Why Trump and Clinton won and lost: the roles of hypermasculinity and androgyny

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine perceptions of the “Ideal President” (IP) and presidential candidates in the 2016 US presidential election in relation to gender stereotypes and leader prototypes.

Design/methodology/approach – In all, 378 business students assessed perceptions of either the IP or a particular candidate on measures of masculinity and femininity. Androgyny (balance of masculinity and femininity) and hypermasculinity (extremely high masculinity) scores were calculated from these measures.

Findings – The IP was perceived as higher in masculinity than femininity, but less similar to the male (Donald Trump) than the female (Hillary Clinton) candidate. IP perceptions were more androgynous than in the 2008 US presidential election. Respondents’ political preferences were related to their IP perceptions on hypermasculinity, which in turn were consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate.

Social implications – Trump’s high hypermasculinity scores may explain why he won the electoral college vote, whereas Clinton’s being perceived as more similar to the IP, and IP perceptions’ becoming more androgynous over time, may explain why she won the popular vote.

Originality/value – The study extends the literature on the linkages between gender stereotypes and leader prototypes in two respects. Contrary to the general assumption of a shared leader prototype, it demonstrates the existence of different leader prototypes according to political preference. The hypermasculinity construct, which was introduced to interpret leader prototypes in light of Trump’s candidacy and election, represents a valuable addition to the literature with potentially greater explanatory power than masculinity in some situations.

Keywords Gender stereotypes, Political leadership, Hypermasculinity, Androgyny, Leader prototypes

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The 2016 US presidential election was historic. Hillary Clinton made history, both positively and negatively, in several ways. First, she became the first female presidential candidate of a major political party (the Democratic Party) in the nation’s history. Second, she won the popular vote in the election, thereby becoming the first woman to do so. Third, she lost the electoral vote (the vote that determined who won the election), also becoming the first woman to do so. Fourth, she was a highly unpopular candidate according to polls. Clinton was criticized for, among other things, her e-mail practices and ties to the Clinton...
Foundation (which her husband founded) while she previously served as US Secretary of State, her links to major financial services firms she would seek to regulate, and her husband’s sexual behavior toward women while and before he served as president. Although she got closer to the nation’s top elected position than any other woman, she failed to shatter what she called “that highest and hardest glass ceiling” (Clinton, 2016).

Donald Trump, the presidential candidate of the other major political party (the Republican Party), also made history, both positively and negatively, in several ways. First, he had never been elected to a political office before, which was rare in history although not the first instance. Second, he lost the popular vote, becoming only the fifth candidate elected president to have done so and by the largest number of votes ever. Third, he was also highly unpopular according to polls. Trump was criticized for, among other things, his sexual behavior toward women, his sexist comments about women during the election process, and his constant belittling of and need to dominate his political opponents, which were collectively regarded as evidence of “hypermasculinity” (Chira, 2016; Mosher and Tomkins, 1988). However, Trump won the electoral college vote and thus the presidency, which was the ultimate positive outcome for him.

Overall, the combination of two highly unpopular major-party candidates, with one being the first female candidate of her party and the other having exhibited a pattern of problematic behavior toward women over time, created a toxic blend and historic clash. In the present study, we took advantage of this clash to examine the possible effects of gender stereotypes and leader prototypes on perceptions of the 2016 presidential candidates and an “Ideal President (IP).”

Although its context was unusual, this study builds on a rich tradition of theory and research on the linkages between leader prototypes and gender stereotypes over more than four decades (cf. Butterfield and Grinnell, 1999; Koenig et al., 2011). Female and male leaders have been compared in light of gender stereotypes in both an organizational context (e.g. Powell and Butterfield, 1979, 1989, 2015; Powell et al., 2002) and a political context (e.g. Dayhoff, 1983; Fox and Oxley, 2003; Powell and Butterfield, 2011). Research subjected to meta-analysis by Koenig et al. (2011) has examined perceptions of a good manager, ideal leader, IP, and the like in light of gender stereotypes (Kite et al., 2008) by assessing the extent to which these perceptions are high in “masculine” traits traditionally associated with males and high in “feminine” traits traditionally associated with females; a balance in masculine and feminine traits attributed to a leader has been characterized as an androgynous leader profile (Bem, 1974; Koenig et al., 2011). Such perceptions represent individuals’ implicit leadership theories (Epitropaki and Martin, 2004; Epitropaki et al., 2013; Junker and van Dick, 2014; Lord et al., 1984; Offermann et al., 1994; Schyns and Schilling, 2011) or mental prototypes of an ideal leader, which have been found to disadvantage female leaders (e.g. Eagly and Carli, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008; Powell, 1999, 2011; Rudman and Glick, 2001).

