiorina, 2006; Lee & James, 2006). After roughly six years as the executive for HP, Fiorina's strategy was labeled "why Carly's big bet is failing" for her deeply controversial and short-of-success merging attempt with Compaq (Loomis, 2005). Following business strategists and analysts' apprehension and disapproval to her latter leadership, Fiorina was forced out of her position by the executive board of committee. Both women executives, during their tenures, were under great scrutiny and pressure by business leaders and analysts to lead the organization out of the whirlwind.

Contrary to the aforementioned examples that were faced with skepticism and harsher failure accountability, some women executives were received into precarious positions with anticipated positive outcomes. For example, the current CEO of Yahoo!, Marissa Mayer, is the paragon of a female executive selected when the company was losing users' interest (i.e., via Online search and mobile applications), loss of key talent to corporate rivals, and poor employee work ethic and commitment (Carlson, 2013). Mayer began her leadership in 2012 during a challenging period for the company; however, executives, managers, and employees alike, were excited about the new face for Yahoo! and embraced her with enthusiasm and support in hopes that she would be able to revive the company. Academic institutions are at no exception to the glass cliff phenomenon. The University of Michigan's board of regents exhibited similar decision-making when they introduced Mary Sue Coleman as the 13th university president. Preceding Coleman's leadership appointment in 2002, the university was searching for a new president that could assist with issues of negative media attention, accusations of money laundering, and discriminatory admission policies. Parallel to Mayer's appointment, Coleman stepped into her risky role with open arms and excitement about her leadership and has served as President of the university for over the past decade.

A series of experimental and qualitative studies offered preliminary research support for the glass cliff phenomenon across various types of occupations and professions (Ashby et al., 2007; Ryan & Haslam, 2007; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2008; Wilson-Kovacs et al., 2006). Haslam and Ryan (2006) studies found glass cliff effects for a female financial director and a youth representative. Ryan, et al. (2005; 2008; 2010) found that women, compared to men, were more likely to be selected to run for political positions that were considered to be “hard to win” (i.e., higher failure rates in political campaign) than political positions considered to be “winnable.” The glass cliff in legal professions operated similarly. Women defense lawyers were selected to lead high-risk legal cases more than male defense lawyers (Ashby et al., 2007). High-risk legal cases had lower chances of winning and poor publicity (hence greater risks). In the informational technology sector, women managers provided testimonies of being selected for unclear job descriptions in leadership positions alongside limited resources, support, and guidance to increase their chances of leadership success (Wilson-Kovacs, et al., 2006).

A majority of the existing glass cliff literature is presented as a gender difference in leadership preference in poor financial performing contexts (e.g., Ryan & Haslam, 2007; Hunt-Earle, 2012; Ryan et al., 2005; Ryan et al., 2008). In the following section, this study proposes the importance of including another type of organizational crisis to understanding glass cliff decisions.

Glass Cliff in Ethical Crisis

As argued by Haslam and Ryan (2009), the glass cliff effect may possibly be triggered by the associated precariousness, risk, and instability factors of crisis. Crisis is conceptualized as “a serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a system” (Rosenthal, Charles, & T’Hart, 1989, p.10). Components of a crisis focus on the cause,

responsible party, seriousness, and length of the crisis (Heath & Millar, 2004). According to crisis management, there are several groups of major organizational crisis events. These categories of crisis can range from an internal to external impact (e.g. economic-related, reputation related, natural disasters) (Mitroff, 2004; Coombs, 2006), and at the macro (organization) or micro (individual) level. Macro crises would consist of economic catastrophe, failed mergers and acquisitions, and litigations. Micro crises include employee violence, individual mistakes, and unethical behaviors. Existing glass cliff research explored the phenomenon at the macro level of crisis management (i.e. poor financial performance) (e.g., Haslam & Ryan, 2008); here, this study includes the examination of the glass cliff decision process both macro and micro crisis levels. This study propositions focuses on glass cliff decisions in both financial crisis and ethical crisis contexts. Similar to a financial crisis, it is expected that the event of an ethical crisis will elicit a glass cliff psychological response and increase desire for change in leadership by decision-makers. In essence, does the glass cliff exist in any context that exhibits crisis, uncertainty, and risky characteristics? If the glass cliff phenomenon exists in any crisis context, does the same glass cliff pattern occur in an ethical crisis for diverse groups as found in the financial crisis situation?

The interpersonally sensitive orientation of an ethical crisis sets the nature of the context apart from a poor performing financial crisis. Ethical scandals are not rare cases in corporate America. There has been a history of organizational misconduct, including accounting scandals, bank and security frauds, selection and promotion discrimination, and federal violations. The outcome of corporate scandals, besides potential lawsuits, criminal trials, and legislation, may lead to erode confidence and trust among employees and constituents (Lorsch, Berlowitz, & Zelleke, 2005). Depending on the severity of the unethical practice, the scandal can lead to the

decline, if not the destruction, of well-known organizations. How do companies respond to ethical scandals in order to preserve and improve their reputation and image? Companies that face high media scrutiny and backlash for unethical scandals may initiate plans for a change in the organizational hierarchy, specifically a new executive leader that may possess characteristics of trust and caring to drive the company out of the negative attention and media. Executive leaders at times are often viewed from the outside as a reflection of the company's ethics, morals, and values.

What is known about ethical leadership derives from the intersection of leadership and ethics literature (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leadership is defined as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005, p. 120). Overall, an ethical leader is characterized as honest, caring, trustworthy and is considered to make fair and balanced decisions. Individual characteristics of a leader are found to explain the antecedents to ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005). Attractiveness and credibility were highly regarded as valuable factors in an ethical leader. Individuals regarded as high in attractiveness and credibility possessed characteristics of power, status, and nurturance. Furthermore, transformational leadership theory has been argued to exemplify a distinct but yet overlapping component of ethical leadership orientation (see Brown & Trevino, 2006 for review). One aspect is that “transformational leadership and ethical leadership overlap in their focus on personal characteristics. Ethical and transformational leaders care about others, act consistently with their moral principles (i.e. integrity), consider the consequences of their actions, and are ethical role models for others” (p. 599); while, others suggest the two as distinct constructs. In support of this

study's theory, the former contention on the convergence of the two leadership theories is adopted in predicting the glass cliff in an ethical crisis.

To date, there is no known literature on the relationships between identities and ethical leadership. The following propositions used the lens of the ethical leadership framework and other relevant theories. The contingency theory framework may provide additional insights to the glass cliff effect in an ethical crisis. Contingency theory (Fiedler & Chemers, 1974) is a leader-match theory focusing on elements of leadership effectiveness that are contingent on the alignment between leadership prototype and context. Individuals may weight certain information more importantly for leadership in certain situations and not others.

The Glass Cliff as a Model of Identities

This study extends the existing glass cliff theory by presenting the model as a diversity dilemma and not exclusively a gender dilemma. Here, the glass cliff is propositioned as a preference for non-prototypical leaders (i.e. minority groups) in non-traditional (i.e. unstable, uncertain, risky) corporate situations. To date, the glass cliff is regarded as a form of gender bias in leadership selection decisions (i.e., Haslam & Ryan, 2008). It is assumed that existing glass cliff patterns apply similarly to *all* women's career trajectories. Yet, prior studies did not identify race under examination and more than likely presumed white and black women are both equally subjected to glass cliff decisions. Extending the contention on the limitations of the glass cliff adopting a gender exclusive focus, one must also ask the question of whether the glass cliff phenomenon apply to other minority groups as it does to white women? Specifically, does the glass cliff pose as a racial preference, as well as a gender preference, in leadership evaluations? One of the goals of this study is to introduce a more broad glass cliff paradigm that explores the intersectionality of racial and gender identities. By including multiple identities and

intersectionality in the glass cliff model, this study proposes that the glass cliff effect may not be restricted to women exclusively but other marginalized minorities (Ellemers, Rink, Derks, & Ryan, 2011; Ryan & Haslam, 2007; Wilson-Kovacs, Ryan, and Haslam, 2006).

Gender Identity: Original Glass Cliff Model

According to role congruity theory, traditional leadership roles are aligned with the agentic qualities associated with male gender roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Traditional descriptions and images associated with leadership roles are typically based on masculinity models (Fearfull & Kamenou, 2006; see also Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, Ristikari, 2001 meta-analysis). When organizational members were asked to define an effective organizational leader, a majority of responses described masculine attributes that exemplify male gender role stereotypes (e.g., assertiveness, independence, and credibility) (Bass, Krusell, & Alexander, 1971; Brown, 1979; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Eagly and Karau's (1991) meta-analysis supported the role congruity theory; men are more likely to emerge as leaders than women. The incongruity between leadership role and female gender roles elicits prejudice against female leaders and even contributes to the paucity of women in higher echelons of leadership. Society has come to accept and normalize men as the prototypical leader (Brenner, Tomkiewicz, & Schein, 1989; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Schein, 2001; Scott & Brown, 2006; Willemsen, 2002). Women, when solely based off her gender status, are expected to adopt subordinate roles and positions within our society (Hooks, 1990).

A more recent meta-analysis by Koenig, et al. (2011) suggests masculine leadership stereotypes operating under the think manager-think male paradigm (TMTM). The TMTM are activated under "normal" (i.e., no crisis) organizational contexts of men appointed into

leadership roles with less criticism (Schein, 1973). The meta-analysis also found moderate effect size for leader status as a predictor of masculine leadership model; higher status leadership positions are stereotypically more similar to men and less similar to women. These findings may explain the demographic pattern of women over represented in lower level and middle-management positions, and underrepresented in executive positions. During times of organizational success, the conceptions of leadership rarely stray into feminine territory due to robust masculinity effects. Along the line of “think manager-think male theory,” grounded in gender and leadership stereotypes, this study expects greater preference for a male leader than a female leader during normal organizational times.

The glass cliff literature suggests the general equation of “think-manager, think- male” may not operate at exceptional contextual circumstances. Ryan and colleagues (2009) proposed that the effect operates under “think crisis-think female”—opposite of the think manager-think male paradigm (TMTM). The think crisis-think female theory activates in times of organizational crisis, and the association of leadership and female preference is greater. Research has found that during times of crisis, female leaders are perceived as more suitable or capable, while during normal business conditions no leader gender differences existed (Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2010). A more recent study by Ryan and colleagues (2011) suggested that gender stereotypes influence people’s tendencies to think crisis-think female. The feminine traits (e.g., understanding, caring, intuitive) may be more desirable than masculine traits (e.g., aggressiveness, forcefulness) for poor performing companies. Implying that women are not perceived as more suited for crisis *per se*, but more associated with those anticipated feminine traits. Research scholars have proposed and applied an array of social and leadership theories to gain insight on the underlying psychological mechanism for women leader preferences during

organizational risky times. Similar to existing glass cliff research, if gender bias exists then female candidates will be more likely appointed into precarious executive positions over male candidates.

Hypothesis 1: Women were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than men.

Intersecting Identities Effects on Glass Cliff Decisions

Generally, within organizational research, a unidimensional identity perspective is adopted. This methodology of treating race and gender as separate decontextualized entities is presumed *sufficient* in understanding diversity experiences across identities. However, this approach is more deficient than sufficient. Most gender and race research adopted an etic (universal) perspective of assuming all female experiences are the same (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993) and all people of color experiences are the same, which is not the case (Staples, 1978). Race and gender discrimination manifest and operate differently from one another. Racism and sexism may not have equivalent weights in decision-making processes. Collins (1999) described the intersection of race and gender as an interlocking system of privilege and disadvantage. Therefore, one may suspect white women and people of color to experience distinctive vulnerability under the glass cliff paradigm. In times of uncertainty or crisis, what happens when race is considered during job-related decisions? When we account for the complexity of possessing multiple identities, and evaluate black men and black women experiences separately, we may find intersecting gender and racial group differences under the glass cliff model.

Bruckmuller and Branscombe (2010) speculated that, “not all minorities will be affected by the glass cliff to the same extent, but that it depends on how stereotypes about the group

matches with what people desire in a leader in times of crisis” and “people will not only prefer women for future leadership, but any candidate who seems to bring something to the table that the stereotypical male, white, straight manager might be seen as lacking” (p. 448). Therefore, it is expected that the glass cliff effect will also be applied to people of color. A person who possesses a low-status social identity may be subjected to glass cliff positions. This study proposes a general *think crisis-think “other”* decision process for the glass cliff model—anyone other than the prototypical leader will fit the mold for change. The glass cliff may not be as simple as a preference for women but more a preference of non-prototypical leaders (‘others’) during risky times. In this context, corporate crises trigger a need for change in leadership that strays from the normal white, male leader prototype (Brown, Diekmann, & Schneider, 2011; Bruckmuller & Branscombe, 2010; Forsyth & Nye, 2008).

According to the latest census on African American CEO’s of Fortune 500 companies, only thirteen black executives have been selected into Chairman or CEO positions since Franklin Raines, the first black CEO of Fannie Mae in 1999 (Catalyst, 2012). Most importantly, of those thirteen executives, there are only six active—five black males and one black female. The business press has asserted, despite the dearth of blacks running major companies, that blacks are making significant strides toward the top echelons of the workplace compared to previous non-existent black executives. Editor-in-chief of black Enterprise magazine Alfred Edmond Jr. noted, “the numbers [black CEOs] are so small that any improvement will seem like a giant leap forward” (Simon, 2007). As indicated in diversity literature and the business press, the presence of black executives in major corporations does suggest a change in time. In spite of this, a critical question remains: is this noted change toward equality or is it another barrier that blacks must overcome as they break into executive ranks? When we take a step back and evaluate the context

of when black executives are selected as CEO successors, the glass cliff seems to also occur for blacks.

Black Men.

