Who will be a Better Change Leader?: Schema-Based Leadership Perception on Followers' Commitment to Change

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We tested the effect of followers' perceived leadership schema congruence on leadership effectiveness in the organizational change context. Drawing on literature from implicit leadership theories (ILT) and social identity perspectives, we predicted that schema-based leadership perceptions – followers' perceived ILT congruence and leader's group prototypicality – explain leadership effectiveness, as measured by follower' commitment to change. We also investigated possible moderators, namely, followers' organizational identification and perceived uncertainty to change. Result of survey study (n=189) on employees of Korean firms supported our research prediction. ILT congruence and leader's group prototypicality were positively related to followers' commitment to change. Moreover, organizational identification positively moderated the effect of leader's group prototypicality on commitment to change. Meanwhile, perceived uncertainty to change showed negative moderation in ILT congruence but positive moderation in leader's group prototypicality, which can be expected from social cognition literature and social identity literature, respectively. Implications for further studies are also discussed.

Key words: Implicit leadership theories, Prototypicality, Leadership, Social identity theory, Organizational identification, Commitment to change

Ⅰ. Introduction

Leadership, a complex phenomenon, is one of the realms in organizational studies that has brought out considerable efforts, including schema-based leadership study, to be elucidated. From the study's initiation by Lord (1976), it has been consistently pursued by researchers and retained its status for active investigation (e.g., Braun, Peus, & Prey, 2018). The basic idea of schema-based leadership study is that leadership effectiveness can be explained by followers' cognitive process that involves matching between their idea (schema) of ideal leader and their perception

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of an actual leader (Lord & Hall, 2003). The approach has its unique strengths to illuminate followers′ side of leadership phenomenon, which is as important as traditionally sought leader-centric explanations (e.g., transformational leadership) (Bligh, 2014).

A notable feature of schema-based leadership literature is that it prefers mid-level group or team leadership setting to top-level strategic leadership setting for investigation. However, top-level leadership whose influence spans the whole organizational level has been central in leadership literature, because it facilitates the achievement of utmost organizational goals (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002). Such choice may be understood from the observation that top-level leadership lacks concrete psychological relationship between the leaders and the followers (e.g., Lord & Maher, 1993). However, we believe that leadership perception can also explain top-level leadership situation; thus, we hypothesized and tested the relationship in the top-level leadership situation.

We propose that followers′ leadership perception will provide a viable explanation to understand the effectiveness of top-level strategic leadership. Literature has suggested that schema-driven leadership cognition, the matching process between actual leader and perceivers′ mental representation of leader, influences shaping leadership effectiveness by deciding the degree of endorsement followers will confer to the leadership.

Implicit leadership theories (ILTs; Lord & Maher, 1993; Shondrick, Dinh, & Lord, 2010) and social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001; Hogg, van Knippenberg, & Rast, 2012b) are two perspectives that explain the mechanism.

Thus, in this study, we initially tested the effectiveness of followers′ schema-based leadership perception on leadership outcome in top-level leadership as predicted by the perspectives of ILT and social identity theory. As an outcome variable to examine leadership effectiveness, we chose followers′ commitment to change. Organizational change is one of the most important tasks of an organizational leader that requires significant contribution from followers (Yukl, 2012), and thus commitment to exerted change from followers' should be a focal variable to examine leadership effectiveness. More specifically, perception-based leadership effectiveness is expected to be more important in a turbulent situation such as organizational change; in a way, a leader is regarded as an agent of change who personifies the organization he/she leads (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), sometimes its reaches beyond actual leadership activities, coined as 'romance of leadership' (Meindl et al., 1985).

For a more thorough investigation, we also postulated and tested factors to moderate the relationship (i.e., organizational identification

and uncertainty to change). Organizational identification and uncertainty to change may be important both in theoretical and practical aspects in schema-based perception mechanisms in leadership effectiveness. Those two variables are expected to work initially followers' cognition level, which should be relevant in our research idea concerning leadership perception. And also, those are followers' general reactions expected in organization settings and also can be dealt by managerial intervention. Hence, we also tested the relationship in the current study.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Implicit leadership theories

Schema-based perception is a way people deal with limited cognitive resource problems. By drawing out stored information in memory and comparing it with the target, people can economize cognitive resource for perception; otherwise, they are required to invest additional cognitive resources to consider numerous individual information associated to the target (Fiske & Taylor, 2013).

As a subject of social cognition, leadership perception might also be driven by such schema-based processing. A basic tenet of the ILT perspectives (Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984; Lord & Maher, 1993) is that people have their own mental representation of an ideal leader (leader schema) like other social being and events. Leader perception would follow general schema-driven cognition principle; thus, a follower initially perceives target leader involving matching process between the actual leader's traits and followers' own leader schema. The result of the matching process may determine leadership effectiveness because successful perception as leader will trigger followers' attitude and behaviors associated with the leadership (Lord et al, 1984). ILTs (Lord & Maher, 1993), referring a term for relative theoretical perspectives, is a general term for the schema individuals use for leadership perception. As a sort of implicit theory, ILTs refer people's lay theory about the leader to guide information processing, containing prototypical characteristics of a leader and associated constructs (Lord & Shondrick, 2011), where the congruence defines followers' leadership perception and further leadership effectiveness (Epitropaki, Sy, Martin, Tram-Quon, & Topakas, 2013; Lord & Maher, 1993).