The present study was designed to explore these issues further by examining leader prototypes in light of gender stereotypes (Kite et al., 2008) in the 2016 presidential election. Specifically, we examined perceptions of the two candidates in relation to each other and perceptions of an “IP” using the dimensions of masculinity and femininity and the constructs of androgyny and hypermasculinity. We obtained access to comparable data from the 2008 presidential election (Powell and Butterfield, 2011), which enabled us to examine whether the first-time presence of a female major-party presidential candidate in the 2016 election was associated with a change in perceptions of an IP from those during the 2008 election. Further, we examined whether individuals’ preferences for a particular candidate were related to their mental prototypes of an IP, which in turn were consistent with the profile of their preferred candidate; such a finding would support the existence of multiple presidential leader prototypes. The study has potential to shed light on why the USA continues to be a nation that has never had a female leader, unlike over 70 nations.
starting with Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) over 50 years ago (Adler, 1999; Bennhold and Gladstone, 2016), as well as on the relationship between leader prototypes and gender stereotypes in a political context.

Theory

Leader prototypes, sex, and gender

Implicit leadership theories (Epitropaki and Martin, 2004; Epitropaki et al., 2013; Junker and van Dick, 2014; Lord et al., 1984; Offermann et al., 1994; Schyns and Schilling, 2011), or individuals’ mental prototypes of an ideal leader, have received considerable attention in the leadership literature. Some of this attention has been devoted to the linkages among leader prototypes, sex, and gender, with the term sex referring to the biological categories of male and female and the term gender referring to the psychological implications of being male or female (Archer and Lloyd, 2002; Lippa, 2005; Unger, 1979). According to theories of the psychology of gender (Denmark and Paludi, 2008; Unger, 2001; Wood and Eagly, 2010), individuals develop gender belief systems that consist of a multifaceted, internally consistent set of ideas they have about gender. The components of gender belief systems include gender stereotypes, or beliefs about the psychological traits that are characteristic of members of each sex (Kite et al., 2008); gender identity (or “sex-role identity,” Bem, 1974), or beliefs about the extent to which one personally possesses psychological traits that are associated in gender stereotypes with women and men; and gender roles, or beliefs about the appropriate social roles to be held by women and men (Deaux and LaFrance, 1998). In this study, we are particularly concerned with individuals’ beliefs about the extent to which the IP and the 2016 presidential candidates were perceived to possess traits associated with gender stereotypes (Kite et al., 2008); gender stereotypes themselves have been found to be generally stable over the last four decades (Haines et al., 2016; Lueptow et al., 2001).

Bem (1974) conceptualized gender identity (aka sex-role identity) as consisting of two independent dimensions: masculinity, or the extent to which individuals believe that they possess traits associated in gender stereotypes with males, and femininity, or the extent to which individuals believe that they possess traits associated in gender stereotypes with females. Unlike in earlier conceptualizations (e.g. Constantinople, 1973), individuals who were high in masculinity were not necessarily low in femininity and vice versa. Bem (1974) further conceptualized androgyny as consisting of a balance of masculine and feminine traits.

Inspired by media descriptions of Trump as hypermasculine (e.g. Chira, 2016) and prior conceptualizations of hypermasculinity as consisting of a “macho personality constellation” or exaggeration of male stereotypical behavior (e.g. Mosher and Sirkin, 1984; Mosher and Tomkins, 1988), we developed an adapted conceptualization of hypermasculinity for purposes of the present study. This construct had not previously been applied to the linkages between leader prototypes and gender stereotypes. Specifically, we defined hypermasculinity, based on Bem’s (1974) masculinity dimension, as consisting of an extremely high level of masculine traits associated in gender stereotypes with males.

The leader role as a masculine and male bastion

In theories and research on the linkages among leader prototypes, sex, and gender, leadership has been typically viewed as a masculine preserve that favors men over women. This phenomenon is supported by statistical evidence, such as the sex composition of the top management ranks of corporations (e.g. only 5.2 percent female CEOs in Standard and Poor’s 500 largest publicly traded US corporations; Catalyst, 2017). It has been attributed to the predominance of a patriarchal social system in which males tend to exert authority and power over females (Marshall, 1984, 1995; Powell, 1999), for which there are several theories. For example, the status characteristics theory (Ridgeway, 1991, 2001) argues that women’s presence in leadership positions violates the societal norm of men’s higher status and...
superiority in a patriarchal system. Also, the role congruity theory (Eagly and Karau, 2002) argues that because the leader role has been largely a male bastion, it is deemed more congruent with the male than the female gender role and thereby more appropriate for men than for women. Further, Heilman’s (1983, 2001) lack-of-fit model argues that gender stereotypes restrict women’s access to and ascent in leader roles because the perceived lack of fit between the leader role and the female gender role due to gender stereotypes produces decreased expectations of their success and increased expectations of their failure as leaders. Indeed, the “glass cliff phenomenon” (Ryan and Haslam, 2005, 2007) or the tendency for women to be selected for more precarious top management positions than men, thereby increasing their relative likelihood of failure in such roles, would seem to reinforce Heilman’s (1983, 2001) lack-of-fit model and contribute to a self-fulfilling prophecy through processes of expectancy confirmation (Eden, 2003; Geis, 1993).

