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Early Influences on Leadership Behavior

By

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of my research project is to study early influences, especially those from the family, on leadership behavior. While children are growing up, their family plays a large role in shaping their ideas, beliefs, values and behaviors. Certainly, the development of an individual's leadership style is a continuous process which does not end when one becomes independent of the family. However, the impact of this early influence must be assessed. Many researchers such as James McGregor Burns and Karnes and D'Iliio note that a significant amount of shaping occurs during an individual's early years. These same researchers, who will be discussed in full shortly, see a lack of attention allotted to this subject.

There are many questions which this topic brings to the surface: What is the relationship (if there is one) between family structure and a child's resulting leadership style, or understanding of leadership? What does a parent's behavior toward a child or other adults teach a child about leadership? Is it as simple as learning by example? Does an adult's behavior demonstrate to a child how or how not to act? Can a child control his or her own leadership tendencies, or are these tendencies ingrained in a child's mind by growing up and interacting with the family on a daily basis? Who creates the leadership characteristics of an individual? How does our family affect the type of leader we become?

In order to address these questions, I will need to define
"leadership behavior". What is the process that occurs which develops this complex social behavior and how does the family influence that process?

There are other concepts which will be examined along with the main question on early influence on leadership behavior. The leader or follower's perception of sex roles affects one's leadership style. This impression of sex roles is often formed by family norms and examples set during an individual's youth. For example, a man who has grown up watching his father cook and clean and his mother bring home the paycheck may feel the responsibility to take a leadership position in the cooking and cleaning of his own family's home. Perceptions of sex roles also affect how an individual treats a boss or a subordinate of the opposite sex.

In terms of leadership, social theories asserted by Burns and the different types of power described by French and Raven may be applied. Burns refers the family as a social system in itself, which shapes a child's leadership behavior. A child may also be influenced by witnessing power (expert, referent, coercive, legitimate, and reward) in action through his or her parents, and will thus learn how to use it, especially with siblings. The manner in which power is utilized within a family affects how an individual will include it in his or her leadership and followership style.

This topic of a family affecting the leadership of an individual growing up in that family is significant to me for several reasons. I feel that we have not addressed this topic to
a large enough extent in the Jepson School. Certainly we have discussed how experiences shape our own theories and practices of leadership. But the importance of the family as an early influence and its role in shaping an individual's tendencies in leadership has not fully been examined within the context of Jepson.

There is a call for more research in this subject outside the Jepson School as well. Francis A. Karnes and Victor R. D'Ilio wrote an article called "Student leaders' and their parents' perceptions of the home environment." I read this article during my research for this project. It focused on whether or not student leaders' perceptions of the home environment were the same as their parents' perceptions. The angle this article took was not relevant to my research, but the authors contributed important words to my research in their introduction. "A paucity of research exists in the area of leadership and the home environment. Additional studies need to focus on family variables such as single parent homes, birth order, parental leadership positions, and personality traits of child and parents." Even though this article was not focused on the direction I was taking with my research and hypothesis, the authors recognize the need for further research in the area of my exploratory study.

Another reason I believe this is a crucial issue to research is that most individuals live with their family for approximately 20 years. In the words of Burns, "The most common experience of humankind is close association with a parent or parents during
the first several years of life" (81). He also includes that "it is the common view that the critical influences on the shaping of leaders lie almost wholly in their early years" (50). Freud recognizes the significance of the family as well. It is the most influential small group (upon us) we have ever been a part of. "We become members at birth, and during our childhood this group cares for and socializes us" (34). It is through membership in this first small group that our needs are created and established (54). When people reflect upon who they are and why they act the way they do, often they come back to their family and the way in which they were brought up. I am personally curious on this subject because I am at the point in my life where I am becoming more independent from my family. At the same time, I am realizing my characteristics which stem from the manner in which I was raised. My own leadership behavior has probably been formed in the process of my upbringing at home.
METHODOLOGY

My study of early influences on leadership style was qualitative (not quantitative) for many reasons. Sally Schumacher and James H McMillian say, "Qualitative research is concerned with understanding a social phenomenon from the participant's view," (373). This was one of my goals with this project. I am trying to understand the phenomenon of leadership development; more specifically, the early influences on an individual which contributed to his/ her own personal leadership behavior. I surveyed 12 Jepson majors in order to gain a firmer grasp on this subject. This was consistent with the qualitative method because Jepson students were a "small distinct group," (Schumacher and McMillian, 375). Due to this project focusing on leadership behavior, and Jepson students majoring in leadership studies, I did not feel comfortable making assumptions about other students at the University of Richmond based on survey results. Although Jepson students might be representative of other University of Richmond students compared to students at other schools, the fact that the Jepson School was a separate population (in terms of its understanding of leadership) from the rest of the University prevented me from using these students to generalize about other students.

Because I would not be pulling in surveys from a diversified population, I would not make generalizations about all people based on my survey results. However, my study was only
exploratory because it was a broad topic to tackle in one semester. The purpose of an exploratory study is to "elaborate on a concept" enough to "lead to further inquiry" (Schumacher and McMillian, 376). It would have been futile for me to try to capture a random sample of a diverse population for a single semester project on such a broad subject. Instead of doing a poor job of attempting such a feat, I decided to take a random sample of a small group with which I am familiar.

