

Sink or Swim: Examining the CCoR's Self-Rated Reluctance and Leadership Behaviours

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Abstract

Though the opportunity to become a leader is often thought to be a positive experience and a chance to advance one's knowledge and skill sets, there is nonetheless a growing phenomenon whereby high potential individuals turn down or simply refuse to take up leadership roles. The purpose of this study is to examine reluctance to lead (RTL) among a sample of naval/officer cadets (N/OCdts) at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC). The aim of this research is to understand how reluctance may affect a range of cadets' leadership behaviours. Seventy-seven N/OCdts at RMC completed online survey measures evaluating their RTL, leadership self-efficacy (LSE) and self-rated leadership behaviours. Bivariate correlational analysis revealed no relationship between RTL and LSE, nor between RTL and self-rated leadership behaviours. These results indicate that, though some at RMC are reluctant to take on leadership, this reluctance does not appear to be an impediment to their self-reported leadership behaviours. These results suggest that consistent with Epitropaki's (2018) assertion, reluctance to lead may not be a barrier to effective leadership, and further research is needed to explore the factors underlying RTL and its potential impact on leadership emergence and development.

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Despite the common assumption that leadership is a universally desired role, a burgeoning literature suggests this is not always the case (e.g., Bhanugopan et al., 2017; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Epitropaki, 2018). Indeed, upwards of 70% of North American employers cite a lack of leadership emergence that is and will continue to impact their organizational performance (e.g., Ashford & DeRue, 2012). This despite billions of dollars being invested into a growing leadership development industry (Ashford & DeRue, 2012). Why otherwise qualified potential leaders choose not to enter leadership is a relatively new area of theorizing (e.g., Aycan et al., 2024; Epitropaki, 2018). Aycan et al. (2024) define reluctance to lead (RTL) as “the hesitation of a high-potential individual both before and after the role occupancy (i.e., individuals’ hesitations about their fit to the role while it is practiced)” (p. 438). To date, very little research has been conducted on so-called ‘reluctant leaders’ (e.g., Anderson et al., 2011; Epitropaki, 2018). The existing literature indicates that RTL may stem from internal or external factors (e.g., Anderson et al., 2011; Aycan & Sheila, 2019; Epitropaki, 2018; Lee-Cunningham et al., 2023). Internal factors can be conceptualized as individual difference variables that contribute to reluctance and may include low levels of motivation to lead (MTL) and leadership self-efficacy (LSE), high worries about leadership and perceiving that leadership is a risky endeavour (e.g., Aycan & Sheila, 2019; Epitropaki, 2018; Lee-Cunningham et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2020). In terms of external influences, several factors that may inhibit leadership aspirations include vast workloads, increased responsibility, inadequate training, lack of organizational support, and insufficient incentives (e.g., Anderson et al., 2011). Arguably, the same factors that might influence someone to avoid the pursuit of leadership in the first instance,

may also influence their experiences when they find themselves in a leadership role that does not match their interests or aspirations.

I propose that RTL must be considered in light of the broader withdrawal and turnover literature. Ayca et al.'s (2024) definition of RTL largely aligns with the previous literature on employee preference and turnover antecedents in that they both emphasize identity and competency related factors as being related to hesitancy or enthusiasm towards the job (Hom et al., 2012). Until now however, relatively little research has been undertaken to understand these antecedents or outcomes of RTL (Ayca et al., 2024; Tussing, 2018). One exception is a study by Fan et al. (2023) that focused on the effects of leaders' reluctance on their laissez-faire leadership behaviours and the negative impact on subordinates. The present study will complement their work by looking at the effects of a leader's reluctance on a broader spectrum of leadership behaviours. At present, little understanding exists of what relationship there is, if any, between a leader's reluctance and their actual leadership behaviours. Considering this gap in the current literature, this study will first address what it means to be *reluctant* (Hom et al., 2012) when occupying an organizational role. Subsequently, this paper will address reluctance as it pertains to leadership role occupancy (Ayca et al., 2024) and finally, investigate the effects of leadership reluctance on a variety of common leadership behaviours.

Proximal Withdrawal States Theory

Hom et al.'s (2012) Proximal Withdrawal States Theory (PWST) describes the antecedents to employees' intentions to stay or leave, and their propensity to actively engage with their organization. Organized along the two axes of *desired employment status* and *perceived volitional control*, the PWST classifies all employees into one of four main categories: enthusiastic stayers, enthusiastic leavers, reluctant leavers, and reluctant stayers (Hom et al.,

2012). These categories, or states of mind, encompass cognitions, attitudes, and intentions regarding the workplace and generally capture an individual's affinity for the organization, their perceived control over leaving, their intentions to quit, and even their propensity to engage in positive organizational citizenship behaviours (Hom et al., 2012).

Enthusiastic leaving involves both the "desire and freedom to leave" (Hom et al., 2012, p. 835). Reluctant leaving, on the other hand, is largely described by the lack of choice in the decision to leave, despite the desire to stay – often due to lay-offs or extenuating personal circumstances like ill parents or spousal relocation (Hom et al., 2012). Enthusiastic stayers are theorized to stay in their role uniquely due to their affective commitment (AC, their emotional attachment to the organization; Meyer & Allen, 1984). Finally, reluctant stayers lack AC but face a variety of impediments to their exit (Hom et al., 2012).

There are two subtypes of reluctant stayers: trapped stayers and contractual stayers (Hom et al., 2012). Both subtypes experience low affective pressures to stay within the organization; however, trapped stayers experience low alternative forces - despite their lack of liking for the job, there exists few or no better alternatives (Hom et al., 2012). In contrast, contractual stayers experience high legal forces to stay due to the terms of restrictive employment contracts (Hom et al., 2012). Somers' (2010) finding that highly committed employees experience the lowest turnover intentions, supports Hom et al.'s (2012) grouping of reluctant stayers as those lacking in AC. Reluctant stayers regardless of subtype are the primary focus of this study because my focus is on the employees' preference to leave their position while being unable to do so. For contractual reluctant stayers, this means that: "they freely entered into employment contracts or accepted financially attractive enticements... [and] most contracts legally stipulate not only a fixed employment duration but also acceptable performance" (Hom et al., 2012, p. 842). The

pressures from the expectations to stay in one's position and standards of performance are, however, predicted to mitigate any negative affects to performance and workplace behaviours of these employees (Hom et al., 2012). Trapped reluctant stayers, in contrast, "fit the job worse and look forward to leaving more than do slackers, who love their paycheck and their low-demand job. In short, trapped stayers are not loyal, avoid the job as much as possible, and cause problems" (Hom et al., 2012, p. 842). Both subtypes are expected to be undesirable to any organization.

