

A Systematic Review of Power in Global Leadership

By: [Marketa Rickley](#)

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Abstract:

Despite its central role in the influence process, power has largely been overlooked by scholars seeking to understand global leaders' influence over their constituents. As a consequence, we currently have limited understanding of the varieties of power that global leaders hold, how power is exercised in global contexts, and what impact exercising power has in global organizations. The intended purpose of this chapter is to mobilize research on this important topic through systematic review. The review is organized around the following guiding questions: (i) how is power defined in global leadership research? (ii) what power bases do global leaders possess? (iii) how do global leaders exercise power? (iv) what factors influence global leaders' exercise of power? and (v) what are the outcomes of global leaders' exercise of power? Based on a synthesis of extant insights, this chapter develops a foundation for future research on power in global leadership by mapping critical knowledge gaps and outlining paths for further inquiry.

Keywords: global leadership | leadership | power | influence | control | global leaders | MNCs

Article:

Power is an omnipresent and guiding feature of interpersonal interactions in global organizations. Yet, it has largely been overlooked by global leadership scholars seeking to understand individual influence (Osland et al., 2017). As noted by Geppert et al. (2016) in a special issue of *Organization Studies* on politics and power in the multinational company (MNC):

... power, conflict, and coalitions are theorized at the level of organizational units with little concern for the sub-organizational or at the level of individual actors. And even where individual actors such as subsidiary managers are considered, their interests and behavioral orientations are equated with the organizational units that host them. ... This organizational-level focus means that the micro-foundations of inter- and intra-unit politics in MNCs are not studied. (p. 1214)

The paucity of conceptual and empirical work on personally held power in global organizations is puzzling given that power is a key element of global leadership. Global leaders enjoy legitimate power by the nature of their positions, which confer authoritative control over subordinates. Furthermore, in line with global leadership's definition as "the process and actions through which an individual influences a range of internal and external constituents from multiple national cultures and jurisdictions in a context characterized by significant levels of task and relationship complexity" (Reiche et al., 2017, p. 556), global leaders' duties include orchestrating varieties of tasks and managing interdependent relationships. Therefore, other bases of power, such as reward, coercive, expert, referent, and information power (French & Raven, 1959), are also likely to be essential for effective global leadership.

The lack of attention to the role of power for global leadership effectiveness is troubling also from a practical perspective. Global companies' success hinges on global leaders' abilities to coordinate often diverse and dispersed sets of constituents toward the achievement of individual, group, and organizational objectives (Rickley & Stackhouse, 2022). To aid practitioners in managing global organizations, it is therefore critical that scholars develop a more structured and thorough understanding of the varieties of global leaders' power and the ways in which it is exercised in global contexts.

The foregoing discussion highlights the need for deeper investigation of the nature and role of power in global leadership. To advance our understanding of this important topic, this chapter offers a foundation for future research by systematically reviewing and synthesizing the current state of knowledge in this area. It identifies critical knowledge gaps and articulates important but heretofore unexplored research questions to offer directions for future inquiry. As the review and integration indicates, there are many opportunities for scholars to pursue conceptual, qualitative, and quantitative research to expand and enrich the growing field of global leadership.

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Driven by practical relevance and scholarly interest, the study of global leadership continues to gain momentum (for recent reviews, see Bird & Mendenhall, 2016; Osland et al., 2020). But despite considerable advances in the field over the previous two decades, including an improved understanding of the traits and competencies that characterize global leaders (e.g., Park et al., 2018), global leadership development (e.g., Oddou & Mendenhall, 2018), or global leadership effectiveness (e.g., Rickley & Stackhouse, 2022), the nature and role of power in global leadership remains understudied (Osland et al., 2017).

To present a foundation for future research on this topic and fulfill the stated purpose of this chapter in a deliberate and structured manner, I organized the review around five questions. Given that "power" has several working definitions in the social sciences (Clegg & Haugaard, 2009), and given that organizational scholars have also yet to converge on a single definition, the first inquiry focuses on how the concept is defined in relation to global leadership. I ask:

RQ1. How is power defined in global leadership research?

The next aim is to map the bases of global leaders' power. In their seminal work, French and Raven (1959) identified six sources of individual power: position, reward, coercive, expert, referent, and information. To determine whether these power bases are also relevant in the global leadership realm, or whether additional power bases emerge in this context, I ask:

RQ2. What power base(s) do global leaders possess?

A closely related question concerns how global leaders exercise their power. In light of the task and relational complexities that characterize MNC operations, the means by which global leaders exercise power is likely to be quite varied. Furthermore, certain environmental, organizational, group, or individual-level attributes may promote or impede global leaders' ability to exercise their power. To gain insight on these issues, I ask:

RQ3. How do global leaders exercise power?

RQ4. Which factors influence global leaders' exercise of power?

Finally, leaders wield power in order to achieve certain objectives. To offer insights regarding the consequences of global leaders' exercise of power, I ask:

RQ5. What are the outcomes of global leaders' exercise of power?

METHOD

Search Method and Article Inclusion

To perform a systematic search of the scholarly literature at the intersection of global leadership and power, I searched the citation database Scopus using the keywords (“global” or “international” or “multinational” or “multicultural” or “transnational” or “cross-cultural” or “cross cultural” or “inter-cultural” or “intercultural”) and (“manager” or “management” or “executive” or “supervisor” or “leader” or “leadership”) and (“power” or “empower” or “shared” or “status” or “authori*” or “delegate*”). The search covered all publication years but excluded unpublished articles, unpublished data, dissertations, theses, and monographs, as well as manuscripts written in a language other than English. Upon limiting the source list to 33 journals identified by Bird and Mendenhall (2016) as having a focus on management and organizational behavior, this search strategy yielded an initial pool of 429 articles for further screening.

Next, I read the abstracts of the 429 articles to determine whether the studies met the following criteria: (1) the study investigated aspects of global leadership as defined by Reiche et al. (2017) and (2) the study conceptualized power as residing in the global leader. Based on a careful reading of the abstracts, 114 studies were identified to be potentially relevant in scope and underwent full-text review by the author. (If it was not clear from the abstract whether the article meets the inclusion criteria, its full-text was reviewed.)