From the list of appointed black CEOs, two of the active black, male CEOs (i.e. Don Thompson and Clarence Otis, Jr.) support the previous speculation of the glass cliff effects across race. Don Thompson became president and CEO of McDonald's on June 2012 after the company's market condition and performance forecast was showing signs of less than promising performance conditions (as it had been for decades). McDonald's sales were dropping at the time due to their competitors' new menus, healthier eating promotion trends, and weak economic conditions. As the Huffington post article stated, "the 50-year-old inherited the top post at a sensitive time for McDonald's" (2013). Similarly, CEO Clarence Otis Jr. of Darden Restaurants, the largest-dining restaurant company in the U.S., was not excluded from the glass cliff effect. Otis took the executive position in 2004 when restaurant industries were combating slumped sales and declining customer counts (USA Today, 2008). Consumers were more cost-conscious and less likely to eat out causing a ripple of restaurant industry turbulences, and Darden not immune to the impact. The political arena has also presented glass cliff cases. In 2008, Senator Barack Obama became the first black President and Commander-in-Chief of the United States of America during economic recession and turmoil. His entire political campaign centered on the theme of "change" and "hope" as a reflection of what the American people were looking for in their new leader during the country's economic crisis. These cases highlight the glass cliff operating beyond a gender preference but possibly more of a desire for any "other" leader than a white male in times of change and uncertainty.

Relevant social theories and organizational studies may provide supplementary support for black males' vulnerability to the glass cliff. The perception of a traditional leader is not only linked to maleness but it also strongly linked to whiteness. Researchers found a strong correlation between stereotypes of whites and managers and weaker correlations between stereotypes of blacks and managers (Tomkiewicz, Brenner, & Adeyemi-Bello, 1998). The strong association of white racial identity and leadership roles extends the think manager-think male theory to *think manager-think white*. Despite black men's gender advantage, they are still disadvantaged when compared to white men. Staples (1978) identified the case as a *dual dilemma* of black men in a sense that "their subordination as a racial minority has more than canceled out their advantages as males in the larger society" and "in comparison to white males find themselves on the negative side of social statistics in the area of health, employment, education, income, etc." (p. 169,170). The black male identity has been negatively perceived as being incompetent (Carton & Rosette, 2011; Devine & Baker, 1991; Devine & Elliot, 1995; Dixon & Rosenbaum, 2004; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Krueger, 1996), which derails from the common perception of a successful, traditional leader (i.e., competence and intelligence) (Rudman & Glick, 2001). Collins (1998) further supported this notion, "aggressive [black men] are seen as dangerous, not powerful, and are often penalized when they exhibit any of the allegedly 'masculine' characteristics" (p. 217) of leadership. These findings suggest the salience of race during employment decisions and evaluations. Hence, the probable psychological decision-making process that hinders black men to rise to executive ranks during traditional successful times. Black men may be perceived as a viable leader when companies encounter times of threat, uncertainty, or dissolution. He meets one aspect of the leadership role, preservation of the social status system of men as naturally superior to others (i.e., women), but

yet he signals a change in leadership. One known study done by Cook and Glass (2008) examined the market reaction to white and black executives appointment in poor performing firms (crisis). They found that Blacks were more likely selected as executives during stressful times than whites. If the glass cliff model operates under the think-crisis think-other framework, then black men are no exception to the rule of experiencing the glass cliff.

Hypothesis 2a: Black men were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than white men.

Although Black men may have a racial disadvantage they also possess a gender advantage. Similar to white men, black men possess certain privileges—that is, gender privilege (McIntosh, 1988). The gender role fosters privilege, access of power, and superiority status for men over women (McIntosh, 1988; Pharr, 1988). Black men are privileged from sexual stereotyping and sexism, thus positioning them to receive higher income and greater employment selection than women (Catalyst Census, 2008). Preferences for a male leader exceeded those for a female leader even when both candidates possessed equivalent qualifications and experience (Hunt-Earle, 2012). In essence, the black male leader is conceptually closer to the leadership prototype that is contained within the masculinity framework than a female leader. It is proposed that both black men and white women are capable of encountering the glass cliff due to each of their disadvantaged identities. However, both groups possess one aspect of the leadership prototype: black men's gender advantage and white women's race advantage. How do black men fare to white women under the glass cliff?

Financial acumen is more associated with the masculine prototype than racial association. Eagly and Carli's (2007) findings showed that leaders emerge in situations that were congruent with their social roles; women, particularly white women, leadership may be constrained to more

stereotypically feminine arenas. The feminine leadership traits may be perceived as less important and instrumental in financial recovery. Eagly's role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) offers additional support of why white women may be trailing behind in leadership selection when competing with black men. White women gender roles are incongruent to the desired masculine leadership roles that are afforded to black men. Here in this context, role congruity remains intact in decision-makers evaluation outcomes. As such, under times of financial crises, it is expected that white women will be viewed as least fitting than black men.

Hypothesis 2b: Black men were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than white women.

Black Women.

Black women are frequently left in limbo between their gender and racial identities, and therefore experience a "double jeopardy"—confronting both racial-ethnic and gender-based prejudice (Bell & Nkomo, 2001). The burden of being marginalized by gender and race poses several distinctive issues for black women (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Carter, 2007; Combs, 2003; Fearfull & Kamenou, 2006; Johnson-Bailey & Tisdell, 1998). Literature on the intersection of gender and race oppression argued against the myth that women of color are on an equal playing field to white women and/or people of color (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Combs, 2003; Golden, 2002; Pharr, 1988). When we evaluate women by racial group, statistics indicate a greater disparity for women of color than white women across various career dimensions (e.g., salary, promotion, social networking, occupations) (Bova, 2000; Kilbourne, England, & Beron, 1994). Women of color are more likely to experience organizational barriers, perceived lack of credibility, tokenism, racism, sexism, and microaggressions than white men and women (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; see also Thomas, et al., 2013), and men of color (Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). On

average, black women are at the bottom of effective leadership evaluations (Rosette & Livingston, 2012; Scott & Brown, 2006) and upward career mobility (Bell & Nkomo, 1994, 2001; Bova, 2000), falling below white women and black men. The implications of these findings suggest the importance in discussing the unique experiences of black women in leadership.

When it comes to studying women and leadership, research has covered predominately one group, white women (Nkomo, 1988). Women in management literature focuses on women leaders' unique leadership traits, style, behaviors, and experiences that reflect a "distinctly female" model of leadership (Grossman & Chester, 1990; Helgesen, 1990). The model emphasizes leadership characteristics such as the ability to express feelings, heightened problem solving skills, and emphasis on personal relationships (see Parker & ogilvie, 1996). Indeed, the model provided grounds for recognizing and accounting for gender differences in leadership; however, the model did not provide a complete leadership theoretical framework. Black women, specifically, are usually ignored in the leadership and women studies (Collins, 1998). Parker and ogilvie (1996) provided a "culturally distinct model of African-American female executive leadership" model proposing that the leadership process for black women are not parallel to white women. The model's theoretical framework was built upon the notion of black women's multifaceted marginalized intersecting identities that stands in opposition to the social, political, and ideological system of oppression (Collins, 1990).

The description of feminine leadership model (i.e., communal) is more aligned with white women (Parker, 2001; Parker & ogilvie, 1996). Black femininity is socially constructed in juxtaposition to this image. Black women have been denigrated as the aggressive crazy black bitch, asexualized Mammy, promiscuous Jezebel (Christian, 1980; Morton, 1991; Collins, 1999;

Reynolds-Dobb, Harrison, & Thomas, 2008; West, 1995) and overachieving black ladies (Lubiano, 1992). The stereotypes attached to black women contradict the ideal leader perspective. The term “women of color leaders” was perceived as an oxymoron because the characteristics of women of color and leadership were viewed as extreme opposites of each other (Blake-Beard & Roberts, 2004). In certain contexts, the salience of race over gender negatively effect people with multiple lower identities (e.g., black women). Rosette and Livingston (2012) study evaluated how black women fared to white women and black men under conditions of organizational failure and success. They described black women’s intersecting identity as a double jeopardy impacting cognitive processes “because the schematic representation of a typical leader does not encompass blacks when race is considered or women when gender is considered, black women may be disadvantaged relative to other groups that share a greater degree of schematic overlap” between identity and leader characteristics (p.1162). White women and women of color have a common gender identity; yet, women of color have differing experiences and outcomes than white women. Black women superordinate identities stray furthest from the ideal leader. The lack of research on professional black women and the daunting territory of black women leadership development found in these research are analogous to the leadership presence of black women in the real corporate world. How much has America progressed in equality toward black women’s rise to top Fortune company executive ranks? If we answer this question with real business cases, then we still have a long way to go. Ursula Burns, CEO successor to Xerox’s Anne Mulcahy, is the first and only active black female executive among the U.S. Fortune 250 companies. As mentioned, the number of black executives in top ranking revenue companies is rare; furthermore, black female executives are almost absent.

Given the previous contention of black men's and white women's susceptibility to the glass cliff, it leaves the question of where do black women fall in this model? Although Cook and Glass examined black executives under the glass cliff paradigm, their approach regarded black women experiences and black men experiences as the same, and failed to account for potential gender differences within racial groups. Again, black women are left out of examination. Black women are assumed, based on their dual identity of being a woman and black, to have the same female experiences as white women and the same racial experiences as black men. Without reservation, it is pertinent that the paper posits separate propositions of the glass cliff effect for black women. Inferring from the above discussion of existing theories on race and gender in leadership, black women may receive favorable leadership evaluations in poor performing companies as compared to successful companies. The social construction of black women's identity is least aligned with leadership at successful times. Paradoxical to former prediction, adverse effects of leadership evaluations may occur for black women in unsuccessful company situations (i.e. presence of the glass cliff). It is possible, given the volatile condition of the company, that black women may be regarded as having "nothing to lose" or be presented as a "golden opportunity" for leadership. Thus, black women may be also susceptible to the glass cliff effects.

Hypothesis 3a: Black women were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than white men.

When evaluated among their gender and racial counterparts, black women are viewed as the least ideal leaders (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Blake, 1999; Parker & Ogilvie, 1996; Rosette & Livingston, 2012; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). The conceptualization of leader is distinctively further apart for black women than men and white women. Black women were

evaluated as less effective leaders than both white women and black men for an unsuccessful company (Rosette & Livingston, 2012). Their study supports the heightened visibility and penalty of black women's dual-subordinate identities (Bowleg, 2008) during risky times. Black women may break the glass ceiling and even experience the glass cliff (as proposed in Hypothesis 3a) but still less likely to be selected for leadership if competing with white women and/or black men. As in real world situations, executive leadership decision-making outcomes are derived from evaluation and comparisons of a pool of potential candidates—typically comprised of mostly men and white women.

It is expected that in times of crisis, black women may face more complex situations than that faced by white women. In concurrent to Parker and ogilvie (1996) propositions, black women executives are “more likely to suffer from the interactive effects of racial and gender discrimination, while Anglo [white] men and women enjoy the benefits of racial privilege” (p. 201). This study is not proposing that black women are excluded from the glass cliff but rather less likely placed in leadership positions when decision makers are evaluating other candidates. In this case, they may be experiencing more of the concrete ceiling or wall—that is, a denser and not easily shattered barrier associated for black women —before she reaches the corporate glass cliff (Bell & Nkomo, 1992; Hayes, 2006; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999). Company's performance conditions played a factor in perceptions of prototypical and effective leaders across race and gender (Rosette & Livingston, 2012). Under successful organization conditions, black females were evaluated comparably in leader effectiveness to white females and black males. On the other hand, black women were perceived as less typical and effective leaders than White women in the failing company condition. Their findings support the contention that black women may experience greater employment inequality during times of organizational failures than success.

Aligned with Rosette and Livingston's findings, black females will be evaluated as less suitable leaders during times of crisis compared to white females.

Hypothesis 3b: Black women were expected to receive lower positive evaluations for the risky leadership role than white women.

These intersections of identity and leadership contribute to the unique experiences of oppression and privilege for white female and black male leaders (Symington, 2004). Furthermore, the intersection of multiple marginalized identities produces a substantively distinct experience for black female leaders. Black women's encounters of both racism and sexism may restrict her opportunities into leadership positions even in risky organizational times. Indeed, both black women and black men are perceived as atypical leaders and are susceptible to racial discrimination. However, black women are different from black men, who may benefit from their male identity in certain situations. Even in times of poor company performance, black females were viewed as less effective and typical leaders in comparison to black males (Rosette & Livingston, 2012). Black women's intersecting identities of gender and race positions them at a greater career disadvantage and discrimination than black men (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). Given the literature on identity and leadership (e.g., Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Rosette & Livingston, 2012), it is expected that black females will be evaluated as the least fitting leaders during risky organizational times.

Hypothesis 3c: Black women were expected to receive lower positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than black men.

Leadership Traits on Glass Cliff Decisions

The glass cliff effect may not be solely influenced by the leader's salient identities (i.e., socio-demographic categories such as gender and race) but possibly intersected by people's

views about desirable leadership behavior and traits. The impact of gender stereotypes on leadership evaluations has been found to be relatively small during stable company times (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Rajahn & Willemsen, 1994; Swim, Borgida, Maruyama, & Myers, 1989). More recently, Ryan, et al. (2011) found that masculine and feminine traits were equally desirable for leaders in successful companies. Their findings are parallel to previous research on communal leadership characteristics being increasingly valued and regarded as effective leadership (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1994; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). However, differences in leadership preferences were found when participants were asked to consider an unsuccessful company—traditional feminine traits (i.e. understanding, intuitive) were indicated as more desirable than masculine traits (Ryan et al., 2011). Although their study did not directly examine gender or race of the leader under evaluation rather the leadership traits were clearly gendered as stereotypic of men or women. To more directly examine the possible intersecting relationships between context, identity, and desirable leadership, this study included leadership traits (i.e., agentic and communal) as another cue variable.