I hoped to be able to make some generalizations about Jepson school students' leadership behavior at the conclusion of my exploratory study. I thought it would be interesting to develop some theories about the early influences on Jepson students' leadership behavior. I believed the students would enjoy reading over these generalizations in the Jepson library. My project should also have opened the eyes of leadership studies faculty and students that this is a subject area that we, as a school, need to address further.

My survey was short and to the point. This type of structure yielded a higher response rate (no one wanted to fill out a long survey), as did the fact that Jepson majors would take a few minutes to help a fellow Jepson major (especially on a project which they were either currently working on or would have to do at some point).

My data collection also included scholarly journals (psychological, behavioral, etc.) and several books. I developed a framework on which to base my survey questions from these journals and books. Because my study was exploratory, I
had to base my questions on a framework. I was not certain what percentage of my research would be journal-based versus survey-based. Schumacher and McMillian say, "Most researchers make decisions about the data collection strategies during the study. The multiple realities of (interactive and noninteractive strategies) are viewed as so complex that one cannot decide a priori on a single methodology (374). As I progressed through my research, I determined that I would need to focus more on the journals for a solid framework. It was not until questions started forming in my head that I could begin my survey.

The five steps for qualitative research are: 1 planning, 2 begin data collection (organize your collection process), 3 basic data collection (begin to understand how data fits together), 4 closing data collection (at this point, researcher decides that no further research would be relevant), 5 completion (begin data analysis), (Schumacher and McMillian, 383). I followed this model, as a research schedule. Once I passed the point of understanding how data was fitting together, I began to develop my survey. As I distributed my survey, I reached the "closing data collection" stage. Once surveys were returned to me, I moved into stage five. One note on this research model is that, in a one semester exploratory project, it was difficult to say for certain when I had reached the "closing data collection" stage. It seems like there was always more data out there. But, because this was only a one semester exploratory project, I had to stop data collection at a realistic point.

In order to achieve as much reliability as possible, I gave
detailed descriptions of my own biases, those of the people I surveyed, those of the journals I used, descriptions of the settings in which I surveyed people, descriptions of how I collected and recorded data, quotes from interviews, and description of my conceptual framework. Schumacher and McMillian recommend these methods to ensure that information is reliable (388–392). They also advocate the researcher searching for data which contradicts the framework which he or she is trying to support (391). This enhances reliability in that the researcher has conducted a fair and balanced search.

One of my own biases was that birth order did make a difference in behavior. I saw much relevance to myself and my own family in Dr. Leman's book The Birth Order Book. My own bias was that birth order does make a difference in the type of experiences one has and the treatment one receives. I felt this way because that had been my own experience. As a first-born, I had dealt with expectations of responsibility and achievement. I needed to be cautious of looking too hard for a trend with birth orders in my survey results.

Any biases that the respondents had were fairly evident in their responses. For example, one respondent said his stepfather had adopted him at the age of six (when he married their real mother) and then said," However, my family is wonderful and is just like any other 'normal' family." That was the only response with a noticeable bias. I did not view respondents' biases as anything that would throw off the data results. The most important bias (which applied to all respondents) is that they
were all Jepson majors at the University of Richmond. This meant that they all had a pull to the study of leadership, and they had an academic background in it. They probably saw my survey in a different frame than would someone outside of the Leadership School.

Most journals and books I used came from a psychology bias. The Group Dynamics book, though, had a leadership/group process bias. It has interesting to read psychologists' works, and then go back to reading a book written in the leadership bias which I was accustomed to.

My methods of data distribution and collection were simple. I counted every eighth person on a list of Jepson majors and called those people. I asked them if they could do the survey for me. When they agreed, I drove over to their room, gave it to them, waited until they had completed it, and then took it home with me. I decided upon this method because I could ensure a 100% response rate this way (they had to fill it out and give it directly back to me). I also did not feel that any of the questions were too personal that the respondent would feel uncomfortable answering them with me present.

My conceptual framework, as I mentioned earlier, was based on the significant factors that I pulled from the journal articles and books I read. I especially looked for ideas which overlapped different publications. The five main concepts I focused on were: gender (of respondent), single-sex or coed high school, birth order, family structure and family environment. Family structure was defined as the number of people in a family
and their relation to one another (blood related or step parent). Family environment, on the other hand, was the power structure (especially in terms of decision-making) of the family. A patriarchal environment was controlled mostly by the father figure, and a matriarchal environment by the mother figure. I also added one free answer question to the end to see if the respondent had any opinion as to what had influenced their leadership behavior.

In my research, I found data on self-esteem which contradicted other data I found concerning this subject. Also, responses to the survey were each individualized, and were, therefore, contradicting at times. I needed to acknowledge all information equally to maintain accuracy in my presentation of data.

