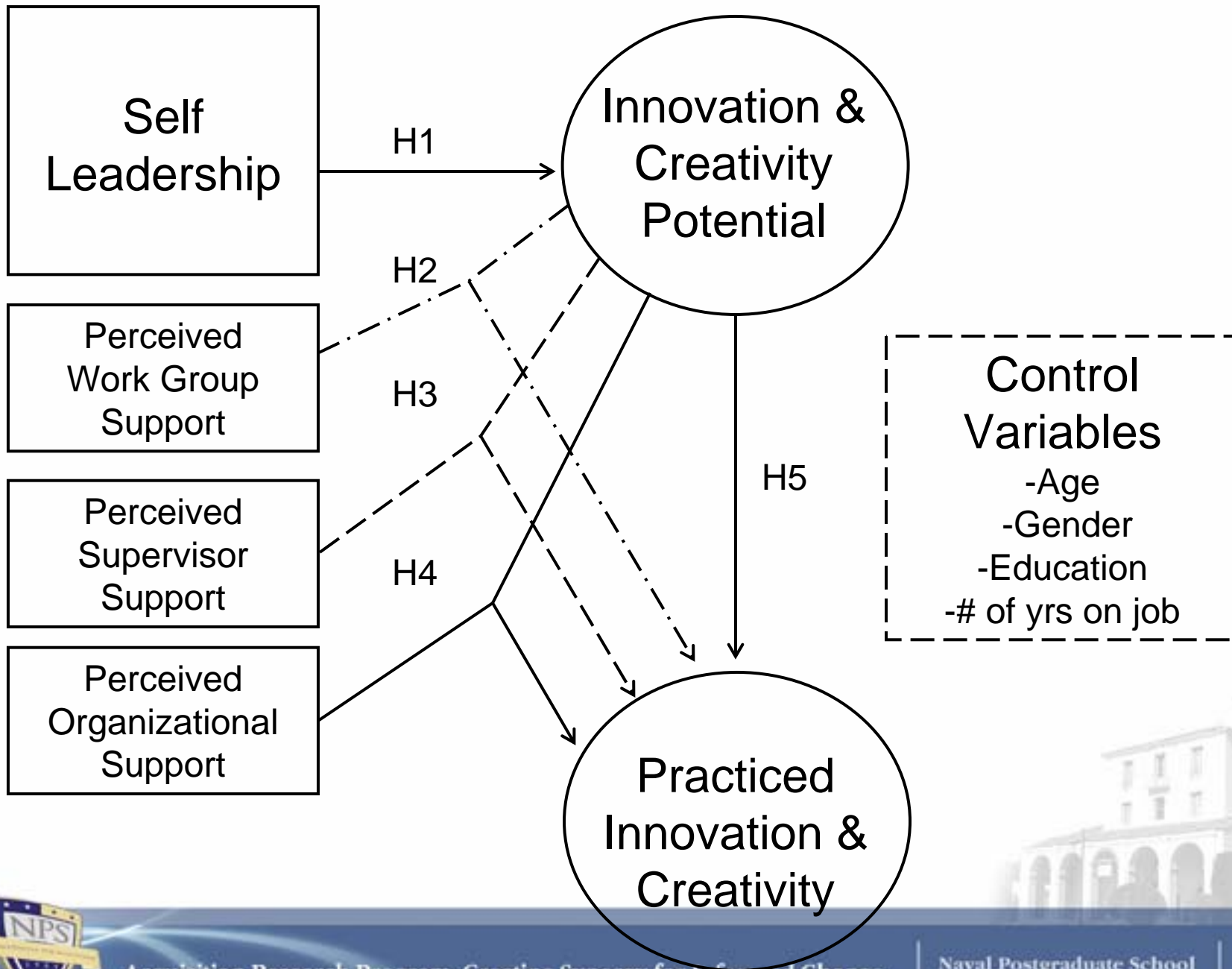




Acquisition Research Program:
Creating Synergy for Informed Change

Self-Leadership and Creativity Differences In Line and Supervisory Defense Acquisition Employees

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Creativity

- An ability to produce novel yet appropriate ideas in order to maximize organizational efficiencies, solve complex problems, and improve overall effectiveness.

(cf. Barron and Harrington, 1981;
Guilford, 1950; Martindale, 1989;
Sternberg & Lubart, 1999)



Creative Potential and Practiced Creativity

- Creative Potential - The creative capacity, skills and abilities that the individual possesses (Hinton, 1968, 1970; Tierney & Farmer, 2002).
- Practiced Creativity - The perceived opportunity to utilize creativity skills and abilities on the job (inspired by the research of Amabile, 1996; Hinton, 1968).



