

# **Hospitality Leadership**

*A Chinese perspective*

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## **1. Introduction**

Since World War II, globalization has been advancing throughout the world, which increased interdependence between nations in economic, social, technical, and political areas. People are becoming more interconnected. There is more international trade, cultural exchange, and use of worldwide telecommunication systems. In the last decade, our restaurants, hotels, and other businesses in hospitality have become far more global than in the past. Increased globalisation has created many challenges as well including the need to design effective multinational hotel brands, to identify and select appropriate leaders for these entities, and to manage international hotel chains with culturally diverse employees.

Leadership is a topic with universal appeal. In the popular press and academic research literature, much has been written about leadership. Despite the abundance of writings on the topic, leadership has presented a major challenge to practitioners and researchers interested in understanding the nature of leadership. As a part of “New Leadership” paradigms (Bryman, 1992), transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people to achieve beyond expectations. Lowe and Gardner analysed the content of articles published in *Leadership Quarterly* in 2001 and found that one third was on transformational leadership. Proved to be successful across the world especially in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Canada, Singapore, India, Italy, and Spain (Parry & Parry, 1993), transformational leadership has attracted much more attention than other leadership theories.

Owning the biggest market with 1.4 billion consumers, China has absorbed tremendous investment from the whole world. Hospitality people and scholars are so desperate to explore the market that a lot of research has been done with regards to how to adapt to this alien culture which was successful in ancient times but has been “a hidden dragon” after the Opium War. Since Deng Xiao Ping’s opening policies in 1978, many studies focusing on applying western leadership theories to Chinese culture have been conducted but most of them are nothing but an inter-mixture of general concepts and characteristics of Western management and leadership theories (Bond & Hwang, 1986). Little empirical research on leadership in a Chinese mainland cultural context has been done (Littrell, 2002). As such a powerful country that can not be ignored from any angle, the need to understand Chinese cultural aspects of leadership is up to schedule.

Thus the following research question has been raised:

1. What are the components of current Chinese culture?
2. How to adapt transformational leadership theories to Chinese culture?
3. What are the main problems in hospitality leadership under contemporary Chinese culture?

After these questions are fully answered, the following objectives will be achieved.

1. Illustrate a thorough understanding of transformational leadership theories, major studies on Chinese leadership, and Chinese cultural background.
2. Fit transformational leadership theories into current Chinese culture to create a new style of leadership and so to improve the leadership effectiveness in Chinese cultural context.
3. Make recommendations to both leaders in hospitality and future cross-cultural leadership studies.

## **2. Literature review**

The review starts from the definition of leadership. Transformational leadership theories will be introduced next to provide the major theoretical basis of the report. Then the development of Chinese culture will be presented from traditional to modern and the related cultural influence on leadership styles will be explained. The influence that globalization has brought to both Chinese culture and Chinese leadership will also be taken into consideration in this part. Lastly, current major studies on Chinese leadership will be reviewed.

### **2.1 Definition of Leadership**

Like the words *democracy, love, and peace*, which have different meanings for different people, there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it (Stogdill, 1974). Believing that a leader without followers may be as useless as a bike without wheels, Pardey (2007) defines leadership the successful process to inspire others to follow. Northouse (2007) from Western Michigan University discusses that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

### **3.2 Transformational Leadership Theories**

Before 1980s, most of leadership studies were mainly on transactional leadership (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1999). Transformational leadership is one of the newest and most encompassing theories to leadership concentrating on how leaders can inspire followers to accomplish great things and achieve goals beyond expectations. Unlike traits theories claiming great leaders are born to be leaders, transformational leadership can be learned and trained so that leaders at all levels can be trained to be charismatic (Bass, 1990).

Transformational leadership theory is a widely based perspective that encompasses many aspects and dimensions of leadership process. Transformational leaders need to

understand and adapt to the needs and motives of followers in order to initiate, develop, and carry out changes in the organisations. This kind of leaders is recognised as change agents and good role models to empower followers to meet higher standards. On the other hand, transactional leadership incorporates the relationship between leaders and followers as the kind of transaction or exchanging of promise and reward for expected performance or outcome (Bass, 1990). Parry (1996) emphasises the importance of transformational leadership by comparing management as a transaction while leadership as a transformation. Managers' main responsibility is to ensure compliance and stability by planning, monitoring, controlling, and rewarding while leaders transform from stability to challenge, change, progress, and beyond-expectation.

Four factors were also illustrated for transformational leadership: Idealised influence/Charisma, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualised Consideration. These factors will be elaborated in more details later in discussion session together with Chinese culture.

Although Transformational leadership has received much attention and been widely used in studies, the framework is criticised suffering from a heroic leadership bias because transformational leadership focuses only on the leader with no attention to the followers at all (Yukl, 1999). Northouse (2007) discusses that transformational leadership has the potential to be used counterproductively in negative ways by leaders since the new vision and value that leaders are changing their followers into may be wrong. Moreover, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which is used to assess transformational leadership by measuring leaders' behaviour in seven different areas, has been challenged for its validity and in some versions of MLQ the four factors correlate highly with each other, which means they are not distinct factors (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

## **2.3 Leadership and Culture**

### **2.3.1 Influence of culture on leadership**

It has been widely acknowledged that cultural differences insert a great influence on human thinking as well as behaviour thus management itself is affected by local, historical, and cultural norms (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Hofstede, 2001; Littrell, 2002). Different cultures hold different conceptions and evaluation standards of effective leadership. Thus different leadership prototypes are expected to happen naturally in different cultural groups (Bass, 1990; Hofstede, 2001). Some cultures might expect leaders to make all the decisions to be effective whereas in other cultures leaders might need to adopt a more democratic approach to be seen effective.