I also needed to account for some variables in my research. Each individual had grown up in a different family, and this had affected their leadership development. I needed to consider family size, values, structure, geographic location, etc. Although I could not control them, acknowledgment of these variables contributed to a reliable research project. This also required me to identify other types of families which I would not be taking into account. Not only was my sample group probably from white, upper-middle class, but there was be no attention paid to homosexual partners with children or abusive relationships and their affects on behavior let alone the affects of adoption on individuals.

In order to define leadership behavior, I first referred
back to Donelson R. Forsyth's definition of leadership. "Leadership is a reciprocal, transacting, transformational process in which individuals are permitted to motivate and influence others to promote the attaining of group and individual goals" (216). Leadership behavior, then, was an individual's conduct which was acted out with the intention of affecting this process. This included communication style, level of aggressiveness in groups, reactions toward gender roles of leadership, initiative, ability to articulate and facilitate goal attainment, effective use of power, setting a moral example, empathizing, and level of task or relation orientation. This was my own definition of leadership behavior which brought in some theories from behavior scholars such as the Ohio Studies focusing on relationship versus task behavior of leaders (217). My definition served the purpose of my project - determining early social influences on leader behavior.

My hypothesis was that an individual's family environment (meaning, specifically, the matriarchal/patriarchal aspect) was the main component which shaped that individual's leadership behavior. (The other less important influences were family structure and single-sex or coed high school.) I expected that a woman who had grown up in a patriarchal family would have less self-esteem than a woman who grew up in a matriarchal family. I thought that, in general, the more female leader role models a woman had, the more her leadership behavior would be defined by those females. I believed the same for males, their leadership behavior, and male role models, but not to the same intensity.
I did not think that this affected men quite as much as it did women because male (positional) leadership is the norm.

I added to this hypothesis that a first-born would have a very different leadership style than a last or middle simply because of what he/she experienced in the family due to their particular birth order. I believed the leadership behavior of a first-born would be typical of a leader with positional power because first-borns experience positional power over their younger siblings. The leadership behavior of last-borns would probably be me creatively designed to adapt to the leadership behavior of their older sibling. I think this factor would be the second most affecting factor in shaping an individual's leadership behavior.
LITERATURE REVIEW

To find out about early influences on leadership behavior, I went to the essential Jepson text, James McGregor Burns' Leadership. Burns devotes a portion of his book to the early social influences which shape leadership behavior. He first asserts that "learning may be the most important (force) in shaping most leaders" (63). The lessons learned through experiences, imitating the behavior of others, and the consequences or reactions to such actions provide individuals with a solid base which "reinforces responses and extinguishes others" (63). Because each persons' experiences and reactions widely vary, there is no way to generalize the way in which leadership behavior is formed (63). I have found that Burns' assertion does apply to my research. The number of variables which exist in one's early life cannot all be addressed accurately enough to generalize how leadership behavior is determined. My goal, then, is to recognize this limitation, and make smaller generalizations based on more specific issues, such as the patriarchal or matriarchal environment of one's family affecting one's perceptions of gender issues in leadership behavior.

It is also important to note Burns' emphasis on "learning" as the shaping force of leadership behavior. In the trait versus behavior debate on leadership (whether one is born with certain leadership traits because of genetics or learns leadership
behavior as one develops), Burns views learning as the main shaping agent of leadership behavior. This is the angle I am using in my research because I am analyzing early influences on behavior which occur after birth. I note this as a bias in my paper, but feel justified in taking this bias due to the specific subject of this paper and the above reference to Burns. I am not making any assertions against the trait theory; it is simply not the most significant means of analyzing data for this project.

Burns then turns his focus to "the family as imperium", which is a revealing metaphor (82). In Webster's II Dictionary, "imperium" is defined as "empire", or "a sphere of dominion or power" (613). Burns discusses the family as a miniature social system in which there are power relationships (mostly by parents) (82). It is in this imperium that the early influences on one's leadership behavior take place.

Another concept which Burns brings to the surface is a person's drive toward political leadership. He acknowledges that "even in the childhood years, the road towards (political) leadership roles takes some form and direction" (89). The key to it is "political efficacy", which he defines as "persons' confidence that they have the competence to take part in politics and that political leaders will listen to them and respond to them" (89). A political leader, such as the President, is the traditional role usually associated with leadership. Whether or not one feels that their leadership behavior will allow them to excel in such a role may partially be based on political interest and information they possess at a young age. Burns says that it
is usually boys who have more political efficacy at this age (89). This is one of many hypotheses that attempt to explain why there are more male political leaders than female. Other authors whose works I have consulted address this same issue.

Highly related to political efficacy is self-esteem. "The growth of a feeling of political efficacy...and of self-esteem, is ultimately a source of leadership only if coupled with a sense of purpose....Youngsters may not only respond to adults and peers in ways that are shaped by family and culture, they may develop increasingly a sense of purpose, however crude and inchoate, that will help create a self that will enable them as leaders to fashion influences on society rather than merely being agents of it" (90). The "self" that Burns refers to which comes from a "sense of purpose" and yields and ability to "fashion influence on society" exhibits leadership behavior. Self-esteem is defined as "satisfaction with oneself" (Soukhanov, 1059). So, to be satisfied with one's "self", is to be content with the leadership behavior one exhibits. If we rely on Burns and Webster's Dictionary, then, it is evident, that self-esteem is tied to leadership behavior.