Creative Potential and Practiced Creativity

- Gap between creative potential and practiced creativity represents untapped organizational resources.
- Identifying untapped resources may be especially important in defense acquisition organizations that are continually being told to “do more with less.”



Self-Leadership

- The process of influencing oneself to establish the self-direction and self-motivation needed to perform
- Three Categories of Strategies
 - Behavior Focused
 - Natural Reward
 - Constructive Thought Strategies



Creativity and Self-Leadership

- Theorists have often suggested a relationship between self-leadership and creativity (e.g., DiLiello & Houghton, 2006; Houghton & Yoho, 2005; Manz & Sims, 2001).
- This relationship may be partially founded on the concepts of autonomy and self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Yun, Cox, & Sims, 2006).



Current Study Purposes

- To examine the relationships between self-leadership and creativity in the context of a defense acquisition organization.
- Specifically, to examine differences in self-leadership, creativity and perceived organizational support for creativity between line and supervisory defense acquisition employees.



Current Study Contributions

- Clarify the nature of the relationship between self-leadership and creativity.
- Examine the role of organizational support in facilitating practiced creativity
- Among the first to examine differences in self-leadership, creativity and perceptions of support between line and supervisory employees (critical for reducing gap between creative potential and practiced creativity)
- Increase knowledge of creativity and self-leadership in the context of defense acquisitions



Method: Sample and Procedures

- Primary data were collected from the Army Contracting Agency (ACA) via an online survey.
- 37% of 1900 employees (high response rate)
- Listwise deletion for missing data resulted in a final overall sample of 654.
- Divided into two subsamples (i.e., supervisory employees, N=215; and line employees, N=439)



Method: Measures

- Self-Leadership: 13 items from the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (Houghton & Neck, 2002)
- Creative Potential and Practiced Creativity: 6 items each (DiLiello & Houghton, 2007).
- Perceived Organizational Support: 6 items from “Keys: Assessing the Climate for Creativity,” used with the permission of the Center for Creative Leadership (Amabile et al., 1999).



Method: Analysis

- t-tests: Mean differences between line and supervisory employees
- Regression Analyses: Effects of self-leadership, perceived support and organizational level on creative potential, practiced creativity and gap scores



Results

Table 1
Means and standard deviations (in parentheses)

	SL[^]	CP*	PC*	GS*	OS*
Supervisors <i>N = 215</i>	49.55 (6.10)	25.47 (2.98)	23.58 (4.04)	1.89 (4.10)	20.00 (5.40)
Line Employees <i>N = 439</i>	48.92 (7.43)	24.65 (3.03)	20.97 (4.51)	3.68 (4.60)	18.54 (5.46)

Note. SL=Self-Leadership, CP=Creative Potential, PC=Practiced Creativity, GS=Gap Score, OS=Perceived Organizational Support.

* $p < .001$; [^] $p = .247$, *ns*



Results

Table 2
Summary of Regression Analyses Results

Independent Variables	Model 1: β	Creative Potential p - value	Model 2: β	Practiced Creativity p - value	Model 3: β	Gap Score p - value	Model 4: β	Organizational Support p - value
Self-Leadership	.356	.000	.158	.000				
Perceived Organizational Support			.563	.000	-.551	.000		
Organizational Level	.113	.002	.195	.000	-.117	.000	.125	.001
Adjusted R ²		.140		.426		.331		.014
F Statistic		54.25		162.84		162.53		10.32
p - value		.000		.000		.000		.001



Discussion

- Self-leadership was significantly related to creative potential and practiced creativity for both line and supervisory employees
- Line employees reported significantly lower levels of creative potential, practiced creativity and perceptions of organizational support for creativity along with higher gap scores in comparison to supervisors



Implications

- Self-leadership is a primary tool for facilitating creativity at all organizational levels
- Active organizational support for creativity may be the key for reducing the gap between creative potential and practiced creativity that represents untapped creative resources
- This gap is much more pronounced among line employees, who generally perceive less organizational support for utilizing their creative resources than supervisors



Implications

- Organizational interventions (e.g., Neck & Manz, 1996; Stewart, Carson, & Cardy, 1996) designed to increase self-leadership capabilities at all levels and to increase perceptions of organization support for creative practices among line employees in defense acquisition organizations would be well advised.



Limitations

- Homogeneous sample
- Self-report items collected utilizing a single survey at a single point in time



Future Research

- Further examine organizational support as a moderator of the relationship between creative potential and practiced creativity and as a key mechanism for reducing the gap between these concepts in organizations.
- Subdivide perceptions of support for creativity from the organizational level to the work group and supervisory levels (e.g., DiLiello & Houghton, 2006).