Therefore, although transformational leadership is generalised and universally applicable, its practical effectiveness is culturally contingent. In Hofstede's latest book *Cultures and Organisations---software of the mind* (2004), he discusses that since both visible and invisible differences between countries and groups are all developed by the various histories, to understand a cultural group's history is the key to understand a culture's characteristics and to find the way to control those characteristics and finally to lead to effective leadership. Thus a rough history of Chinese culture's development from traditional to modern will be presented next.

### **2.3.2 Cultural roots of Chinese leadership**

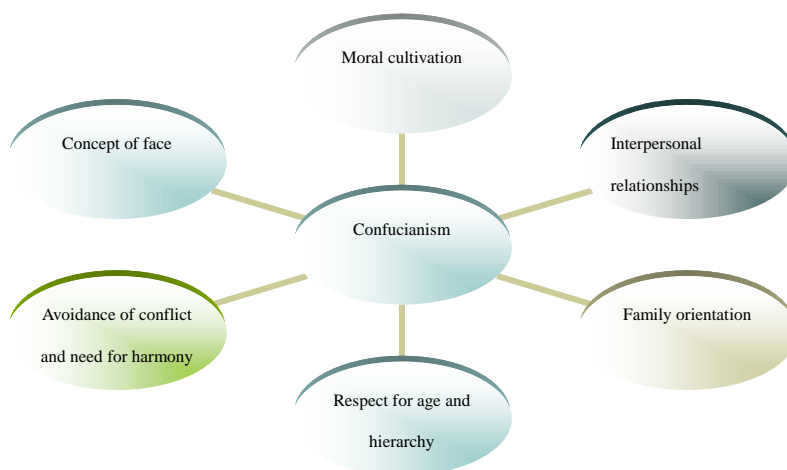
When talking about culture, it is like the ancient Buddhist parable of six blind men and their encounter with the elephant. Different people see different angles and got culturally shocked by different phenomena. The main traditional cultures still influencing Chinese current culture significantly can be categorized into three schools---Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. A rough introduction of each philosophy is going to be presented and its influence on Chinese leadership styles y will be discussed.

◇ **Confucianism**

De Bary, Chan, and Watson (1960) conclude one word to characterise the Chinese way of life for the last two thousand years----Confucian. Confucianism is a fundamental philosophical tradition that has shaped Chinese culture for 2,500 years (Fang, 1999). The core values or basic elements of Confucianism have been studied by scholars from various disciplines (Lockett, 1988; Child & Markoczy, 1993; Hofstede & Bond, 1988; Tu, 1996; Moise, 1994). Confucius (551-479 B.C.) is the founder of this philosophical doctrine (Child & Markoczy, 1993). Tu (1996) explains that the emergence of Confucianism can be understood as one of the several responses to the decline and fall of the major civilisation at that time, Zhou, which developed and flourished for a number of centuries prior to the birth of Confucius. Han Dynasty (250B.C.-0) adopted Confucianism as state religion and Tang Dynasty (618-906) utilized Confucian Classics as the basis to evaluate the government.

Drawing on the existing studies, Confucianism can be classified as moral cultivation, importance of interpersonal relationships, family orientation, respect for age and hierarchy, avoidance of conflict and need for harmony, and concept of face as shown in Figure 1. (Tu, 1990; Child & Markoczy, 1993; Lockett, 1990; Fang, 1999).

Figure 1. The central values of Confucianism (Tu, 1990; Child & Markoczy, 1993; Lockett, 1990; Fang, 1999).



Naisbitt (1995) argues that Confucianism can be divided into two main philosophies-- -- political Confucianism and personal ethics. He explains that political Confucianism composes principles for a hierarchical political system. Since Confucian claims that relationships are associated with their own virtue and should be respected, Pan and Zhang (2004) analyse that in a society or organizations with high hierarchy and unequal relationships, Confucianism can be used to promote obedience and to improve respect for authority. Unlike Western trait leadership theories emphasising leaders' self-confidence and sociability (Northouse, 2007), Confucius believes that leaders should be modest in the speech, but will exceed beyond expectations in the actions (Confucius, 500 BC).

#### ◇ **Taoism**

The basic thinking of Taoism can be found in Taoist classics. In particular, Dao-De-Jing (Book of Morals), written by Laozi before Confucius' Analects, is often called the only trend of Chinese thought that at least is comparable with Confucian philosophy (Tang, 1991). Taoism denotes simplicity, contentment, spontaneity, tranquility, weakness, and non-action. Tao literally translates as "way", the way that shapes all in the universe. Fang (1999) believes that the Taoism is a severe critic of Confucianism on many grounds. For example, the Taoism blamed the Confucianists for introducing hypocrisy or artificiality into life.