The potential detriments to employees experiencing reluctance according to the PWST encompass performance, satisfaction, and growth outcomes and can extend into the leadership domain (e.g., Fan et al., 2023). This study will focus on reluctant staying's potential for negative influences on leadership behaviours. Although Hom et al.'s (2012) PWST broadly describes employee mindsets (i.e., their workplace attitudes and intentions), Fan et al. (2023) assert that examining PWST in leaders is important because leaders are not immune to reluctance and the various negative preference or constraint antecedents as described by Hom et al. (2012). In Fan et al.'s (2023) study, 101 leaders rated their subordinates' task performance and OCB, and 347 subordinates provided laissez-faire leadership and delegation ratings for their supervisors. Leader reluctant staying was positively associated with laissez-faire leadership behaviours and negatively and indirectly associated with subordinate performance (Fan et al., 2023). Aside from the work done by Fan et al. (2023), research has largely neglected the potential relationships between leader reluctant staying and their leadership behaviours, despite the potency of antecedents to proximal withdrawal states (PWS) and their relationships with organizational outcomes (e.g., Gellatly et al., 2006; Somers, 2010). We still lack an understanding of how reluctant staying relates to the full range leadership model, which includes transformational and

transactional leadership in addition to passive avoidant leadership (see Avolio et al., 1991; Bass, 1985; Frooman et al., 2012). This study intends to address this gap by investigating the link between leaders' reluctant staying and their leadership behaviours.

Fan et al. (2023) focussed on PWST as it pertained to behaviours in the organization. In their study (Fan et al., 2023), the *leaving* and *staying* tendencies of leaders were behaviours directed toward the organization (e.g., withdrawal and turnover) and not necessarily in their position (e.g., leaving a position but not the organization). Someone deciding to *stay* according to Fan et al.'s (2023) study would stay in both their job and the organization. The authors make no distinction for members who wish to leave their position to assume another role within the organization. The present study intends to address this research gap by further building upon Fan et al.'s (2023) work. and the turnover literature in general, by examining reluctant staying in the context of a position and not the organization. This approach aligns with Aycan et al.'s (2024) recent conceptualization of RTL as high-potential individuals' hesitation either before or after role occupancy.

The military environment, and particularly that of the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC), is unique as naval and officer cadets (N/OCdt) have a contractual obligation under the Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP), which includes a requirement to complete tenure in two "designated command position[s]" (RMC, 2018, para 12) and to "demonstrate successful leadership" (RMC, 2018, para 12) in a variety of formal and informal leadership tasks as part of their successful degree completion. In this environment, N/OCdt may assume various leadership roles, with their preference for each role varying, resulting in PWS that may be tied to the specific leadership role they hold and not necessarily reflect a desire to turnover from RMC or the CAF. For example, a N/OCdt tasked to be their squadron's administrative officer for the

semester may perceive they are staying in that role reluctantly, but in another term, they may perform the role of squadron sports and recreation officer, in which they stay enthusiastically. This is contrasted to the leaders in Fan et al.'s (2023) study, where turnover from the position would require leaving the organization. Thus, officer candidates in the ROTP may reluctantly stay in a leadership role, without a desire to leave the organization.

Reluctance to Lead & Leadership Self-Efficacy

Aycan et al.'s (2024) definition of RTL reflects high-potential individuals' hesitation either before or after role occupancy acknowledges it as dynamic and fluctuating across time and contexts (see also Tussing, 2018). The dynamic nature of RTL is largely in line with Hom et al.'s (2012) PWST, whereby transitions between states can occur as preferences and/or degree of volitional control change. For the purposes of this study, I will use the term *reluctance to lead* to refer to reluctance to remain in one's current leadership role.

Within their definition of RTL, Aycan et al. (2024) further acknowledge the multiplicity of RTL antecedents. RTL could emerge from various competency and identity-related factors – more specifically, one's self-integration of a leader identity (Aycan et al., 2024; Epitropaki et al., 2017), perceptions of over/under qualification (Tussing, 2018), and potentially imposter syndrome effects (e.g., Kark et al., 2021). These three antecedents share a common underlying process - self-perception - which includes how one perceives their qualification to be a leader (Tussing, 2018), their self-schema (Epitropaki, 2017), and their ability to effectively perform the job (Kark et al., 2021). These concepts, though distinct, share commonality with the construct of leadership self-efficacy (LSE), which refers to: “one's perceptions regarding his or her ability to lead” (Epitropaki, 2018, p.12; Murphy, 1992; Murphy & Johnson, 2011).

Research linking LSE and RTL is limited; however, Hannah (2006) found LSE predicted motivation to lead (MTL) and transformational leadership. Moralogil et al. (2024) propose negative correlations between RTL and MTL and generalized self-efficacy. I intend to expand this area of research by investigating the relationship between LSE and RST.

N/OCdts at RMC have not yet had the opportunity to embark on some of the proven methods to improve LSE such as long-term feedback and training (Hannah et al., 2008) or mastery training interventions (Epitropaki, 2018, p.13; Hannah et al., 2008). Examining LSE in conjunction with RTL in junior officer candidates, when they are first learning how to be leaders in the military will add to this limited body of literature.

Reluctance to Lead at RMC

As mentioned above, this study will be conducted within the unique context of military service at a military academy. Specifically, the ROTP covers all costs associated with a member's education, contingent on a commitment to service in the CAF for a specified period and subject to successful completion of RMC's *4 Pillar Program* (RMC, 2018). Ultimately the 4 Pillar Program is intended to achieve RMC's aims to educate, develop, and inspire physically fit, bilingual, and ethical leaders who will serve the CAF and Canada (RMC, 2024a). Unlike other contexts, individuals enrolled in the ROTP are officer candidates and are automatically placed in a leadership selection pool (e.g., Erkal et al., 2022). All candidates must successfully complete a minimum of one tenure as a leader in the Cadet Chain of Responsibility (CCoR) at RMC as a graduation requirement (RMC, 2024b). Roles in the CCoR aim to mirror the basic leadership requirements of newly commissioned officers and help prepare N/OCdts for their first positions after graduation and commissioning (RMC, 2018). CCoR roles can vary in length, duties, and selection procedures; however, all CCoR roles fall under some form of direct supervision from a

member of RMC's Training Wing. For some CCoR positions, a great deal of attention is given to the selection process, particularly those with high levels of responsibility for evaluating, mentoring, coaching, administering discipline, and ensuring the well-being of subordinates. However, most assigned leadership roles are determined at the squadron or division level with potentially inconsistent application of selection criteria (e.g., Maddison et al., 2017). Consequently, individuals who have not applied may still be assigned specific roles in the CCoR. Thus, N/OCdts could find themselves tasked with leadership responsibilities that may not align with their interests. In general, default leadership emergence mechanisms (such as all individuals automatically entering the leadership pool) provide higher rates of leadership participation particularly for females (Erkal et al., 2022). However, they also typically have opt-out mechanisms whereby individuals can opt out of leadership roles that do not match their interests. Opting out of leadership is not an option for ROTP candidates and the potential impact of this absence is unclear, and the effects on RTL and leadership behaviours remains unknown.