The conceptualization of leadership is gendered. Within the gender and leadership literature, leadership traits are categorized into two competing models of leadership: masculine and feminine model of leadership. The masculine leadership model is conceptually representative of male values (Marshall, 1993) that demonstrate autonomy, self-efficacy, control, aggressiveness, independence, and intelligence (Collins, 1998; Eagly, 1987). On the other hand, the feminine model of leadership is associated with female values (Marshall, 1993) that exhibit leadership behaviors of interpersonal consideration that reflects nurturance, compassion, sensitivity to others' needs, and empathy (Collins, 1998; see also Parker, 2001). The cultural conceptualization and characteristics of effective leadership is traditionally aligned with

masculine roles (e.g., Eagly & Karau, 2002) more so than feminine roles. Efforts to understanding leadership have been linked to aspects of gender roles and discussed in terms of agentic and communal attributes (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000). Gender roles are the shared beliefs about the social expectations of people based on their socially identified sex (i.e., male or female). Agentic leadership traits are ascribed more strongly to the masculine leadership model and communal leadership traits to the feminine leadership model. Agentic leadership manifests traits such as controlling, forceful, confidence, self-direction, aggressiveness, and assertiveness. Communal characteristics describe concern for others, warmth, understanding, kindness, and talkative (e.g., Williams & Best, 1990; see also Ryan et al., 2011). Traditional leadership theory suggests that agentic leadership traits were more attributed to organizational success than communal leadership traits (Schein 1973). Consequently, more often than not men are perceived as more representative of an effective (e.g., Carli, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002) and prototypical leader than women (e.g., Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008).

Research has suggested that differences in leadership preferences are related to contextual factors. There are unique leadership characteristics that are found to be suitable in times of corporate instability and uncertainty (e.g., Eisenback, Watson, & Pillai, 1999; Lalonde, 2004). In times of crisis, communal leadership traits were found to be more desirable due to feelings of confusion, fear, and uncertainty (Bass, 1990; Pillai, 1996;). Communal leadership traits were presented as one of the underpinning explanations for female appointment in glass cliff positions (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009; Ryan et al., 2011). The preference for a leader with communal leadership traits during times of uncertainty goes hand in hand for a greater likelihood of selecting a female leader who possesses those communal characteristics. Therefore, the greater congruity between female gender role and communal leadership role the greater

likelihood of positive leadership evaluations for a female candidate. On the contrary, any member that violates their gender role expectations is more likely to experience opposing reactions or penalty (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Gender roles influence and shape our prescriptive and proscriptive stereotypes and can be used as a guide to make inferences about a person or group (Hall, Phillips, Rudman, Glick, Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012; see Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012). Prescriptive stereotypes are the beliefs about how a person or group member *should* behave according to their social group; conversely, proscriptive stereotypes denote how one should not behave. Given this notion, white men with communal leadership traits and white women with agentic leadership traits may be perceived as less suiting for precarious leader roles. The gender role conflict for white men with communal leadership traits may lead to unfavorable leadership evaluations despite the congruency between desired leaders role and possessed leadership traits. Whereas, white female candidates may be more likely to receive higher leadership evaluations for unsuccessful companies due to her greater fit between the female gender role and the desired leadership role (i.e., communal). However, similar to males with communal leadership, females who violate her gender role by possessing agentic leadership qualities may be less likely to receive positive evaluations for the risky leadership role (Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012). As research has indicated, white female leaders who contradict prescribed gender stereotypes for communality and exhibit agentic behaviors (i.e., dominance, aggression) are more likely to experience backlash (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Hypothesis 4a: White women with communal leadership were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for the financial crisis leadership roles than white women with agentic leadership.

A different outcome may occur for blacks when leadership traits are also considered in the decision process. Both masculine and feminine leadership models' symbolic representation identifies with the cultural image of "white" female and male stereotypes. Parker (2001) noted that both models "were developed based almost exclusively on studies of white women and men but which are presented as race-neutral (Parker & Ogilvie, 1996). One model is based on the notion of masculine instrumentality, and the other is based on the notion of feminine collaboration. Both models are grounded within perspectives that privilege white middle-class cultural norms and values and are reinforced through gender symbolism that operates as the universal depiction of men and women across cultural and class boundaries" (p. 50). Black women prescriptive stereotypes—aggressive, controlling, authoritarian, hostile, and militant—contradicts white women stereotypes of nurturing and caring. Communal leadership traits are more strongly associated with white female gender stereotypes, whereas, agentic leadership traits are more aligned with the black female stereotypes. Livingston et al. (2012) recently found greater penalty for white female leaders who express dominance (i.e. agentic traits) than Black female leaders. Interestingly, black and white female leaders with communal qualities received equable leadership evaluations. Furthermore, they also found no difference in leadership evaluations between black female leaders and white males leaders with agentic behaviors. This could be due in part to black female's dual identities. Black women identify with the black identity as well as the female identity and fall in between these intersecting identities. Black women may not be penalized more for their agentic¹ traits; however, they may still be perceived as the least prototypical leaders in times of crisis. In this case, black women that are presented with stereotype inconsistent information (i.e., possessing communal leadership traits) will more

¹Livingston et al. (2012) found greater negative evaluations for leaders with agentic behaviors (dominance) than communal behaviors.

than likely “be ignored, filtered, or reinterpreted to be consistent with existing schemas” (i.e., agentic traits) (Jackson & Rose, 2013, p. 52). Consequently, black female candidates with communal leadership traits would be cognitively re-categorized (memory bias) (e.g., Pezdek, Whetstone, Reynolds, Askari, & Daugherty, 1989) and may be evaluated less favorable to the risky leadership role contrary to what was found by Livingston and colleagues. If one accepts the explanation for the glass cliff as a preference for a sympathetic and concerned to others’ needs type of leadership traits to holds true then black women may not fare well in evaluations during times of crisis.

Hypothesis 4b: White women with communal leadership were expected to receive higher evaluations for the financial crisis leadership roles than black women with similar leadership traits.

Indeed, during successful times, black males may encounter racial hostilities because he poses as threat to the system of power within corporate America. However, according to the *subordinate-male-target hypothesis*, the intergroup conflict and bias occurs primarily within the male gender group—outgroup males (i.e., black males) are perceived as a greater threat to the dominance and power hierarchy than outgroup females (Navarrere, McDonald, Molina, & Sidanius, 2010). It is possible that the glass cliff effect may alleviate the previous theorized phenomenon when black male leaders exhibit communality rather than dominance. For example, it has been found that black male leaders are more likely to receive positive evaluations for expressing communal than agentic (dominance) behaviors (Livingston, et al., 2012). The perceived warmth and deference associated with communal traits have been found to buffer black males stereotypical aggressive and threatening appearance (Livingston & Pearce, 2009). In spite of the incongruent roles, black male leaders with communal leadership traits may be

viewed as less threatening and more effective in encouraging subordinates to improve performance in times of financial crisis.

Hypothesis 4c: Black men with communal leadership were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for the financial crisis leadership roles than all “other” with similar leadership traits.

Leadership Traits and Ethical Crisis

Role congruity theory also suggests that the gender-based leadership preference may deviate from masculine to feminine leadership traits depending on the qualities desired for the leadership role (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Traditional female leadership qualities of empathy, warmth, and compassion may be more appealing in crises involving interpersonal conflicts and reputation distortion (Vongas, 2012) as found in unethical situations. In contrary, masculine leadership qualities are generally associated with objective performance outcomes (e.g., stocks, share prices, profits) (Bass, 1985; Bass & Aviolo, 1990; Williams & Best, 1990). Women who are perceived to possess caring and nurturing leadership traits are more associated to being effective leaders for communal type of crises (see Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992 meta-analysis) rather than performance type of crises. During an ethical crisis, decision makers may desire an empathizing leadership characteristic in order to build trust, develop communication, and establish credibility among employees and constituents. It is expected that communal leadership traits to be more desirable during an ethical crisis but contingent on gender stereotype consistency and inconsistency. Stereotype consistency bias is the tendency to use stereotype-consistent information more than stereotype-inconsistent information in cognitive processing of information for intergroup evaluations (e.g., Clark & Kashima, 2007; Jackson & Rose, 2013) that may trigger group biases, prejudice, and discrimination (Sekaquaptewa, Espinoza, Thompson,

Vargas, & von Hippel, 2003). Drawing from research on the consequences of stereotype inconsistency, group members who do not meet group stereotype expectations may be regarded with inconsistent leadership traits to gender role thus, receiving lower evaluations.

Studies on gender-related differences in ethics have found no strong explicit findings between gender and ethical leadership; however, it is proposed that differences may exist more through only perceived (implicitly) gender differences (Ambrose & Schminke, 1999). The caring, nurturing, and interpersonal attributes that are described to ethical leadership are more congruent with the prescribed female gender role rather than the male gender role (i.e., aggressive, assertive). Thus, a gender-base leadership preference may also be likely to occur during times of ethical crisis. Although, it is expected that in an ethical crisis white women may be more aligned with the ethical leadership role than black women. As mentioned, the general female gender roles are more prescribed to white females; whereas, black females are perceived to be more associated with masculine or agentic gender attributes. As discussed, race and gender are important factors and should not be viewed in isolation. The impact of intersecting identities is context dependent. In the financial crisis, black men may receive higher leadership evaluations than white women. In contrary, in the ethical crisis race does matter but not exclusively. For instance, white women may be evaluated more favorably compared to her gender and racial counterparts. In the case of the ethical crisis, white and black men, and black women who possess communal leadership traits that contradict their stereotype expectations would be evaluated with bias and prejudice. Extending the previous proposition, white females with communal leadership traits may be regarded as the most fitting leader in unethical contexts.

Hypothesis5: In an ethical crisis, communal white women were expected to receive greater positive evaluations compared to her gender and racial counterparts.

Using Policy Capturing for Glass Cliff Decisions

Glass cliff literature attributed this greater preference for women compared to men during risky times as a form of evaluation bias (e.g, Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007). Specifically, that glass cliff decision-makers rely on implicit assumptions about women being better at handling challenges and crisis than men. Therefore, it seems most appropriate to use a research method that examines unconscious decision processes. In this study, a policy-capturing approach was used to assess the importance of the candidate's characteristics and organizational context on decision-makers' leader evaluations.

A policy-capturing design involves participants making decisions in response to a series of scenarios presented by the researcher (Aiman-Smith, Bauer, & Cable, 2001; Stewart, 1988). Inferences about the judgment process are captured from the values of one or more cues embedded in the scenarios. More specifically, policy capturing is a method that allows researchers to obtain a better assessment of what cues (i.e., the weight or importance of these cues) individuals use to make evaluative judgments (Zedeck & Kafry, 1977). These evaluative judgments are referred to as "policy capturing" that provides an individual's judgment policy (Stewart, 1988; Graham & Cable, 2001) which evolved from Egon Brunswik's model of intuitive cognition (Cooksey, 1995; Hammond, 1966). Brunswik's model was later presented as the probabilistic "lens" model that "illustrates how a person's judgment of an intangible [unobservable] object, event, or state (e.g., intelligence) is made on the basis of multiple fallible indicators [cues]" (Hammond, 1966, p. 87). The lens model paved the way for social psychology studies on modeling human judgment with linear multiple regression (Brehmer & Brehmer, 1988).

This analysis of individual policies comprises of separate regression equations for how each decision makers weigh or combine cue by regressing individual decision outcomes (i.e., criterion) on the decision criteria (i.e., cues) provided in the scenarios (Slovic, Fischhoff, & Lichtenstein, 1977; Slovic & Lichtenstein, 1971). The multiple regression equation allows researchers to “predict” individual’s judgment policy by treating each judgment as a separate sample in relative to the weight (i.e., beta weights or regression coefficients) given to each cue variable (Stewart, 1988). The statistical equation is the captured rating policy representing how each rater combines and weights the information (i.e., cues) provided in each profile to reach their judgment decisions. Policy capturing by definition is most commonly used to examine differences between individual’s decision policies (ideographic) (Hobson & Gibson, 1983), although the method has also been used for exploratory questions to identify existing clusters of individuals with distinct decision policies (nomothetic) (Aiman-Smith, Scullen, & Barr, 2002).

Organizational behavior researchers have used policy capturing to study personal and organizational characteristics that influence personnel selection to determine factor’s regression weights in judgment policies (Zedeck, 1977). Policy-capturing methods main advantage is the ability to capture how situational factors may have influenced the decision maker. This approach has been effectively used in organization studies on variety of decision-making processes. These studies include—but are not limited to—candidates’ job selection and choice (Cable & Judge, 1994; Reeves & Schultz, 2004; Rynes & Lawler, 1983), promotion (Stumpf & London, 1981), selection and hiring decisions (Sekiguchi & Huber, 2011), performance evaluations and appraisals (Zedeck & Cascio, 1982; Brannick & Brannick 1989; Rotundo & Sackett, 2002), and job applicant evaluations (Dougherty, Ebert, & Callender, 1986; Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones,

1995; Hitt & Barr, 1989). In essence, the policy capturing approach deems appropriate for this study's research focus and questions on glass cliff decisions.

The popularity of policy capturing within the organizational research realm comes from the purported methodological advantages. First, the method has been suggested to weaken social desirability effects compared to self-report attribute methods (Karren & Barringer, 2002). Therefore, variables that are socially undesirable or unattractive (e.g., bias, salary, sexism) may have more weight or importance in a policy capturing approach, suggesting a more reflective response of actual (observed) individual decision policies. As indicated earlier, the glass cliff model has been presented as a form of gender bias. Although, this study proposes that the glass cliff manifests as both gender and racial bias in individual's selection decisions. Gender and racial biases may operate more on an unconscious implicit level than on a conscious explicit level during employment evaluations (Latu, Stewart, Myers, Lisco, Estes, & Donhue, 2011). Through self-attribute surveys, respondents may be more likely to give socially desirable answers to avoid feeling prejudice or bias. However, in actual choice situations, race and gender disparity in employment selection still exists (e.g., Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Carlsson & Rooth, 2007) regardless of evaluator's explicit attitudes. Latu et al.'s study (2011) found that males are more likely to hold implicit attitudes aligned with the "think manager-think male" model, even when their explicit attitudes are nonsexist. Therefore, a more sophisticated method (i.e., policy capturing) must be utilized for studying leadership decision-making leading to glass cliff occurrences. A policy-capturing design allows this study to "capture" different decision outcomes or processes for certain candidates versus others in times of uncertainty and riskiness (context of crisis). Furthermore, people tend to have less insight in their decision-making process than one

infer and claim they weight certain information (i.e., cues) more than they really do in the “real world” (Reilly & Hoherty, 1989).