Johnson (2000) analyses that the ideal leader according to Taoism should maintain a low profile, lead by examples, and encourage followers to take ownership. He also points out that decision making in Taoism is based on conformity to principles that concluded from natural or phenomenological world. Unlike Confucianism to avoid conflict to pursuit peace, Taoism encourages to face conflict and solve problems in two-way communication to achieve mutual understanding, which was agreed by Chairman Mao in his article *On Contradiction* in 1937. In Dao-De-Jing, Laozi claims that leaders should think about others all the time, do what followers are not willing to do, and not ask for paying back, which has been proved still affecting views of

Chinese followers nowadays (Ling, Chia, & Fang, 2000; Hofstede, 2004).

#### ◇ **Buddhism**

Buddhism came to china from India in approximately the first century (Fang, 1999; Moise, 1994; Gao & Handley-Schachler, 2003). Buddhism is essentially a set of prescriptions about how humans should approach the world and about that life in this world is essentially miserable (Gao & Handley-Schachler, 2003). Buddhism advocates that nothing endures--- everything changes, decays, and is eventually destroyed; people are born, grow old, sicken, die, and are born again in other bodies in an endless cycle of misery. The goal of all sensible people should be to break the cycle of reincarnation, to free themselves from the ties that bind them to the world (Moise, 1994).

According to Buddhism, to manage people is to manage heart. Successful leadership is to manage followers' heart successfully by helping them improve their own understanding of the world. Kriger and Seng (2005) explored leadership from a Buddhist perspective and concluded five successful leadership philosophies: impermanence (Anicca), selflessness, the effects of the comparing or discursive mind, and development of the four positive states of mind (Brahmaviharas). Unlike western self-centred concept, Impermanence encourages leaders to be “no self”, and to improve their own inner meaning and values by thinking, feeling, and observing the changing world with sensations. According to Buddhism, there is no essential difference between leaders and followers. Therefore Gronn (2002) discusses to use multiple leadership to replace traditional leadership as an effective method to improve work attitude and efficiency since every member in the organisation can be a leader at some stage.



### **2.3.3 Modern Chinese Culture and Leadership**

Chinese culture has been defined and analysed under the big Confucian theory all the time (Chen, 1995). But like being mentioned in the prior review of Chinese traditional culture, Taoism and Buddhism also insert a big influence to Chinese people's world view, which makes Chinese culture more complicated and hard to generalise. Ralston, Yu, Wang, Terpstra, and He (1996) in a study of managerial values across the six regions of China conclude that Chinese values are changing all the time. They suggest that with Chinese economy moving toward a market economy from previous communistic economy during the past thirty years, Confucian cultural philosophy has absorbed new western individualistic values, which has resulted in a cross-verging set of values and has created a series of unique Confucian market economic principles.

The starting point of Chinese culture's transformation from traditional to modern is the outbreak of the Opium War, after which Western culture poured in and "confronted Chinese society with a severe challenge" (Pan, 1990, p.83). When the Western culture suddenly flooded in immensely, unavoidably, and non-negotiably after the Opium War, the turning point of Chinese history into its modern development, Chinese chose a traditional way to absorb it, which led to a cultural crisis and backwardness in forming modern Chinese culture.

La (1982) argues that before 1979 the factory directors are all under the direct leadership of Chinese Community Party (CCP) thus the only managerial leadership style is to receive the authorisation from CCP and pass on the message to the followers. Since 1979 the government issued a set of regulations and reforms to increase organisational efficiency, the responsibility of all production functions and administrative duties fell into the hand of the Working Committee (La, 1982) which is also under the supervision of CCP. The bureaucratic management style and hierarchy organisational structure did not change till 1980s when many private companies joined the market. Wang, Zhang, and Goodfellow (1998) analyzed from an insider's position on business culture in China and pointed out the leadership styles in China

were essentially paternalistic or authoritarian in nature before the 1990s because most of the decision-making power concentrated in the hands of one or two top managers or the Communist Party officials. Therefore, the managerial leadership during this period is limited by “complex historical legacies of a structural and political nature” (Schermerhorn & Nyaw, 1990, p.19).

#### **2.3.4 The influence of Globalisation on Chinese culture and leadership in hospitality**

In the last twenty-five years, all countries have been gradually exposed to the same products and common social norms as the globalisation of the world economy and culture as well as the technological modernisation. Globalisation is not simply an economic phenomenon but is a multidimensional process involving diverse domains of activity and interaction, including economic, political, and cultural factors.

Influenced by Western management theories and the new market driven by globalization, more hotels in China have adopted a more consultative leadership style (Bjerke, 1999). With the spread of western pop culture, different generations assimilate the new culture in different ways thus generation gaps have requested the utilization of different leadership styles to be effective. Young people born after 1980s are called “post eighties” by Chinese society. They are influenced the most by globalization since western culture is throughout every single corner of their daily life such as food, education, music, movie, fashion etc. Egri and Ralston (2004) studied Chinese managers in three age groups --- younger than 40s, 40s, and older than 50s and found significant intergenerational value differences by using the Schwartz Value Survey. They noticed that Chinese younger generations were more open to change and self-enhancing while were less conservative and self-transcendent than the elder generation.

Therefore, the changing culture has demanded a new leadership style to utilize scientific western leadership theories on the base of Chinese traditional cultural point

of view. The report will demonstrate the current major studies on Chinese leadership first and then discuss how to apply transformational leadership theories to Chinese cultural context.