Koenig et al.’s (2011) meta-analyses of studies following three different research paradigms supported the masculinity of the leader role and its association with males. Powell and Butterfield’s (1979) agency-communion paradigm compared stereotypes of leaders’ perceived masculinity (i.e. agency) with stereotypes of their perceived femininity (i.e. communion). According to meta-analytic results for studies following this paradigm, study respondents perceived leaders as higher in masculinity than femininity. Schein’s (1973) think manager-think male paradigm compared the similarity between male and leader stereotypes with the similarity between female and leader stereotypes. According to meta-analytic results, study respondents believed that leaders had a higher level of characteristics associated with men in general than those associated with women in general. Finally, Shinar’s (1975) masculinity-femininity paradigm analyzed the masculine vs feminine content of leader stereotypes in diverse occupations, including boat captain, mayor, sales manager, university dean, and orchestra conductor. According to meta-analytic results, masculinity prevailed over femininity in stereotypes of leader roles in various occupations.

To summarize, in theories of the relationship between leader prototypes and gender stereotypes (e.g. Eagly and Karau, 2002; Marshall, 1984, 1995; Powell, 1999; Ridgeway, 1991, 2001) and empirical studies following each of three research paradigms (Koenig et al., 2011), good leaders, whether in an organizational or political context, were described as having a higher level of masculine traits stereotypically associated with males than feminine traits stereotypically associated with females. Accordingly, consistent with theory and research, we hypothesized that:

\[ H1. \] The IP would be perceived as higher in masculinity than femininity.

\[ H2. \] The IP would be perceived as more similar to the male presidential candidate (Trump) than to the female presidential candidate (Clinton).

\textit{Change in leader prototypes}

Stereotypes, including those of leaders, tend to be durable over time (Hamilton and Sherman, 1994; Hilton and von Hippel, 1996). This is because stereotypes are reinforced by both cognitive and social processes. Regarding cognitive processes, individuals tend to categorize people into groups and then develop self-enhancing beliefs about the attributes held in common by members of different groups, including their own (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995; Tajfel and Turner, 1986); these beliefs in turn act as self-fulfilling prophecies (Eden, 2003; Geis, 1993). Regarding social processes, individuals learn stereotypes of different groups during their early socialization experiences from their parents, teachers, and other significant adults in their lives as well as from the popular media (Hamilton and Sherman, 1994).

However, stereotypes, including those of leaders, may change over time (Alipour et al., 2017). Rothbart (1981) distinguished between two models of stereotype change, the bookkeeping
According to the bookkeeping model, stereotypes are constantly open to revision as new pieces of information, either confirming or disconfirming, are received; stereotypes change gradually if there is a steady stream of disconfirming information. According to the conversion model, stereotypes change suddenly in response to highly salient and critical pieces of disconfirming information. Thus, if new information about the accuracy of a particular stereotype has been moderately disconfirming, the bookkeeping model would predict modest change in the stereotype and the conversion model would predict no change. If new information has overwhelmingly discredited the stereotype, both models would predict substantial change in it. Overall, although it is assumed to be easier for individuals to maintain a stereotype than to change it, they may change it in some situations (Hamilton and Sherman, 1994; Hilton and von Hippel, 1996; Rothbart, 1981).

There is reason to believe that leader prototypes or stereotypes may have changed over time. In an organizational context, consistent with Rothbart’s (1981) bookkeeping model of stereotype change, the increase in the proportion of women in managerial positions over the last four decades (Powell, 2011) may have gradually contributed to a more androgynous leader prototype over time, although an overall emphasis on masculinity over femininity in leader prototypes may still prevail. However, in the context of the US presidency and consistent with Rothbart’s (1981) conversion model of stereotype change, an unprecedented and cataclysmic event occurred in 2016 with Hillary Clinton’s nomination as the first-ever female major-party candidate. This event may have been a highly salient and critical piece of disconfirming information that resulted in a sudden shift in perceptions of an IP during the 2016 election compared with those during earlier elections.

Also, there were trends in studies during earlier US elections of perceptions of the IP and presidential candidates following Powell and Butterfield’s (1979) agency-communion paradigm suggesting that femininity, relative to masculinity, was becoming more important. For example, Butterfield and Grinnell (1998) found that the IP was perceived as lower in masculinity in 1996 than in 1984 and 1988, whereas perceptions of the IP on femininity remained constant; also, Bill Clinton, who won the 1996 election, was perceived as similar to the IP in femininity but lower in masculinity. Further, Powell and Butterfield (2011) found that Barack Obama, who won the 2008 election, was perceived as similar to the IP in both masculinity and femininity, whereas John McCain, the losing presidential candidate, was seen as similar to the IP in masculinity but lower in femininity, suggesting again that femininity may have been the differentiator in the election results.