The Full Range Leadership Model

The Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM; Avolio & Bass, 1991) is a nine-factor leadership model, which has garnered broad recognition in organizational and leadership psychology literature (Antonakis et al., 2003). The FRLM consists of three styles of leadership that encompass a wide range of leadership behaviours: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and passive/avoidant leadership. The FRLM addresses many of Bass' (1985) criticisms that contemporary leadership models neglected behaviours that enabled subordinates to transcend self-interest; *transformative* leadership behaviours were notably understudied and seldom identified in the literature of the time. Thus, the FRLM was established to differentiate transactional leadership behaviours - which take advantage of contractual obligations and mutual

exchange - from transformational leadership behaviours - which transform followers in the pursuit of optimal efficiency of the individual and the organization as a whole.

Given our limited knowledge of how reluctance to lead impacts actual leadership behaviours, the overarching aims of this study will be to examine a) the pervasiveness of RTL at RMC; b) the effects of the RTL on self-reported leadership behaviours and; c) how LSE relates to both RTL and leader behaviour as described in the FRLM (Bass & Avolio 1994).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership comprises *the four I's*: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Avolio et al., 1991). Individualized consideration involves a mentorship process whereby the leader both accepts individual differences among their followers and takes a unique approach to working with each of them (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Furthermore, while task delegation is common, there is an emphasis on monitoring for the sake of developing subordinates (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Intellectual stimulation is the process by which a leader gives their subordinates the means and environment to facilitate changing their approach to technical problems, personal attitudes, peer relations, and values (Avolio et al., 1991). Intellectual stimulation is ideally a two-way process between leader and subordinates, especially in cases where the leader is lacking the subordinates' expertise. In these environments both leaders' and subordinates' abilities to identify and solve problems are continuously developed, leading to a more effective team (Avolio et al., 1991).

In their description of inspirational motivation, Avolio et al. (1991) argue that "inspirational leaders often set an example of hard work" (p.14), and they outline antecedents such as communication skills, role modeling, and past personal accomplishments – all of which

can be developed by prospective leaders. Unlike individualized consideration, which is mostly defined by leaders' deliberate efforts to attend to each follower's specific needs, inspirational motivation relies on the subordinates perceptions of their leaders and requires leaders to set the appropriate example for the behaviours subordinates should model.

Idealised influence occurs when leaders facilitating leadership emergence within their followers by encouraging the belief that followers are fully capable of leading the team when needed (Avolio et al., 1991). Instilling self-efficacy for promoting positive change in the organization takes shape when leaders foster and nurture maturity in their subordinates while also giving them a chance to impart lasting change to broader organizational processes (Bass & Avolio, 2009). As a result, idealised influence is also sometimes described by the pride subordinates feel in being associated with a leader who engages in these behaviours (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012).

The four Is of transformational leadership all inherently demand a willingness and intention by leaders to engage in positive change in their team and organization and to ascend beyond core occupational requirements. Those who are reluctant to take on leadership are less prone to engage in intentional activity (Gagné & Deci, 2005) and thus more likely to adopt more laissez-faire behaviours (Kelloway et al., 2006; Mullen et al., 2011; Gilbert et al., 2016). As a result, it is unlikely that those reluctant to take on leadership will engage in more intentional and positive organizational behaviours, and thus I predict a negative relationship between RTL and transformational leadership:

H1: Reluctant staying will be negatively related to self-reported transformational leadership behaviours.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership styles like contingent reward and active management by exception (MBE-active) uniquely involve the primary use of incentive systems to encourage desired behaviour (e.g., Frooman et al., 2012). Transactional leadership behaviours include cost-benefit exchanges between leaders and followers (e.g., Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). For this study, contingent reward and MBE-active will be considered transactional leadership as they are often grouped together. Contingent reward is generally considered a positive leadership approach which involves leaders using systems of incentives to encourage desired behaviour in the workplace (Frooman et al., 2012; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). MBE-active leadership behaviours, in contrast are evaluated neutrally and involve the correction of undesirable behaviour while it is occurring and it requires the leader to maintain vigilance and supervision to catch transgressions as they occur (Frooman et al., 2012; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

To my knowledge, there is no literature linking RTL and transactional leadership behaviours. However, the PWST framework suggests increases in dysfunctional behaviours like counterproductive workplace behaviours (e.g., bad-mouthing the organization, abdication of responsibilities; Rusbult et al., 1988) and meeting only the minimum performance requirements (Luchak & Gellatly, 2007; Meyer et al., 2004). Transactional leadership still requires intentional activity on behalf of leaders and is expected to be less prevalent in reluctant leaders (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Thus, reluctant leaders should exhibit fewer contingent reward and MBE-active leadership behaviours:

H2: Reluctant staying will be negatively related to self-reported contingent reward (H2a) and MBE-active (H2b) leadership behaviours.

Passive Avoidant Leadership

Frooman et al. (2012) describe laissez-faire and transformational leadership as existing on opposite ends of the “hierarchy of effectiveness” (Bass, 2008, p. 628) of leadership behaviours. Laissez-faire and MBE-passive leadership behaviours co-exist at the bottom of this hierarchy and can be grouped together as passive avoidant leadership that are negatively regarded by subordinates (Avolio et al. (1999). The passive avoidant leadership styles of MBE-passive and laissez-faire are categorically different from MBE-active and contingent reward in that they involve either the complete absence of leadership intervention, or a deficit in the areas including, but not exclusive to, supervision, feedback, and corrective punishments / motivating rewards (Frooman et al., 2012). With MBE-passive, punishment is employed as a reaction to undesired behaviour (Frooman et al., 2012). Laissez-faire leadership, on the other hand, is best described as “the absence of leadership” and “the avoidance of intervention” (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Under these conditions, there is a marked absence or dereliction of leadership responsibilities (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Reluctant stayers are more likely to exhibit avoidance behaviours including abdicating leadership responsibilities (e.g., Fan et al, 2023; Hom et al., 2012). Thus:

H3: Reluctant staying will be positively related to self-reported MBE-passive (H3a) and laissez-faire (H3b) passive avoidant leadership.