## **2.4 Major Studies on Chinese Leadership**

### **2.4.1 Hofstede's Culture Consequence**

Among cross-cultural studies, Hofstede is one of the first to relate culture to management. He adopted a pragmatic problem-solving method and generalized four cultural dimensions from over two decades' research into cultures in over 50 countries with more than 100,000 respondents. The dimensions he identified includes power distance, individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity-femininity (Hofstede, 2001). Later in 1989, Michael Bond added a fifth "Confucian" dynamism called long-term and short-term orientation from his studies into Eastern countries. In comparison, Chinese culture is defined as high in power distance, low in individualism, medium for masculinity, medium in uncertainty avoidance, and high in long-term orientation.

With regards to leadership, high in Power Distance in China represents expected inequality. Of course that inequality exists in every society, but in China this inequality between leaders and followers is defined from below rather than from above (Littrell, 2002). That China is quite low in Individualism indicates that collectivism prevails thus Hofstede (2001) discusses that leaders in China usually take a more parental role to take responsibility for the fellow members of their groups like extended families. China has rather low Uncertainty avoidance, which demonstrates that more direct supervision is expected from leaders and unstructured situations are deemed as risky which should be avoided. Being long-term oriented, Chinese culture embeds thrift and perseverance, respect for traditions, delegation in social obligations, and the protection of one's face.

#### **2.4.2 Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) studies**

With regard to the specific area of leadership and culture, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) studies by House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta offer the strongest body of findings so far and have generated a huge amount of findings on the relationship between culture and leadership. The program was initiated by Robert House in 1991 and has involved more than 160 investigators with responses from 17,000 managers in more than 950 organisations representing 62 different cultures throughout the world and still will be ongoing. The purpose of GLOBE studies is to increase the understanding of cross-cultural interactions and the impact of culture on leadership effectiveness.

GLOBE studies also developed their own cultural dimensions include Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation, and Humane Orientation. Clusters of world cultures are also identified (Appendix I) among which China is included in the Confucian Asia cultural cluster with high scores in performance orientation, institutional collectivism, and in-group collectivism. This cluster is result-driven and encourages the group working together over individual goals. The leadership styles concluded from Confucian Asian cultural clusters are protective of one's own leadership, team-oriented, and people-oriented. Although this type of leader is independent and inspiring, they do not invite others to be involved in goal setting or decision making. In another word, Confucian leaders work and care about others but make independent decisions without the input of others. A list of universal leadership attributes, both positive and negative, were also identified by GLOBE studies (Appendix II).

Although the GLOBE research has resulted in a multitude of findings about perceptions of leadership in different cultures, criticisms have been raised around the world blaming the weaknesses and the non-applicability of it (Dorfman, Hanges, &

Brodbeck, 2004; Northouse, 2007).

### **2.4.3 Chinese Implicit Leadership Scale (CILS)**

Ling, Chia, and Fang (2000) developed the Chinese Implicit Leadership Scale and applied it in different professions. They found that four dimensions were used to describe successful leadership by Chinese followers---personal morality, goal efficiency, interpersonal competence, and versatility.

Different from US participants dramatically, Ling et al. (2000) find that Chinese people emphasize on virtue as the most important characteristics of leadership, which indicates that even thousands of years after time of Confucius, the traditional Confucian ethics still have unimaginable influence on Chinese people. On the other hand, people in USA concentrate more on personal task ability and individual traits.

Scored the second highest among the four, goal efficiency indicates that leaders are expected to have vision, the strategically planning ability, an open mind, a keen perception, and to be decisive, deliberate, insightful in others' abilities, and the most important of all, to know how to do it right to achieve the goal.

Interpersonal competence is closely related to Chinese social environment. Leaders are expected to be sophisticated, mature, persuasive, straight forward, elegant, and good at socializing with people in external environment. These attributes chosen by Chinese participants are quite similar with US participants which can make the leader more attractive and so are helpful in building interpersonal relationship successfully.

With no such correspondence among the US participants, Chinese participants considered versatility the fourth important attribute that leaders should master to be effective. To be versatile, leaders are expected to be knowledgeable, multi-talented, imaginative and willing to take risks, approachable, and to have a sense of humor.

### **3. Discussion**

Everything related to a different culture needs to be dealt with carefully and sensitively. Transformational leadership has been approved to work well across the world especially in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Canada, Singapore, India, Italy, and Spain (Parry & Parry, 1993). Walumbwa, Lawler, and Avolio (2007) investigated 825 employees from China, India, Kenya, and US and concluded that Transformational leadership styles work better on Allocentrism (Collectivism) while Transactional leadership styles suits indiocentrism (Individualism) better, which was also suggested by Bass in 1985 as well.

Transformational leaders often exhibit a strong set of internal values and are effective at motivating their followers to behave in the way that support and coordinate with the greater good rather than their own self-interests (Northouse, 2007). The four factors: Idealised influence/Charisma, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualised Consideration, mentioned in the previous review of leadership theories, will be discussed and analysed next in a Chinese cultural context.

#### **3.1 Idealised influence/Charisma**

Charismatic leaders have the talent to make people to respect, trust, and follow them by acting as strong role models. Like traits theories, the charismatic leadership behaviour requires high standards of moral and ethical conduct to make the influence idealised and the relationship between leaders and followers is based on subjective understanding, personal feelings rather than institutional regulations, such as rewards and punishments (Bass, 1990).