According to Burns, self-esteem and the "perception of esteem by others" is a "powerful influence" which determines whether adolescents will get involved in positions which utilize their leadership potential, or miss out on these opportunities (94). Self-esteem may depend on how others' esteem for one match up with one's expectations of the esteem in which one will be held (95). "These expectations are formed early in life, and are
largely influenced by the family" (95). Although self-esteem is related to leadership behavior, no definite trend has been discovered. Some researchers believe that the higher one's self-esteem, the more likely one will exhibit leader behavior. Others see no correlation. To this point, there is not enough evidence to show that leader behavior will result from a high level of self-esteem (100). This may be due to the fact that a high level or low level of self-esteem affects each person differently. As Burns says, "...while a low self-esteem may disable some potential leaders, it may compel some others to seek fame and glory to overcome doubts about one's worth" (104). This doesn't make self-esteem any less of a factor in affecting one's leadership behavior, it simply limits our ability to generalize about it.

What behaviors and attitudes do we display now (as adults) that were shaped by the environment in which we grew up? An article by David C. Ivey and Tamara Yaktus works toward an answer to this question. They relate an experiment that was performed to determine whether or not individuals who grew up in a patriarchal family (with traditional gender roles) would perpetuate these behaviors and attitudes. These gender attitudes are a part of our leadership behavior. They affect our self-esteem level in situations which carry a gender stereotype such as this one: women in business either aren't aggressive enough to be effective, or they are too aggressive and mean and are overcompensating for being a female in business. Applying the
article to this stereotype, women who grew up in traditional, patriarchal families may not try to go into business, or may not expect to rise up very high in a corporation. Their self-esteem level is lower in this context.

The experiment showed that, for subjects with patriarchal family backgrounds, most viewed a normal husband-wife relationship to be one in which the man dominated. In fact, when these subjects were shown a video portraying an entirely equal husband-wife relationship, they perceived it as a female dominated family. In fact, subjects accustomed to a patriarchal style often viewed female leadership (especially in the family context) in a negative light. The general theme of the findings from the study was that people who grow up in patriarchal families have strong tendencies to maintain those same standards for their own life (especially relating to the family).

Gender related attitudes affect adult perceptions of leadership in terms of preconceived notions about who should be a leader, in what context, and what characteristics should/shouldn't a leader portray. These attitudes usually stem from the home/family environment.

Another study concerning the family's affects on children's behavior was done by David M. Nielsen and Arlene Metha. Their hypothesis was that a child who rated his/her parents' behavior higher (indicating positive characteristics such as support and affection) would have a higher level of self-esteem him/herself than a child who would not rate his/her parents as high. This
stems from the assumption that parents' recognized support and affection for their child fosters an increased self-esteem in that child. In searching for a relationship between a child's perception of his/her parents' behavior and a child's self-esteem however, no strong correlation was discovered. The only connection made as a result of this study was a positive relationship between females' self-esteem and the support and autonomy granted by their parents. This was not a strong finding, though. There was not enough evidence to show that the original hypothesis of this study was true in this case. However, this does not mean that it is not true, or that the opposite is true.

After comparing and contrasting these two articles, I found it interesting that both had implications concerning self-esteem. A patriarchal family environment may trigger higher self-esteem in men and lower self-esteem in women in terms of what they believe they are capable of doing. It would especially have this effect in the discipline of leadership. The family environment is a more subtle factor in effecting self-esteem than a parent's behavior toward a child. The extent to which a parent grants support and affection to a child would be considered to have a greater effect on that child's self-esteem than would that child's family environment. A parent's behavior is more of an intentional act to affect a child's self-esteem. It is also more controllable. A family environment, on the other hand, is not specifically designed to affect a child's self-esteem. The environment is unconsciously created by the parents. To them, it
is normal. It is like asking a fish what water is.
Interestingly enough, however, this is a significant factor (even more than the parent's behavior) in the self-esteem of the child.

The implications here are parents may try to behave a certain way in order to have an effect on how their children will behave, but these intentional, controllable factors will not impact the child as much as other factors. These other factors which are subtle and less contrived, actually have a greater effect on the children. Parents need to be aware of these subtle, yet defining factors. It is misleading for parents to believe that they are having an impact on their child by behaving a certain way, yet not realizing that they ARE significantly affecting their child in another way.

Another article that deals with the gender issue of leadership is by Nanci M. Monaco and Eugene L. Gaier. Even though this article was not related to family influences on leadership behavior, I found it relevant as it addressed the issue of male versus female leadership behavior. Because gender was a significant factor in other articles, I thought it would be important to get more information on it.

Monaco and Gaier suggest that women have a conflict between feminine roles and achievement roles. Their self regard - "active affirmation of one's worth and capabilities - is lower than males' self regard (585). This means that men take credit for their achievements more than women do. In coeducational settings (and, in this case, high schools), this leads to more
males being elected to leadership positions. Often, it is assumed that a male is competent at a task. This stems partially from our socialization as a culture that is still somewhat patriarchal, and partially from the fact that males, in general, have a higher self regard, and therefore, receive more recognition (587).