Koenig et al. (2011) found a trend toward the leader role being perceived as more androgynous over time for all three paradigms examined in separate meta-analyses. Accordingly, consistent with the theory regarding stereotype change (Rothbart, 1981), Clinton’s nomination as a unique event during the 2016 election, and research on change in leader prototypes over time (Alipour et al., 2017; Koenig et al., 2011), we hypothesized that:

\[H3.\text{ The IP would be seen as more androgynous during the 2016 election than the 2008 election.}\]

**Political preferences and leader prototypes**

When Koenig et al. (2011) examined research on leader prototypes in relation to gender stereotypes, they combined studies conducted in an organizational context with studies conducted in a political context within each of three paradigms. For example, studies following Powell and Butterfield’s agency-communion paradigm (Koenig et al., 2011, Table II, pp. 625-626) examined an ideal, good, or successful local council member, mayor, or school board member; state governor, representative, or senator; or US representative, senator, vice-president, or president (political context) as well as an ideal, good, or successful
manager, middle manager, top management team member, bank manager, academic dean of students, or school superintendent, principal, or assistant principal (organizational context). However, there is a key difference between political and organizational leader roles: political leaders are typically elected by voters in the relevant jurisdiction, whereas organizational leaders are seldom “elected,” at least not by voters in public elections (they may be elected by corporate boards of directors, school boards, and the like). Perhaps individuals who prefer different candidates in a given political election are acting in accordance with different leader prototypes they possess.

Extant theories of the relationship between leader prototypes and gender stereotypes such as the role congruity theory (Eagly and Karau, 2002) and the lack-of-fit model (Heilman, 1983, 2001) assume that there is a leader prototype on which people generally agree about who is fit for leader roles (men and/or individuals who are perceived as specializing in masculine traits) and who is not (women and/or individuals who are perceived as specializing in feminine traits); this shared prototype in turn results in women being seen as less suitable for leader roles than men. Koenig et al.’s (2011) approach to aggregating studies was consistent with the assumption of shared leader prototypes, in that profiles of IPs, vice-presidents, and other political leaders were aggregated with profiles of ideal organizational leaders for each paradigm rather than separately examined. We do not question that women are disadvantaged by leader prototypes, for which there is considerable evidence (e.g. Eagly and Carli, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008; Powell, 1999; Rudman and Glick, 2001). However, we question whether such prototypes are as shared in a political context as they have been assumed to be in past theory (e.g. Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman, 1983, 2001; Marshall, 1984, 1995; Ridgeway, 1991, 2001) and research (Koenig et al., 2011).

In the context of a US presidential election, one perspective of voters’ cognitive processes would be that they agree on a prototype of an IP but differ in the extent to which they perceive their preferred candidate to fit this prototype compared to other candidates. This perspective is consistent with the assumption of a shared leader prototype in past theory and research (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman, 1983, 2001). We propose an alternative perspective: voters who prefer different candidates in a presidential election possess different prototypes of an IP that are consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate.

During the 2016 US presidential election, voters tended to say they were voting against one candidate more than they were voting for the other (Newport, 2016; Saad, 2016). During the election campaign, it seemed that supporters of the two candidates were “talking past each other” and unlikely to agree on qualities needed in a presidential leader. Thus, this election seemed to provide a good situation in which to examine whether multiple leader prototypes exist in a political context that reflect individuals’ political preferences. Accordingly, consistent with these notions, we hypothesized that:

\[ H4. \] Individuals’ preferences for a particular presidential candidate would be related to their perceptions of an IP in a manner consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate.

Method

Samples and procedure

Samples were obtained from two different populations at a large public university in the Northeastern USA – undergraduate upper-level business students, most of whom expected to enter the labor market after graduation, and part-time MBA students, nearly all of whom held full-time jobs. The samples consisted of 233 undergraduate business students, 44 percent of whom were female; and 145 part-time MBA students, 34 percent of
whom were female. All respondents were of voting age. For the 233 undergraduate business students, age range was 98 percent 18-23 years and 2 percent over 23 years; race/ethnicity was 77 percent Caucasian, 12 percent Asian American, 3 percent Hispanic American, 1 percent African American, and 7 percent other; political party was 40 percent Democratic, 24 percent Republican, 31 percent Independent, and 5 percent other; and the candidate they “would most want to see as President of the USA in 2017” was 49 percent Clinton, 25 percent Trump, and 26 percent other. For the 145 part-time MBA students, age range was 3 percent 18-23 years, 30 percent 24-30 years, 38 percent 31-40 years, and 29 percent over 40 years; race/ethnicity was 69 percent Caucasian, 12 percent Asian American, 5 percent Hispanic American, 6 percent African American, and 8 percent other; political party was 41 percent Democratic, 23 percent Republican, 30 percent Independent, and 6 percent other; and the candidate they would most want to see as president was 52 percent Clinton, 24 percent Trump, and 24 percent other.

Data were collected during the 2016 presidential election between the last candidates’ debate on October 19 and the election on November 8. A “Leadership Survey” was administered using the Qualtrics survey software in an introductory management class (undergraduate business students, response rate = 84 percent) and three graduate management classes (part-time MBA students, response rate = 90 percent). The purpose of the survey was described as “to learn about the characteristics different people associate with leadership.” It asked respondents to rate the extent to which different personal traits characterized either an “IP” or a particular candidate. Respondents were randomly assigned to complete one of three survey forms, either for an IP ($n = 125$), Hillary Clinton ($n = 125$), or Donald Trump ($n = 128$).