The ability for researchers to experimentally select cue variables and manipulate cue values to explain existing judgments and to predict future decision outcomes is another noted advantage to the methodology (Aiman-Smith et al, 2002; Karren & Barringer, 2002). Through this method, policy-capturing studies have provided “a relatively high degree of control over confounding (i.e., have the ability to rule out competing explanation for results)” (Aiman-Smith et al., .390). Selecting the number of cue variables to include per scenario is one of the major processes of policy capturing designs. As noted, no research can include all of the variables that may affect decision outcomes, however, representativeness can be obtained by selecting realistic cue variables derived from extant literature and/or qualitative data from interviews and focus groups (Aiman-Smith et al., 2002). After a review of past theoretical and empirical research, four cues (i.e., company context, race, gender, and leadership traits) were used in each scenario for this study.

Despite the noted advantages to policy capturing, there are some disadvantages. A review of best practices and guidelines for policy capturing designs suggests a lack of consensus on the minimum of required cues to be represented in each scenario (Aiman-Smith et al., 2002; Karren & Barringer, 2002), and the maximum number of total scenarios per decision-maker. Some researchers have suggested a scenario-to-variable ratio of 5:1 is sufficient (Cooksey, 1996; Stewart, 1988); others have recommended having at least 10 scenarios per cue variable (Cohen & Cohen, 1983; Nunnally, 1978). Despite the suggested range difference, some policy capturing studies fall in between the scenario to cue ratio recommendations (e.g., Bonnaccio & Dalal, 2010, four cues and 18 scenarios; Goede, Van Vianen, & Klehe, 2013, three cues and 27

scenarios; Thomas, Hu, Gewin, Bingham, & Yanchus, 2005, three cues and 12 scenarios; Sekiguchi & Huber, 2011, two cues and nine scenarios). In addition to satisfying the scenario to cue ratio rule, researchers have suggested policy-capturing designs to have no more than five cues that may lead to large scenarios if each cue has more than three values. Karren and Barringer's (2002) review of published policy capturing studies in organizational literature found that most studies have either two or three levels of cue values. Policy capturing designs with cue values of more than three levels and exceeding more than five cues per scenario have a greater chance of encountering fatigue, cognitive overload, and stress from respondents (Graham & Cable, 2001; Webster & Trevino, 1995; see also Karren & Barringer, 2002).

There appears to be a greater methodological concern with researchers to not exceed a degree of cues and cue values that produces an excessive number of scenarios than there is with the minimum requirement. Some have suggested researchers to present fewer than 60 scenarios per decision-maker (Rossi & Anderson, 1982), Aiman-Smith et al. (2002) suggested fewer than 80 scenarios, and Cooksey (1996) recommended fewer than 100 scenarios. Four cue variables were used for this study, yielding 24 scenarios thus the study adopted a more conservative approach (8:1 scenario to cue ratio). Although this study does not satisfy Nunnally's (1978) recommended 10:1 ratio, this study determined that an 8:1 ratio is adequate because it addresses the research question supported by theory and remains within the range of previous employed policy capturing designs.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Pilot Study

Policy capturing methods have been criticized for lack of realism, more so for the external validity of the results (e.g., Aiman-Smith et al., 2002; Karren & Barringer, 2002; Klaas & Wheeler, 1990). Therefore, as suggested by Karren & Barringer (2002), a pilot study (i.e., pretests) was administered to identify and address unrealistic scenarios (e.g., organizational crisis information). Thirty-four undergraduate students participated in the pilot study. Seventy-nine percent ($n = 27$) indicated having experience in some type of management decision-making. Nine participants were removed from the data analysis due to missing data, thus the pilot study final sample for analyses was $n = 18$ (56% women; 78% white; average age = 21.83, $SD = 2.43$). Participants were informed at the beginning of the pilot study that recall of information will be required toward the end of the survey. Twenty-four scenarios were presented to participants (8 candidates x 3 organizational context). For each scenario, participants were asked to identify the best fitting organization description and their perception of leadership riskiness for each organizational context. Pilot study survey items also assessed the racial and gender saliency of the candidate's name (eight total).

A majority of participants indicated that the executive position is risky in both, the financial crisis and ethical crisis context (82% and 90%, respectively). As expected, only 22% of participants perceived the no crisis organization as a risky leadership opportunity. Seventeen participants (94%) correctly identified the gender of each manipulated candidate's name.

Over 94% of participants were able to correctly identify the associated race for each candidate's manipulated name, with the exception of the black female and white male (Latoya and Greg; 89% and 72%, respectively).

Sample

One hundred Mechanical Turk (MTurk) workers, who reported having decision-making experience in management, human resource, or organizational processes and operations agreed to participate in the online study. MTurk is an online contracted service for working professionals to participate in computer tasks (e.g., online surveys, experiments, writing) in exchange for a small amount of compensation per completed task (e.g., \$0.10 or \$0.50 per survey) through Amazon.com. The service allows participants to remain anonymous. Generally MTurk samples are a better representative of the U.S. Workforce than the American college sample (Behrend Sharek, Meade, & Wiebe, 2011; Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). As recommended by Aiman-Smith et al., (2002), a well-designed policy capturing study uses a representative sample of the research question in mind. Therefore, working professionals from a corporate environment are more ideal to make executive type selection decisions than undergraduate or graduate students in an educational environment.

Forty-two participants had missing data or did not complete the entire study; therefore, they were excluded from further analyses. Of the 58 valid cases, 16 participants answered at least one of the manipulation checks incorrectly. After manipulation check analyses, the final usable sample is 42 MTurk workers. Participants were 57% female with an average age of 34.2 years ($SD = 9.83$). Eighty-one percent were white and 12% were black with over 74% of participants indicating they have more than three years of working experience with their current employer. Sixty-two percent had a bachelor's degree or higher (i.e., MS, MA, MBA, PhD, JD, MD).

Participants' positions included 31% manager, 21% assistant manager, and 14% supervisor. Fifty percent work in medium size companies (i.e., 15-249 employees) and 36% in large size companies (i.e., > 250 employees). Participants reported their current employer's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as being male (91%, $n = 38$) and white (83%, $n = 35$).

Policy Capturing Design

Four policy-capturing cues (i.e., organizational context, candidate's race, candidate's gender, candidate's leadership traits) were completely crossed on candidate's evaluation. The four cues were manipulated using evaluation scenarios of a potential executive candidate. An orthogonal factorial design was used, yielding 24 (i.e., $3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$) scenarios. Scenarios were randomly presented to minimize potential order effects. Two additional (duplicate) randomly selected scenarios were included for each decision maker's evaluations, yielding a total of 26 scenarios. The two duplicate scenarios served as practice sets, and used to minimize start-up effects (Aiman-Smith et al., 2002; Bonaccio & Dalal, 2010) and to assess test-retest reliability. The overall evaluation scores from the repeated scenarios were used to compute an overall test-retest reliability coefficient across participants. The reliability coefficient was satisfactory for both duplicated scenarios (average $r = 0.77$).

Measures

Policy-Capturing Cues

The three values for the company context cue were normal (no crisis), financial crisis, and ethical crisis (see Table 2.1). Policy capturing studies suggest supplementing written information about cues with visual aid such as graphs, tables, and pictures to enrich information presentation (Highhouse, Luong, & Sarkar-Barney, 1999; see also Aiman-Smith et al., 2002). Similar to Haslam and Ryan (2008) procedure, a 10-year span stock graph was used to

manipulate the company's financial performance. A stable performing company was described as having a steady increase in its financial performance and presented with a financially successful stock chart. The financial crisis company was described as having a steady drop in its financial performance and facing dissolution accompanied with a stock chart showing a continuous decrease in stock prices. The ethical crisis company was described as experiencing unethical practices from the previous leader and presented with two separate internal memorandums addressing the incident. The memorandums provided a brief statement of the previous executive resignation and the media criticism on the company.

Candidate's gender and race cues were manipulated using candidate's name. This technique is similar to previous organizational studies that investigated discrimination in employment practice using fictional job applications to isolate the impact of different groups by names and indicators (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Carlsson & Rooth, 2007; Riach & Rich, 2002). As in effort to increase realism, this study did not directly identify the race of each candidate but utilized race- and gendered-specific names. Selected names were adapted from Bertrand and Mullainathan's assessment of salient racial and gender names via fictitious applicant resumes². A total of eight fictitious candidates were used to evaluate per organizational condition (i.e., financial crisis, no crisis, ethical crisis).³ It is highly recommended to include extraneous information in each scenario like hobbies, hometown, high-school attended, musicality, and so on, to decrease demand effects and guessing the nature of the research with

² See Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004), Appendix A-1, for full list of first names by race and gender.

³ Eight names were randomly selected from the complete list of gendered and racially salient first names (Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004). Greg and Brad for white, male names; Emily and Allison for white, female names; Jamal and Darnell for black, male names; Latoya and Tamika for black, female names.

policy-capturing designs (Carroll-Johnson, 1990; see also Aiman-Smith et al., 2002). Therefore, candidate's management experiences were included in each scenario.

Candidate's leadership cue was manipulated via reported pre-employment selection test results (i.e., Leadership Personality Test). Candidates were reported of having one of two possible leadership personality test results: communal leadership or agentic leadership traits (see Ryan, Haslam, Hersby, and Bongiorno, 2011).⁴ A candidate with communal leadership style was described as possessing tactful, neat, grateful, understanding, talkative, and courteous leadership traits. A candidate with an agentic leadership style was described as being assertive, feeling not easily hurt, high need for power, adventurous, vigorous, and forceful.

Criterion

Following each evaluation scenario, participants responded to four evaluation items on their likelihood of recommending the candidate for the position, and their perception of the candidate's fit, success, and overall positive evaluation. The criterion variables used a 7-point Likert-type scale for each scenario (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) (adapted from Sekiguchi & Huber, 2011). Instructions stated that "given what you know about this organization, please answer the following items accordingly": (1) "I would recommend the candidate for this executive position."; (2) "The candidate is a good fit for this executive position at this time."; (3) "I think the candidate will succeed in this executive position."; and (4) "My overall evaluation of this candidate is positive for this executive position." The composite criterion was the average evaluations across all four variables.

⁴Refer to Ryan et al., (2011) leadership traits assessment.

Procedure

Participants were asked to assume a role as a partner for a fictitious executive search firm service via a survey web link. They were informed that the purpose of the assessment is to receive public input on developing an executive candidate pool for different organizations. Online instructions indicated that several organizations are in the process of reviewing a series of potential candidates to fill a recently vacant executive position and that they are at the final stage of the selection process. The evaluation scenario indicated that the previous executive had resigned and it is necessary to hire/select another leader. Instructions advised participants to expect the possibility of evaluating the same applicant for different companies, since the executive search is at the final stages. Participants were told that candidates were randomly selected from a large applicant pool. Finally, participants were informed that they will not be asked to justify their decisions nor will they be meeting with the executive selection committee or candidates.

Decision-making was elicited using a series of evaluation scenarios. Each scenario comprised of a set of cues, and cue values are systematically manipulated across scenarios. Before receiving evaluation scenarios, all participants completed a brief selection training that introduced them to sample evaluation scenarios with a hypothetical company and candidate background profiles. During the training, participants were instructed to familiarize themselves with the materials and how profiles will be presented in each scenario.

In each evaluation scenario, participants received information on the respective company context, candidate's name, and candidate's leadership style (see Table 2.1). All evaluated candidates had more than five years of management experience, thus this was held constant. The study's four cues varied in each scenario. For each random scenario, participants provided a

separate evaluation thus completing 26 evaluations (2 were duplicate scenarios). Participants completed the same set of evaluation items at the end of each scenario to the next one, evaluating one scenario at a time.

A post-task open-ended question, “what do you think is the purpose of this study?” was assessed after participants completed all scenarios. Aiman-Smith et al., (2002) suggests using post-task assessment to counterbalance potential demand effects of studies with small number of cue variables. Moreover, the qualitative data provided enriches information of the degree “respondents understand and articulate their own decision policies” (Aiman-Smith et al., 2002, p. 400). Manipulation check items on the candidate's race and gender were assessed before participants were debriefed. Manipulation check items asked participants to identify each evaluated candidate's name by their appropriate race and gender. An example item included, “Given what you know from the candidate's profile, identify each candidate's gender” by their identified name. Participant’s demographic and current employer's information items included age, sex, race/ethnicity, job title, tenure, sexual orientation/identity, education, and employer information (i.e., type of industry, size, and current CEO’s race and gender).

Analyses

A series of initial analyses were conducted prior to testing the hypotheses. Due to the categorical nature of the four cue variables, dummymcodingwas used for appropriate regression analyses interpretation (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). Since the organizational context cue is a categorical variable with three levels (i.e., no crisis, financial crisis, or ethical crisis), this cue was transformed into two variables and dummymcoded.Given that the focus of the research questions is on each type of crisis, the no crisis context was coded 0 and labeled as the reference group.Table 2.2 shows how each of the cue variables was coded for each scenario.