LSE

Given that some evidence suggests a link between LSE and MTL (Hannah, 2006) and the most recent proposed research hypothesizing negative correlations between RTL and MTL and a generalized model of self-efficacy, it is likely that the predicted and observed detriments to one’s motivation to lead associated with a decrease in self-efficacy will also translate into the

reluctance and withdrawal domain. With respect to the PWST, this means that higher levels of LSE will be associated with lower levels of RST:

H4: Reluctant staying will be negatively related to self-reported LSE.

Method

The study was conducted on a convenience sample of undergraduate students at RMC, who were enrolled in ROTP and occupied a position in the CCoR. A total of 137 individuals opened the study invitation link but 54 records were eliminated because they did not consent to the study or complete any of the survey measures. Six additional participants were removed because they were either univariate outliers (using a cut-off of ± 3 SD from the mean of each subscale) or had indicated they had not paid attention to the survey and their data should not be used. The final sample ($N = 77$) was mainly aged between 20-22 (75%) and balanced between genders, (male $n = 38$; 49.4%, female $n = 37$; 48.1%, other $n = 2$; 2.6%). A breakdown by first official language (74.0% English, 26% French) matched expected proportions in the cadet population. Fourth year students were overrepresented compared to other year (20.8% in second year, 26.0% in third year, 53.2% in fourth year). Participants indicated whether they had applied for a position in the CCoR (7.8% did not apply for a position), and if they were assigned the position for which they applied (20.8% assigned positions for which they did not apply).

Measures

Reluctant Leadership

Participant's reluctance to lead was measured using five items from the reluctant staying subscale of Li et al.'s (2016) reluctant staying questionnaire (RSTQ) measure. A sample item is "I wanted another position, but I felt I had to accept this one." The items were scored on a five-

point scale (i.e., 1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*) and scale reliability was acceptable; Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$. Higher scores indicate a higher level of reluctance.

Full Range Leadership Model

Participant's self-rated leadership behaviours (i.e., transformational, CR, MBE-active, MBE-passive, and laissez-faire leadership) were measured using Bass & Avolio's (1995) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5). More precisely, the transformational leadership scale consists of five subscales, each of four items (idealized influence - attributes; idealized influence - behaviours; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation and individual consideration). Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$, indicating strong internal consistency reliability for a unidimensional higher order transformational leadership construct¹. The transactional leadership scale has two subscales, each consisting of four items (CR, Cronbach's $\alpha = .57$ and MBE-active, Cronbach's $\alpha = .72$). The passive/avoidant scale consists of two subscales, each consisting of four items (MBE-passive, Cronbach's $\alpha = .42$ and laissez-faire, Cronbach's $\alpha = .42$). The MLQ is scored on a five-point scale (i.e., 0 = *not at all*; 2 = *sometimes*; 4 = *frequently, if not always*) and a higher score corresponds to a higher frequency of behaviour.

Leadership Self-Efficacy Scale

LSE was measured using Bobbio & Manganello's (2009) Leadership Self-Efficacy Scale. The 21-item scale measures six core components of LSE including: a mindset focused on change, the capacity to select team members and assign tasks effectively, essential skills in communication and relationship management, strong self-awareness and confidence, motivating people, as well as a strategic approach to maintaining and building group consensus and support.

¹ Carless (1998) suggests that a first-order multidimensional construct of transformational leadership lacks adequate discriminant validity to be useful in measurement, and thus a singular transformational leadership dimension was assessed in this study.

Bobbio and Manganelli (2009) confirm their scale can be used as a general measure of LSE, and this produced a Cronbach $\alpha = .89$, suggesting very good internal consistency. The questionnaire was scored on a seven-point Likert scale (i.e., $1 = \text{strongly disagree}$; $4 = \text{neither agree nor disagree}$; $7 = \text{strongly agree}$). Higher scores indicate a higher level of LSE. A sample item includes: “I am able to set a new direction for the group, if the one currently taken doesn’t seem correct to me” (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2009).

Procedure

Ethics approval was received through the Student Research Ethics Board (REB, see Appendix E and Appendix F). In the first academic semester of the 2024-2025 academic year, all ROTP students received a standardized invitation to take part in the study over the school’s webmail platform (see Appendix A and Appendix B) but only individuals serving in the CCoR met the eligibility criteria for the study. The same methodology was employed in the second semester; however, an REB amendment was granted which permitted the physical delivery of printed copies of the invitation email into public spaces where the target population was expected to increase participation.

No deception occurred in this study. The invitations, both physical and electronic, to complete the survey were distributed outside of the mid-term and exam periods to avoid overwhelming prospective participants and to improve the participation rate. Once participants clicked on the survey link or scanned the QR code affixed to the printed invitation, they were brought to a SurveyMonkey webpage presenting a general overview of the study. Proceeding to the survey constituted providing informed consent. After participants completed demographic information, they were able to complete the survey measures. Participants were advised that they could provide an email to which further notification could be sent if the use of incentives were

approved. Ultimately, no incentives were provided to participants for their participation in the survey.

Post Data Collection Cleaning

To ensure statistical validity an assessment of normality was conducted for all study variables. The distribution of scores on the RSTQ was found to be positively skewed, suggesting that more participants reported lower levels of reluctant staying, with fewer endorsing higher levels. While normality is an assumption in some parametric analyses, psychological data, particularly self-report measures, often deviate from perfect normality (e.g., Curran et al., 1996). Given the robustness of many statistical tests to moderate deviations from normality and the theoretical importance of the RST scale, the variable was retained in subsequent analyses without transformation.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

All data were analyzed using SPSS 29. A series of independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to determine if there were any differences in reluctant staying on the basis of the demographic variables including type of CCoR role (i.e., applied for vs assigned), gender, and first official language. Individuals who were assigned a CCoR role they did not apply for ($n = 15$, $M = 2.51$ $SD = .88$) experienced greater reluctance than those who were assigned roles they applied for ($n = 59$, $M = 1.89$, $SD = .68$), $t(72) = -2.93$, $p = .002$ and this difference corresponds to a large effect size, Cohen's $d = .72$. There were no differences between men ($n = 37$) and women ($n = 35$) in reluctant staying $t(70) = .395$, $p = .694$ or between individuals whose first official language was French ($n = 19$) or English ($n = 55$), $t(72) = -.014$, $p = .989$.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the hypotheses, a bivariate correlational analysis was conducted between RST, LSE and all leadership variables (see Table 1).

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 were not supported. CCoR leaders' reluctant staying was not related to their leadership behaviours. Specifically, transformational leadership ($r = -.180, p = .082$), CR leadership ($r = -.009, p = .472$), MBE-active leadership ($r = .069, p = .298$), MBE-passive leadership ($r = -.009, p = .472$) or laissez-faire leadership ($r = -.084, p = .259$).