Upon full-text review of 114 articles, an additional 72 articles failed to meet the inclusion criteria. Examples of articles that failed to meet the inclusion criteria during this step included several studies in which leader influence was oriented toward constituents from a single national culture or jurisdiction (e.g., Tinsley, 1998; Zhang et al., 2011) as opposed to “constituents from multiple national cultures and jurisdictions” (Reiche et al., 2017, p. 556). Studies that conceptualized power as residing in organizational units (such as corporate headquarters or foreign subsidiaries) (e.g., Ambos et al., 2010; Bouquet & Birkinshaw, 2008; Mudambi & Navarra, 2004) – and not in the global leaders leading these units – were also excluded. At the conclusion of the

full-text review, 42 articles comprise the final review set. These articles are marked by an asterisk in the References.

Article Analysis

Each article was first coded for differences in study type (conceptual, qualitative, quantitative), sample characteristics (data sample, industry, country), theoretical perspectives, the type of global leader/agent of power, and the type of subordinate/subject of power. To better understand the state of the literature on power in global leadership, every article was analyzed to offer insights to the five research questions by noting: the definition of power invoked in the article (cf. RQ1), the power base(s) attributed to global leaders and associated power categories (cf. RQ2), the means by which global leaders enact or exercise their power (cf. RQ3), the factors that influence global leaders' exercise of power (cf. RQ4), and the outcomes of global leaders' exercise of power (cf. RQ5).

RESULTS

Main Results

Table 1 presents the attributes of the 42 articles identified by systematic review. The earliest article is Schmidt and Yeh's (1992) comparison of global leaders' influence strategies across Australia, England, Japan, and Taiwan for the purposes of testing the generalizability of French and Raven's (1959) typology of individual power across cultures. Since its publication, interest in the broader topic of power in global leadership has grown each subsequent decade, with an additional 6 articles published between 1993 and 2002 (14%), 8 articles published between 2003 and 2012 (19%), and 27 articles published between 2013 and 2022 (64%). Among the 42 papers, four are conceptual and the remaining 38 papers represent empirical studies. Of the empirical studies, 21 are qualitative (55%), 15 are quantitative (40%), and two employ mixed methods (5%).

Upon cataloging the various theoretical perspectives used by scholars to investigate power in global leadership, it is clear that the field has not coalesced around any particular paradigm. On the contrary, the breadth of theoretical perspectives invoked is unusually vast. Among the 42 papers, 10 do not reference any specific theory and an additional eight use an inductive approach to instead build new theory from qualitative data. In the remaining 24 articles, 26 distinct theories are invoked, including social identity theory, negotiation theory, power dependence theory, and post-colonial theory – to note only a few. This indicates that the field is still developing and suggests that the range of phenomena captured in this field of research is quite broad. As such, power in global leadership is well suited for investigation by management scholars, who are comfortable with applying a broad spectrum of theoretical lenses.

Table 1. Review of Research on Power in Global Leadership.

Authors (Year)	Study Type	Sample Characteristics	Industry	Countries	Theory	Agent of Power	Subjects of Powers	Base of Power	Type of Power	Exercise of power	Factors that Promote or Impede/Exercise Enactment of Power
Neeley and Reiche (2022)	Quantitative (archival); Qualitative (interview)	115 global leaders	High-tech	United States	Social distance theory of power	Global leader	Local subordinates	Formal hierarchy	Position	Use of downward deference toward local subordinates	Lack of leader expertise; Lack of leader social connectedness; Lack of leader influence relative to local subordinates
Fernando (2021)	Qualitative (case study)	1 subsidiary	IT	Sri Lanka	Postcolonial theory, Positioning theory	Subsidiary managers; HR managers	Subsidiary employees	Nation-of-origin	Referent	Use of diversity discourse to exercise control and legitimize and reproduce existing power relations	NA
Boustanifar et al. (2022)	Quantitative (archival)	304 LLCs	Various	Norway	Upper echelons theory	CEOs	Board members	Formal hierarchy; Network connectedness	Position	Influence over firm internationalization modes	CEO–board relative power
George et al. (2022)	Quantitative (survey)	212 individuals in 56 engineering teams	Aerospace	13 countries	Cultural self-representation theory	Engineering team members	Engineering team members	Undefined	Undefined	Undefined	Traditionalism; Virtuality
Iwashita (2021)	Qualitative (case study)	3 subsidiaries	Manufacturing	Thailand, Belgium, United States	Inductive theory building	Expatriate managers	Various stakeholders (HQ employees, subsidiary employees, customers)	Multilingualism	Information	Influence (enable, block, select) over adoption of HRM systems in subsidiaries	Language skills
Crowley-Henry et al. (2021)	Qualitative (case study)	3 SMEs	Medical tourism, High-tech, Fin-tech	Ireland	Intelligent career theory	Migrant founders	Skilled migrants; Self-initiated expatriates	International experience	Expert	Influence over recruitment and retention policies and practices	International experience; Firm size

Table 1. (continued)

Authors (Year)	Study Type	Sample Characteristics	Industry	Countries	Theory	Agent of Power	Subjects of Powers	Base of Power	Type of Power	Exercise of Power	Factors that Promote or Impede/Exercise Enactment of Power
Farh et al. (2021)	Quantitative (archival)	362 employees and 47 leaders nested in 33 sites of 1 MNC	Pharmaceuticals	50 countries	Social capital theory	MNC employees	Undefined	Network connectedness	Connection	Advice-giving	Employee's cross-border work; Employee's connection to site leader with high network centrality
Gyamfi and Lee (2020)	Qualitative (interview)	Various MNCs	Various	Ghana	Social identity theory	Various types of global leaders	Subsidiary employees	Nation-of-origin	Undefined	Undefined	Local language proficiency; Socio-cultural understanding; Knowledge of host-country market; Unique social ties; Skill-set similarity to host-country employees; Over-embeddedness in host-country network
Ciuk et al. (2019)	Qualitative (case study)	47 individuals in 1 subsidiary	Pharmaceuticals	Poland	Power turn strand of translation studies	Subsidiary managers	Corporate and local managerial colleagues	Multilingualism	Information	Use of interlingual translation to exercise power over meaning	NA
Li et al. (2017)	Quantitative (archival)	4,839 firm-year observations	Various	22 countries	Power circulation theory of control	CEOs	Senior executives who are also board members	Formal hierarchy; Network connectedness	Position; Connection	Undefined	Power distance; CEO-senior executive status incongruence