No between-subject variables were hypothesized in this study; therefore, a nomothetic (between-subject analysis) was not necessary for data analysis. A within-subject multiple regression analysis was done for hypotheses testing since the interest of this study is on understanding the intersection of cues on individual evaluation policies in times of crisis. First, evaluations were regressed on all of simple effects (first order effects of cue variables). Although it is not the primary research questions for this study, the first step examined participants' relative weight of various cues on their evaluations. Regression equations were computed for each participant to assess the effects of the five cues (with the inclusion of the additional type of crisis variable) on evaluations of the candidate for the executive position. Specifically, a policy-capturing analysis was conducted for each participant by regressing evaluations on the cue values (financial crisis, ethical crisis, leadership trait, candidate's gender, and candidate's race) across 24 scenarios. Since the cues are expected to be orthogonal, the standardized regression coefficients will be interpreted as relative weights. Coefficients (beta) for each cue represented the relative weights given to each variable in evaluations.

This study is particularly interested on how the type of organizational context (i.e., crisis) and candidate's characteristics (race, gender, and/or leadership traits) jointly influence participant's evaluation policy. To test these hypotheses, subsequent model analyses were used to assess the cues in an interactive manner on evaluations (Aiken & West, 1991). For each individual participant, a four-way interaction regression analysis was performed on evaluations. At each step, appropriate interaction terms were entered into the regression model. For instance, in the second step of the analyses, two-way cross-product terms between each type of the crisis variable were included in the regression model (e.g., Gender x Financial crisis; Race x Financial crisis; Gender x Ethical crisis; Leadership x Ethical crisis). Six additional interaction

terms were entered into the third block (e.g., Leadership x Gender x Context; Leadership x Race x Context; Race x Gender x Context). The fourth block of the regression model included two four-way cross-product terms (i.e., Leadership x Gender x Race x Financial crisis; Leadership style x Gender x Race x Ethical crisis). The incremental R^2 associated with each block were examined for model significance. If the block of interactions is significant then beta weights associated with each interaction coefficient were examined for statistical significance.

Table 2.1 *Scenario cues*

Organizational Context ^a	
No Crisis:	This company has a steady increase in its financial performance.
Financial Crisis:	This company has a steady drop in its financial performance.
Ethical Crisis:	This company experienced unethical practice from the previous leader.
Candidate's Race and Gender ^b	
White, male:	Brad, Greg
White, female:	Emily, Allison
Black, male:	Jamal, Darnell
Black, female:	Latoyra, Tamika
Candidate's Leadership	
Communal:	Tactful, neat, grateful, understanding, talkative, courteous
Agentic:	Assertive, feeling not easily hurt, high need for power, adventurous, vigorous, forceful

^a A stock graph accompanied each organizational context.

^b Each name, per race and gender category combination, had different leadership trait. Example: Brad had agentic leadership traits and Greg had communal leadership traits.

Table 2.2 Cue variable coding of each scenario for regression analyses

Scenario No.	Race	Gender	Leadership	EC	FC
1	0	0	0	1	0
2	0	0	0	0	1
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	1	1	0
5	0	0	1	0	1
6	0	0	1	0	0
7	0	1	0	1	0
8	0	1	0	0	1
9	0	1	0	0	0
10	0	1	1	1	0
11	0	1	1	0	1
12	0	1	1	0	0
13	1	0	0	1	0
14	1	0	0	0	1
15	1	0	0	0	0
16	1	0	1	1	0
17	1	0	1	0	1
18	1	0	1	0	0
19	1	1	0	1	0
20	1	1	0	0	1
21	1	1	0	0	0
22	1	1	1	1	0
23	1	1	1	0	1
24	1	1	1	0	0

Note: FC = financial crisis; EC = ethical crisis. The numbers in columns 2-6 represents the cue values used in each scenario. Specifically, values of 0 represent “this candidate is white,” “this candidate is male,” and “this candidate possess agentic leadership traits,” respectively. Values of 1 represent “this candidate is black,” “this candidate is female,” and “this candidate possess communal leadership traits,” respectively. Values of 1 in the FC or EC column represents that specific organizational crisis and values of 0 represents all other groups (no crisis is the reference group, 0).

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Table 3.1 presents means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for criterion variables. Each participant made 24 evaluations, resulting in a total of 1008 (42 participants x 24 scenarios) observations available for analysis. As expected, the four evaluation items were highly inter-correlated at the within-subject level of analysis (average $r = .97$). Furthermore, the first principal component accounted for 92% of the total variance for the composite criterion variable. Thus, this study used the single-variable composite criterion (average of the four criterion variables) for further analyses. The composite criterion represents participants' overall evaluation of the candidate for the executive position.

Means and standard deviations of participants' evaluations for each scenario are presented in Table 3.2. The four lowest evaluations occurred when candidates' possessed communal leadership traits *and* in the financial crisis organizational context (scenarios 11, 5, 17, and 23). The two highest evaluations occurred when the candidate was white *and* in the no crisis organizational context (scenarios 6 and 9). Interestingly, the next two highest evaluations were in the financial crisis but for candidates who were white *and* possessed agentic leadership (scenarios 2 and 8).

Policy Capturing Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was performed for each participant to assess the effects of the cue variables on evaluations across scenarios. This yielded 42 regression equations, thus depicting each participant's evaluation policy. Four models were tested. Each participant's 24

evaluations of candidates were regressed on all cue variables (i.e., candidate's race, candidate's gender, candidate's leadership, financial crisis context, and ethical crisis context). Subsequent models investigated the interactive effects of cue variables (hypotheses testing).

The purpose of this analysis was to estimate a regression equation for each participant. The squared multiple correlation coefficient (R^2) is interpreted as a measure of the consistency with which the participant used the captured evaluation policy and the extent that the cues in the model account for a large amount of variance in evaluations.

First-Order Effects of Cue Variables

This step of the analysis allows the identification and removal of any potential participant(s) that fail to satisfy the rule of the R^2 for the regression equation—equal to or greater than 0.50 (Cooksey, 1996). That is, the modeled cues accounted for at least 50% of the variance in evaluations.

Standardized regression coefficients and R-squared for each participant's evaluations are shown in Table 3.3. Negative β weights suggested participants reported higher evaluations for the executive position when the candidate was white, male, agentic leader, or under a no crisis context. There was a wide variation for the entire sample in the extent cue variables predicted evaluations for each participant, the R^2 ranged from .10 to .89 ($M = 4.95$; $SD = 1.43$). This data suggests participants' policies lack uniformity (consistency) to one another. Not all participants had similar policies such that there was variation on the extent participants used the same cues or relative weights of cues in their evaluations. This study suggests one explanation of why evaluation policies were not captured (i.e., $R^2 < 0.50$ rule) for some participants. These participants (with no captured policy) may have not evaluated candidates distinctively from one another but rather evaluated candidates as being somewhat suitable for the executive position

regardless of the scenario (the mean composite evaluation across all participants were 4.95 and not captured policy participants were 4.83). Therefore, only participants with captured policies were used for further analyses. Table 3.4 shows the β weights that were significant at the .05 α level for each cue variable and the R^2 for each participant.

Twenty of the 42 evaluation policies (48%) were captured using the $R^2 > 0.50$ rule. Two subjects had $R^2 < .50$ (subject 36, $R^2 = .47$; subject 38, $R^2 = .45$); however, both subjects had statistically significant first-order models and coefficients. Therefore, both subjects were considered as captured evaluation policies. Thus, 22 (52%) evaluation policies were captured in this model. Captured evaluation policies had a R^2 range from .45 to .89 ($M = 5.06$; $SD = 1.37$). On average, 67% variance accounted in evaluations was captured for these participants in this model. Table 3.5 provides the results of regression on the average individual participants' captured evaluation policies. The standardized coefficient represents the weights given to cue variables by the average participant—the average of the individual participants' regression coefficients. These results suggest that a majority of the variance in participants' evaluations was associated with the variance in the cues. In other words, captured participants' evaluations were predictable based on the information presented in scenarios.

The relative importance on evaluations can be interpreted as a weight assigned to each variable. The captured policy sample consisted of 69% white, 60% female who had an average age of 33.82. The percentage of coefficients that were statistically significant for overall within-subject factor was as follows: 86% financial crisis, 73% leadership traits, 55% ethical crisis, 14% race, and 5% gender. Individuals weighed similar cue variables differently such that not all participants agree on how much each cue variable influenced their evaluations. For example, although 16 of 22 participants considered the candidate's leadership traits, the magnitude of the

significant β weights ranged from .37 to -.78. Likewise, the ethical crisis cue β weights ranged from -.39 to -1.00 and the financial crisis cue β weights ranged from -.40 to -1.06. Although, directionality of the β weights indicates that majority of participants evaluated cue variables in the same direction (exception to the two participants under the leadership traits cue).

Based on the relative weights, not all participants considered the same cue variable as the most important influence on their evaluations (45% financial crisis; 32% leadership; 23% ethical crisis; 9% race), nor the same cue combination. No participants considered the candidate's gender as the most important influence on their decisions. Thirty-six percent of individual participants ($n = 8$) considered leadership traits *and* both crises (financial and ethical crisis) as important variables in their evaluations. Twenty-seven percent of individual participants ($n = 6$) considered leadership traits *and* only the financial crisis as important variables in their evaluations. Two participants (9%) considered both candidate's race *and* both crises as important variables in their evaluations. One participant considered gender *and* both crises as important variables in evaluating candidates for the executive position. Of the 22 captured evaluation policies, four participants considered *only one* cue (race, leadership, *or* financial crisis) in making evaluations for the executive position. Evaluation policy of both type of crises considered in evaluations were found for one participant. No participants relied on the candidate's gender as the only variable in making evaluations.

Interactive Effects of Cue Variables

To test for this study's hypotheses, interactive effects of candidate's characteristics (identities) and organizational context (types of crisis) on participant's evaluations were included in the subsequent models. For each model, participant's evaluations were regressed on the first-order effects of cue variables *and* all appropriate hypothesized interactions between variables.

Test of simple effects were performed for all hypothesized significant interactions. A summary of hypothesized results is presented in Table 3.6.

In the second model, this study regressed individual participant's evaluations on to all two-way interaction cues in this step (4 product terms entered into the model; gender x context; race x context). No participants indicated a significant interaction between race and type of crisis. Hypothesis 1 was aligned with existing glass cliff literature, women would receive higher evaluations than men for risky leadership roles. One participant had a significant interaction coefficient between gender and financial crisis (subject 27; $\beta_{R*FC} = .49, p < .05$) and significant model, but a non-significant change in model ($\Delta^2 = 0.06, p = .07$). The lack of significant change in R^2 may have been associated with the number of two-way interaction cues included in the model. Therefore, a separate alternative regression analysis was conducted with only two interaction cues (i.e., gender x type of crisis), and found that the interaction was significant with gender and financial crisis cues on evaluations, $F(7, 16) = 5.71, p < .01$. Women received higher evaluations than men in the financial crisis context. No participants indicated a significant interaction between gender and ethical crisis. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

All three-way interaction terms were included in the third model. Hypothesis 2 (a-b) and 3 (a-c) suggested that the candidate's intersection of racial and gender (identities) would influence participant's evaluations during times of organizational crisis (gender x race x financial crisis; gender x race x ethical crisis). One participant had a significant three-way interaction term model (subject 8), $F(15, 8) = 4.63, p < .01$, see Figure 3.1. Interaction terms between race and gender in both types of crisis were significant. Hypotheses 2a and 2b proposed that black men would receive greater positive evaluations in risky leadership roles than white men, as well as white women. Results suggested the opposite evaluation pattern, black men received lower positive

evaluations in the ethical crisis and financial crisis (risky leadership roles) than white men. Additionally, black men received lower positive evaluations than white women for both risky leadership roles. Thus, Hypothesis 2a and 2b were not supported despite that there were significant race and gender effects. On the other hand, a different evaluation pattern emerged for black women. Black women received greater positive evaluations than white men during the financial crisis but not the ethical crisis, thus Hypothesis 3a was partially supported. Hypothesis 3b proposed that black women would receive lower positive evaluations in risky leadership roles than white women. In the financial crisis, black women received greater positive evaluations than white women. The opposite was found in the ethical crisis context such that white women received greater positive evaluations than black women. Thus, Hypothesis 3b was not supported. Hypothesis 3c posited that black men would receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than black women. Although, results indicated that black men received lower positive evaluations than black women in both types of crisis (Hypothesis 3c was not supported). Although not predicted in this study, two participants had significant interactions between race and leadership in both types of crisis as well as gender and leadership in both types of crisis.

The fourth model tested Hypothesis 4 (a-c) and 5 that examined four-way interaction cue variables. A statistically significant “race x gender x leadership x financial crisis” interaction was found for one participant (subject 8; $\beta = -0.13$, $p < .05$), see Figure 3.2. During a financial crisis, white women with agentic leadership received higher positive evaluations than white women with communal leadership. Thus, Hypothesis 4a was not supported. White women with communal leadership received higher positive evaluations than black women with communal leadership in times of financial crisis. Hypothesis 4b was supported. Hypothesis 4c proposed that

black men with communal leadership would be more preferred in the financial crisis than other non-prototypical leaders with similar traits (white women and black women). Results suggested that in both types of crisis, black men with communal leadership received lower positive evaluations than both white and black women with communal leadership. Hypothesis 4c was not supported. The “race x gender x leadership x ethical crisis” interaction were statistically significant for one participant (subject 7, $\beta = -0.78$, $p < .05$), see Figure 3.3. White women with communal leadership in the ethical crisis received higher positive evaluations than both black men and women with communal leadership. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Organizational Context Analyses⁵

Participants also reported their expectations of the appointed executive leader for each type of organizational context. Sixty-four percent of participants expected the new leader to perform the normal duties required of position in times of no crisis and 77% expected the new leader to take control of the division and improve the company’s situation in the financial crisis. In the ethical crisis, 41% of participants reported that the new leader should take control of the division and improve the company’s situation, 18% expected the new leader to be a spokesperson for the division providing damage control, and 14% expected the new leader to manage people and personnel issues through the crisis. These percentages indicated that depending on the context of evaluation participants had different leadership duty expectations.