Implicit leadership theory can explain leadership effectiveness in several ways. First, followers' successful leadership perception, which means higher congruence between an actual leader and a perceiver's ILTs, can enhance leaders' capacity to influence because followers recognize them as leaders (Lord,

1976; Lord & Maher, 1993). As a result, the leader will have more discretion to exercise leadership behaviors described as idiosyncratic credits (Hollander, 1958). Moreover, such successful leadership perception can induce followers' favorable appraisal of leadership behavior; therefore, followers will more likely perceive and interpret leader-related information coherent with their schematic information and expectations rather than the exact, more individuating appraisal of actual traits or behaviors (Lord & Maher, 1993; Shondrick et al., 2010).

Empirical studies provide pieces of evidence that leaders who are perceived as highly congruent to followers' ILTs are evaluated as more effective (Fraser & Lord, 1988; Hogg, Hains & Mason, 1998; van Quaquebeke, van Knippenberg, & Brodbeck, 2011), received more respect (van Quaquebeke et al., 2011; van Quaquebeke & van Knippenberg, 2012), perceived as more charismatic (Ensari & Murphy, 2003; Martin & Epitropaki, 2001), and associated with higher organizational commitment (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005).

2.2 Social identity theory of leadership

As illustrated above, schema-based leadership perception provides a basic mode of leadership perception, a person's ILT as a guide. However, the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001; Hogg et al., 2013b) suggests that the schema for leader perception can change by the degree a perceiver's group membership is important to him/her. To elaborate it further, a leader's group prototypicality, which refers a person's exemplar or representativeness of certain group characteristics, becomes a guiding schema for leader perception when a follower's self is highly identified to his/her group such as organization (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003).

Like ILT congruence-based leadership, prototypicality-based leadership perception can enhance a leaders' capacity to influence the followers' recognition of them as a leader, which facilitates more favorable attribution of a leader. Moreover, social identity theory predicts that prototypicality-based leadership can exercise its own way to leadership effectiveness, as followers perceive highly prototypical leader more representative of their groups' characteristics and their behalves (Hogg, 2001; Hogg et al., 2013b). When a person's social identity is salient and thus one's self-concept is tied to a group, motivation to conform to the group norm will occur. Prototypical member, who exemplifies group representative characteristics, can be regarded as a source of group norm. Therefore, followers will seek for relevant group information from the prototypical member, and then such referent role of a leader can be a source of influence (Hogg, 2001; Platow, Haslam, Foddy, & Grace, 2003). Also, prototypicality can

promote followers' attraction due to social identity-based group liking (Hogg & Hains, 1996). From the mere fact of group membership, people display a more positive attitude to in-group leader (Kniffin, Wansink, Griskevicius, & Wilson, 2014). Therefore, a prototypical group leader, who embodies group characteristic best, receives high favor from group members (Hogg, 2001; Hogg, van Knippenberg & Rast, 2012a). Also, followers expect that a group prototypical leader will be group-oriented. They tend to perceive that prototypical leaders will support group interest (van Dijke & De Cremer, 2010), promote group status (Piero, Cicero, & Higgins, 2009), and be more trustworthy (Giessner, van Knippenberg, & Sleebos, 2009). Such belief of group-orientedness can work as a major source of influence (Keltner, van Kleef, Chen, & Kraus, 2008), and thus, prototypical leaders will exercise effective leadership with relatively fewer efforts (Giessner et al., 2009; van Dick & De Cremer, 2010). Finally, prototypicality-based leadership effectiveness mechanisms generate charismatic attribution to the prototypical leader as a whole (Platow, van Knippenberg, Haslam, van Knippenberg, & Spears, 2006). Empirical tests showed that prototypicality-based leadership actually contributes to leadership effectiveness outcomes, such as work effort (Cicero, Bonaiuto, Pierro, & van Knippenberg, 2008), creativity (Hirst, van Dick, & van Knippenberg, 2009), job satisfaction (Cicero, Pierro, & van Knippenberg, 2007; Pierro, Cicero, Bonaiuto, van Knippenberg, & Kruglanski, 2005), and turnover intention (Cicero, Pierro, & van Knippenberg, 2010; Pierro et al., 2005).

2.3 Schema-based leadership perception and top-level leadership: a view from the change leadership context

Another interesting point of literature on schema-based leadership might be its preference for explaining small group situation (e.g., teams). Although the literature did not openly rule out the possibilities, it has implicitly regarded that schema-based perception mechanism fits less with top-level leadership situation. For social identity theory of leadership, such interest might partly be rooted in its theoretical origin, which prefers to conduct the studies in settings called minimal group paradigm (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

However, schema-based leadership perception will reasonably explain leadership effectiveness in top-level leadership situation (e.g., the CEOs). Although organization can bear nested subgroups (e.g., teams), it is itself a genuine group that possesses psychological reality to its member (Haslam, 2004; Haslam, Postmes, & Ellemers, 2003). Thus, due to the salience of an organization for people who are in, people will regard the organization as a referent group in which social identity prin-

ciples work (e.g., group prototypicality-based leadership perception). If a person identified him/herself to an organization, the organization will become the basis for the psychologies of members (Haslam, 2004; Hogg & Terry, 2001). Some previous empirical studies tested the effect of group prototypicality in large non-profit organization settings, for example, university (Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001) or political party (Giessner et al., 2009), and found that group prototypicality predicts leadership effectiveness in such relatively broad, less interactive group context.