Hiezmann et al. (2018)	Qualitative (interview)	20 Australian expatriates	Various	Vietnam	Intergroup contact theory	Expatriate managers	Local subordinates	Professional expertise	Expert	Influence over capacity development relationships	Interpersonal trust; Perceived equality between leader–follower; Mutual openness; Close and interdependent cooperation; Social interaction/ friendship; Supportive organizational environment
Paunova (2017)	Quantitative (survey)	230 individuals from 46 nationalities in 36 self-managing teams	Graduate program project	A European country	Status characteristics theory	Informal leaders of multinational teams	Multinational team members	Nation-of-origin; English proficiency	Referent	Leader emergence	Nation-of-origin development rate; English language proficiency
Kane and Levina (2017)	Qualitative (interview)	41 individuals	IT, Pharmaceuticals, Technology	Belarus, India, Russia, Ukraine	Social identity theory; Bicultural theory	Onshore managers	Offshore employees	Formal hierarchy; Biculturalism	Position; Expert	Use of position to empower or hinder low status group members by connecting/ narrowing communication channels to important stakeholders, teaching missing competencies/ micromanaging, soliciting/ suppressing input	Dual language proficiency; Socio-cultural understanding; Knowledge of host-country culture; Knowledge of home-country culture
Tenzer and Pudelko (2017)	Qualitative (interview)	90 individuals from 19 nationalities in 15 multinational teams	Automotive	Germany	Inductive theory building	Multinational team leaders	Multinational team members	Formal hierarchy; Professional expertise	Position; Expert	Various	Language policies; Language formality; Language proficiency
Malik and Yazar (2016)	Qualitative (case study)	25 negotiation events	Various	9 countries	Inductive theory building	Senior managers	Senior managers	Formal hierarchy; Professional expertise	Position; Expert; Referent	Influence over organizational alliance formation	Cultural distance

Table 1. (continued)

Authors (Year)	Study Type	Sample Characteristics	Industry	Countries	Theory	Agent of Power	Subjects of Powers	Base of Power	Type of Power	Exercise of Power	Factors that Promote or Impede/Exercise Enactment of Power
Moeller et al. (2016)	Conceptual	NA	NA	NA	Status inconsistency theory	Inpatriate managers	HQ employees	Formal hierarchy; Network connectedness; Nation-of-origin	Position; Connection; Referent	Fulfillment of boundary spanning role	Status inconsistency; Global talent management practices
Kopelman et al. (2016)	Quantitative (experiment)	181 individuals from 4 nationalities	Graduate program project	Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, United States	None	Managers	Managers	Experimentally assigned (high/low)	NA	Influence over cooperative behavior	Culture of high-power manager
Toegel and Jonsen (2016)	Conceptual	NA	NA	NA	None	Senior managers	Team members	Undefined	Position; Reward; Coercive; Expert; Referent Position	Shared leadership	Status; Culture
Tenzer and Pudelko (2015)	Qualitative (case study)	90 individuals from 19 nationalities in 15 multinational teams	Automotive	Germany	Inductive theory building	Multinational team leaders	Multinational team members	Formal hierarchy	Position	Use of emotion management strategies aimed at reducing impact of language barriers, redirecting multinational team members' attention away from language barriers, reducing negative appraisal of language barriers	NA
Vogel et al. (2015)	Quantitative (survey)	951 individuals (subordinates)	Graduate program project	Australia, Singapore, Taiwan, United States	Fairness heuristic theory	Supervisors	Subordinates	Status	Coercive	Abusive supervision	Cultural dimensions

Stock and Ozbek-Potthoff (2014)	Quantitative (survey)	92 expatriate managers; 370 local subordinates	Various	Various	Implicit leadership theory	Expatriate managers	Local subordinates	Undefined	Charisma	Undefined	Disconfirmation of subordinates' expectations of leadership; Collectivism; Power distance
Rule and Tskhay (2014)	Quantitative (survey)	196 Amazon's Mechanical Turk participants; 140 undergraduate psychology students	Various	United States, Germany	None	CEOs	Undefined	Facial appearance (dominance and maturity [power]; likeability and trustworthiness [warmth])	Charisma	Undefined	Macroeconomic events
Gundling et al. (2014)	Qualitative (case study)	Case study of Ford Motor Company's training programs	Automotive	United States	Adult learning theory	Senior managers	Undefined	Undefined	Undefined	Undefined	Cultural self-awareness; Socio-cultural understanding; Frame-shifting; Shared responsibility; Helping others grow; Balance adaptation and assertiveness; Core values and flexibility
Huang and Aaltio (2014)	Quantitative (survey); Qualitative (interview)	21 Chinese female managers; 15 Finnish female managers	IT	China, Finland	Structural hole theory	Female IT managers	Undefined	Network connectedness	Connection	Undefined	Female-to-male power ties
Chevrier and Viegas-Pires (2013)	Qualitative (ethnography)	9 French expatriate managers; 32 Malagasy subordinates	National development	Madagascar	Inductive theory building	Expatriate managers	Local subordinates	Formal hierarchy	Position	Use of delegation	Leader's inclination to delegate; Followers' expectations
Khakhar and Rammal (2013)	Qualitative (interview)	30 individuals	Various	Lebanon	Negotiation theory	Senior managers (Arab)	Senior managers (non-Arab)	Formal hierarchy; Network connectedness (wasta)	Position; Connection; Referent	Use of negotiation tactics	Socio-economic factors; Cultural factors; Political factors

Table 1. (continued)