Confucian values, especially morality cultivation has been emphasized as one of the most important factors for effective leadership in China by both Western and Oriental studies (House, et al., 2004; Ling et al., 2000; Hofstede, 2001, Wang et al.,1998; Pittinsky & Zhu, 2005). In the Confucian context, the authority of leaders, to a very

large extent, depends on the respect that leaders can gain from the followers. The leaders are expected not only to be successful in the business but also to possess traditional Confucian virtues such as family, ordering relationships, having a sense of shame, community responsibility, loyalty, thrift, and persistence (Bond & Hofstede, 1988). The leaders who are able to lead the followers to achieve the business goal but failed to show their moral virtues will not be deemed as successful leaders.

In Ling et al.'s study (2000), versatility was also found one of the top four characteristics of successful Chinese leaders. Different from Western leadership Implicit theories, versatility is always deemed as a talent by Chinese that only the smart people possess. To be versatile is equal to be intelligent according to Chinese culture thus it is quite possible for leaders to gain more respect from the followers for being versatile.

Relationship is probably the oldest topic and the most widely accepted fact when Chinese culture is mentioned. Leaders who are good at dealing with relationship matters will be seen by the followers as to have the capability to be successful. Regarding this factor, leaders are expected to be sophisticated, mature, persuasive, straight forward, elegant, and good at socializing with people in external environment (Ling et al., 2000), which is quite similar to sociability in Western leadership theories but more complicated and difficult. One more thing to be clarified here is that relationship skills are not equal to interpersonal skills. Relationship skills are wider in definition than interpersonal skills since they include dealing with not only people but also organizations and government under the unique Chinese culture and regulations.

The efficiency to achieve goals is also mentioned Ling et al.'s study because this is the easiest way for followers to tell whether the leader is successful and worth to follow or not. To improve the efficiency to achieve goals is a very broad topic but if leaders can achieve it, the followers will show more of their respect.

### **3.2 Inspirational motivation**

Inspirational motivation describes leaders to transmit high expectations to followers, to inspire them through motivation to commit to a shared vision. Like the *commissar* in every group of Chinese army during the Second World War, this kind of leaders uses symbols and emotional appeals to encourage the group to understand the mutually desired goals and to achieve beyond the expectation. Instead of being a role model, this factor doesn't require leaders to be technically professional in the field but to know how to increase the awareness and the understandings of the goals among followers and how to motivate them to go beyond their own self-interest and to challenge themselves. These leaders need to be strongly self-determined, committed, and able to present an optimistic view of the future (Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson, & Spangler, 1995).

Confucian sees modesty one of the most important characteristics to be moral (Tu, 1990). Also the respect of hierarchy explains about obeying to parents, to the country, to the hierarchy, which was one of the reasons that made Confucianism so popular and beloved among Chinese emperors and dominators (Hofstede, 2001) and has been the mainstream ideology throughout Chinese history (Tsang, 2007). As a result, inspirational motivation wasn't a very important character for traditional leaders since workers will follow directions anyway. But during the Second World War, mentioned in the review of Chinese Modern culture, Chinese people from every industry and every part of the country were motivated and inspired successfully by the Chinese Communist Party to stand up and fight for their own country, which was why the Second World War was defined by Chairman Mao as "people's war". Inspirational motivation has become a very important factor for successful leadership since then.

In Ling et al.'s Chinese Implicit Leadership Scale study (2000), leaders' being inspirational and motivational was not mentioned at all because the participants in the research were asked to give their opinions on the successful leadership as followers



not as leaders and according to Chinese culture, leaders are expected to work harder but not to talk more. In Singh and Krishnan's research (2005) on transformational leadership in India, another country famous for being high in collectivism, they found the factor of being motivated only composed 2 percent.

Since the Chinese Communist Party was successfully motivating Chinese people to contribute during the Second World War, there should be a way to combine both Chinese culture and Inspirational Motivation together to perform successful transformational leadership and to achieve goals beyond expectations. According to Triandis and Gelfand (1998), achievement motivation is socially oriented in collectivistic cultures. The meaning of work in such cultures emphasizes cooperation, obedience, persistence, and endurance (Hui & Villareal, 1989) and workers tend to have long-term goals leading to long-term commitment to the company (Bass, 1985). House and Podsakoff (1996) discuss that transformational leaders in collectivism cultures should demonstrate more determination and persistence to be inspirational to the followers to achieve the vision and mission.

### **3.3 Intellectual stimulation**

Intellectual stimulating leaders encourage followers to challenge the old ways of thinking in order to think creatively and critically. As a result, followers can try new approaches and develop innovative ways of thinking to solve problems.

As a culture low in uncertainty avoidance proved true repeatedly by cross-cultural research (Hofstede, 2001; Littrell, 2002), Chinese society has very low tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. Chinese people feel uncomfortable in unstructured situations and try to minimise the possibility of such situations by strict regulations.

As the central philosophy of Taoism,  is “an emblem of fuzziness...and offers

the only major belief systems that accept contradictions” (Fang, 1999, p.23). According to Taoism, everything is in the process of changing forms. As a result, Chinese people see things in grey rather than black and white. To accept the fact that everything is in a constant process of changing from one shade of grey to another, it is logical that Chinese people can be more prone to be innovative and to challenge their own beliefs and values to be used to and to further control the change. Thus intellectual stimulation should work well on Chinese followers as long as Taoism is still affecting Chinese people. But on the other hand, as explained by Moise (1994), since Confucianism does not support the idea of progress, there is a huge resistance for change in China. Rather than trying to devise something new, Chinese people prefer looking to the past for their models.