Leading change is one of the more pronounced activities in top-level leadership (Yukl, 2012). In such a situation, a leader is often regarded as an agent of change (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Considering that followers' leadership perception affects leadership effectiveness by inducing favorable cognitive and affective appraisal from them, such favorable appraisals become more important assets when it comes to a turbulent situation such as organizational change. Some others already elaborate that prototypicality-based leadership will be especially effective in change leadership (e.g., van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & Bobbio, 2008). In an initial empirical study to adopt change-related variable for leadership effectiveness, B. van Knippenberg and D. van Knippenberg (2005, Study 4) found that leader prototypicality is significantly related to followers' willingness to engage in organizational change, and thus, the posited relationship between leader self-sacrifice and willingness to change becomes insignificant when a leader is highly prototypical. Moreover, Pierro, Cicero, Bonaiuto, van Knippenberg, and Kruglanski (2005) found that the leader's group prototypicality is associated with followers' openness to change. From the perspective of social identity theory of leadership, such relationship may be rooted from the fact that prototypicality can work as a cue to self-continuity (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; van Knippenberg et al., 2008). Such sense of self-continuity can promote followers' pro-change attitudes and behaviors by reducing uncertainties that change can pose. Followers will interpret prototypical leaders as "agents of continuity" (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; van Knippenberg et al., 2008); therefore, resistance for change will be mitigated under prototypical leadership.

Top-level leadership phenomena seemed to be less alien in ILT based leadership discussions, since it works in individual level without pretext of followers' awareness of organizational membership although it could be generally assumed. Some researches on ILT based discussion dedicated on the concept such as transformational leadership and authentic leadership, which have been more easily associated in top-level leadership (Braun et al., 2018; Martin & Epitropaki, 2001).

For example, Martin and Epitropaki (2001) found that favorable ILT congruence rating is associated with followers' higher perception transformational leadership. Transformational leadership has been pointed as a key element (Eigenberg, Watson, and Pillai, 1999) and proved to positively influence followers' commitment to change (Herold, Fedor, Caldwell, & Liu, 2008).

2.4 The effect of followers' perceived uncertainty on leadership perception and effectiveness

The literature on social cognition has suggested that uncertainty may influence perceiver's mode of information processing to be more effortful. Weary, Jacobson, Edwards, and Tobin (2001) suggested that uncertainty perception, from difficulty to finding a causal relationship, causes people to pursue more effortful, systematic information processing that requires more cognitive transactions. Furthermore, Tiedens and Linton (2001) showed that emotions activated by certainty facilitate heuristic processing, whereas emotions activated by uncertainty triggers controlled, systematic processing.

Schema-based leadership perception (i.e., ILT congruence and leader's group prototypicality) is driven by automatic information processing (Lord & Hall, 2003; Lord & Maher, 1993); thus, uncertainty perception may influence leadership perception in a similar mechanism. To put it more precisely, uncertainty perception is expected to negatively influence the relationship between schema-based leadership perception and leadership effectiveness because it motivates more systematic processing on leader perception. Therefore, we expect that uncertainty perception may cause schema-based leadership perception to associate less with leadership outcome. As empirical evidence associated with the argument, Rast, Gaffney, Hogg, and Crisp (2012) found that followers perceiving self-related uncertainty relied less on schematic perception to endorse newly elected leader.

However, in prototypicality-based leadership perception, social identity principle may override the meta-cognitive effect of uncertainty. Hogg (2001) accentuated the prototypical leader's role in reducing uncertainty. Accordingly, people favor and pursue group prototypical leader in the situation that uncertainty raises concern to their self. In this situation, people may endorse group prototypical leader because this type of leader, who is epitomizing group's identity, might be perceived in followers' unconscious level to offer them clear idea in dealing with uncertain situation (Hogg, 2009). Therefore, as a source of group referent information, the value of group prototypical leader will be maximized. To test the idea, several researchers performed a series of related studies (Cicero et al., 2010; Pierro et al., 2005; 2007). They found that followers' role ambiguity

(Cicero et al., 2010) and need for cognitive closure (Pierro et al., 2005; 2007) moderate the relationship between the leader's group prototypicality and leadership effectiveness. Moreover, group prototypicality can work as an epistemic provider (Kruglanski, Pierro, Manneti & De Grada, 2006); hence, in the case when people faced epistemic needs and defined themselves in collective level, group prototypicality information becomes more important to them, thereby resulting to an enhanced endorsement of group prototypical leader.