Authors (Year)	Study Type	Sample Characteristics	Industry	Countries	Theory	Agent of Power	Subjects of Powers	Base of Power	Type of Power	Exercise of Power	Factors that Promote or Impede/Exercise Enactment of Power
Sutton et al. (2013)	Conceptual	NA	NA	NA	Self-categorization theory	Various types of global leaders	Various stakeholders (groups, work teams, subsidiaries, the company, interfirm partnerships, mergers/acquisitions)	Formal hierarchy	Position	Use of purposeful stereotype categories for groups (not individuals) to enhance leader's social power over subordinates	NA
Moore (2012)	Qualitative (ethnography)	NA	Automotive	United Kingdom	Inductive theory building	Expatriate manager	Local managers and local subordinate	Formal hierarchy; Professional expertise; MNC-of-origin and Nation-of-origin (savior/white knight)	Position; Expert; Referent	Use of identity management and knowledge management (through knowledge transfer, withholding, and manipulation) to justify and consolidate position	NA
Fernern et al. (2012)	Conceptual	NA	NA	NA	Institutional theory	Headquarters managers and subsidiary managers	Undefined	Formal hierarchy	Position	Influence over resource allocation; Influence over process development/implementation/compliance; Influence over shaping of meaning systems	Subsidiary local embeddedness; Host market regulatory environment; Host country institutions

Rule et al. (2011)	Quantitative (survey)	135 undergraduate psychology students	Various	United States, Japan	None	CEOs	Undefined	Facial appearance (dominance, competence, and maturity [power]; likeability and trustworthiness [warmth])	Charisma	Undefined	Evaluator's country-of-origin
Schotter and Beamish (2011)	Qualitative (interview)	150 individuals; 9 cases	Various	Various	Inductive theory building	Subsidiary managers	Various stakeholders (HQ employees, subsidiary employees)	Boundary spanning	Expert; Referent; Information	Influence over conflict negotiation	NA
Williams and Lee (2011)	Quantitative (survey)	135 individuals	Various	Various	Entrepreneurial cognition theory	Subsidiary managers	Undefined	Professional expertise	Expert	Use of political games to support outward diffusion of subsidiary initiatives	NA
Robinson and Kerr (2009)	Qualitative (ethnography)	Participant observation	Education	Ukraine	Critical social theory	Senior managers	Subordinates	Vision; Symbolic efficacy of speech; Creating an emotional community	Charisma	Influence over subordinates' perceptions of leader legitimacy	NA
Moore (2006)	Qualitative (ethnography)	23 individuals	Financial	Germany, United Kingdom	Strategic self-presentation theory	Expatriate managers	Subsidiary employees	Formal hierarchy; Network connectedness; Informal knowledge; Multilingualism	Position; Connection; Information	Use of self-presentation of personal alignment with HQ or subsidiary interests to allow for strategic, self-interested approach to negotiation	NA
Geppert and Williams (2006)	Qualitative (case study)	30 individuals	Manufacturing	Germany, United Kingdom	Inductive theory building	Subsidiary managers	HQ managers	Formal hierarchy	Position	Influence over local implementation of global best practices	Institutional environment; Subsidiary performance; Subsidiary strategic importance

Table 1.
(continued)

Authors (Year)	Study Type	Sample Characteristics	Industry	Countries	Theory	Agent of Power	Subjects of Powers	Base of Power	Type of Power	Exercise of Power	Factors that Promote or Impede/Exercise Enactment of Power
Marschan-Piekkari et al. (1999)	Qualitative (interview)	110 individuals	Elevator	Various	None	Various types of global leaders	Subordinates	Multilingualism enables social connectedness and specialized knowledge access	Expert	Influence over communication flows	Language distance
Rao and Schmidt (1998)	Quantitative (survey)	81 negotiators	Various	United States	Transaction cost theory; Game theory; Power dependence theory	Senior managers	Foreign counterparts	Alternatives available to negotiator	Referent	Use of hard/soft negotiation tactics	NA
Rao et al. (1997)	Quantitative (survey)	150 individuals	Import/export	Japan	None	Senior managers	Subordinates	Formal hierarchy	Position	Use of influence tactics (culture-general: assertiveness, coalitions, friendliness, reason, sanction; culture-specific: firm's authority, personal development, open communication, role model, socializing)	NA
Adler (1997)	Qualitative (meta-ethnography)	25 women leaders	Politics	Various	None	Women leaders of countries/governments	A nation's people	Formal hierarchy	Position	Ascendance to power	Diverse backgrounds; Diverse contexts; Legacy/dynasty; Popular support; Symbol of change

Janssens (1994)	Quantitative (survey)	162 individuals	Various	Belgium	None	Senior-level, middle-level, and low-level managers	HQ managers	Formal hierarchy	Position	Influence over use of parent company/ host company standards to evaluate leader	Home/host country cultural distance; Number of other international managers in the host company; Nature of foreign assignment
de Laat (1994)	Qualitative (interview)	46 individuals	Agriculture	Netherlands	None	Functional managers	Project managers	Matrix position	Position	Use of nonconformist conflict behavior (ritualism; manipulation; rebellion; retreatism) to challenge division of authority in matrix structure	NA
Schmidt and Yeh (1992)	Quantitative (survey)	126 Australian managers; 121 English managers; 2,231 Taiwanese managers; 355 Japanese managers	Various	Australia, United Kingdom, Taiwan, Japan	None	Senior managers	Subordinates	Higher authority; Assertiveness; Sanctions; Bargaining; Reason; Coalition; Friendliness	Position; Reward; Coercive; Expert; Connection; Charisma	NA	NA

comfortable with applying a broad spectrum of theoretical lenses. It is also noteworthy that among the 38 empirical studies, there is great variety in industry and country samples. Regarding industry variety, there are 22 single-industry studies and 16 multi-industry studies. Together, the articles offer insights from across 15 named industries. In terms of country variety, there are 19 multi-country studies and 19 single-country studies. In the single-country studies, researchers commonly sampled global leaders (CEOs, expatriate managers, subsidiary managers, project managers, multinational team leaders) who were stationed in a particular country but whose constituents (subordinates, superiors, colleagues, counterparts) represented multiple national cultures or were located in multiple countries. The diversity in sampling across the (relatively few) empirical studies in this review is remarkable and represents a strength of this line of research.