The other influence on female leadership cited by the authors is the presence of female leader role models. It is difficult for a female to expect to achieve leadership status when she sees mostly males and few females in adult leadership positions.

A study was conducted where a group of males, a group of females and two coed groups were assigned a task to accomplish within their own group. The two single-sex groups accomplished the goals through similar task oriented processes. The coed group who was given some experience in the task beforehand showed females holding the middle rank positions in the group, while the males split between either leading the group, or taking little to no initiative in the group. The other coed group was given no background on the task. Their process consisted of the men taking the lead, and the women taking the least amount of leadership.

All of the information in this article leads to the theory that, in coeducational environments (high schools), females are at a disadvantage as compared to males in developing their leadership potential. Not only does a single-sex high school offer more leadership opportunities for females, but, under this
theory, it would also facilitate the development of leadership potential more effectively than a coed high school.

I am curious to know how the variable of attending a single-sex high school really does affect a person (especially a female) in terms of one's leadership behavior. I realize I could have done an entire paper on this subject, but it can also fit in as a small part of my overall topic of the early influences on a person's leadership behavior. Even though I am mainly focusing on the influence of the family, I feel justified in including this research because it builds on the gender issues which affect leadership behavior (which have been raised in the family articles as well).

Returning to the family characteristics which affect an individual's leadership behavior, family structure comes under examination. Family structure refers to the number of people in the family and their relation to each other (stepfather, blood sister, etc.). An article by Michael O. McCullough, et al finds a relationship between family structure and some of these leadership characteristics. In this study, high school students considered "leaders" by the faculty were compared against students considered to be non-leaders. The results showed very little difference between the two groups in terms of their self-esteem. However, there was a trend among the "leaders" which showed high internal locus of control, high career aspirations, and a traditional two-parents family structure.

This study was searching for an indication as to why some
adolescents become leaders and some do not. I question the premise of this study. How did faculty select the "leaders" and the "non-leaders"? In the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, it is situational leadership and Robert Kelly's effective followership is taught. I doubt that the faculty was aware of these concepts when they were selecting "leaders" and "non-leaders" and, therefore, question the validity of their process.

After reading the Ivey and Yaktus article on family environment (patriarchal), I viewed the family structure element of this McCullough, Ashbridge, and Pegg article as significant. This variable could be similar to environment in that it doesn't intend to affect behavior, but is, in fact, a critical influence on leadership behavior. The everyday dynamics of a family with stepparents differs from those of a single parent family, or from the traditional two-parent family.

"'My big sister the town supervisor': Family leadership training is not just for boys" by Joan Newman, Jill Pettingger, and JoBeth W. Evan discusses the family in terms of gender inequities, birth order, and how the two affect leadership behavior. This study surveyed 57 male and 66 female town supervisors. It was found that, in general, the females were reining over smaller towns than the males. Once again, similar to the "Single-sex..." article, the lack of powerful female political leaders as role models is cited as a reason for this inferior status. The authors also suggest that it may be parents
who groom their daughters for one type of leadership, and their sons for another.

Whether one of these, or both is a contributing factor as to why females govern over smaller population than males, the fact that this is the case is important to note. It strengthens the earlier argument in the "Single-sex..." article that, in coed environments, females will generally not have the high leadership positions. It is significant that this continues from high school into adult politics. Another simple example of this is the fact that the United States has never had a female president. It is increasingly obvious that females in coed environments in our culture do not claim the same high level leadership positions that males do. This is one reason why I am focusing on only the U.S. culture for this research. Other cultures like Great Britain have women in high leadership positions. What is it that allows women to rise to these positions in their culture, but not in our culture? This is a question for another research project altogether, but one to acknowledge here as well.

Another point raised by the authors of "My sister..." is that an individual's birth order plays a significant role in their leadership behavior. The results of the survey of town supervisors revealed that an overwhelming majority were first-born children. Why is this the case? The authors suggested that parental treatment of first-borns was different from middle-borns and last-borns. Sibling relationships between first-borns, middle-borns, and last-borns could also be a factor in this phenomenon. However, this article did not go into much detail on
the specific ramifications of an individual's birth order.

I did find more information on this subject in an article by J. Newman and A. Taylor called "Family training for political leadership: Birth order of U.S. governors and Australian prime ministers." The authors report the results of a study conducted on male U.S. governors and male Australian prime ministers. Once again (as in the "My sister..." article), most of them were first-borns. Several theories were advanced by the authors to account for this result.

In terms of first-borns' relations with their parents, they have more time alone with them. Some researchers believe that this helps these children to understand adults better than a child who has less time alone with parents.

First-borns' relations with their siblings are also important in this examination. This article discussed how first-borns are often relied upon to teach younger siblings, set a good example, and show responsibility. The oldest sibling may also be accustomed to having the power in their relationship with their younger sibling/s. This also means that younger siblings may be used to submitting to that power, and so, will not attempt to put themselves in high level power positions.