Ⅲ. Hypothesis

3.1 Schema-based leadership perception on followers' commitment to change

Commitment to change is one of the well-studied variables to access leadership effectiveness in a change situation. It refers to "a mindset that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative" (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002, p.475). The concept is uniquely associated with the cognitive-intentional aspect of pro-change attitude of employees (Fedor, Herold, & Caldwell, 2006), which reflects a positive attitude toward and alignment with change and intention to support and willingness to work on behalf of change (Herold, Fedor, & Caldwell, 2006). Empirical studies show that commitment to change is related to employees' behavioral support of the change by facilitating employees' compliance and cooperation, and extra-role behavior to given change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Meyer, Srinivas, Lal, & Topolnytsky, 2007). Leadership is regarded as one of the most important sources to develop employees' commitment to change (e.g., Herold, Fedor, Caldwell, & Liu, 2008; Nohe, Michaelis, Menges, Zhang, & Sonntag, 2013) by facilitating followers' psychological alignment to change from influence to followers' self-concept (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Kark, & Shamir, 2002).

Followers' leadership perception is a mediating mechanism from leadership behavior to the outcome; therefore, we expect that followers' schema-based leadership perception can predict followers' commitment to change as well. Especially, commitment to change might be one of the leadership outcomes keenly related to followers' self-concept (Gardner et al., 2005), and therefore, cognitive and mental appraisals reflected from schema-based leadership perception would be a good predictor to their intention to emerge in organizational change. First, followers' ILT congruence perception is reported to be positively associated with perception of transformational

leadership (Martin & Epitropaki, 2001), which facilitates followers' commitment to change (Herold et al., 2008). Also, followers easily regard group prototypical leader as acting for their group's behalf because of prototypical leader's representativeness of their group (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Thus, it lessens followers reluctance to change. For example, B. van Knippenberg and D. van Knippenberg (2005, Study 4) found that a leader's group prototypicality is significantly related to followers' willingness to engage in organizational change. Pierro et al. (2005) also found that leader's group prototypicality is associated with followers' openness to change. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses.

Leading change is one of the more pronounced activities in top-level leadership (Yukl, 2012). In such a situation, a leader is often regarded as an agent of change (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Considering that followers' leadership perception affects leadership effectiveness by inducing favorable cognitive and affective appraisal from them, such favorable appraisals become more important assets when it comes to a turbulent situation such as organizational change. Some others already elaborate that prototypicality-based leadership will be especially effective in change leadership (e.g., van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & Bobbio, 2008).

Hypothesis 1a: Perceived ILT congruence of an organizational leader is positively related to followers' commitment to change.

Hypothesis 1b: Perceived organizational leader's group prototypicality is positively related to followers' commitment to change.

3.2 The moderating role of followers' organizational identification

As suggested earlier, ILT congruence and leader prototypicality are the criteria for followers' leadership perception. ILT represents a follower's mental image of an ideal leader, whereas leader prototype indicates a mental image of group representative member. These two kinds of leadership schemas are qualitatively different; thus, which schema will take the dominant role becomes an important question to understand schema-based leadership perception (Lord & Hall, 2003; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). In responding to the question, the social identity theory of leadership provides the answer by arguing that self-concept level will work as a criterion to decide the mode to be taken (Hogg, 2001; Hogg et al., 1998; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003).

The organization is a group where leadership processes occurred; therefore, identification to the organization will cause a corresponding change in followers' mind in which

social identity principles become effective (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Terry, 2000). The organization is a type of social group that shares a significant part in people's lives and thus becomes an important source of self (Albert, Ashforth, & Dutton, 2000; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Organizational identification is defined as "the perception of oneness with or belonging to an organization, where the individual defines him or her in terms of the organization(s) in which he or she is a member" (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p. 104). It refers to the situation that a person categorizes himself or herself as a member of a certain organization. If one identifies highly to an organization, he or she will embrace the norm of the organization and integrate its view in mind; hence, he or she is more likely to display pro-organizational attitudes and behaviors (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). In a study performed in the Dutch national postal guide, Van Dijke and De Cremer (2010) examined the relationship between employees' organizational identification and supervisors' prototypicality. They found that followers' perception of the supervisor's group prototypicality influences their perception of the supervisor's benevolence and charisma; the result is more strongly prevalent among employees highly identified to the organization.

As organization identification reflects the situation that leader's group prototypicality becomes dominant schema for followers' leadership perception, which will eventually lead to leadership effectiveness, we expect it has the same influence on employees' commitment to change. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Organizational identification positively moderates the relationship between perceived leader's group prototypicality and followers' commitment to change.

3.3 The moderating role of employees' perceived uncertainty to change

Followers' uncertainty to change is a major byproduct during organizational changes (Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia & Irmer, 2007; Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish & Difonzo, 2004; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Change process often involves follower's status (e.g., current position and future role) (Bordia et al., 2004); therefore, these expected consequences of change is directly associated with their existential concerns not only in terms of basic livelihood dimension but also in their self-associated dimension (Eilam & Shamir, 2005). Considering the centrality of organizational life in society today, uncertainty from organizational changes will be such a grave problem to organizational members. Thus, people will distinctively perceive change-related uncertainty, and the resulting perceived un-

certainty to change will influence followers' mind in greater degrees.

Therefore, having a salient experience of uncertainty perception, we expect that followers' perceived uncertainty to change will influence schema-based leadership perception processes the way we elaborated previously. More specifically, we predict that followers' perceived uncertainty to change will negatively affect the relationship between ILT congruence and followers' commitment to change from uncertainty's effect on their information processing (Weary et al., 2001). By contrast, in prototypicality-based leadership perception, perceived uncertainty to change will positively influence the relationship between prototypicality and followers' commitment to change from social identity-based effectiveness (Hogg, 2009; Hogg, 2012).