Key Patterns and Themes in the Literature

RQ1. How is power defined in global leadership research? In the social sciences, power is a central – albeit intricate – concept, with many definitions, each emphasizing different elements (for a review of various theories of power, see Clegg & Haugaard, 2009). Similarly, there is little definitional convergence as to what constitutes power in global leadership. However, the various definitions of power used by global leadership scholars (presented in Table 2) can be placed into four broad categories.

Power as ability to influence. The most commonly used view emerges from Weber's conceptualization of power as the potential to exert influence over others. In Weber's definition, "Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance" (Weber, 1978, p. 53). In this category, the emphasis is mainly on the leaders (or agents) and their abilities to exert influence. Although Weber's definition does not preclude consideration of power differentials between leaders and followers, studies invoking this type of definition tend to privilege the leader's perspective. This line of research commonly views power as stemming from a position of authority. Indeed, among the global leadership studies referencing Weber explicitly (e.g., Neeley & Reiche, 2022), or those conceptualizing power as an influence process in more general terms (e.g., Fernando, 2021; Li et al., 2017; Moeller et al., 2016; Schmidt & Yeh, 1992), power derives from hierarchical position, expert knowledge, or by association as a referent for another entity.

The leader-centered approach is reflected also in these studies' research designs. In particular, the sampling strategies of studies that define power only in terms of ability to influence (Table 2) commonly survey, interview, or gather archival information on global leaders often without obtaining complementary information about subordinates. The spotlight is thus on individual global leader differences and their effect on team, unit, and organizational outcomes. This approach has been effective in examining the moderating role of context (e.g., virtuality, firm size, cultural distance, host market characteristics). However, such studies are incomplete representations of the phenomenon because they do not account for the relative power of subordinates (or subjects of influence). In some studies, the relative power of subordinates is overlooked entirely. In other studies, for practical purposes, subordinates' relative power is assumed to be constant across members of a subgroup (such as among people belonging to the same team, unit, or nationality), the lack of empirical consideration of subordinates' relative power is noted as a key limitation, and its integration is left to future research (e.g., Crowley-Henry et al., 2021; George et al., 2022; Neeley & Reiche, 2022).

Table 2. Definitions of Power in Global Leadership Research

Authors (Year, Page)	Definition of "Power"	Definitional Category
Neeley and Reiche (2022, p. 11)	"...the right to command, direct, and evaluate subordinates' work by virtue of their structural rank in a defined hierarchy (Astley & Sachdeva, 1984; Lee & Edmondson, 2017; Weber, 1947)"	Power as ability to influence
Fernando (2021, p. 2129)	"An asymmetrical relation (Dahl, 1957) that rests upon the ability to influence others (Lukes, 1974)"	Power as ability to influence, power as relational dependence
George et al. (2022, p. 1)	"...shared leadership, formally defined as a 'dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups where members lead one another to achieve organizational objectives' (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1)"	Power as ability to influence
Crowley-Henry et al. (2021, p. 146)	"...influence of the founder's international experience and status on the design and application of the company's HRM practices, in particular concerning recruitment and retention"	Power as ability to influence
Gyamfi and Lee (2020, p. 82)	"Power is defined as the ability and willingness to asymmetrically enforce one's will over entities; by utilizing one's relative capacity to provide or withhold resources or administer punishments (Keltner et al., 2003; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015)."	Power as ability to influence, power as relational dependence, power as control over resources
Li et al. (2017, p. 811)	"A primary way that CEOs establish their authority is to exercise social influence over their immediate subordinates (Boeker, 1992)."	Power as ability to influence, power as relational dependence
Paunova (2017, p. 884)	"...informal leadership status, defined as the position in the social hierarchy that results from accumulated acts of follower deference (Ridgeway, 2001)."	Power as relational dependence
Kane and Levina (2017, p. 542)	Asymmetric power and status relations	Power as relational dependence
Tenzer and Pudelko (2017, p. 45)	"In line with Magee and Galinsky's (2008, p. 361) definition of power as 'asymmetric control over valued resources in social relations' and the portrayal of language proficiency as a socially highly valued resource in MNCs (Koveshnikov et al., 2012; Neeley & Dumas, 2016), language is now commonly acknowledged as a significant source of power in global corporations."	Power as relational dependence, power as control over resources

Table 2. (continued)

Authors (Year, Page)	Definition of "Power"	Definitional Category
Malik and Yazar (2016, p. 1045)	"Dahl (1957) focuses on authoritative power and suggests that executive power is a strong influencing mechanism that makes others in the organization follow orders. Emerson (1962, p. 32) links the influence of the power of party A over party B to the need of party B for A's resources."	Power as ability to influence, power as control over resources
Moeller et al. (2016, p. 995)	"Power renders influence"	Power as ability to influence
Kopelman et al. (2016, p. 722)	"In the social psychology and decision-making literature, power refers to asymmetric control over resources, which affords a person control over the outcomes, experiences, or behaviors of others (Keltner et al., 2003; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In negotiations – including social dilemmas, which are conceptualized as tacit negotiations (Kopelman, 2009; Schelling, 1960; Thompson, 2001) – objective economic power differences may arise on the basis of alternatives (e.g., best alternative), market share, or future dependence on a resource"	Power as ability to influence Power as control over resources
Toegel and Jonsen (2016, p. 154)	"...control over valued resources (Magee & Galinsky, 2008)"	Power as control over resources
Stock and Ozbek-Potthoff (2014, p. 1651)	"However, as Ensari and Murphy (2003, p. 52) state: 'The power of leaders is largely dependent on how they are perceived by others'."	Power as perception
Gundling et al. (2014)	Ability to exert influence within a complex global matrix organization	Power as ability to influence, power as relational dependence
Huang and Aaltio (2014)	Control and influence	Power as ability to influence
Sutton et al. (2013, p. 609)	"...mobilization of subordinates"	Power as ability to influence
Ferner et al. (2012, p. 166)	"Hardy (1996) labels the first dimension 'the power of resources', which concerns power derived from the control of scarce resources, such as hiring and firing, rewards and sanctions, and expertise, in order to influence behavior in the face of opposition. The second, 'the power of processes', resides in 'organizational decision-making processes which incorporate a variety of procedures and political	Power as ability to influence, power as control over resources