A paired, samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether evaluators agreed on the degree of riskiness for each organizational context, see Figure 3.3. As expected, the results indicated that the mean for the financial crisis context ($M = 5.64$, $SD = 1.03$) was significantly greater than the mean for the no crisis context ($M = 2.86$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(527) = -29.58$, $p < .001$. Similarly, the mean for the ethical crisis context ($M = 5.50$, $SD = 1.47$) was significantly greater

⁵ These results represent captured participants’ evaluations ($N = 22$ subjects; $N = 528$ observations)

than the mean for the no crisis context, $t(527) = -24.42, p < .001$. The mean for the financial crisis was significantly greater than the mean for the ethical crisis, $t(527) = 2.15, p < .05$.

Table 3.1 Means, standard deviations, and correlations of participants' evaluations^a

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Likelihood of recommendation	4.92	1.50	—				
2. Perception of fit	4.94	1.51	.94**	—			
3. Perception of success	4.97	1.43	.91**	.92**	—		
4. Overall positive evaluation	4.97	1.47	.92**	.92**	.91**	—	
5. Composite criterion	4.95	1.43	.97**	.98**	.96**	.97**	—

Note: $N = 42$ subjects, $N = 1008$ observations (42 subjects x 24 scenarios). Variables used a strongly disagree/ strongly agree 7-point Likert rating scale. The composite criterion variable includes criterion variables 1-4.

^a Average response across all 24 scenarios

** $p < .01$

Table 3.2 Means and standard deviations of participants' evaluations, broken down by scenario and criterion variable

Scenario No.	Ev1		Ev2		Ev3		Ev4		Composite Criterion	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
11	3.55	1.40	3.57	1.53	3.69	1.41	3.74	1.52	3.64	1.40
5	3.74	1.55	3.55	1.42	3.81	1.49	3.64	1.45	3.68	1.40
17	3.74	1.33	3.69	1.32	3.83	1.29	3.86	1.35	3.78	1.24
23	3.71	1.49	3.79	1.55	3.98	1.47	3.90	1.54	3.85	1.47
13	4.33	1.72	4.43	1.67	4.60	1.53	4.36	1.54	4.43	1.55
1	4.48	1.55	4.38	1.67	4.57	1.52	4.52	1.57	4.49	1.54
7	4.48	1.66	4.55	1.73	4.48	1.74	4.55	1.70	4.51	1.67
19	4.48	1.53	4.57	1.59	4.62	1.53	4.40	1.50	4.52	1.50
22	4.83	1.46	4.93	1.47	4.88	1.37	4.88	1.53	4.88	1.42
4	5.05	1.25	5.17	1.25	5.07	1.24	5.14	1.24	5.11	1.21
10	5.19	1.34	5.12	1.38	5.05	1.36	5.17	1.34	5.13	1.31
16	5.14	1.36	5.19	1.27	5.17	1.23	5.19	1.38	5.17	1.25
15	5.24	1.51	5.21	1.59	5.29	1.44	5.38	1.36	5.28	1.42
21	5.31	1.35	5.31	1.33	5.38	1.17	5.33	1.16	5.33	1.20
14	5.36	1.14	5.40	1.13	5.31	1.24	5.33	1.18	5.35	1.12
24	5.43	1.25	5.52	1.13	5.33	1.07	5.43	1.13	5.43	1.10
20	5.48	.97	5.48	0.97	5.36	0.96	5.55	0.71	5.46	0.82
12	5.43	1.31	5.48	1.13	5.52	1.06	5.45	1.17	5.47	1.12
18	5.50	1.07	5.43	1.25	5.48	0.99	5.52	1.13	5.48	1.07
3	5.40	1.33	5.50	1.37	5.52	1.33	5.57	1.33	5.50	1.29
8	5.48	1.17	5.64	0.96	5.52	1.11	5.52	1.09	5.54	1.03
2	5.50	1.24	5.55	1.13	5.62	1.06	5.55	1.13	5.55	1.09
6	5.52	1.19	5.57	1.19	5.57	1.06	5.64	1.10	5.58	1.09
9	5.76	1.21	5.55	1.27	5.69	1.22	5.69	1.24	5.67	1.20
Average	4.92	1.50	4.94	1.51	4.97	1.43	4.97	1.47	4.95	1.43

Note: *N* = 42 subjects; *N* = 1008 observations; Ev1 = likelihood of recommendation; Ev2 = perception of fit; Ev3 = perception of success; Ev4 = overall positive evaluation; *M* = mean; *SD* = standard deviation. The composite criterion variable includes criterion variables Ev1-4. Scenarios are presented in ascending order of the mean composite criterion scores.

Table 3.3 *Standardized regression coefficients and R² from each participant's evaluations*

Subject No.	β_1	β_2	β_3	β_4	β_5	R ²
1	-0.09	0.04	0.23	0.01	-0.15	0.09
2	0.09	0.03	0.04	-0.55	-0.47	0.27
3	-0.04	-0.08	-0.73	-0.17	-0.35	0.64
4	-0.12	0.01	0.26	-0.22	-0.02	0.13
5	-0.07	0.02	0.18	-0.33	-0.26	0.13
6	0.08	0.00	-0.54	-0.11	-0.64	0.65
7	0.23	0.02	-0.37	-0.60	-0.76	0.70
8	-0.58	0.18	0.03	-0.50	-0.61	0.69
9	0.06	0.08	0.00	-0.68	-1.06	0.87
10	-0.12	-0.31	-0.28	-0.01	-0.23	0.24
11	-0.05	-0.11	0.37	0.38	-0.04	0.31
12	-0.07	0.08	-0.24	-0.91	-0.89	0.89
13	-0.67	-0.05	-0.20	-0.56	-0.59	0.83
14	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.09	0.07	0.01
15	-0.42	-0.05	-0.32	0.07	-0.10	0.31
16	0.00	0.05	-0.38	-0.23	-0.25	0.20
17	0.02	0.01	-0.20	-0.12	-0.04	0.05
18	-0.14	0.01	-0.78	-0.02	-0.42	0.80
19	-0.08	-0.05	0.30	-0.03	-0.05	0.10
20	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.11
21	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.12	-0.26	0.13
22	0.11	-0.02	-0.33	-0.23	-0.17	0.17
23	0.05	0.05	0.37	-0.45	-0.82	0.65
24	-0.02	0.02	0.35	0.03	0.03	0.12
25	0.02	-0.02	0.38	-1.00	-0.44	0.89
26	-0.02	-0.03	0.00	-0.21	-0.20	0.04
27	0.21	-0.19	-0.37	-0.70	-0.58	0.64
28	-0.21	0.01	-0.78	-0.15	-0.23	0.70
29	-0.17	0.58	-0.05	-0.18	-0.16	0.40
30	-0.07	-0.07	-0.59	-0.30	-0.43	0.51
31	-0.08	-0.08	-0.64	-0.34	-0.40	0.57
32	0.91	-0.15	-0.56	-0.48	-0.59	0.63
33	0.15	0.09	-0.55	-0.46	-0.66	0.68
34	-0.30	-0.30	-0.62	-0.63	-0.63	0.78
35	0.00	0.00	0.10	-0.14	-0.41	0.14
36	0.17	0.11	-0.57	0.34	0.04	0.47
37	-0.02	0.14	0.13	-0.09	-0.19	0.07
38	0.20	-0.01	0.11	-0.11	-0.67	0.45
39	0.04	0.02	0.34	-0.55	-0.02	0.41
40	0.00	0.00	-0.68	-0.07	-0.52	0.71
41	0.10	0.34	-0.04	-0.64	-0.64	0.55
42	-0.79	-0.18	-0.07	0.06	0.08	0.66
Averages	-0.04	0.01	-0.15	-0.10	-0.25	0.44

Table 3.4 Significant standardized regression coefficients and R^2 for participants with captured evaluation policies

Subject No.	Cue Variables and Interactions																	R^2	
	β_1	β_2	β_3	β_4	β_5	β_6	β_7	β_8	β_9	β_{10}	β_{11}	β_{12}	β_{13}	β_{14}	β_{15}	β_{16}	β_{17}		
3			-0.73		-0.35														0.92
6			-0.54		-0.64							0.38	0.46	-0.39	-0.65				0.98
7			-0.37	-0.60	-0.76											-0.78			0.96
8	-0.41			-0.39	-0.44					0.20	0.52	0.21	0.11	0.21	-0.46			-0.13	1.00
9				-0.68	-1.06														0.95
12			-0.24	-0.91	-0.89														0.97
13	-0.67			-0.56	-0.59														0.92
18			-0.78		-0.42														0.94
23			0.37	-0.45	-0.82														0.88
25			0.38	-1.00	-0.44														0.95
27			-0.37	-0.70	-0.58		0.49												0.92
28			-0.78																0.82
30			-0.59		-0.43														0.87
31			-0.64		-0.40														0.75
32			-0.56	-0.48	-0.59														0.81
33			-0.55	-0.46	-0.66														0.84
34			-0.62	-0.63	-0.63														0.91
36			-0.57																0.76
38					-0.67														0.86
40			-0.69		-0.52														0.50
41		0.34		-0.64	-0.64														0.81
42	-0.79																		0.91

Note: β_1 = race (R); β_2 = gender (G); β_3 = leadership (L); β_4 = ethical crisis (EC); β_5 = financial crisis (FC); β_6 = G X EC; β_7 = G x FC; β_8 = R x EC; β_9 = R x FC; β_{10} = R x G x EC; β_{11} = R x G x FC; β_{12} = R x L x EC; β_{13} = R x L x FC; β_{14} = G x L x EC; β_{15} = G x L x FC; β_{16} = R x G x L x EC; β_{17} = R x G x L x FC. Evaluations represent the composite criterion. R^2 values represents the fourth model variance explained.

Table 3.5 Results of regression for cue variables on individual participant with captured evaluation policies^a

Variable	γ for step				% of within-subject variance explained	
	One	Two	Three	Four	R^2	ΔR^2
Race (R)	-0.06	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10		
Gender (G)	0.00	-0.04	-0.04	-0.04		
Leadership (L)	-0.34	-0.34	-0.28	-0.28		
EC	-0.38	-0.41	-0.42	-0.42		
FC	-0.54	-0.62	-0.60	-0.60	67%	
G x EC		0.01	0.06	0.03		
G x FC		0.07	0.11	0.14		
R x EC		0.03	0.03	0.01		
R x FC		0.06	0.08	0.11	71%	4%
R x G x EC			-0.01	0.05		
R x G x FC			0.03	-0.04	84%	13%
R x L x EC			0.01	0.05		
R x L x FC			-0.06	-0.11		
G x L x EC			-0.06	-0.02		
G x L x FC			-0.09	-0.13		
R x G x L x EC				-0.08		
R x G x L x FC				0.10	87%	4%

Note: $N = 22$ subjects; $N = 528$ observations (22 subjects x 24 scenarios); FC = financial crisis; EC = ethical crisis. γ is the average regression standardized coefficient across participants. The R^2 and ΔR^2 represents percentages of within-subject variance explained by the set of cues. Evaluations represent the composite criterion.

^a Average of individual participant's evaluations.

Table 3.6 *Summary of hypothesized results*

Interactive Effects	Hypothesis	Result
* G x FC G x EC	H1: Women were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than men.	<i>Partially supported.</i> W > M → FC
	H2a: Black men were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than white men.	<i>Not supported.^a</i>
	H2b: Black men were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than white women.	<i>Not supported.^a</i>
* G x R x FC * G x R x EC	H3a: Black women were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than white men.	<i>Partially supported.</i> BW > WM → FC
	H3b: Black women were expected to receive lower positive evaluations for the risky leadership role than white women.	<i>Partially supported.</i> BW < WW → EC BW > WW → FC
	H3c: Black women were expected to receive lower positive evaluations for risky leadership roles than black men.	<i>Not supported.^a</i>
	H4a: White women with communal leadership were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for the financial crisis leadership roles than white women with agentic leadership.	<i>Not supported.^a</i>
	H4b: White women with communal leadership were expected to receive higher evaluations for the financial crisis leadership roles than black women with similar leadership traits.	<i>Supported.</i>
* G x R x L x FC * G x R x L x EC	H4c: Black men with communal leadership were expected to receive greater positive evaluations for the financial crisis leadership roles than “other” candidates with similar leadership traits.	<i>Not supported.^a</i>
	H5: In an ethical crisis, communal white women were expected to receive greater positive evaluations compared to her gender and racial counterparts.	<i>Supported.</i>

Note: N= 22 subjects; N = 528 observations (22 subjects x 24 scenarios); H = hypothesis; G = candidate’s gender; R = candidate’s race; FC = financial crisis; EC = ethical crisis; B= black; M = men; W=white or women.

^aSignificant interactive effects but opposite direction of expected findings.