Hypothesis 4 was also not supported; the relationship between RST and LSE was non-significant ($r = -.012, p = .464$).

Exploratory Analyses

To ensure the appropriateness of my hypothesized analyses, I conducted a curve estimation to examine the nature of the relationship between reluctance to lead and leadership behaviours and LSE. Both linear and nonlinear models (e.g., quadratic, cubic) were tested, but neither significantly improved model fit, suggesting that a linear approach was appropriate for the primary analyses.

Discussion

The overarching aims of this study were to examine a) the pervasiveness of RTL at RMC; b) the effects of the RTL on self-reported transformational, transactional, and passive avoidant leadership behaviours and c) how LSE relates to both RTL and leader behaviour as described in the full range leadership model (Bass & Avolio 1994).

A considerable proportion of CCoR members reported being assigned a position they had not applied for ($n = 15$; 20%) and these individuals reported higher levels of reluctance, nonetheless, reluctance among leaders in the CCoR was generally very low ($M = 2.02, SD = .76$). For reference, an average score of 2 on the RSTQ (Li et al., 2016) suggest disagreement with the

statements on the questionnaire. These findings indicate that leaders at RMC are not reluctant resulting in a floor effect whereby the statistical power of all subsequent analyses are limited (Šimkovic & Träuble, 2019).

My hypotheses that RTL would be associated with lower levels of transformational and transactional leadership, and higher levels of passive avoidant leadership were not supported. Hypothesis 1 stated that leaders' reluctance would be negatively related to self-reported transformational leadership. Bivariate correlational analysis revealed that there was no significant relationship between leaders' RST and transformational leadership. Although a sizable proportion of the study's participants were assigned positions they had not applied for, any resultant reluctance was not related to any significant detriments to their self-rated leadership behaviours. Contrary to the hypothesized relationship, my findings show that CCoR leaders at RMC reported engaging in positive leadership behaviours whether or not they were assigned roles they desired.

Beyond the potential for floor effects in RTL, there are several possible reasons why this hypothesis was not supported. First, there are definitional incongruencies with Hom et al.'s (2012) reluctant staying and RTL. The two concepts remain distinct in that RTL is largely concerned with the reluctance to take up managerial roles and responsibilities, whereas Hom et al.'s (2012) reluctant staying is more concerned with preference and control antecedents that dictate whether an employee leaves the organization. To mitigate this potential shortfall, I altered Li et al.'s (2016) RSTQ to be specific to participants' CCoR positions. However, the scale still measured reluctance to stay in a leadership position (e.g., "I wanted another position, but I felt I had to accept this one") and not necessarily a reluctance to lead. RTL may reflect a reluctance to

engage with the leadership identity (Epitropaki, 2018); future research developing a distinct RTL measure (e.g., Moralogil et al., 2024) is needed.

Secondly, previous work done by Gilbert et al. (2016) was cited to justify the hypothesized relationship between RST and transformational leadership; however, it is reasonable to suggest that my results indicate that those individuals who are uninterested in their assigned CCoR leadership role may not be reluctant leaders. It was hypothesized that CCoR leaders fulfilling undesired roles would be amotivated and this would result in fewer transformational leadership behaviours. However, it is plausible that CCoR leaders, even when assigned roles they did not seek out, identified with the leader role and were motivated to perform transformational leadership behaviours such as inspirational motivation and an idealized influence.

Hypothesis 2 stated that leaders' reluctance would be negatively related to self-reported contingent reward leadership (H2a) and MBE-active leadership (H2b). Bivariate correlation analysis revealed that there was no relationship between leaders' RST and levels of self-rated contingent reward leadership behaviours or MBE-active leadership behaviours. These findings also suffer from the same floor effect in RST scores described above. However, there are nonetheless other potential explanations that may shed light on these findings. First, the results may be impacted by the self-report nature of the MLQ, which is likely to engender a social desirability bias (Krumpal, 2013). ROTP N/OCdts' performance as a leader make up one of the many criteria upon which their graduation is based (RMC, 2024a; 2024b). Furthermore, my findings that RTL was generally low (despite a significant difference between those who got the job they wanted and those who did not), suggests that members of the CCoR are able to separate their personal dissatisfaction with their leadership role and their behaviours in said role. N/OCdts

who are highly motivated may be able to set aside their reluctance in favour of still performing as an effective leader to reach the common goals of success for their team. Although motivation was not examined in this study, it is still possible that there is an underlying mechanism mediating a potential relationship between reluctance and leadership behaviours. In line with this supposition, it is also possible that leaders may be engaging in some compensatory behaviours whereby they are acutely aware of their reluctance and decide to consciously and deliberately emphasize appropriate leadership behaviours to avoid negative consequences for themselves and/or the team. This would be more in line with Epitropaki's (2018) work characterizing reluctant leaders as those high potential individuals who are less interested in leadership for reasons other than their abilities. In this study, this means that members who find themselves in the leadership selection pool, despite feeling reluctant, still perform to their full ability.

Hypothesis 3 stated that leaders' reluctance would be positively related to self-reported MBE-passive (H3a) and laissez-faire (H3b) passive avoidant leadership behaviours. Bivariate correlational analysis revealed that there was no relationship between leaders' RST and their self-rated MBE-passive and/or laissez-faire leadership behaviours. Despite Fan et al.'s (2023) findings suggesting that there would be a significant relationship, it is equally possible that the previously mentioned floor effect, inherent social desirability bias and low sample size and power all played a role in the non-significant finding. While these relationships were not statistically significant (H2a, H2b, H3a, H3b), the low/minimally acceptable internal consistency of the CR, MBE-active, MBE-passive, and laissez-faire scales reduces their statistical power and limits the conclusions that may be drawn from the results they yield.

Hypothesis 4 stated that LSE would be negatively related to RST. Bivariate correlational analysis revealed that there was no relationship between leader's LSE and RST. Though the

findings are insignificant, they nonetheless highlight the need for further scrutiny in future studies considering the limited statistical power in the present study. LSE may instead be acting as a moderator between RST and self-rated leadership behaviours, which may not in itself manifest as a direct relationship between RST and LSE. It is also likely that many of the abovementioned potential mitigating factors in the relationships between RST and self-rated leadership behaviours also played a role in this result.