Table 2. (continued)

Authors (Year, Page)	Definition of "Power"	Definitional Category
	routines that can be invoked by dominant groups to influence outcomes by preventing subordinates from participating fully in decision making'; equally, new groups may be brought, or force their way, into decision-making processes. The third dimension is labeled 'the power of meaning'; Hardy explores the way in which organizational groups legitimize their own demands and 'delegitimize' those of others through the management of meaning and the deployment of symbolic actions."	
Schotter and Beamish (2011, p. 246)	"Power in organizations arises not only from structure, hierarchy, or resource dependency, but also from interpersonal sources such as the personalities, characteristics, experiences, and talents of individual members of an organization. French and Raven (1959) early on identified six types of individual power, including: legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, referent, and information power."	Power as control over resources, power as perception
Williams and Lee (2011, p. 1246)	"Pfeffer (1981, 1994) described the source of power within an organization to be attributable to being in 'the right place': having control over resources or budgets, having control or access to key information, and having formal authority. Morgan (1986) extended this to include control over decision processes, control over boundaries, and even the ability to cope with uncertainty."	Power as ability to influence, power as control over resources
Robinson and Kerr (2009, p. 880)	"In Bourdieu's view all organizational power relations are based on symbolic violence, that is, the imposition of and misrecognition of arbitrary power relations (e.g., class, race, gender) as natural relations."	Power as perception
Moore (2006)	Dominance and suppression	Power as ability to influence, power as perception
Geppert and Williams (2006, p. 53)	"...political control over uncertainties and scarce resources"	Power as control over resources

Table 2. (continued)

Authors (Year, Page)	Definition of "Power"	Definitional Category
Marschan-Piekkari et al. (1999, p. 431)	"As Kalu (1995, p. 251) states: there is a tendency in the current literature among scholars toward a consensus definition of power as the ability to control interdependence uncertainties for others."	Power as relational dependence, power as control over resources
Rao and Schmidt (1998, p. 671)	"In an exchange relationship, each party's potential power lies in the perceived dependence of the other (Emerson, 1962)."	Power as relational dependence, power as control over resources
Asha Rao et al. (1997) Janssens (1994, p. 857)	Influence over subordinates "The concept of power as used by Emerson (1962) takes power as a property of the social relationship, not of the actor."	Power as ability to influence Power as relational dependence
de Laat (1994)	"...power is used against one or more other parties" (Fox, 1971)	Power as relational dependence
Schmidt and Yeh (1992)	"...influence refers to the behaviors, often verbal, that superiors use to gain compliance from subordinates (Kipnis et al., 1984)"	Power as ability to influence

Yet, Weber (1978) himself notes that power is enacted in the context of a "social relationship" where an individual is "in a position" to prevail "despite resistance" (p. 53), which indicates that this definitional category can accommodate power differentials between leaders and followers. Indeed, conceptual work by Moeller et al. (2016) defines power in Weberian terms, but explicitly considers an agent's ability to influence as being contingent upon both context and the attributes and behaviors of the subject of influence. Therefore, although this definitional category has traditionally been invoked in research focusing mainly on the global leader, there is nothing precluding scholars from using it in studies that privilege leader and subordinate perspectives equally.

Power as relational dependence. The leader-centered approach stands in contrast to a relation-based view of power as "a property of the social relation" (Emerson, 1962, p. 32). In this definitional category, power is not an attribute of the power holder. Instead, it depends on the nature of the relationship between the power holder and the subject of influence and their relative bargaining positions. Research in this tradition sees influence as a tacit negotiation between parties (Schelling, 1960), where power is derived from having a stronger next best alternative.

A conceptual advantage of defining power in terms of relational dependence is that it provides scholars an opportunity to spotlight both leader and subordinate perspectives. The vast majority of global leadership studies in this category indeed sample both agents and subjects of influence. The available insights, however, are nearly all qualitative in nature with many scholars using case studies and interviews to generate new theory. Building on this research, scholars can make further headway by invoking the relational dependence view of power in large-scale studies. Large-scale studies that sample both leader and subordinate perspectives can measure and exploit variance in relative power to identify key antecedents and outcomes of power differentials between global leaders and their subjects of influence across various contexts.

Thus far, this definitional perspective has commonly been used to explore lateral and upward influence. For example, Janssens (1994) investigates the conditions under which global leaders can successfully influence headquarters about being evaluated against parent company performance standards. Studies of actual negotiations involving global leaders also often conceptualize power in terms of relational dependence. Malik and Yazar (2016) and Rao and Schmidt (1998) both adopt Emerson's definition in their respective studies of lateral negotiations in international alliances to examine whether global leaders' relative power influences international alliance formation (Malik & Yazar, 2016) and whether it can be used to explain application of hard versus soft negotiating tactics (Rao & Schmidt, 1998). In a study of lateral relationships among graduate students in multinational student teams, Paunova (2017) finds that language proficiency and the national development of an individual's country-of-origin predicts leader emergence.

Conspicuously missing from most global leadership studies adopting a relational dependence view of power (see Table 2) are investigations of downward influence. This is a critical gap given that the nature of power in global leadership arguably depends on both leader and follower attributes and behaviors. Indeed, Paunova's (2017) work suggests that one's ability to influence others is contingent on one's relative standing in a group. Furthermore, the consequences of power differentials also likely vary depending on the context in which they occur. Although Neeley and Reiche (2022) do not explicitly adopt a relational dependence view of power, their qualitative analyses uncover instances where follower characteristics affect the influence process. In certain contexts, for example, Neeley and Reiche find that age upends hierarchical status such that older followers outrank younger leaders. In their sample, female global leaders also report having to adjust their behavior toward subordinates depending on the environment. Yet, the extent to which normative pressures on leader behavior are gender-specific and how these adjustments differentially impact male and female leader effectiveness remains unexplored (Neeley & Reiche, 2022). Probing the nature of power between global leaders and their subordinates in various relative power combinations and contexts thus represents an exciting opportunity for future research.