The generalization that I pulled from this article was that first-borns have to grow up faster than other birth orders. This makes them a more likely candidate for leadership positions. Not only do they have the characteristic of maturity, but they have also had experience with positional and expert power. The Jepson
School has not emphasized maturity as a leadership behavior. I think this is a characteristic which should be given more recognition in the Jepson school in terms of its relation to leadership. The power which first-borns experience while growing up also provides them with a security in using that type of power in their leadership behavior. This makes sense because a political leader uses positional power and expert power a great deal.

For more information on the phenomenon of birth order and its affects on leadership behavior I went to The Birth Order Book by Kevin Leman. Kevin Leman is a psychologist who has written many self-help books on families, parenting, and birth order. He lists typical characteristics of first-borns: "perfectionists, reliable, conscientious, list maker, well organized, critical, serious, scholarly, goal-oriented, achiever, self-sacrificing, people pleaser, conservative, supporter of law and order, believer in authority and ritual, legalistic, loyal, and self-reliant" (43). These characteristics sound surprisingly similar to what we generally look for in a president, or any political leader who has positional power (relating back to the "Family training for political leadership..." article). However, Forsyth defines leadership as "a reciprocal, transactional, and transformational process in which individuals are permitted to influence and motivate others to promote the attaining of group and individual goals" (216). This definition is more along the lines of a Jepson School definition of leadership. This is
different from the type of leadership that is identified as obtaining a political position. There are so many different types of leadership behavior that it is difficult to separate these behaviors from non-leadership behavior. This needs to be identified as one of the limitations of my project.

Leman says, based on the characteristics he names that "first-born children are like 'little adults' who often go on to become the leaders and achievers in life" (45). How are they influenced early on so that they become these leaders and achievers?

First, they only have adults as their models for, perhaps, a number of years. Therefore they develop more adult characteristics. This is consistent with the "Family training for political leadership..." article which cited the maturity of first-borns for their time alone with their parents.

Also, parents and other relatives become quite excited about a first-born. Once the baby arrives, he/she is given constant attention, education, and encouragement by many adults. First-borns usually take their first step sooner than those who follow them because of all of this prodding and focus on only them. This headstart on achievement also leads to first-borns feeling the pressure to set the standards for those who follow them. So, not only do first-borns try to achieve faster, but they also try to set an example.

These oldest children are also used to being "left in charge." Mom and Dad bestow the leadership position of "babysitter" upon them. This is similar to the "Family training
for political leadership..." article again. Both show first-borns as familiar with a positional power role over their younger sibling/s. Not only does this imply that parents assume the oldest will take care of the younger ones, but it also reveals that parents "expect more from" a first-born because they are older (53). They tell him/her that they know that he/she can just ignore the younger sibling when they are acting up because he/she is older - all first-borns must recognize these words. This kind of parental treatment encourages the sense of greater responsibility and maturity in first-borns. Based on this information, how can anyone question why first-borns fit the traditional leader role so well.

Birth order is a subject, like other I have mentioned, to which an entire paper could be devoted. I have just given it minimal attention for this project because it is only one of many ideas to understand leadership behavior. It does have strong arguments to answer the question of why people behave the way they do, however, in my exploratory study, I can only focus on it a little bit.
Jepson Senior Project Survey

I appreciate the time and honesty you put into this survey. It will help me draw conclusions for my Jepson senior project. Thanks for your help!

1. Are you male or female?

2. Did you attend a single-sex high school?

3. Do you have siblings (how many?, what are the age differences?, what is the birth order?)

4. What best describes your family structure?
   - living with single parent
   - living with step parent/step family and blood relations
   - living with 2 blood parents
   - other

   If family is divorced, what age were you when this happened?, how old were you when a remarriage occurred?

5. Is your family more matriarchial or patriarchial?
   What role does each parent have? (financial, domestic, etc.)
   How equally split are these roles?

6. Do you see affects on your behavior as you've grown up from any of the above? If so, what?

*To be returned to Autumn Fehr  x3990, apt.307
SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

After reading through all the journal articles and book, I developed my survey. The questions on the survey were based on the main concepts I drew out of my reading.

The gender issue of leadership behavior was brought up by many authors. The argument by Monaco and Gaier concerning females' leadership development in single-sex versus coeducational schools was compelling. I was curious to know how this variable had affected females' (in the Jepson School) leadership behavior. I asked this question on the survey because I was interested to see if Monaco's and Gaier's theory held up.

Next, I asked a question about birth order because, to apply any of the birth order theories which I had read in a number of articles (Leman, Newman et al, and Newman et al) I needed to know if the respondent was a first, last, or middle born child. With this information, I could make inferences from their answers.

I also asked about the family structure and family environment of the respondent. Family structure means the number of parents and siblings one lives with and their relation to each other (blood relation or step parent). McCullough et al brought this variable to my attention, even though the article itself did not bring forth strong theories. I was struck by the different shaping of leadership behavior that might occur in a traditional two-parent family structure than in a divorced step parent structure. This became a question on the survey purely for my
own interest. I was curious to see whether or not any respondents would attribute their leadership behavior to their family structure.