* $p < 0.05$

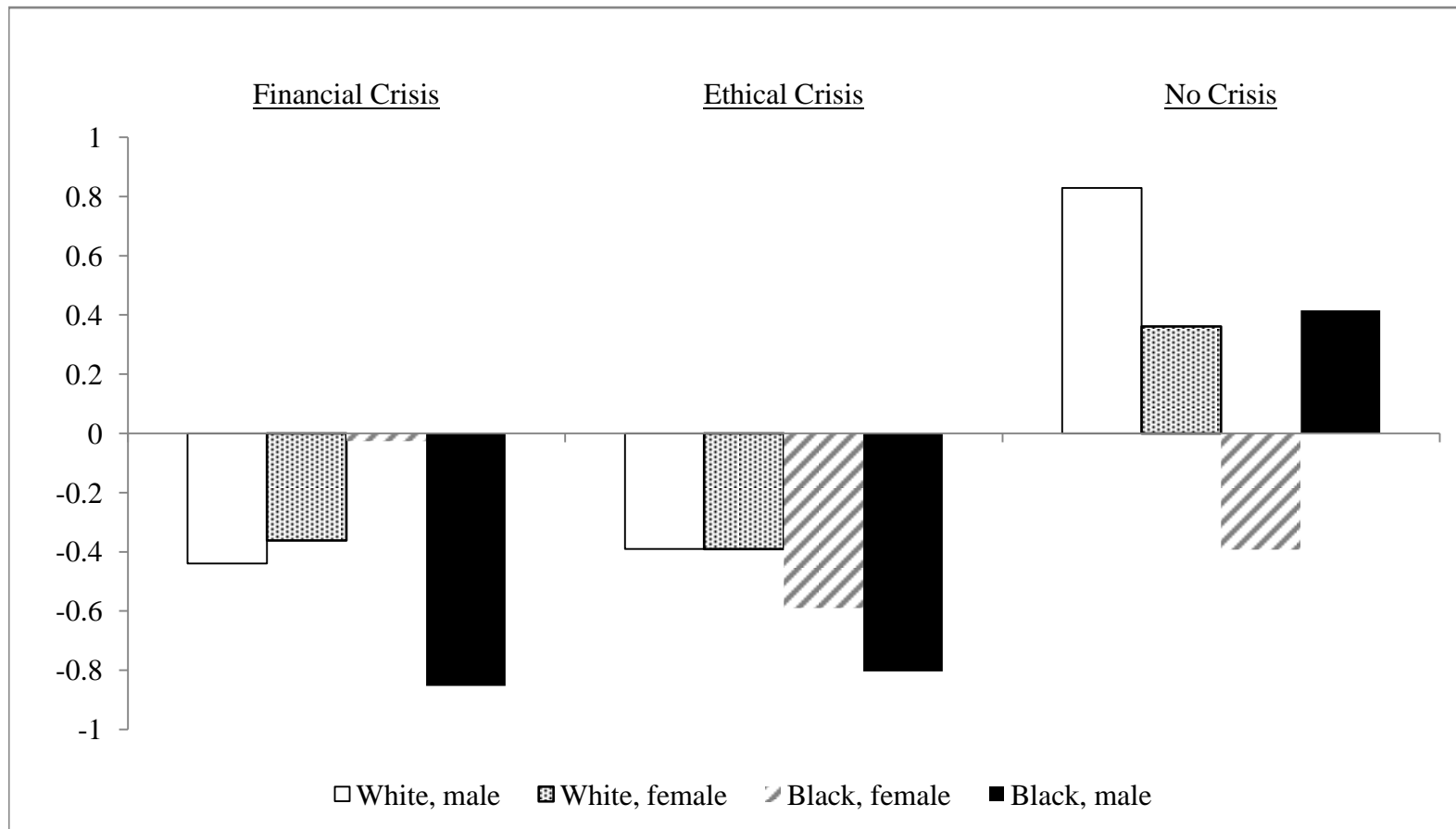


Figure 3.1 Subject 8 evaluations by gender and race across organizational contexts.

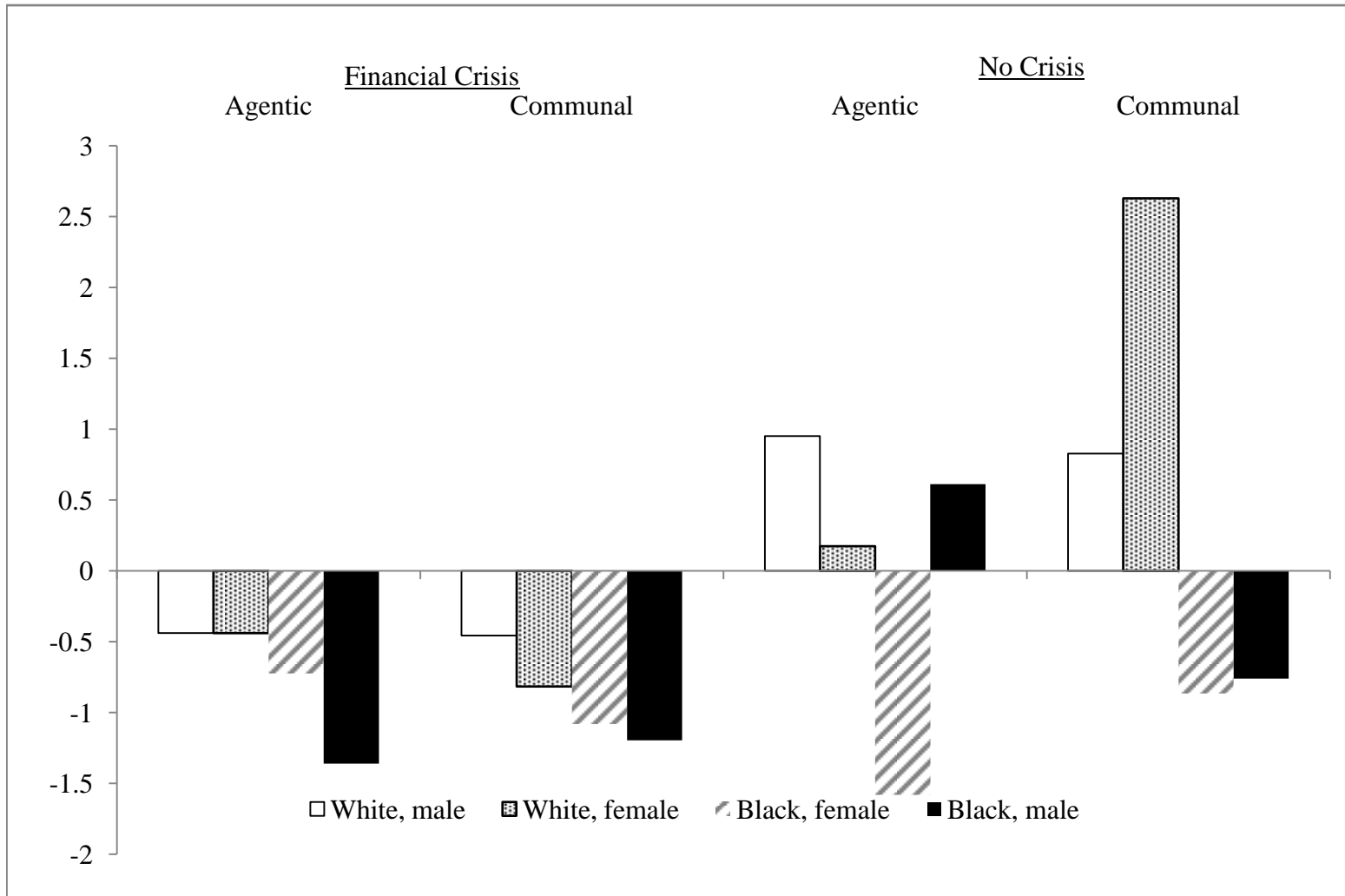


Figure 3.2 Subject 8 evaluations by leadership traits, gender, and ethnicity in financial crisis.

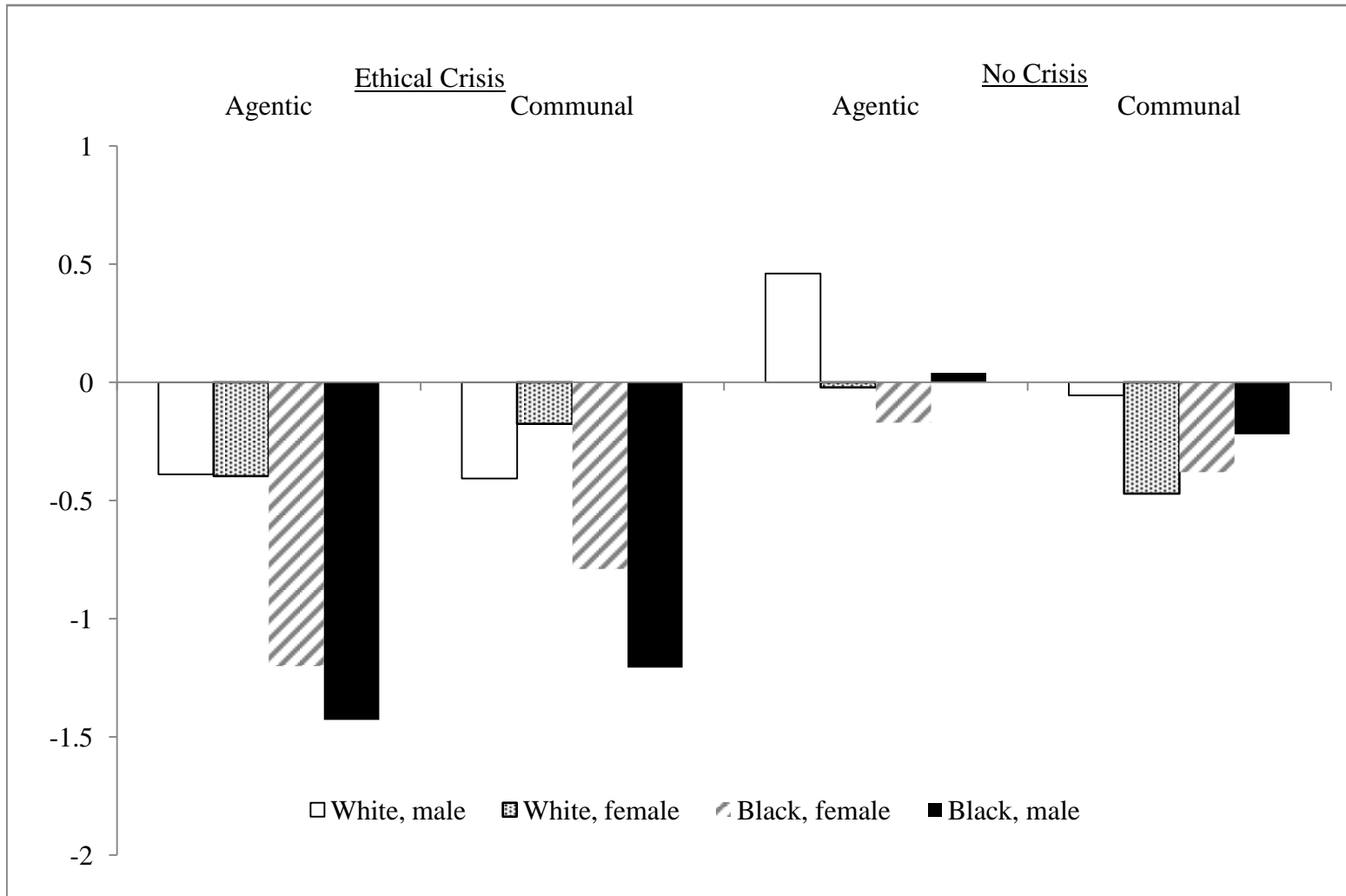


Figure 3.3 Subject 7 evaluations by leadership traits, gender, and ethnicity in ethical crisis.

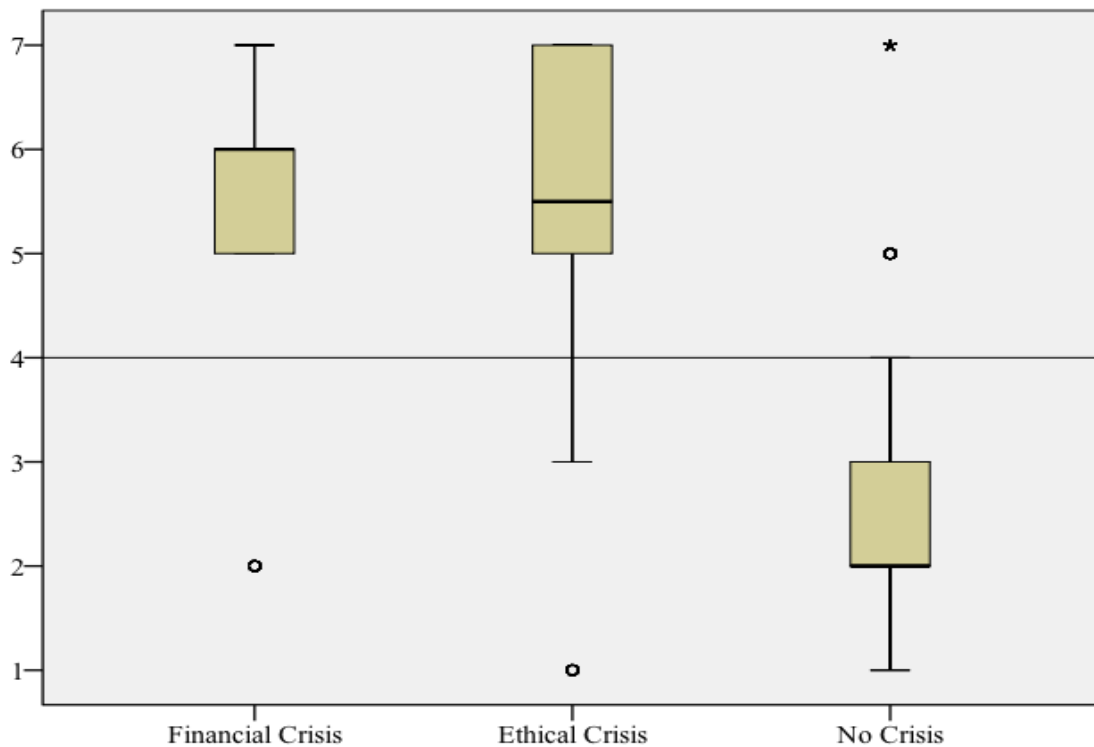


Figure 3.4 Boxplots of perceived riskiness for each organizational context.