With the influence of two extremely opposite factors, Chinese people should be driven to either “conservative” or “creative and innovative” theoretically. The difference here mainly exists among generations. According to Modern Chinese history and the influence of globalization during the last two decades, people over 55 years old are more reluctant to change since they have experienced too many unsuccessful changes such as the disastrous Cultural Revolution—the period of social chaos and political anarchy, the lost of the spiritual leader—Chairman Mao, Great Leap Forward--the unrealistic strategy to realise socialism, and the transition of the Chinese Communist Party’s apparatus. People from 30 to 55 years old, who were influenced by the unstable society the most either prefer following orders or tend to challenge their own beliefs and values. People under 30 years old are influenced by globalisation the most and are very similar to the same generation in the West. Intellectual stimulation works the best on this generation since they have received proper education and are open to new things. Thus this generation has the most potential to be creative and to challenge the old ways of thinking. But since Chinese education concentrates on disciplines, regulations and traditions rather than innovation and creative thinking (Littrell, 2002), it’ll be relatively hard to perform intellectual stimulation to any generation.

Wang et al. (1998) suggest that leadership styles vary from managers of different levels. For example, middle managers are characterized by their deference to higher-placed authorities by leaving important decisions to a higher management level. The middle managers are unwilling to offer individual suggestions or opinions even when requested to do so. They are reluctant to recognize responsibility for enterprise performance because they are in fact trained not to make unilateral decisions and often wait patiently for the single senior manager to decide on the correct course of action and then carry out the instructions obediently (Wang et al., 1998).

Intellectual stimulation can also be achieved through appropriate empowerment (Littrell, 2007). Although there are huge cross-cultural differences with regards to what empowerment really means to the followers and empowerment may not be the most desirable leadership behaviour, Littrell (2007) discusses that to some degree empowerment can enhance Chinese leadership effectiveness since empowerment is one of the essential elements of quality management while Chinese staff are poor with it by passing on responsibilities and weak in decision-making (Mwaura, Sutton, & Roberts, 1998). Empowerment can be associated with Taoism since in Taoism leaders should encourage followers to take ownership and decision making is based on conformity of understanding.

### **3.4 Individual consideration**

Individual consideration is to pay attention to every individual follower's ability, aspirations, and needs by mentoring and one-on-one communicating. Leaders act as coaches and advisors when assisting followers to enhance their confidence and to become fully actualised. Northouse (2007) explains that this type of leaders spends their time treating every follower in a caring way by giving strong affiliation and sometimes by giving specific directions with a high degree of structure. Such leaders can build a sense of self-confidence and determination in their followers (Dubinsky et al., 1995).

Bass (1985) explains that individualised consideration is especially important in a collectivistic culture since it is usually taken for granted. But Chinese culture is also defined with high power distance (Hofstede, 2004; House, et al., 2004; Ling, et al., 2000) which implies that leadership is characterised with Social Distance between leaders and followers. Inequality is expected, accepted, and even desired by the followers (Littrell, 2002) thus leaders often need to keep a social distance from their followers rather than keep a close relationship in order to gain more respect. Littrell (2007) discusses that under Confucian values effective leaders must take two roles---to maintain both order and harmony in the social structure because leadership is similar to the concept of headship, such as the head of a family or the head of a clan. As a result, leaders in these roles can expect respect, deference, and obedience from their followers without coercion. Chen (1995) compared the management systems in China, Japan, and Korean and discusses that Chinese leadership is based on an authoritarian approach which encompasses high power distance, concentration of power at the top, and respect for hierarchy. He argues that successful Chinese leadership can be achieved through the control of information by limit the sharing of information, development of face by keeping social distance with subordinates, and exchange of favours for loyalty.

But since followers' individual differences play a very important role predicting the effectiveness of different leadership styles (Triandis, Chan, Bhawuk, Iwao, & sinha, 1995; Walumbwa et al. 2007; Yukl, 1999; Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Bass, 1985), it is necessary to listen carefully to the followers' individual needs and feedback in order to get to know them, to put the right person into the right position, to avoid any potential conflict, and to supervise in the right way, and to make every follower comfortable under the leadership and so to improve the effectiveness of leadership.

The table below is the summarization of different interpretations of the four factors for transformational leadership between Western and Chinese culture.

Table 1. Summarisation of different interpretations of the four factors for transformational leadership between Western and Chinese culture.

<b>Four factors of transformational leadership</b>	<b>Characteristics/methods required in Western culture</b>	<b>Characteristics/methods required in Chinese culture</b>
<b>Idealized influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Confidence</li> <li>◆ Intelligence</li> <li>◆ Sociability</li> <li>◆ Role model</li> <li>◆ Dominant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To possess traditional Confucian virtues (such as family, ordering relationships, having a sense of shame, community responsibility, loyalty, thrift, and persistence)</li> <li>◆ To be respected (to have face)</li> <li>◆ Versatility</li> <li>◆ To be good at dealing with relationship</li> </ul>
<b>Inspirational motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Self-determined</li> <li>◆ Committed</li> <li>◆ Able to present an optimistic view of the future</li> <li>◆ Strong values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Determination</li> <li>◆ Persistence</li> <li>◆ Role model</li> <li>◆ Trustworthy</li> </ul>
<b>Intellectual stimulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Desire to influence</li> <li>◆ Encouraging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Appropriate empowerment</li> </ul>
<b>Individualized consideration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Supportive</li> <li>◆ Act like a coach</li> <li>◆ One-on-one communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To keep appropriate social distance from followers to maintain respect and appropriate relationship</li> <li>◆ To listen to followers for their needs and feedback</li> </ul>

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

“Culture is more a process than anything else; change and transformation are definitional to understanding any culture” (Jones, 2006, p. 494). With the impact of globalization, Chinese culture and western culture are often combined and performed in unexpected ways. Thus to have a sound understanding of current situation that

Chinese culture and Chinese people are under is very essential and central to perform successful leadership in China. With the huge success of transformational leadership theories around the world, leaders in China can surely find a point to balance Chinese traditional leadership with western scientific managerial theories in order to create a new Chinese featured transformational leadership to improve the effectiveness.