Power as control over resources. Power can also be conceived as deriving from *control over valued resources*, because control over resources provides individuals with leverage over others' behaviors when faced with resistance (Keltner et al., 2003). Global leadership studies invoking this conceptualization often reference the works of Pfeffer (1981, 1994) or cite Magee and Galinsky's (2008) definition of power as "asymmetric control over valued resources in social relations" (p. 361). Related definitions by Kalu (1995) and Morgan (1986) conceptualize power as *control over uncertainty* on behalf of others.

In the global leadership literature, studies invoking this definitional category vary greatly in terms of the types of global leaders studied, their power bases, and how they exercise power. One recurring theme, however, involves investigating whether global leaders' control over the allocation of valued resources depends on their language proficiency (e.g., Gyamfi & Lee, 2020; Tenzer & Pudelko, 2017). In these studies, language proficiency is not seen as a resource or a source of power. Instead, it represents an enabling mechanism for global leaders to capitalize on other sources of power, such as position or expert power. A second set of studies invoking this definitional approach investigate how institutional or organizational factors can restrain or empower global leaders' abilities to influence resource allocation. For instance, conceptual work by Ferner et al. (2012) suggests that host country institutions can limit global leaders' influence over resource allocation and process development. Similarly, Geppert and Williams (2006) highlight the moderating role of the broader institutional environment and subsidiary strategic and economic importance in affecting global leaders' abilities to affect resource allocation through implementation of global best practices.

In this category, the focus has been on uncovering which global leader characteristics are associated with greater control over valued resources and on identifying which contextual variables moderate the relationship. In addition to the need for future research to examine the antecedents and moderators of power as control over resources in a more comprehensive and structured manner, another interesting path forward is to conceptualize what constitutes resources in a more granular way. As suggested by Hardy (1996), control over resources can be further decomposed into (i) control over scarce resources, (ii) control over processes, and (iii) control over meaning. Global leadership effectiveness is likely to hinge on leader ability to not only capture and allocate scarce resources and implement necessary processes but also on ability to win constituents' "hearts and minds" by gaining power over meaning. Future research may thus wish to explore whether the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) that have been identified as desirable global leader attributes for control over allocation of valued resources are equally useful in gaining control over processes and meaning.

Power as perception. The last major definitional category views power as emerging from the response an individual engenders in others. As defined by Ensari and Murphy (2003, p. 52), "The power of leaders is largely dependent on how they are perceived by others." As noted by Schotter and Beamish (2011, p. 246), "Power in organizations arises not only from structure, hierarchy, or resource dependency, but also from interpersonal sources such as the personalities, characteristics, experiences, and talents of individual members of an organization." This category conceptualizes power from the perspective of the led. In terms of research design, researchers commonly collect linked leader–follower data to determine how follower perceptions of global leadership differ depending on leader characteristics, follower characteristics, and context.

In empirical studies of global leadership, scholars have found that in order for subordinates to perceive an individual as a leader, the individual cannot simply meet subordinates' expectations, but must instead exceed them (Stock & Ozbek-Potthoff, 2014 "). Studies invoking this definitional tradition often view leader's power as deriving from charisma (e.g., Robinson & Kerr, 2009; Stock & Ozbek-Potthoff, 2014 "), as opposed to position or expert power. For instance, in the work of Robinson and Kerr (2009), global leaders used vision, symbolic speech, and emotion to establish legitimacy through charismatic leadership.

A follower-centered approach is theoretically appealing but is currently underutilized in the literature, representing the smallest definitional category in terms of number of studies. As it shares many of its tenets with the relational dependence perspective, future research seeking to cast power in the eyes of the led can more accurately represent the phenomenon by also explicitly considering leader characteristics or leader perspectives. Outcomes of interest in this stream of research tend to emphasize what followers think of leaders (e.g., Robinson & Kerr, 2009; Stock & Ozbek-Potthoff, 2014 "). In the future, followers' perceptions can be juxtaposed against what leaders think of their own performance. This line of inquiry invites deeper examination into whether and under what conditions leaders' and followers' perceptions of global leadership effectiveness are in alignment. Presumably, alignment between leaders' and followers' perceptions of leadership effectiveness can predict a host of higher-level outcomes, including stakeholder satisfaction, motivation, productivity, and perhaps even financial results.

Power as a combination of elements. Overall, scholars' choice of definition has important consequences for how power is conceptualized and operationalized. Furthermore, whether one thinks of power as emanating from the leader, as being determined by each party's respective next best alternatives, as being an expression of constituents' abilities to capture resources, or as being nothing but perception has important consequences for study design and for the range of implications that can be drawn from study findings. In navigating these various conceptualizations, some global leadership researchers have adopted definitions of power that combine elements from several of the categories described above. For

instance, Gyamfi and Lee (2020) write, “Power is defined as the ability and willingness to asymmetrically enforce one’s will over entities; by utilizing one’s relative capacity to provide or withhold resources or administer punishments (Keltner et al., 2003; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015)” (p. 82). Inherent in their definition is a conceptualization of power simultaneously as ability to influence, as relational dependence, and as control over resources. This suggests that the various definitions can be thought of as modules that can be layered for more complete coverage of the phenomenon. However, when combining definitional elements, scholars must be careful to align the chosen definition with a study design that allows for observation of all relevant agents, subjects, and objects of influence.

RQ2. What Power Base(s) Do Global Leaders Possess? With a more complete understanding of power’s meanings, this review now turns to the question of the sources of global leaders’ power. In French and Raven’s (1959) typology, individuals enjoy six bases of power: position, reward, coercive, expert, referent, and information. Position power, which emerges from formal hierarchy, constitutes the most researched type of power among global leaders and is referred to in half of the articles in this review.