Hypothesis 3a: Perceived uncertainty to change negatively moderates the relationship between perceived leader's ILT congruence and followers' commitment to change.

Hypothesis 3b: Perceived uncertainty to change positively moderates the relationship between perceived leader's group prototypicality and followers' commitment to change.

Ⅳ. Method

4.1 Sample and procedures

We collected survey data from several firms in Korea. We initially distributed questionnaires to two companies currently experiencing organizational level change. One company was a mid-sized company producing semiconductor component, and the other company was a small-sized financial service company. However, due to a low response rate (20.8%), we additionally collected survey data from part-time MBA students in a university in Seoul. Data collection from MBA students may introduce some validity concerns; thus, we tried to rule out such possibilities by including parser items in the questionnaire. Hence, based on the responses from the parser items, we dropped out the respondents who did not experience organizational change. We wanted to concentrate on organizational level leadership (i.e., CEO); therefore, we eliminated responses from respondents who worked in extremely small-sized companies (the number of employees was less than 50) where top leadership might not be sufficiently distinctive from supervisory leadership.

After sorting out irrelevant responses, we finally obtained 189 responses for data analysis. Respondents were 75.7% male, and the average age was 34.7 years (SD = 5.8). Of the

total respondents, 91.5% were college graduates and above, and 86.2% of the respondents held middle managerial position and below. The average tenure of the respondents was 6.9 years (SD = 5.9). We also asked the number of years respondents worked under the current CEO, and the average was 3.5 years (SD = 4.2).

4.2 Measures

4.2.1 Implicit leadership theory congruence

We assessed the followers' perception of ILT congruence of CEO with Korean translation measure suggested by Cronshaw and Lord (1987). Among the original five items, we removed an item ("The CEO should definitely be leader again") because it possibly made respondents uncomfortable in answering the question. Items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, and the sample question was "The CEO is very typical of a leader." The internal consistency coefficient for the scale was .92.

4.2.2 Leader's group prototypicality

For the followers' perception of the CEO's group prototypicality, we applied the four items from Platow and van Knippenberg (2001) and B. van Knippenberg and D. van Knippenberg (2005) translated in Korean. This measure on prototypicality was generally used in social identity theory-based research (e.g., Giessner et al., 2009; Hogg et al., 1998; Pierro et al., 2005; van Dijke & De Cremer, 2010). The sample question was "The CEO represents what is characteristic about the company." Items were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, and the internal consistency coefficient for the scale was .72.

Although ILT and leader prototypicality were separate constructs, there may be confusion for some respondents because of their common characteristic of leadership perception schema. Thus, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify the construct independence. Two-factor model that has separate dimensions for ILT and prototypicality yielded better model fit indices than one-factor model; $\chi^2(19) = 4.34$, $p < .001$; GFI = .90; CFI = .92; NNFI = .89; RMSEA = .13; SRMR = .77 in two-factor model, whereas $\chi^2(20) = 5.33$, $p < .001$; GFI = .87; CFI = .90; NNFI = .86; RMSEA = .15; SRMR = .88 in one-factor model.

4.2.3 Organizational identification

To measure respondents' organizational identification, we adopted the Korean version of Ellemers, Kortekaas, and Owerkerk's measure (1999), which was provided by Cho, Lee, and Kim (2014). This measure has 10 items with three sub-dimensions, namely, social self-

categorization, group commitment, and group self-esteem. The following are sample items for each dimension: "I identify with other members of my company" (social self-categorization; three items), "I would like to continue working with my coworker in my company" (group commitment; three items), and "I feel good about my company" (group self-esteem; four items)", measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale. We conducted CFA to examine the validity of our measurement with three-sub-dimensional model and unidimensional model. Consistent with the original item structure, the model with three sub-dimensions showed a good model fit. Although the overall chi-square of the model was not supportive (66.124 with 32 degrees of freedom), we received favorable goodness of fit indices (GFI = .93; CFI = .933; NNFI = .90; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .05). The model fit indices of the unidimensional model were slightly inferior to the three-subdimensional model but displayed acceptable values. We also calculated the internal consistency coefficient, and the result was .82.

4.2.4 Perceived uncertainty to change

To assess the followers' perceived uncertainty to change, we adopted the four-item measure developed by Rafferty and Griffin (2006). The sample question was "I am often uncertain about how to respond to change." Items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale, and the internal consistency coefficient for the scale was .79.

4.2.5 Commitment to change

We adopted the four-item measure of Fedor, Caldewell, and Herold (2006) to assess the followers' commitment to change. A sample item was "I intend to fully support my leader (CEO) during this change." Items were measured in 5-point Likert-type scale. The internal consistency coefficient was .79.

4.2.6 Control variables

Age, gender, job position, tenure, and the number of years working under the current CEO were control variables in the study. Gender was a dummy variable coded (0 = male and 1 = female). Job positions (1 = staff; 2 = senior staff; 3 = junior manager; 4 = manager; 5 = senior manager and above) were also categorically measured. Age, tenure, and years working under the current CEO were included as scale variables.