Another potential explanation for the non-significant results to all hypotheses could be the impact of RMC's rigid structure and military environment on cadets' leadership behaviours. The CCoR hierarchy mirrors the official training wing chain of command, who supervise their leadership. This high level of supervision could mean that deviations from appropriate leadership behaviours are not tolerated - with concepts like character-based leadership being emphasized in military leadership development (Department of National Defence, 2025). Considering professional development sessions dedicated toward appropriate leadership and a lack of tolerance for inactive or avoidant leadership, even reluctant leaders are likely to align their behaviours with RMC and the CAF's expectations to avoid administrative or punitive repercussions. For examples, cadets could be removed from their position for an abdication of responsibilities (RMC, 2024c). This kind of environment represents a strong situation (Schneider & Hough, 1995; Mischel, 1973), in which relationships, job tasks, norms and expectations all have a significant impact on employee attitudes and behaviours (Davis-Blake & Pfeffer, 1989). It is likely then, that the strength of the military training environment at RMC directly impacts leadership attitudes and behaviours in ways that this study did not measure.

Limitations

The results of the present investigation may be attributed to several limitations. First, my relatively small sample size resulted in severely limited statistical power (Maxwell et al., 2008). The low internal consistency values for most MLQ-5 facets also suggest this measure did not function as expected in this sample. Although this was largely an exploratory study, it is important to consider that the findings cannot be generalized beyond this study.

Furthermore, this study sought to explore the relationship between reluctant leaders and their self-reported leadership behaviours. Those who are reluctant and those with poor perceptions of their own leadership abilities can be reasonably expected to respond at a lower rate (as a result of a lack of motivation, or fear of judgement). This largely aligns with what Epitropaki (2018) describes as the *self-selection bias in leadership*; however the same antecedents that might make one less likely to emerge as a leader may also make those disengaged with their role as a leader less likely to undergo a self-evaluation of their leadership voluntarily. The potential effect of self-selection bias in this study means that a group of people of great interest to this study may have chosen not to participate in this study. In addition, some bi-directionality of the self-selection bias for participation in this study is likely as participants also generally over-report behaviours viewed as appropriate by the researchers (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002). Thus, those who had high self-ratings of their leadership may have been more likely to participate in this study. This may also explain the relatively low reluctance among the sample as those who were less reluctant may have completed the survey at a higher proportion than those who were more reluctant.

Finally, despite my best efforts, the nature of this study being conducted by an undergraduate student who lives, works, and studies amongst the sample population means that there are unavoidable perceptions in the sample of the primary researcher that may have coloured

some of the results. Those who are more proximal to the primary researcher were more likely to respond, and therefore, the sample is less-than-random.

Future Directions

Future research should broaden the nomological network surrounding reluctance to lead by investigating potential links between RTL and its antecedents and outcomes (Epitropaki, 2018). Further exploratory analysis should be conducted to establish robust evidence supporting the antecedent and outcome relationships between RTL and key constructs in the withdrawal and turnover space, such as MTL. This includes examining contextual factors like job type, workload, and compensation, among others (Hom et al., 2012), to better understand what may be driving reluctance in the military setting. Arbour (2022), in a section of her external review of the CAF, discusses the leadership program for N/OCdts as being described by some as “children leading children” (p. 225) and the “untrained leading the untrained” (p.225) which no doubt leads to negative perceptions about the efficacy of the CCoR as a legitimate leadership development tool or structure. Though her focus in that section was the eradication of sexual misconduct at RMC, her observations nonetheless suggest that future research should be aimed at the impact of observations concerning reluctance in the CCoR as a function of perceived legitimacy or *buy-in* to the CCoR. These findings, along with those of the most recent Report of the Canadian Military Colleges Review Board (CMCRB Report; Beauvais et al., 2025) highlight that the CCoR has become “a tool for the CMCs to function within their allocated resources” (Beauvais et al., 2025) without focussing on the CCoR’s primary purpose of offering “experiential leadership opportunities to N/OCdts” (Beauvais et al., 2025). These observations all compound and may well hinder the perceived efficacy of the CCoR as a leadership mechanism - but nonetheless they highlight the need for further research investigating the links

between RTL and any perceived lack of leadership growth potential in the CCoR at RMC.

Perhaps if N/OCdts do not perceive anything to gain from being in the CCoR, that may be a contributor in their decision to not apply to some positions.

The military domain presents a small and unique subset of contextual factors that do not exist elsewhere (Nazri & Rudi, 2019). Determining if RTL and leadership behaviours are related outside of the strict confines of ROTP may present fruitful areas for future research and will help contribute to laying the foundation for future application to other leadership domains.

More broadly, future research should aim to develop a more tailored scale for RTL in line with both the practice of leadership behaviours described by the FRLM (Avolio & Bass, 1991) and with the principles of reluctance in an occupational and organizational setting set out in the PWST (Hom et al., 2012). Moralogil et al. (2024) are currently working on developing such a scale. Since prior research on MTL antecedents in a military sample found significant effects for military attitudes values (Chan & Drasgow, 2001) – a construct unique to a military sample, the scale development process should ensure that a general RTL scale will remain valid in the military setting or other restricted environments.

Efforts to strengthen the validity of leadership behavioural assessments beyond self-reported behaviour, could focus on other methods of assessment. Dyadic leader-follower reluctance and behavioural perception ratings may provide more realistic and valid assessments of leadership behaviours. Given that dyadic research is difficult to conduct, situational judgment tests (SJT), which are scenarios/problems requiring the participant to use “relevant knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or other characteristics to solve” (Christian et al. (2010) p.84), could also be used to more accurately measure leaders’ actual job performance. Thus, future research could

build upon these findings by utilizing SJTs to gain a better, more valid picture of leadership behaviours and performance.

Given that research suggests that positive leadership behaviours like transformational leadership can be learned (Avolio et al., 2009; Hamdani, 2018) and knowing that RMC is, at its core, a school with a mission to *develop* leaders for the CAF, it is imperative to the success of the mission of the ROTP that any potential limiting factors in the success of leadership skill acquisition be both understood and mitigated. RMC and the CAF are not the only institutions that would benefit from this continued research, however. As mentioned previously, many North American employers are currently struggling to identify and assign leadership talent (Ashford & DeRue, 2012), suggesting that more work still needs to be completed to understand why high potential individuals are not emerging as leaders. Though the stakes for inadequate, incompetent, or reluctant leadership may be greater in the military setting (Hannah et al., 2009), both potential leaders and their organizations have much to gain by understanding and ameliorating some of the individual or organizational factors that may impede leadership emergence.

To conclude, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between leader's reluctance and their self-rated leadership behaviours. The goal was ultimately to expand the rapidly growing field of research concerned with leadership reluctance (e.g., Aycan et al., 2024; Epitropaki, 2018; Fan et al., 2023) and hopefully inform leadership development and training programs like those at RMC. Although my results indicate that a reluctance to lead is not necessarily associated with self-reported leadership behaviours, they also indicate that those who were assigned leadership positions they did not apply for experienced a significantly greater amount of reluctance in that position. These results may inform future leadership selection and training mechanisms within RMC to maximize growth of high potential leaders at the college,

and, more broadly, help to expand the current understanding of some of the theorized antecedents to RTL.