As discussed in the report, some factors of transformational leadership can be adjusted and applied to Chinese followers while some factors do not apply. Unlike Trait leadership theories explaining leaders are born to be leaders, Transformational leadership can be educated, trained, and adjusted to different cultures. But every leader has his own preferred leadership style. Only to lead in a way accepted and supported by the culture can result in the improvement of effectiveness of leadership.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

### **4.2.1 Recommendations for leaders in hospitality**

As explained by Taoism, to change to suit is the best way to adapt to novel or unfamiliar situations. Success can be copied but there's no guarantee that copied success will lead to success as well. The generalization of a series of universal traits or leadership theories across cultures to make it possible to predict successful leadership is only helpful to train leaders to obtain the universal and general leadership merit but not helps leaders deal with unfamiliar situations in different cultures. So leaders need to bear in mind that even under the same situation, same leadership styles work differently in different cultures.

Apart from the four main factors explained previously, some other factors should also be taken into account. Followers from different education levels see things differently regardless of cultural factors. Since followers with higher education tend to be more idealistic and require higher standards from their leaders (Wang et al., 2001), leaders

should keep social distance from them to gain respect from them and should enhance the empowerment to encourage them to be innovative and creative.

Since the development of Chinese economy as well as culture varies a lot from region to region and from province to province, subcultures among regions need to be brought into attention by leaders. For example, there is a general belief in the northern part of China that although not all the leaders can drink but if you want to be promoted or to be a leader, you'll need to be able to drink a lot of beer because more beer can gain more face and respect. This phenomenon has never been written down in a questionnaire by any researcher to be proved. But it is very often and common that the followers in this part of China ask their leaders to bottom up the glass of beer to show that they care.

Followers from different industries are different in education, personality and even worldview. Successful leadership in Chinese software industry was found to originate from Confucian tradition but has adapted Western practices in an entrepreneurial way shaped by both the command economic system and the Socialist market system (Tsang, 2007). In Hospitality industry, the adaptation to the host culture is more important for leaders to be effective than being technically skillful (Shafer et al., 2005). As a result, the relationship between the industry and the culture should be defined before any leadership styles to be practiced since some industries are more closely related to the local culture such as hospitality and tourism while some industries are relatively more independent or universal such as high technology and the new industries originated from the West.

#### **4.2.2 Recommendations for future studies**

Culture is a complex and slowly changing phenomenon. With many current issues regarding the methodology in cross-cultural research, the culture itself should be defined and explored in a way rather than Western logic and theories. The purpose of research is not to decide either West or East, either Chinese mode or Western mode. To solve the problems is the terminal goal to promote the mutual understanding.

Adopting the fuzziness thinking explained in Taoism, readers should interpret studies involving culture with the identified limitations and boundaries in mind in stead of accepting the findings of these studies uncritically. Moreover, researchers should find another way to analyse findings in a culturally sensitive way by giving out recommendations rather than concluding theories or models.

Instead of following the traditional way of sampling and data collection, future research should adopt a more updated method such as internet because a bigger sample with automatic data collection can be achieved through internet and research can be conducted repeatedly to cater for the speedy change of the world.

Most of the leadership studies are based on followers' point of views. Even when managers are asked to be the participants, they often consider leadership from their own position as followers. Although the data that these studies generated are important, the views towards leadership from a follower's position are always too ideal from being practicable for leaders. Since leadership is a two way phenomenon, future studies could try to collect data from views of leaders towards their followers to analyse more on the truly happening followers' behavior from culture to culture. Instead of looking for the universally successful leadership factors, academics should pay more attention to analyse the way to make followers to follow in different cultures and under different situations. It's quite similar to marketing issues with which not only products should be researched but also the consumers should be studied according to their culture and the society in order to match product to the consumers. Successful leaders should be able to change to cater to the needs of different followers, which is not equal to "individual consideration" that was discussed previously but to understand the whole group of followers, their culture, their needs, the environment around, and the situation related.