Ⅴ. Result

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlation between variables. All

〈Table 1〉 Descriptive statistics and correlations between study variables

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5
1. ILT Congruence	3.53	0.87	-				
2. Group Prototypicality	3.10	0.70	.64**	-			
3. Organizational Identification	5.04	0.82	.34**	.35**	-		
4. Uncertainty to Change	3.63	1.05	-.22**	-.23**	-.36**	-	
5. Commitment to Change	3.53	.72	.55**	.47**	.45**	-.31**	-

Note. $N = 189$, ** $p < .01$

study variables showed statistically significant correlations, except for commitment to change to uncertainty to change. Interestingly, the result showed that top-level leader's ILT congruence has moderate to strong relationship with group prototypicality (r=.64, $p < .01$). This result suggests the possibility that followers might not have sharp distinction between ILT congruent leader and group prototypical leader.

For hypothesis testing, we conducted a series of hierarchical regression and subsequent indirect effect analyses. Table 2 presents the result of regression analysis.

Hypothesis 1 was derived to test the direct effect of schema-based leadership perception on followers' commitment to change. First, we entered the control variables in the regression model, and none showed a significant relationship. Then, we entered ILT congruence and leader prototypicality in the model. Both ILT congruence and leader prototypicality were significantly and positively related to followers' commitment to change; for ILT congruence (H1a), $\beta = .420$, $p < .001$, and for leader prototypicality (H1b), $\beta = .153$, $p < .05$ (see Table 2, Model 1). Thus, both hypotheses were supported.

To test the moderating role of organizational identification on prototypicality to a commitment to change, we first added organizational identification in the model. The main effect of organizational identification was significant ($\beta = .218$, $p < .001$), and the effect of leader prototypicality became insignificant. Then, we entered leader prototypicality × organizational identification interaction term. The regression analysis result showed that interaction was significantly related to the followers' commitment to change ($\beta = .148$, $p < .01$). Thus, we found initial support for hypothesis 2 (Table 2, Model 2).

Then, we conducted simple slope analyses (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003) to examine further support for hypothesis 2. For highly identified followers, prototypicality was positively and significantly related to followers' commitment to change ($\beta = .48$, t(180)

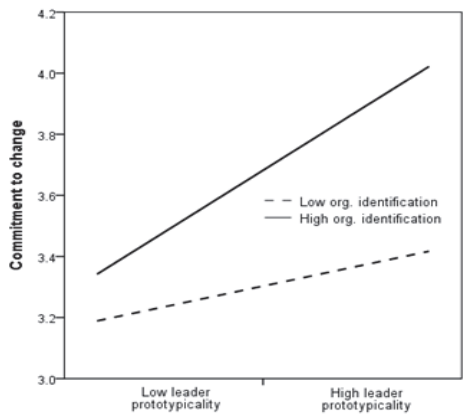
〈Table 2〉 Result of hierarchical regression analysis

DV = Commitment to change	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
Controls						
Gender	.116	.898	.039	.686	.063	1.096
Age	.205	1.437	.121	1.176	.200	1.095
Position	.097	1.522	.168	1.876	.088	.965
Tenure	.037	-.224	-.048	-.632	-.055	-.721
Years working with the CEO	.084	.640	.049	.831	.021	.345
Main effects						
ILT congruence	.420***	5.585	.385***	5.335	.406***	.584
Leader prototypicality	.153*	2.054	.088	1.223	.137	1.889
Org. identification			.218***	3.619		
Uncertainty to change					-.154**	-2.704
Interaction effects						
Leader prototypicality × Org. identification			.148**	2.705		
ILT congruence × Uncertainty to change					-.204**	2.687
Leader prototypicality × Uncertainty to change					.235**	3.060
Model						
R^2	.417***		.480***		.470***	
ΔF	41.648***		7.315**		4.995**	
ΔR^2	.268***		.021**		.030**	

Note. N = 189; Standardized coefficients are reported; Centered variables were used for interaction analysis.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

= 5.50, $p < .001$), whereas for low identifiers, the relationship between prototypicality and commitment to change turned out to be weaker although statistically insignificant (β = .16, t(180) = 1.67, ns). (See Figure 1.)

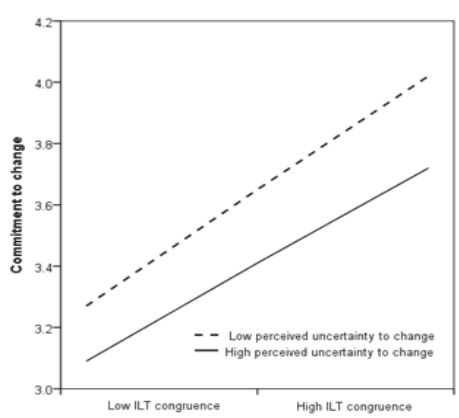
Then, we tested the role of the followers' perceived uncertainty to change on the hypothesized relationship. After entering control variables and the two main effect variables, we added uncertainty to change into the model. Perceived uncertainty to change was negatively related to followers' commitment to change (β = -.154, $p < .01$). Then, we entered the interaction terms for each leadership perception