**Measures**

The measures for the study were based on or derived from the short form of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Short BSRI; Bem, 1981a). The BSRI, in either its short or original (long) version (Bem, 1974), has been described as “the instrument of choice” (Hoffman and Borders, 2001) in gender research and used in many thousands of gender-related studies.

The BSRI has been subject to theoretical and methodological criticisms (e.g. Choi et al., 2008, 2009; Pedhazur and Tetenbaum, 1979), although no competing instrument has come to prevail. Theoretically, the primary criticism has been that masculinity and femininity may be further divided into independent constructs and that it makes no theoretical sense to consider masculinity and femininity in themselves (Choi et al., 2008; Pedhazur and Tetenbaum, 1979). For example, masculinity could be subdivided into an internal, personal dimension and a social control-oriented dimension (Choi et al., 2009). In response to this criticism, Bem (1981b) argued that the terms masculinity and femininity refer to meaningful concepts for people and are an important part of their gender schemas, even though the concepts themselves may be broken down further. In this study, we focused on masculinity and femininity in themselves to be consistent with prior research on the relationship between gender stereotypes and leader prototypes following Powell and Butterfield’s (1979) agency-communion paradigm in both a political (e.g. Butterfield and Grinnell, 1998; Powell and Butterfield, 2011) and organizational (e.g. Powell and Butterfield, 1979, 1989, 2015; Powell et al., 2002) context.

Methodologically, the primary criticism of the original (long) BSRI has been that, although the mean desirability of the masculine items for a man and the mean desirability of the feminine items for a woman is similar, the masculine items have been found to be more desirable for an adult of unspecified sex than the feminine items (Pedhazur and Tetenbaum, 1979). It was in response to this criticism that Bem (1981a) developed the Short BSRI, which has half as many masculine and feminine items as the original BSRI and eliminates most of the items regarded as undesirable for adults in general. The Short BSRI has been found to demonstrate greater
reliability and validity than the original BSRI (Campbell et al., 1997; Choi et al., 2009). Accordingly, we utilized the Short BSRI (Bem, 1981a) in this study, with a focus on overall masculinity and overall femininity scores.

The Short BSRI (Bem, 1981a) contains ten items characteristic of the masculine gender stereotype (e.g. defends own beliefs, independent, assertive) and ten items characteristic of the feminine gender stereotype (e.g. affectionate, sympathetic, warm); it also contains ten filler items not associated exclusively with either stereotype included to disguise the purpose of the instrument. Items were rated on a seven-point scale (1 = never or almost never true, 7 = always or almost always true). Masculinity and femininity were calculated for each respondent’s rating of the IP, Clinton, or Trump as the average of scores on the masculine and feminine items in the completed survey form. Coefficient $\alpha$ was 0.81 for the masculinity score and 0.95 for the femininity score for both samples combined across all forms.

An androgyny score was derived from the Short BSRI’s (Bem, 1981a) masculinity and femininity scales following the approach suggested by Bem (1974). Specifically, androgyny was calculated for each respondent’s rating of the IP, Clinton, or Trump as the standardized absolute value of the difference between masculinity and femininity. Androgyny scores closer to 0 represented more of a balance between masculinity and femininity.

In addition, a hypermasculinity score was derived from the Short BSRI’s (Bem, 1981a) masculinity scale in a manner consistent with its conceptualization for purposes of this study as an extremely high level of masculine traits. The cut-off point for determining whether a respondent’s description of a target person was hypermasculine or not consisted of the sum of the mean masculinity score for an IP ($M = 5.28$) and the standard deviation of this score ($SD = 0.64$), which equals 5.92; only 14 percent of all descriptions of an IP were above this cut-off point. Hypermasculinity was then calculated for each respondent’s rating of the IP, Clinton, or Trump as a dichotomous variable: 1 = yes, indicating that the masculinity score was 5.92 or greater; and 0 = no, indicating that the masculinity score was lower than 5.92.

Results

Before proceeding with hypothesis testing, we examined whether scores on the four study variables differed according to the population sampled, undergraduate business students vs part-time MBA students. $t$-Tests for each candidate – the IP, Hillary Clinton, and Donald Trump – revealed no significant differences for any of the study variables by population. Accordingly, all data were combined in subsequent analyses. Data on the study variables were standardized for purposes of these analyses. Table I presents descriptive statistics and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Masculinity</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Femininity</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Androgyny</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
<td>-0.79**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hypermasculinity</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>-0.14*</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: $n = 378$. Coding of variables: masculinity and femininity: seven-point scales with higher scores indicating higher levels of masculinity and femininity, respectively; androgyny: the standardized absolute value of the difference between masculinity and femininity, with scores closer to 0 representing a higher level of androgyny; hypermasculinity: 0 = no (i.e. not hypermasculine), 1 = yes (i.e. hypermasculine, one standard deviation or more above the mean masculinity score for the ideal president). Means and standard deviations are for the unstandardized variables. *$p < 0.01$; **$p < 0.001$
correlations across all candidates. Table II presents mean scores for the IP, Clinton, and Trump for masculinity, femininity, androgyny, and hypermasculinity.