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Tables

Table 1

Correlations for RST, FRLM Measures, and LSE

Variable	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. TFL	3.8286 (.45487)	1						
2. CR	3.8817 (.56611)	.616**	1					
3. MBE_A	3.2016 (.8128)	.332**	.269*	1				
4. MBE_P	1.9382 (.53176)	-.309**	-.330**	0.011	1			
5. LF	1.6667 (.47573)	-.158	-.232*	0.019	.359**	1		
6. RST	2.0189 (.75936)	-.180	-.009	.069	-.009	-.084	1	
7. LSE	5.6589 (.52196)	.695**	.682**	.150	-.398**	-.372**	-.012	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Table 2*Demographic Statistics*

Demographic Variables	Sample Population (<i>N</i> = 77)	
	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	38	49.4
Female	37	48.1
Other	2	2.6
Age		
19	9	11.8
20	16	21.1
21	27	35.5
22	14	18.4
23	4	5.3
24	2	2.6
25+	4	5.3
CCoR Role		
Bar Position	50	64.9
Badge Position	27	35.1
First Official Language		
English	57	74
French	20	26
Role Applied for was Assigned		
Yes	61	79.2
No	16	20.8

Appendix A: Recruitment Notice - English

Good day,

You are invited to participate in a quick online research study. This study will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

As a participant, you will be asked to respond to a series of questions about yourself and your experiences with leadership at RMC.

The research is being conducted by NCdt Brady Bartolozzi for his undergraduate thesis project under the supervision of Dr. Cindy Suurd Ralph. The survey is available in English and the data collected will be completely anonymous. The researchers will not know who participated. Participating in this study will have no bearing on your standing in the CCoR whatsoever.

You may participate in the study to any extent. If you do not feel comfortable answering certain questions you may skip them, you are also free to withdraw your participation entirely. Withdrawing or not participating in the study will have no consequences to you. If you choose to withdraw, please close your browser prior to submitting your completed survey, because your participation is anonymous, we will not be able to remove completed responses once they are submitted.

If you are interested in taking part in this study, click on the link below / scan the QR code below. The link will take you directly to the survey.

This term, I have a position in the CCoR (barslate)

[LINK TO STUDY 1]

Please do not hesitate to reply directly to this email with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you in advance for your participation,

NCdt Brady Bartolozzi

Appendix B: Recruitment Notice - French

Bonjour,

Vous êtes invité(e) à participer à une brève étude de recherche en ligne. Cette étude prendra environ 5 à 10 minutes à compléter.

En tant que participant(e), il vous sera demandé de répondre à une série de questions sur vous-même et sur vos expériences en matière de leadership au CMR.

Cette recherche est menée par l'Élève-officier de 1re classe (Élof) Brady Bartolozzi dans le cadre de son projet de mémoire de premier cycle, sous la supervision de la Dre Cindy Suurd Ralph. Le sondage est disponible en anglais et les données recueillies seront entièrement anonymes. Les chercheurs ne sauront pas qui a participé. Votre participation à cette étude n'aura absolument aucune incidence sur votre statut au sein du CCEOR.

Vous pouvez participer à cette étude dans la mesure de votre choix. Si vous ne vous sentez pas à l'aise de répondre à certaines questions, vous pouvez les passer. Vous êtes également libre de retirer votre participation à tout moment. Le retrait ou le non-participation à cette étude n'aura aucune conséquence pour vous. Si vous choisissez de vous retirer, veuillez fermer votre navigateur avant de soumettre votre sondage, car votre participation est anonyme, nous ne pourrions pas supprimer les réponses complétées une fois soumises.

Si vous êtes intéressé(e) à participer à cette étude, cliquez sur le lien ci-dessous ou scannez le code QR. Le lien vous dirigera directement vers le sondage.

Cette session, j'occupe un poste au sein du CCEOR (barrette).

[LIEN VERS L'ÉTUDE 1]

N'hésitez pas à répondre directement à ce courriel pour toute question ou préoccupation.

Merci d'avance pour votre participation,

Élof Brady Bartolozzi

Appendix C: Letter of Information and Consent - English

The purpose of the study is to examine attitudes and behaviours in the Naval and Officer Cadets (N/OCdts) wing of RMC.

This study is entirely voluntary, and you will experience no consequences for not participating. This research is being conducted by NCdt Brady Bartolozzi for his undergraduate thesis project under the supervision of Dr Cindy Suurd Ralph of the Department of Military Psychology and Leadership. Should you have any questions or concerns about the ethical nature of this study, please contact our Research Ethics Board Chairs for undergraduate studies – Dr. Jordan Sutcliffe at Jordan.sutcliffe@rmc-cmr.ca and Dr. Meaghan Wilkin at Meaghan.Wilkin@rmc-cmr.ca.

As a participant, you will be asked to respond to a series of questions about yourself and your experiences with leadership at RMC.

This survey is expected to take approximately 5-10 minutes.

Strict guidelines will be followed to protect your privacy. The study is completely anonymous, and the researchers will not be able to identify who has completed the study. All data is stored using SSL encryption. All raw data will be destroyed within five years from when the study is published. Only the researchers mentioned in this letter of information, along with the thesis supervisors, will have access to the data.

There are no known risks involved in participating in this research. We hope this research will benefit the field of psychology, the Royal Military College and the Canadian Armed Forces. This research project has received ethical approval by the Royal Military College Research Ethics Board.

In line with Chapter 7, Article 3.2(e) of the TCPS2, we would like to inform you that a potential conflict of interest might exist between NCdt Brady Bartolozzi's study and your participation. If you feel any potential conflict of interest might impact your participation in any way, or if you have any other questions regarding this study, you are encouraged to reach out to Dr Cindy Suurd Ralph (Cindy.suurd-ralph@rmc.ca).

Pressing the "Yes" button (below) will be interpreted as providing consent for participation in this research. It will also be interpreted as indicating that you: understand the procedures, realize that you are not required to participate if you so choose, are free to withdraw from the study at any point in time, and freely consent to participate in this research.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Do you consent to participate in this study?

<Yes> or <No>

Appendix D: Letter of Information and Consent – French

L'objectif de cette étude est d'examiner les attitudes et les comportements au sein du corps des élèves-officiers (Élof) et élèves-officiers de marine (ÉOM) du CMR.