Note: A 7-point Likert rating scale was used to assess perceived riskiness of the context under evaluation. The horizontal line (4) represents a rating of neither agree nor disagree on the organizational context as being risky. Rating scores above the horizontal line represents greater perception of riskiness.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Within less than a decade since Ryan & Haslam (2005) coined the “glass cliff” terminology, the phenomenon has received national attention from major corporations, news media, as well as from research scholars and practitioners (e.g., Bloomberg Business, 2014; Cook & Glass, 2013; Forbes, 2014; Hunt-Earle, 2012; Harvard Business Review, 2014). Despite the acknowledgement of the glass cliff as a robust phenomenon, relatively little attention has been paid to whether the glass cliff operates beyond a gender bias and financial crisis. This study proposes that a) gender, as found in the most current glass cliff literature, is not the only determinant in evaluations during glass cliff decisions, and b) the glass cliff does not operate similarly for all risky leadership roles. Drawing from social cognition and organizational development theories, this study argues that the glass cliff is better understood as a multifaceted, implicit processing model. The current study suggests that the glass cliff occurs as a form of implicit bias that operates under a model of multiple identities, which produces unique decision outcomes for various group members depending on their intersecting identities and the type of risky context.

The initial analyses revealed greater positive evaluations for candidates’ who were either identified as white, male, agentic, or in a no crisis organizational context. These findings support existing contentions for the “think manager – think male” and “think manager – think white” cognitive process of decision-makers (Gundemir, Homan, de Dreu, & van Vugt, 2014; Koenig et al., 2011; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Tomkiewics et al., 1998) during

times of normal organizational performance. Thus, in the no crisis context (stability, low risk), white or male candidates represent the maintenance of the status quo, and a gendered and racialized organizational system (Brown et al, 2011). In relation to the glass cliff theory, hypothesized results suggested that in addition to a gender preference, leadership traits, race, and crisis context matters in glass cliff decisions. These findings advance the glass cliff theory and support the notion that the interactive effects of gender and racial bias may influence leader evaluation decisions but varied along the category of crisis. For some decision-makers, black women were evaluated differently in times of crisis compared to her gender and racial counterparts.

Glass Cliff Decisions and Intersecting Identities

Consistent with the original glass cliff theory (Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007), the results of this study found that women were more preferred than men during times of financial crisis. Here, the “think crisis- think female” cognitive process was supported such that the context of a poor performing company activates a gender bias in evaluators (Ryan et al., 2009). However, the glass cliff pattern did not exist for women when evaluated under an ethical crisis. The perceived degree of impact (risky or threat) for each crisis context (financial versus ethical; macro versus micro level) may have contributed to the absence of the glass cliff effect in the ethical crisis for some decision-makers. For instance, evaluators may not consider an unethical behavior from the previous leader as a sufficient threat to the organizational system thus inhibiting an implicit preference for change in leadership (Brown et al., 2011). Whereas, the company with poor financial performance may elicit a greater association of female gender stereotypes with change more so than male gender stereotypes.

Results from this study also demonstrated that some decision-makers included race as an important factor in evaluations during times of crisis. When the combination of race and gender cues were considered white and black women received greater positive evaluations than white men, but only in the financial crisis context. A within group (female) comparison across race revealed further insights such that black women received greater positive evaluations in the financial crisis than white women. Although, the glass cliff effect was not supported in the ethical crisis across race and gender such that neither white women nor black women were viewed more positively than white men for the leadership role. It is important to note that within the ethical crisis context, white women received different evaluations than black women. By examining white women and black women separately, in spite of the shared gender disadvantage, this study supports a distinct glass cliff pattern for black women compared to white women in poor performing (financial) contexts. The evaluation bias at the nexus of race, gender, and financial crisis suggests a greater degree of challenges presented for black women who find themselves in glass cliff positions compared to white women. Opposite of this study's prediction, black women were more preferred than black men under both types of crisis. Interestingly, the glass cliff effect was absent for black men in both crisis contexts such that black men were not evaluated more positively than white men or white women in any type of crisis. Again, these findings suggest black women's distinctiveness to not only white women but also black men under leader selection evaluations (Combs, 2003; Parker & Ogilvie, 1996). Additionally, this study also supports the recent findings of bias toward women and BME political candidates for lower winnability seats during the U.K. General Election (Kulich et al., 2013).

Glass Cliff Decisions and Leadership Traits

The glass cliff pattern changed when evaluators considered candidate's leadership traits across the two types of crisis. Of the 22-captured evaluation policies, leadership traits were reported by 73% as an important cue in making evaluation decisions. Opposite of what has been found in regards to the association between leadership traits and crisis (Bass, 1990; Pillai, 1996; Ryan et al., 2011), agentic traits were found to be more desirable than communal traits in the financial crisis. This study also found that the combination of race, gender, and leadership traits influenced some evaluator's decisions differently in each crisis context, thus suggesting more of an interdependent nature of evaluation decisions rather than independent. White women with communal leadership traits were not preferred over white women with agentic leadership in the financial crisis, rather a reverse relationship was found. In line with role congruity theory, communal white women were more preferred than communal black women in the financial crisis. Moreover, agentic white women received greater positive evaluations relative to agentic black women in both types of crisis.

In times of crisis, black men with agentic or communal leadership received lower positive evaluations compared to white men and women, and black women. This specific finding is aligned with other studies examining blacks and leadership traits (e.g, Livingston, et al., 2012). The *subordinate male target hypothesis* (SMTH) may explain the absence of the glass cliff effect toward black men (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000). Based on the SMTH, one may argue that black men's social location are at a greater disadvantage because whites tend to view black women as less threatening to social and organizational hierarchy and power system than black men (Veenstra, 2013) thus, he would experience greater discrimination (less fit of ideal leader) in risky and threatening contexts. As predicted, the interpersonal and highly sensitive nature of an ethical crisis diverges from a financial crisis such that evaluator's indicated

greater preference for communal white women compared to both communal, black women and men in the ethical crisis but not the financial crisis.

Implications

This study offers several theoretical implications. From the organizational research framework, this study extended the glass cliff paradigm with the consideration of intersecting identities (i.e., black men, black women) and leadership traits. From the women's, and ethnic and racial studies viewpoint, these findings highlight the unique social location of black women in leadership evaluations relative to white women and some black men. Furthermore, this study highlighted the importance of avoiding the fallacy of assuming gender operates similarly across all racial groups. Additionally, this research addresses the need to consider the nature of the type crisis of when minorities are more likely to be appointed into leadership roles. For social cognitive theory, the use of a policy capturing method (implicit process) to examine evaluations in this study provided a deeper understanding of what factors may be considered in individual's glass cliff decision-making.

The findings from this study also have practical implications. Despite the incremental increase of women and people of color in executive ranks in larger companies, gendered and racialized organizations continues to impede the career success rate of non-prototypical leaders thus producing persistent inequities for minorities. The assumption of a prototypical leader embodying masculine leadership traits (aligned with the male gender role) (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Scott & Brown, 2006), as well as the critical use of the white standard (whiteness) in leader selection evaluations (Rosette et al., 2008), increases the deviation of perception of fit for women and people of color to the ideal leader in normal contexts. If the glass cliff does exist as a career barrier for women and people of color, organization decision-makers should be mindful of

the context of when minority leaders (non-prototypical) are selected into precarious positions (abnormal, risky contexts) that are more likely to have a lower probability of leadership success. It is critical for organizations to recognize the potential dangers of placing minorities in leadership roles when the stakes are high such that it may lead to greater stress of having to perform beyond normal leadership expectations which in turn increases likelihood of mental health issues and diseases (e.g., depression, hypertension, cardiovascular disease).

Given the unique nature and expectations of leaders for companies with poor financial performance, organization management could provide the needed access and useful information for leadership development, especially for women and people of color. Women and people of color in high stress leadership positions should receive the necessary resources to succeed as well as opportunities for coaching development and counseling. Formal and informal diverse leadership development programs should consider including self-care strategies (e.g., social, spiritual, cultural, emotional, vocational, and intellectual) oriented around the unique and complex coping challenges encountered by women of color compared to white women and men of color. As part of the effort to address the leaky pipeline of diverse leaders in corporate's upper echelons, organizations should equally value the importance of developing women and people of color into successful leaders during their appointments and creating greater access to leadership opportunities. These findings can also be used as information resource during selection training for members of the executive search committee such that it allows decision-makers to learn about the important effects of implicit bias in leadership selection for women and racial minorities. Training and education about gender and race equity in organizations is also a necessity for board members, and not only managers and executives, in order to increase the

awareness of how stereotypes (e.g., prototype- consistency) and prejudice influences negative decisions outcomes for women and racial minorities' vertical career development.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite the methodological contribution, research advancement, and practical implications, the results of this study should be interpreted with some caveats. The first limitation focuses on the concern of external validity of policy capturing methods. This study used a repeated, simulation experiment to study evaluation decisions. Some research identified this approach to understanding information processing in an experimental setting as the in-basket exercise—participants use the information that are presented in the form of memos, graphs, or related material to complete a task or assessment (e.g., Dukerich, Milliken, & Cowan, 1990). One main caveat associated with the in-basket method is the use of “paper people” such as the fictitious organization and candidate used in each scenario (Gorman, Clover, & Doherty, 1978). Procedures requested participants to respond to scenarios in order to assist a fictitious executive search firm; however, the extent that participants actually seriously envision themselves as a vital role in the selection process is unknown (Meyer, 1970). Additionally, participants may have not valued the importance of the selection evaluation task since the outcome of their decision has no direct impact to their real life at work (Nees, 1983). Despite the noted disadvantages, the in-basket method was considered as not the only appropriate methodology but rather the best approach to answer the current research question versus a field study. Some research scholars argue that the artificial nature in experimental studies is less of a concern such that it has been found to complement field studies regardless of the fictitious context or people under evaluation (Nees, 1983). Examining effects of organizational crisis and the intersection of race and gender

on decision-making may have presented a different set of challenges if conducted as a field study. For example, the inability to control the environment and distinguish evaluation differences that are attributed to the information regarding organizational characteristics (type of crisis) and candidate's characteristics would be a greater research limitation than using an experimental method.

Future research may consider assessing leader preference evaluations from actual employees or members of a company that is experiencing an existing crisis. For instance, it would also be beneficial to the glass cliff research to use actual leaders in a real organization such as executives (e.g., COO) and members from the board of trustees who normally are major decision-makers in selecting the next chief executive officer (CEO). It might be more valuable in understanding "who" they consider or include as a potential pool of candidates for the precarious leadership position, rather than giving them a list of candidates to evaluate and select. Moreover, the next direction of research should focus on whether decision-makers (e.g., board members) vary on their degree of desire to provide resources to certain leaders than others in times of crisis (e.g., openness to coaching and mentoring, providing support, or providing access to workshop and training).

Another potential limitation is related to policy capturing design scenario to cue ratio such that this study only focused on two categories of crisis (i.e., keeping the number of levels per cue to under 3). Therefore, additional research is needed to further support findings of the glass cliff in other forms of macro level crises such as a global economic crisis. The final limitation that should be noted is that participants with captured policies did not have a general evaluation policy. Results revealed significant cue interactions with only four individual

participants. However, this concern is minimal since policy capturing is a within-subject analysis; therefore, it is not influenced by sample size as compared to a between-subject analysis.

Given that the glass cliff theory is still underdeveloped compared to the glass ceiling, there is much work ahead in order to further understand the process and effect of the glass cliff phenomenon. Are other non-prototypical (e.g., Hispanics, Asians, gay and lesbians) leaders vulnerable to the glass cliff? Does the degree (i.e., severity of threat or riskiness) of the crisis influence leader preference? Would we find similar glass cliff effects in small and large organizations? Additionally, would we find glass cliff effects in non-dominant male or white occupations/organizations (e.g., hospitals, fashion and beauty industry)? On the other hand, one could argue that the glass cliff could be viewed as a leadership opportunity rather than employment discrimination for minorities (non-prototypical leader). It would also be critical to the glass cliff literature if we understand the climate after the glass cliff appointment. What are the expectations for leaders placed on the glass cliff? What are the consequences for leaders who fall off the glass cliff (i.e., inability to turn the company around or improve the condition of the context)?

This study examined results at the within-subject level. It would also be beneficial to understand the relationship between evaluators' personal beliefs and attitudes, and identities and candidate's identities when making evaluations in times of crisis (multilevel, between- and within- subject analysis simultaneously). Are male evaluators more likely to make glass cliff decisions than female evaluators? Are white evaluators more likely to make glass cliff decisions than non-white evaluators? Would evaluator's degree in belief of meritocracy influence decision outcomes for minorities in risky contexts? Evaluators' social experience and espoused cultural lens may influence their judgments of prototypical and non-prototypical leaders when leadership

risk is high. In what ways does the socialization process and degree of ethnocentrism impact decision-makers association between minority leaders and risky contexts?

Conclusion

This study has shed light on the importance of context in the shift for non-prototypical leaders (“others”) such that white women and black women were found to be susceptible to the executive glass cliff but in times of financial crisis and not ethical crisis. Moreover, black women’s distinct vulnerability to the glass cliff in times of financial crisis suggest the presence of both gender and racial prejudice (interactive double jeopardy hypothesis) in upper leadership ranks selections (Beale, 1970; Epstein, 1973; Rosette & Livingston, 2011). Contrary to this study’s expected finding, black men were evaluated less positively in times of crisis in comparison to whites, as well as black women. It may be more intriguing to understand why black men were significantly less preferred in times of crisis compared to his gender and racial counterparts, despite his gender advantage. What social cognitive processes influence decision discrepancies for black men compared to “others” when threat and risk are heightened? Finally, this study also provided evidence that most decision makers considered several factors (e.g., race, gender, leadership traits) when making evaluations for a precarious leadership position. In addition, these evaluations varied by the type of crisis and on how important these factors were during their decision-making.

These overall findings may suggest a schematic process in executive glass cliff decisions that involves evaluators making stereotype-consistent or stereotype-inconsistent (role congruity) ratings when presented with leadership traits for each candidate. Specifically, the congruity of

gender roles, racial roles, and leadership roles may produce different evaluations that simultaneously vary by the nature of the crisis. It is possible that the cognitive processes behind glass cliff decisions are not fixed but rather fluid. Perhaps evaluators' leadership preference decisions may depend on the degree of role congruity that is desired in specific crises.

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