The family environment question was based on my reading of Ivey and Yaktus's article. Family environment is the way the family is led or governed, and the way decisions are made. The father has more power in a patriarchal family, and the mother in a matriarchal family. I thought that this was a fascinating variable on which to draw inferences about a person's leadership behavior. Growing in one environment instead of another would seem to make a great impact on that individual's perceptions of gender leadership (especially depending on the gender of that individual).

My final question was meant to encourage the respondent to look over his/her short answers to the above question and make a judgment about whether or not he/she felt that his/her leadership behavior was affected by any of those variables. I was interested in what the respondent could tell me about him/herself having just answered the first five questions.
PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data I collected from my survey yielded the following results:

6/12 male respondents, 6/12 female respondents

7/12 youngest child, 4/12 oldest child, 1/12 middle-born

1/12 attended a single-sex high school

10/12 living with 2 blood parents, 1/12 living with blood mother and stepfather who adopted individual, 1/12 father passed away when young

11/12 equal decision-making between parents, 1/12 matriarchal (only lives with mother)

Answers to free answer questions:
-Tradition was a theme throughout my family, so I take a traditional approach/ mindset towards leadership. I see leadership as very separate from followership, and do not agree with the leader getting personally involved with the followers. This encroaches on their responsibilities.
-I felt more support because my parents weren't divorced and one of them always attended my activities.
-I am competitive against my younger brother, but also feel that I take a leadership role over him. Also, I have developed a family oriented mindset like my mother. I think I have strengths and weaknesses of both parents.

-I am the oldest girl so I am responsible for many household chores, and my younger siblings as well. Perhaps that's why I'm outgoing, organized, and have the ability to easily take on leadership roles in different contexts.

-My leadership style is a blend of my parents'. My outgoingness may have to do with me being a middle child and fighting for the attention. I value open communication and group decision because family valued them.

-I know how to take responsibility for my actions because my parents let me make mistakes and learn from them.

-It was hard to adjust to having a father figure again after not having one for the formative years of my life. Now, though, my family is just as "normal" as others.

-Since both parents were around a lot and shared decision-making, I learned about sharing gender roles. I also adopted my leader/follower personality traits from them.

-My sibling affected my leader/follower relationships - provided examples and competition.

-We work together as a group and follow the leadership of whoever has it at that time.

-I've created my own unique leadership style from growing up with 2 parents with two very different yet balanced styles. I have been fortunate to see the strengths and weaknesses of both of
their styles. My parents instilled in me that I could achieve anything and that there is a time to lead and a time to follow. I have always hoped to join the creativity of my father and the compassion and independence of my mother. Both have definately helped me have a fiercely independent nature.

-Growing up with just a mother, I had to develop leadership early. My mom tried to empower me and my brother, so I use that type of leadership. My older brother acted like a father to me, he was charismatic and taught me about leading by example. Both my mom and my brother have been the strongest influences on the type of leader I am today. I often wonder whether or not I would have emerged as a leader had my father never passed away.
SURVEY RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

In reading over my survey results initially, I felt that should have attempted to distribute more surveys. If I had 24 survey respondents instead of 12, I believe I could have found more trends in data. The data that came in was not what I had expected.

I was certain that most Jepson majors would be first-born children. My bias was that, in general, first-borns were the ones who would major in leadership studies. My own personal experience is probably the cause for this bias. I am the older of two females. My sister and I fit the last-born and first-born mold asserted mainly by Leman. Not only did I fit his description of first-born, but I thought most Jepson majors did, too. He describes first-borns as:

perfectionists, reliable, conscientious, list maker, well organized, critical, serious, scholarly, goal-oriented, achiever, self-sacrificing, people pleaser, conservative, supporter of law and order, believer in authority and ritual, legalistic, loyal, and self-reliant (43).

However as I pointed out in my literature review, this is consistent with the traditional political view of leadership. In the Jepson school, we learn leadership as a "reciprocal, transactional, transformational process in which individuals are permitted to influence and motivate others to promote the attaining of group and individual goals" (Forsyth, 216).

My expectation was that most people in Jepson were first-
borns because I thought most first-borns exhibited those characteristics laid out by Leman. I also thought that most Jepson students displayed those characteristics. Based on survey results, however, I was wrong. Only four out of twelve students were first-borns.

In order to gain significant meaning from this question, the results of each answer to this question are compared with the final question on the respondents' behavior. I was looking for some link between the respondents; birth order and their view of how it may have affected their leadership behavior.

Five respondents addressed their relationship to their sibling as significant to their leadership behavior. One identified herself as a middle child and attributed her outgoing personality to the "middle-child syndrome - fight for attention." My focus, however, was not on middle-child behavior, but one first and last-child behavior. Two respondents who were the youngest child (both by four years), cited their older sibling as one who lead them by example. One had the special circumstance of losing his father at a young age, and having his older brother step into the father role for him. He claimed that his brother was a charismatic leaders to him and, thereby, taught him (by example) how to be charismatic. Neither of these two respondents seemed to follow Newman and Taylor's assumptions about the last-born child, which include being accustomed to the position of less power and looking to others to lead them. Instead, these two last-borns have been taught by their older siblings how to show leadership. Now, they use those lessons as models for how
to behave. Their leadership behavior was shaped largely by how their older sibling taught them (by example) to act.