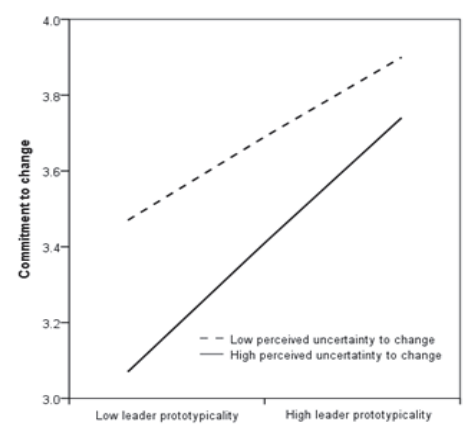
〈Figure 1〉 The relationship between leader prototypicality and followers' commitment to change as a function of organizational identification

schema. ILT congruence × uncertainty to change interaction showed negative effect on followers′ commitment to change (β = -.204, p 〈 .01) (H3a), whereas prototypicality × uncertainty to change interaction showed positive and significant effect (β = .235, p 〈 .01) (H3b; see Table 2, Model 3). Thus, we also found supporting pieces of evidence for the hypothesized moderating role of uncertainty to change.

To examine additional supports for the relationship, we also conducted a set of simple slope analyses. First, we examined the moderating role of perceived uncertainty to change on ILT congruence-based leadership perception. The result showed that followers perceiving low uncertainty to change displayed greater commitment to change in ILT congruence-based leadership perception (H3a) (β = .43, t(180) = 6.72, p 〈 .001), than followers with high uncertainty to change (β = .36, t(180) = 5.72,



〈Figure 2a〉 The relationship between ILT congruence and followers' commitment to change as a function of perceived uncertainty to change



〈Figure 2b〉 The relationship between leader prototypicality and followers' commitment to change as a function of perceived uncertainty to change

$p < .001$). However, in prototypicality-based leadership perception, the pattern was reversed. Although the overall level of followers' commitment to change was also higher in low uncertainty perception, in prototypicality-based leadership perception, followers with high uncertainty to change tended to rely more on prototypicality information on commitment to change ($\beta = .48$, $t(180) = 5.33$, $p < .001$) than followers with low perceived uncertainty to change ($\beta = .30$, $t(180) = 3.51$, $p < .001$) (see Figure 2a,b).

Additionally, we tested the possible relationship between ILT congruence and leader prototypicality suggested in correlation. We conducted separate regression analysis with commitment to change regressed on ILT congruence, the relationship was moderated by leader prototypicality. The interaction term turned out to be statistically insignificant ($\beta = 0.025$, *ns*), so we could not find supporting evidences for the relationship.

Ⅵ. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study may contribute to the literature in several ways. First, we provide further evidence to support the relationship between schema-based leadership perceptions and leadership effectiveness. Although the idea was empirically tested in former literature, our study has unique strengths because it was conducted in a field setting and in the organizational-level leadership, which was rarely tested in the literature. We also expect that our finding of the effect of uncertainty perception on leadership effectiveness will broaden understanding of schema-driven processes in leadership outcome. We hypothesized and found that uncertainty perception influences each perception mode with opposite direction. A finding that uncertainty to change negatively moderated the effect of ILT congruence based-leadership perception can pose an interesting question to the current literature because previous theoretical literature suggested contrary prediction (e.g., Lord & Maher, 1991). On the basis of the social cognition findings, we instead find that uncertainty perception negatively influences the relationship between ILT congruence and commitment to change. This result provides further justification to search for cognitive mechanisms to better understand the leadership phenomenon. Meanwhile, the positive effect of uncertainty perception to prototypicality-based leadership effectiveness was mainly based on the argument of social identity theory (Hogg, 2009; 2012). Along with previous studies that offered related findings (e.g., Cicero et al., 2010; Pierro et al., 2005; 2007), our study provides empirical support for the prediction to show the effect on followers' commitment to change.

One of the distinctive aspects of the present study is that our study proposed and tested a perception-based leadership effectiveness model in strategic leadership situation (i.e., CEOs and top managers). Although physically distant and therefore deficient in direct interactions with followers, organizational leaders are the salient figure in organizational life; hence, defining whether he or she fits the personal schema on an ideal leader or prototypical character of the organization will be the target of perception (c.f., Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Thus, our finding will broaden the understanding of strategic leadership by accentuating the role of followers' perception on leadership effectiveness. Therefore, given the current state of the literature on the organizational leadership and perception-based leadership, our finding will contribute to expand the domains in the literature.

The present study may provide implication to change leadership literature. We found that followers' perception of a leader based on leader characteristics influences followers' commitment to change. Although previous studies tested the effect of prototypicality-based leadership perception on followers' change orientation (e.g., Pierro et al., 2007; van Knippenberg et al., 2008), no studies have tested the role of ILT-based leadership perception and leader prototypicality on followers' change-oriented intention in a similar context. Thus, we provide an initial trial to test the relationship. The current study also accentuates the importance of follower-side factors to investigate change leadership effectiveness. Our findings suggest that organizational identification will be an important factor to facilitate followers' commitment to change both by directly motivating followers and by strengthening the efficacy of prototypical leader. However, the effect of uncertainty perception in change may be more complex; ILT congruence-based leadership perception follows the socio-cognitive rule of information processing; therefore, the relationship becomes weaker as uncertainty to change heightens. By contrast, prototypicality-based leadership perception is driven by social identity principle; hence, high prototypicality becomes a remedy for difficulty posed by organizational change. It could be more important in the situation with an unlikely identification-based support to change.