**H1** proposed that the IP would be perceived as higher in masculinity than femininity. To test this hypothesis, a comparison of mean scores on masculinity and femininity for the IP was conducted. As Table II presents, **H1** was supported ($t = 4.30, p < 0.001$). In addition, Clinton ($t = 9.50, p < 0.001$) and Trump ($t = 23.80, p < 0.001$) were seen as significantly higher in masculinity than femininity.

**H2** proposed that the IP would be perceived as more similar to the male presidential candidate (Trump) than to the female presidential candidate (Clinton). To test this hypothesis, ANOVA was conducted for each of the four study variables with Scheffe tests of pairwise comparisons (Table II). ANOVA comparisons of the IP, Clinton, and Trump revealed significant differences on all four scales. Figures 1-4 plot these comparisons.

According to Scheffe tests of pairwise comparisons in Table II:

1. The IP ($M = 5.28$) was perceived as significantly less masculine than Trump ($M = 5.68$) and significantly more masculine than Clinton ($M = 4.98$). Thus, although the candidates both differed from the IP in masculinity, the direction of the difference varied (see Figure 1).

2. The IP ($M = 4.92$) was perceived as significantly more feminine than Clinton ($M = 3.95$), who in turn was perceived as significantly more feminine than Trump ($M = 2.55$). Thus, Clinton was perceived as more similar than Trump to the IP in femininity (see Figure 2).

3. With lower scores indicating a more androgynous profile, the IP ($M = 0.74$) was perceived as significantly more androgynous than Clinton ($M = 1.27$), who in turn was perceived as significantly more androgynous than Trump ($M = 3.18$). Thus, Clinton was perceived as more similar than Trump to the IP in androgyny (see Figure 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel A: masculinity and femininity</th>
<th>Panel B: androgyny and hypermasculinity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Androgyny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal President (I)</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton (C)</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Trump (T)</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheffe comparisons</td>
<td>T &gt; I &gt; C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F$ (df = 2)</td>
<td>191.05*</td>
</tr>
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Notes: Scheffe comparisons are at the 0.05 significance level. Coding of variables: masculinity and femininity: seven-point scales with higher scores indicating higher levels of masculinity and femininity, respectively; androgyny: the standardized absolute value of the difference between masculinity and femininity, with scores closer to 0 representing a higher level of androgyny; hypermasculinity: $0 = \text{no (i.e. not hypermasculine)}, 1 = \text{yes (i.e. hypermasculine, one standard deviation or more above the mean masculinity score for the ideal president)}$. Means and standard deviations are for the unstandardized variables. *$p < 0.001$
The IP ($M = 0.14$) was perceived as significantly lower in hypermasculinity than Trump ($M = 0.47$) and no different in hypermasculinity from Clinton ($M = 0.15$). Thus, Clinton was perceived as more similar than Trump to the IP in hypermasculinity (see Figure 4).

Overall, based on Scheffe tests of pairwise comparisons, $H2$ was not supported. Instead, the IP was perceived as more similar to the female candidate than the male candidate on three of the four study variables.

$H3$ proposed that the IP would be perceived as more androgynous during the 2016 election than the 2008 election. For purposes of testing $H3$, data collected during the 2016 election for this study were combined in analyses with data collected during the 2008
election from business students at the same Northeastern US public university sampled by Powell and Butterfield (2011); see Powell and Butterfield (2011) for sample characteristics. Table III presents mean scores for the IP for androgyny as well as masculinity and femininity, the two Short BSRI (Bem, 1981a) dimensions from which the androgyny measure was derived. An ANOVA comparison indicated that the IP was perceived as significantly more androgynous during the 2016 election ($M = 0.74$) than the 2008 election ($M = 0.97$, $F = 7.32$, $p < 0.01$). Although IP masculinity scores did not differ between the 2008 and 2016 elections ($M = 5.25$ vs $5.28$, $F = 0.20$, ns), IP femininity scores significantly increased from the 2008 election ($M = 4.44$) to the 2016 election ($M = 4.92$, $F = 23.06$, $p < 0.001$).
Thus, $H3$ was supported, with the more androgynous IP profile during the 2016 election attributable to an increase in IP femininity scores since the 2008 election.

$H4$ proposed that individuals’ preferences for a particular presidential candidate would be related to their perceptions of an IP in a manner consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate. The distribution of candidate preferences for the 125 respondents who described an IP was 48 percent Clinton, 26 percent Trump, and 26 percent other. For purposes of testing $H4$, the IP profile was compared by ANOVAs for respondents who preferred Clinton vs those who preferred Trump (see Table IV). These IP profiles were then compared with profiles of the candidates themselves.