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## 6. Appendices

### Appendix I. Country clusters defined by GLOBE (House et al., 2004)

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Latin Europe	France Switzerland (French speaking part) Israel Italy Portugal Spain
Germanic Europe	Austria Germany (former East) Germany (former West) Netherlands Switzerland (German speaking part)
Anglo Europe	Ireland United Kingdom
Nordic Europe	Denmark Finland Sweden
Eastern Europe	Albania Georgia Greece Hungary Kazakhstan
Latin America	Poland Russia Slovenia Argentina Bolivia Brazil Colombia Costa Rica Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala Mexico Venezuela
Confucian Asia	China Hong Kong Japan Korea, Rep. Singapore Taiwan
Anglo (outside Europe)	Australia Canada (English speaking part) United States New Zealand South Africa (white sample)
Sub-Sahara Africa	Namibia Nigeria South Africa (black sample) Zambia Zimbabwe
Southern Asia	India Indonesia Iran Malaysia Philippines Thailand
Middle East	Egypt, Arab Rep. Kuwait Morocco Qatar Turkey

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**Appendix II. Universally positively endorsed leader attributes (House et al., 2004).**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Corresponding 1<sup>st</sup> Order Factor</i>	<i>5<sup>th</sup> Percentile</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>ICC(1)</i>	<i>r<sub>wg</sub></i>
Positive	Charisma 2: Inspirational	5.07	6.03	0.45	0.11	0.86
Trustworthy	Integrity	5.24	6.36	0.39	0.11	0.90
Administratively Skilled	Administratively Competent	5.06	6.02	0.48	0.12	0.86
Just	Integrity	5.18	6.02	0.37	0.08	0.87
Win-win Problem solver	Diplomatic	5.23	6.05	0.36	0.08	0.87
Encouraging	Charisma 2: Inspirational	5.26	6.14	0.30	0.06	0.90
Intelligent	Malevolent	5.28	6.18	0.38	0.11	0.90
Decisive	Decisiveness	5.36	6.20	0.33	0.08	0.89
Informed	Team 2: Team Integrator	5.39	6.13	0.41	0.11	0.90
Effective Bargainer	Diplomatic	5.10	6.10	0.39	0.10	0.89
Foresight	Charisma 1: Visionary	5.22	6.02	0.33	0.08	0.90
Plans ahead	Charisma 1: Visionary	5.14	6.17	0.37	0.10	0.91
Motive Arouser	Charisma 2: Inspirational	5.27	6.22	0.50	0.19	0.90
Communicative	Team 2: Team Integrator	5.03	6.02	0.48	0.18	0.90
Excellence Oriented	Performance Oriented	5.25	6.16	0.43	0.13	0.89
Confidence Builder	Charisma 2: Inspirational	5.33	6.13	0.34	0.09	0.91
Honest	Integrity	5.19	6.11	0.45	0.12	0.87
Dynamic	Charisma 2: Inspirational	5.55	6.28	0.34	0.11	0.91
Coordinator	Team 2: Team Integrator	5.31	6.00	0.40	0.12	0.89
Team Builder	Team 2: Team Integrator	5.36	6.15	0.39	0.11	0.90
Motivational	Charisma 2: Inspirational	5.26	5.99	0.39	0.10	0.86
Dependable	Malevolent (reverse score)	5.29	6.17	0.37	0.10	0.89

*Notes:* Universal status of attributes are based on the following criteria:

1. Mean rating across country > 6.00;
2. 5<sup>th</sup> percentile > 5.

All ICC(1) are significantly greater than zero ( $p < 0.01$ ).

$n = 53$  countries.

**Appendix III. Universally negative (undesired) leader attributes (House et al., 2004).**

<i>Item</i>	<i>1st order Factor</i>	<i>95th Percentile</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>ICC(I)</i>	<i>r<sub>wg</sub></i>
Ruthless		2.89	2.05	0.41	0.08	0.80
Asocial	Self-centered	2.98	2.05	0.47	0.13	0.86
Irritable	Malevolent	2.59	1.97	0.34	0.05	0.87
Loner	Self-centered	2.83	2.06	0.40	0.10	0.86
Egocentric*	—	2.97	2.01	0.39	0.08	0.86
Nonexplicit	Face Saver	2.94	2.29	0.34	0.08	0.85
Noncooperative	Malevolent	2.22	1.70	0.36	0.09	0.89
Dictatorial	Autocratic	2.83	2.05	0.41	0.12	0.83

*Note:* \* This item did not load on any of the factors.

Appendix IV. Research results from Chinese Implicit Leadership Scale (Ling, et al., 2000)

Factor/Item	Loading	% variance explained	$\alpha$
<b>1: Personal Morality</b>		<b>35.79</b>	<b>.96</b>
Willing to be public servant	.73		
Honest	.73		
Genuine	.73		
Pragmatic	.72		
Receptive to criticism	.71		
Impartial	.71		
Trustworthy	.71		
Self-disciplined	.70		
Incorruptible	.70		
Use self as model	.69		
<b>2: Goal Effectiveness</b>		<b>23.88</b>	<b>.94</b>
Fortitude	.66		
Visionary	.66		
Decisive	.64		
Deliberate	.63		
Perceptive	.62		
Scientific	.62		
Competent	.62		
Insightful	.61		
Far-sighted	.60		
Open-minded	.59		
<b>3: Interpersonal Competency</b>		<b>18.17</b>	<b>.89</b>
Seasoned	.70		
Cautious	.60		
Socially skilled	.59		
Mature	.59		
Charming	.57		
Glamorous	.56		
Elegant	.55		
Verbal skill	.55		
Cheerful	.54		
Steadfast	.54		
<b>4: Versatility</b>		<b>13.44</b>	<b>.92</b>
Multitalented	.56		
Cheerful	.55		
Psychologically knowledgeable	.54		
Entrepreneur	.52		
Sense of humor	.52		
Appreciates arts	.52		
Well read	.51		
Multilingual	.46		
Imaginative	.43		
Many interests	.41		