Cette étude est entièrement volontaire, et vous ne subirez aucune conséquence si vous choisissez de ne pas y participer. Cette recherche est menée par l'Élof Brady Bartolozzi dans le cadre de son projet de mémoire de premier cycle, sous la supervision de la Dre Cindy Suurd Ralph, du Département de psychologie militaire et leadership. Si vous avez des questions ou des préoccupations concernant la nature éthique de cette étude, veuillez contacter les coprésidents du Comité d'éthique de la recherche pour les études de premier cycle : le Dr Jordan Sutcliffe (Jordan.sutcliffe@rmc-cmr.ca) et la Dre Meaghan Wilkin (Meaghan.Wilkin@rmc-cmr.ca).

En tant que participant(e), il vous sera demandé de répondre à une série de questions sur vous-même et sur vos expériences en matière de leadership au CMR. Ce sondage devrait prendre environ 5 à 10 minutes.

Des lignes directrices strictes seront suivies pour protéger votre vie privée. L'étude est entièrement anonyme, et les chercheurs ne pourront pas identifier les personnes ayant participé. Toutes les données seront stockées avec un cryptage SSL. Toutes les données brutes seront détruites dans un délai de cinq ans après la publication de l'étude. Seuls les chercheurs mentionnés dans cette lettre d'information, ainsi que les superviseurs de mémoire, auront accès aux données.

Il n'y a aucun risque connu associé à la participation à cette recherche. Nous espérons que cette recherche bénéficiera au domaine de la psychologie, au Collège militaire royal et aux Forces armées canadiennes. Ce projet de recherche a reçu l'approbation éthique du Comité d'éthique de la recherche du Collège militaire royal.

Conformément au Chapitre 7, Article 3.2(e) de l'EPTC2, nous souhaitons vous informer qu'un conflit d'intérêts potentiel pourrait exister entre l'étude de l'Élof Brady Bartolozzi et votre participation. Si vous pensez qu'un tel conflit d'intérêts pourrait avoir un impact sur votre participation de quelque manière que ce soit, ou si vous avez d'autres questions concernant cette étude, nous vous encourageons à contacter la Dre Cindy Suurd Ralph (Cindy.suurd-ralph@rmc.ca).

En cliquant sur le bouton « Oui » (ci-dessous), vous acceptez de participer à cette recherche. Cela indiquera également que : vous comprenez les procédures, vous réalisez que vous n'êtes pas tenu(e) de participer si vous ne le souhaitez pas, vous êtes libre de vous retirer de l'étude à tout moment, et vous consentez librement à participer à cette recherche.

Merci pour votre temps et votre considération.
Consentez-vous à participer à cette étude ?

<Oui> ou <Non>

Appendix E: RMC UREB Approval

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA Certification of Institutional Research Ethics Review (Undergraduate Student Research)

File Number: REB_BartolozziGlover_07102024
Project Title: "Who Likes Ice Cream?": Leadership Imposition and its Consequences
Principal Investigator(s): N/OCdts Brady Bartolozzi & Isabelle Glover
Supervisor: Dr. Cindy Suurd-Ralph
Date of Submission: 24 09 2024
Anticipated completion date: 15 04 2025
Date of approval: 07 10 2024
Period of approval: 12 months – expiry date: 07 10 2025

Dear N/OCdts Bartolozzi and Glover,

This is to inform you that RMC Undergraduate sub-committee of the Research Ethics Board (RMC UREB) has reviewed the above-mentioned project for ethical compliance, and it can now proceed. The approval is based only on the documents submitted and only on the language(s) presented.

REB approval is effective for up to 12 months (per TCPS-2) after which the research requires additional review and approval for a subsequent period of up to 12 months. Prior to the expiry of the present approval, you are responsible for submitting an annual report to further renew REB approval.

Any intentional changes to the protocol, prior to the start of data collection must be submitted to and approved by the RMC UREB before beginning data collection.

Researchers should not proceed with a project if unforeseen changes to the protocol threaten participants' right to informed consent or place participants at a higher level of risk than anticipated. Such unforeseen changes to the protocol during the conduct of the research must be communicated to the RMC UREB within four working days, as well as the actions taken to protect the dignity of participants.

Any undesirable experience or response (adverse event) from participants during their involvement in the study must also be reported to the RMC UREB within four working days, as well as actions taken by the research team to protect the participants. Such adverse event may be emotional, psychological, physiological, or physical in nature.

For the duration of the research project involving humans, you are expected to comply with the oversight requirements of the RMC REB, including documenting changes, reporting incidents or adverse events and annual/final reporting responsibilities.

If the principal investigator or supervisor for this study changes, you must immediately advise the RMC UREB. The conditions indicated above are subject to conditions stated in DAOD 5062-0 and DAOD 5062-1. All researchers are obliged to comply with those directives, including cooperating fully with all applicable research ethics boards.

Sincerely,



Dr. Meaghan M. Wilkin
Undergraduate Research Ethics Co-Chair, Royal Military College of Canada
meaghan.wilkin@rmc-cmr.ca

Appendix F: RMC UREB Amendment

Tudh, Durs, Valour • Vêrité, Desein, Vallance

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA • COLLÈGE MILITAIRE ROYAL DU CANADA

PO Box 17000, Station Forces • CP 17000, Succursale Forces • Kingston, Ontario • K7K 7B4

Certification of Institutional Research Ethics Review (Undergraduate Student Research)

File Number: REB_BartolozziGlover_07102024

Project Title: "Who Likes Ice Cream?": Leadership Imposition and its Consequences

Principal Investigator(s): N/OCdts Brady Bartolozzi & Isabelle Glover

Supervisor: Dr. Cindy Suurd-Ralph

Original Date of Submission: 24 09 2024

Anticipated completion date: 15 04 2025

Original Date of approval: 07 10 2024

Amendment Date of Submission 07 01 2025

Amendment Date of Approval: 12 01 2025

Period of approval: 12 months – expiry date: 07 10 2025

Dear NCdt Bartolozzi,

This is to inform you that RMC Undergraduate sub-committee of the Research Ethics Board (RMC UREB) has reviewed the above-mentioned project for the documented amendments to your previously submitted project.

The majority of your proposed amendments are minor and reflect refinement in your data collection and recruitment approach. There were no major changes to your study's objectives, informed consent process, inclusion/exclusion, risk to participants, etc. In terms of your new recruitment strategy (approaching potential participants at targeted events or in targeted environments), you are reminded to be cognizant of perceived/unintentional coercion. It is recommended that distribution of your letter of invitation happens in a way that is 'public' as opposed to private/individual distribution.

The UREB has approved your amendments and you can proceed with the next step of your research process. Should you have any questions or need to make further changes to the protocol during the conduct of the research, these must, once again, be communicated, to the RMC UREB within four working days.

Sincerely,

Meaghan M. Wilkin, PhD
Undergraduate Research Ethics Co-Chair
Military Leadership and Psychology Department
Meaghan.wilkin@rmc.ca

Appendix G: TCPS CORE Certification