According to Table IV, the IP profile for Clinton supporters vs Trump supporters significantly differed in hypermasculinity, with a significantly higher proportion of Trump supporters favoring a hypermasculine IP than the proportion of Clinton supporters ($M = 0.24$ vs 0.07, $F = 6.11, p < 0.05$). This result was consistent with perceptions of Trump’s vs Clinton’s hypermasculinity reported in Table II, with Trump being perceived as significantly higher in hypermasculinity than Clinton according to a Scheffe comparison ($M = 0.47$ vs 0.15, $p < 0.05$). Because of this significant difference in IP hypermasculinity, we examined perceptions of Trump’s hypermasculinity for Trump vs Clinton supporters; Trump supporters perceived Trump himself as significantly higher in hypermasculinity than Clinton supporters did ($M = 0.76$ vs 0.30, $F = 21.74, p < 0.001$). However, there were no significant differences between Clinton and Trump supporters in IP masculinity, femininity, or androgyny.

Thus, $H4$ received limited support. In support of $H4$, respondents’ preferences for a particular presidential candidate, Clinton or Trump, were related to their perceptions of an IP in hypermasculinity in a manner consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate.
However, contrary to $H4$, candidate preferences did not predict perceptions of an IP in masculinity, femininity, or androgyny.

Because leader prototypes are associated with issues of sex as well as gender stereotypes, we also examined whether female and male respondents differed in their perceptions of an IP or the candidates. There were no significant differences according to ANOVAs by respondent sex in perceptions of an IP. The only significant differences in perceptions of the candidates were that female respondents described Clinton as significantly higher in masculinity and Trump as significantly lower in femininity than male respondents did. Complete results of these analyses are available from the senior author.

Discussion

This study, drawing on prior literature on the linkages between gender stereotypes and leader prototypes as well as unique aspects of the 2016 US presidential election, tested four hypotheses with survey data gathered just before the election. $H1$, that an “IP” would be perceived as higher in masculinity than femininity, was supported. $H2$, that the IP would be seen as more similar to the male presidential candidate (Trump) than to the female candidate (Clinton) was not supported. In fact, Clinton was seen as more similar to the IP than Trump was on three of the four measures. $H3$, that the IP would be seen as more androgynous during the 2016 election than the 2008 election, was supported. $H4$, that individuals’ preferences for a particular presidential candidate would be related to their perceptions of an IP in a manner consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate, was supported only for hypermasculinity.

The findings for $H1$ locate the current study in the long stream of research (cf. Koenig et al., 2011) that has found masculine traits prevailing over feminine traits in leader prototypes in many different settings. They are also consistent with findings specifically about presidential leadership in previous elections (e.g. Butterfield and Grinnell, 1998; Powell and Butterfield, 2011). In a sense, there is nothing particularly new in this finding; rather, it provides evidence of consistency with prior research. Of note, however, is that Hillary Clinton was also seen as significantly higher in masculinity than femininity, indicating she could be a viable candidate for president according to leader prototypes of the IP. And indeed Clinton won the popular vote over her opponent Donald Trump. But since Trump was also perceived as higher in masculinity than femininity, being seen as higher in masculinity than femininity (like an IP) does not explain the outcomes of the 2016 US presidential election, i.e. the winner and loser of the popular vote vs the electoral college vote.

Drawing on research following Schein’s (1973) think manager-think male paradigm (Koenig et al., 2011), $H2$ stated that the IP would be seen as more similar to the male presidential candidate than the female candidate. Results turned out essentially opposite to the predictions. Hillary Clinton was perceived as more similar to the IP than Donald Trump was in femininity, androgyny, and even hypermasculinity. Only for masculinity, for which Trump was perceived as higher and Clinton lower than the IP, were results mixed. Thus, candidate sex could explain why Clinton won the popular vote, but in a direction different from what was predicted. However, this explanation seems far-fetched given the preponderance of theory and research supporting the leader role’s being a male bastion.

An alternative explanation for the $H2$ findings is suggested by the nature of the 2016 campaign itself. Clinton was generally portrayed as the established (if not establishment) candidate (Newport, 2016), whose attributes might be seen as conforming with common expectations for a US President, thus seen as (more) similar to an IP. In contrast, Trump was portrayed as the candidate of change (Newport, 2016), and behaved in ways different from usual expectations for a president. Trump’s being perceived as more of a change agent than Clinton in behavioral style may explain why he won the electoral college vote.
However, female heads of state, especially the first woman to lead a nation, are often seen as symbols of change (Adler, 1999). Women’s being seen as outsiders in senior political leadership ranks dominated by men and as “beating the odds” in attaining these ranks may contribute to expectations of sweeping societal change when they are elected. Because she was the first female US major-party presidential candidate, Clinton may have been seen as more of a change agent than Trump, which may explain why she won the popular vote. Thus, both Trump and Clinton may have been seen as change agents or innovators, but for different reasons (Levine, 2017).

Perhaps androgyny provides an explanation for why Clinton won the popular vote. H3, that the IP would be seen as more androgynous during the 2016 election than the 2008 election, was based on research over the last four decades (Koenig et al., 2011) suggesting a lessening of the importance of masculinity (though still dominant) and an increase in the importance of femininity in perceived qualities of leadership. Given that Clinton was seen as more similar to the IP in androgyny than Trump was, an increasingly androgynous profile of the IP over time, which her candidacy may have contributed to creating, may have benefited her candidacy in terms of the popular vote.