Thus, we can find some practical implications for the current study. First, our findings illustrate the importance of the followers' perception of leaders in leadership effectiveness. Especially, we suggested the model in which followers' mental image of a leader largely determines leadership effectiveness. Thus, we can utilize such information in appointing leaders or in facilitating image management of leaders. Especially in the latter, our study was conducted in organizational leadership situations; therefore, impression management

might be more effective than face-to-face, supervisory leadership. Also, we found that organizational identification and leader prototypicality will be more beneficial in tough organizational change situation that poses severe uncertainty to followers. Although congruence to personal leadership criterion (i.e., ILT) generally displayed strong effect, our findings suggest that social identity-based leadership mechanism may fare better in a critical change situation. In other words, "a leader like us" can be more effective than "a leader-like leader" in a change situation. Moreover, when the change is led by a leader-like leader, eliminating possible sources of uncertainty can be a way to strengthen the leadership.

6.1 Limitations and suggestions for future research

First, our choice of cross-sectional survey method possibly obscures the interpretation of the results. We hypothesized that trait-based perception influences followers' endorsement of leader, thereby resulting in leadership outcome. However, in the current research design, we cannot rule out the possibility of reverse causality that recognition of leadership outcome causes evaluation of leader. Although we chose a cross-sectional survey to enhance the mundane reality of the findings, further experimental studies will be helpful to elucidate the causal relationship inherent in the research question.

In accessing followers' schema-based leadership perception, we asked the followers' subjective impression of perceived congruence between their ideal leader image and their actual leaders. It has been the accepted and popular way of accessing the construct. However, more rigorous research designs such as additionally asking the content of followers' leadership schema (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Martin & Epitropaki, 2001) might be considered. As suggested by Edwards (1994), the use of the congruence score requires considerable care. We assessed the perception in a relatively distant leader; hence, only reporting subjective perception may amplify the possibility of measurement bias. Therefore, more rigorous measurement should be adopted in future studies.

Along with the methodological improvement suggested above, future research can contribute to further understanding of the research problem in several ways. First, more empirical tests will be needed to investigate the schema-based leadership perception in organizational leadership settings. Although we found supporting pieces of evidence, some literature provides a possible counterargument, especially prototypicality-based leadership perception may be vulnerable for such criticisms (e.g., Halevy et al., 2011; Hogg et al, 2012b). For example, Halevy and colleagues (2011) showed

that leaders' group representative was less effective than leaders' vision statement to exercise leadership effectiveness including members' identification of group and their motivations. Thus, studying the effect of schema-based leadership perception on organizational leadership setting will be needed to secure further rationale of the research problem.

In this study, we focused on follower-side factors. However, finding the leader-side factors or environmental factors will be equally fruitful. Actually, some studies on leadership perception have been increasingly interested in interactive aspects of the processes (e.g., Giessner, van Knippenberg, van Ginkel & Sleebo, 2013; Steffens, Haslam, & Reicher, 2014; van Quaquebeke et al., 2011). Also, socio-cognitive perspectives will be beneficial to elucidate leadership phenomenon. Thus, introducing multiple actors of the relationship or diverse theoretical standpoints will further contribute to our understanding of the question.

Finally, investigating the long-term effect of schema-based leadership perception will be helpful because this effect may differ among future and current leaders (Rast et al., 2012). Therefore, we expect that taking the longitudinal approach will also be rewarded.

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스키마기반 리더십 지각이 부하의 변화 몰입에 미치는 영향

이은영* · 조봉순**

요 약

본 연구는 부하가 지각한 리더의 리더십 스키마 일치성(leadership schema congruence)이 부하의 변화 몰입에 미치는 영향을 탐색하였다. 암묵적 리더십 이론(Implicit leadership theory) 논의와 리더십 사회정체성 이론(Social identity theory of leadership)에 의거하여 본 연구는 부하가 지각한 리더의 암묵적 리더십(ILT) 일치도와 리더의 집단 전형성(group prototypicality)이 부하의 변화몰입과 정적으로 연관되며, 부하의 조직 동일시 수준과 변화 불확실성이 해당 관계를 조절할 것으로 예측하였다. 실증을 위해, 국내 기업에 재직하는 직원을 대상으로 설문을 수집하였으며(n=189), 회귀분석을 통해 연구문제를 검증하였다. 분석결과, 부하가 지각한 CEO의 암묵적 리더십 일치도와 집단 전형성은 이들의 변화 몰입에 정적으로 관련되었으며, 부하의 조직 동일시 수준은 집단 전형성 지각과 변화몰입간의 관계를 긍정적으로 조절하였다. 변화 불확실성은 암묵적 리더십 일치도와 변화 몰입간의 관계를 부정적으로 조절한 반면 집단 전형성과 변화 몰입간의 관계는 긍정적으로 조절하였다. 그리고 학문적 및 실무적 시사점을 논의하였다.

주제어: 암묵적 리더십 이론, 전형성(prototypicality), 사회정체성 이론, 조직 동일시, 변화 몰입

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