Two other respondents identified themselves as first-borns. They both claimed that they had a leadership role over their siblings. One respondent identified herself as a "parent at a young age because she was the oldest. She was responsible for many household chores, as well as taking care of her two younger siblings. She attributed her outgoing personality, organization, and ability to take on leadership roles in many different contexts easily to the role she played in her family. This relates to Leman's assertion the first-borns mature faster because parents have higher expectations and for them because they are older (53).

The age difference between the respondents and their siblings was important to note. Two other respondents both had older siblings who were eight years older than them. Neither one attributed any of their leadership behavior to their sibling. I believe this is because the large age difference minimizes to affects of sibling relations and birth order on an individual.

Another variable which yielded interesting results was that of family environment. Eleven out of twelve respondents viewed their family as neither patriarchal or matriarchal, but equal in decision-making power.

Two female respondents said, because their parents shared power and decision-making equally, they felt their own leadership behavior was a blend of both parents' styles. Two other respondents (a male and a female) replied similarly, but
expanded on their answers. The male said that spending an equal amount of time with both parents and observing their shared decision-making taught him about sharing gender roles. This combined with his adoption of some of his parents' personality trait has, he claimed, contributed to the development of his leadership behavior. Ivey and Yaktus asserted that the family environment would affect an individual's leadership behavior in terms of their gender role perceptions. This case is consistent with their assertion in that the gender roles, along with the power designated to each, is passed down to the child as the norm. The child takes that as an example of how gender roles and the equality or inequality associated with them should be outside of their family.

The female respondent said her "fiercely independent nature" can be traced back to her parents because they have encouraged her to "create her own style of leadership." She has seen strengths and weaknesses in both parents and, based on this, has developed her own leadership behavior.

Another female respondent said that her family works together and "follows the person with the leadership at that time." This implies that her family environment has exposed her to, not gender based leadership, but situational leadership. Her leadership behavior, then, is based on Feidler's contingency theory of leadership, which states that the context or situation dictates who the leader will be and how that leader may behave.

The other variable which gave some insight into how one's leadership behavior was shaped was family structure. Ten of
twelve respondents lived with two blood parents, one with his mother, and the other with his mother and stepfather who had adopted him. Only two of these respondents (one male, one female) made comments on how their family structure had affected their leadership behavior.

The male respondent questioned whether or not he would have the same type of leadership behavior which he has now had his father not passed away. His experience growing up in a single-parent, matriarchal home shaped his leadership behavior a great deal. Empowerment was emphasized by his mother. He believed that this caused him to develop leadership skills early in life, so that now, his skills have developed into a strong behavior.

The other respondent said that she believed she had felt support because her parents were not divorced. This may have contributed to her confidence or level of self-esteem in her leadership behavior, but there is no evidence which is conclusive enough to support this.

Family structure, in terms of my survey and research, did not come out as strong an affecter of leadership behavior as some others (like birth order and family environment) did. The other variable of single-sex or coed schooling did not yield enough varying data in my survey to give any information on how it affected leadership behavior.
WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

I did gain a lot more than just information knowledge from this project. I learned about limitations in research projects. The time limit of one semester was a given. However, I did not know what would and would not fit into one semester. My project could only be exploratory because of two factors. One was the number of variables that are relevant to the study of influences on one's early life. Unfortunately, I could not adequately address all of these. I did concentrate on a few, but still I could not achieve too much depth.

The other limitation stemmed from my inexperience with surveys. I did not survey enough people, or a diverse enough population to achieve results which might have given me a trend. I did learn a lot from my survey results and was able to make many implications based on them, but I did not have the information to suggest any trends.

I have also learned that many people associate leadership and leadership behavior with the traditional political image of a leader. Only with more schools like the Jepson School and more literature by Margaret Wheatley will out country (and maybe others, too) break out of this old paradigm, and instead, see leadership in a broader more meaningful and (I believe) true light.

I have learned that it is difficult to make generalizations when humans are involved. We are each so different, each having
experienced different pieces of life, that one cannot predict another's behavior.

I also noted that one cannot simply go by the book when looking for influences on leadership behavior. Surveys, interviews, etc. are necessary to combine with scholarly journals.
CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The nuclear family is a tiny political system - a small Leviathan, Hobbes called it - and a primitive leadership system. In all cultures, the origins of political attention and comprehension lie largely in the early childhood years. 'The entire man is, so to speak, to be seen in the cradle of the child,' Toqueville said.

(Burns, 81)

I have found this to be true. So much can be understood about one if one's background is revealed. The family is the most influencing and private part of our background.

In this research, in particular, I have found one's family environment and one's birth order to be influencing factors upon one's leadership behavior. Many other variables exist which affect leadership behavior as well.

For further research, I would recommend focusing on one factor, whether is be birth order, or one not named here. A more complete analysis of a single factor could possibly provide a more solid trend in the search for early influences on leadership behavior.

Another recommendation would be to find out how parents treat males versus females in terms of developing their leadership behavior.

A larger and more diverse sampling would also be suggested for a survey in this field.
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