Further, perhaps hypermasculinity provides an explanation for why Trump won the electoral college vote. H4, that individuals’ preferences for a particular presidential candidate would be related to their perceptions of an IP in a manner consistent with perceptions of their preferred candidate, was supported only for hypermasculinity: Trump supporters perceived an IP as significantly higher in hypermasculinity than Clinton supporters did (Table IV). Trump was perceived as much more hypermasculine than Clinton (Table II and Figure 4). Indeed, 76 percent of Trump supporters perceived Trump himself as hypermasculine, whereas “only” 30 percent of Clinton supporters did. In the eyes of Trump supporters, hypermasculinity may have been a virtue that contributed to his success in winning states that had a majority of voters looking for the kind of change that he represented, and ultimately led to his winning the electoral college vote.

Overall, these results suggest that the role of hypermasculinity (Mosher and Tomkins, 1988) in leader prototypes, newly examined in this study, warrants further scholarly attention. Hypermasculinity, as operationalized in this study, offered a possible explanation for the electoral college outcome that masculinity, the measure from which it was derived, did not. We recommend that future theory and research on the linkages between leader prototypes and gender stereotypes consider the potential role of hypermasculinity in leader prototypes in both an organizational and political context. We also recommend that further attention be devoted to the validity and reliability of the hypermasculinity measure developed for purposes of this study and that alternative measures be considered and tested.

Further, we recommend that the likely existence of multiple leader prototypes be taken into account in future theory and research on the linkages between gender stereotypes and leader prototypes. Foti et al. (2017, p. 264) suggested that “implicit leadership theories have a clearly defined center but fuzzy boundaries,” thereby acknowledging the presence of individual differences in ILTs. However, our findings suggest that leader prototypes in the political arena may systematically differ according to political preference, a key individual difference variable. People who prefer different political candidates in a given election may be talking past each other because they possess different leader prototypes, in this case different perceptions of hypermasculinity in an IP. Further theory and research on the role of political affiliation in both a political context and a business context (e.g. Netchaeva et al., 2017; Roth et al., 2017), and on the existence of multiple leader prototypes in a business context as well as a political context, is recommended.

It should be noted that the present study adopted Bem’s (1974) original conceptualization of androgyny as representing a balance of masculinity and femininity rather than an
alternative conceptualization that has received some attention. Androgyny has also been conceptualized as representing a high level of both masculinity and femininity (e.g. Spence and Helmreich, 1978), and early studies of androgyny in leader prototypes were based on this conceptualization (e.g. Powell and Butterfield, 1979, 1989). However, because Koenig et al.’s (2011) interpretation of meta-analytic results for Powell and Butterfield’s (1979) agency-communion paradigm, which represents the most comprehensive analysis of the body of empirical research in this field, was based on Bem’s (1974) original conceptualization of androgyny as a balance of masculinity and femininity, we relied on the Bem (1974) conceptualization. Further, the calculation of androgyny in leader prototypes in studies following the alternative conceptualization was based on the respondent’s masculinity and femininity self-scores on the Short BSRI (Bem, 1981a), which were not available in this study; thus, we could not operationalize androgyny as a high level of both masculinity and femininity in the same manner as such studies.

This study was subject to limitations. First, it was conducted in a state that had reliably voted for the Democratic candidate in presidential elections in recent decades; the proportions of Clinton vs Trump supporters in our samples roughly reflected the election results in this state. In other states that were more supportive of Trump’s than Clinton’s candidacy, the IP profile may have placed more of an emphasis on hypermasculinity and been more similar to Trump’s than Clinton’s leader profile. However, the results of comparisons of the IP profiles for Clinton vs Trump supporters in Table IV may have been applicable to comparable populations in other states. Second, results obtained from business students should not be generalized to other populations within the same state. Third, unmeasured factors besides the presence of the first female major-party presidential candidate may have contributed to the increase in IP androgyny from 2008 to 2016. Fourth, because all data were collected during the same time period (except for the 2008 data used for testing $H3$), inferences of causality should be made with caution. Finally, the USA as a nation has been characterized as having a societal culture that particularly emphasizes masculinity (Hofstede, 2001). Results about the linkages between gender stereotypes and leader prototypes in US presidential elections should not be generalized to elections in other nations, many of which have already had a female head of state (Adler, 1999) and/or place less emphasis on masculinity.

In conclusion, we are left with the question of what it would take for the US to have a female leader. Although Clinton (2016) acknowledged in her concession speech that “we still have not shattered that highest and hardest glass ceiling,” she added, “[...] but someday someone will.” Clinton’s legacy may be that she has contributed to a more androgynous profile of the IP that will benefit future female candidates. However, Trump’s legacy may be that he has contributed to a more hypermasculine profile of the IP that will benefit future hypermasculine candidates and disadvantage future female candidates. It will, of course, take field replications of this study (i.e. future presidential elections) to answer this question.

References


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