A few themes are worth noting in the line of research on position power. First, scholars view position power as an explanatory mechanism for individuals’ abilities to influence group-level outcomes such as team cooperation (Tenzer & Pudelko, 2015) and team effectiveness (Tenzer & Pudelko, 2017), and firm-level outcomes such as implementation of best practices (Geppert & Williams, 2006), firm internationalization (Boustanifar et al., 2022), or alliance formation (Malik & Yazar, 2016). Second, global leaders use position power to empower others (Neeley & Reiche, 2022), but also to systematically hinder others’ abilities to contribute to organizational goals (Kane & Levina, 2017). Third, position power is used by global leaders to consolidate or enhance their own position (de Laat, 1994) and to protect against dismissal (Li et al., 2017). Taken together, the extant studies suggest that global leaders’ position power has the capacity to affect outcomes at the level of the organization, the group, the dyad (through leader–member exchange), and the individual.

Expert power is the second most researched power base, with studies showing that global leaders’ sources of expert power are quite varied, and have basis in professional expertise (e.g., Fee et al., 2017; Tenzer & Pudelko, 2017; Williams & Lee, 2011), international experience (e.g., Crowley-Henry et al., 2021; Kane & Levina, 2017), and language skills (e.g., Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999). Although expert power is commonly viewed as a positive form of influence that global leaders use to facilitate communication (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999) or reduce conflict and tensions (Schotter & Beamish, 2011), there is also qualitative evidence that global leaders deploy expert power to serve their own self-interest. For instance, Moore (2012) shows that global leaders use professional and cultural expertise to control, manipulate, or withhold knowledge.

The third power base is referent power, which emerges out of a subject’s identification with the power holder. In French and Raven’s (1959) work, a subject’s identification can emerge from a feeling of oneness with the power holder’s identity or from a desire to be associated with that identity. Studies indicate that global leaders deftly use the prestige associated with their MNC-of origin, nation-of origin, or proficiency in the MNC’s lingua franca as a source of power. For instance, Moore’s (2012) ethnographic study of interactions between German expatriate managers and British subsidiary employees at BMW’s struggling subsidiary in the United Kingdom highlights the importance of national identities for building global leaders’ referent power. As representatives of BMW, the German expatriate managers incorporated within themselves the successes of their parent company and were thus able to construct identities as “saviors” (p. 285) and as “white knights” (p. 286) in a cross-cultural context and counteract local managers’ presentation of them as “invaders” (p. 286). Paunova’s (2017) study further supports the role of nation-of origin and language as a basis of referent power and finds that the level of development of an individual’s nation-of origin and English language proficiency predicts leadership emergence and

deference received from peers. In a critical study of cross-national transfer of diversity management practices, Fernando (2021) argues that top-down transfers from parent organizations to subsidiaries reproduce existing power relations in ways that frame the Western providers of best practices as “modern and superior” and the non-Western recipients as “disadvantaged and inferior” (p. 2127), which serves to protect the referent power of global leaders in their interactions with local subordinates. Fernando writes, “Power differentials between the companies are heightened as diversity is employed as a tool to position employees of the subsidiary in unfavourable occupational terms” (p. 2146). Together, the extant studies suggest that referent power is a potent instrument in interpersonal interactions, with potentially positive as well as negative consequences for global leadership outcomes.

In contrast with position, expert, and referent power, power based in control over information (information power), the ability to confer rewards (reward power), and the ability to administer punishments (coercive power) are comparatively understudied in global leadership research. However, the available studies offer useful foundations for future research. For instance, several studies highlight the central role that multilingualism holds for global leaders’ abilities to exercise information power. As Iwashita (2021) indicates, multilingual expatriates use their language proficiencies not only to enable but also to block the transfer of parent company practices to host organizations by exploiting language disparities between organizational stakeholders. Ciuk et al. (2019) point to the information power held by subsidiary managers who use interlingual translation to influence how parent company decisions will be received by subsidiary employees. These insights beg further inquiry into whether multilingual global leaders’ tendencies to exploit language differences as a source of power can be explained by individual-level factors (such as demographics, personality profiles, or knowledge/experience) or whether the behavior is instead activated in certain contexts.

Regarding coercive power, Vogel et al. (2015) find that subordinates’ acceptance of coercive power varies by culture, with subordinates from Confucian Asian cultures reacting less negatively to abusive supervision than subordinates from Anglo cultures. This invites the question of whether the various sources of global leaders’ power are equally effective in influencing individuals across cultures or whether their relative effectiveness is culture-specific. To answer this question, future scholarship can build on the pioneering work of Schmidt and Yeh (1992), who found that Australian, British, Taiwanese, and Japanese leaders all used a common set of influence strategies, which broadly align with French and Raven’s (1959) bases of social power. However, the specific tactics for using these influence strategies were found to be culture-specific.

RQ3. How Do Global Leaders Exercise Power? As foreshadowed in early work by Schmidt and Yeh (1992), there is great variety in how global leaders exercise their power. The range of tactics, behaviors, and actions exhibited by global leaders and captured by scholars is impressively broad, in some ways reflecting the variety of activities comprising “management.” In summarizing what is known about how global leaders enact power, it may be useful to distinguish between tactics used in interpersonal contact and tactics employed for general influence.

In interpersonal relationships, global leaders employ both coercive and cooperative tactics to advance organizational goals. Coercive tactics include using assertiveness and sanctioning (Rao et al., 1997), micromanagement (Kane & Levina, 2017), withholding or manipulating knowledge (Moore, 2012), suppressing constituents’ input (Kane & Levina, 2017), and seeking acquiescence and compliance to leader directives (Neeley & Reiche, 2022). In contrast, cooperative tactics include a range of adaptive behaviors such as reducing social distance between leaders and followers by fostering interpersonal trust, connection, openness, and close collaboration (Fee et al., 2017; Neeley & Reiche, 2022), empowering constituents by soliciting and privileging their input (Kane & Levina, 2017; Neeley & Reiche, 2022), and using network centrality to connect stakeholders (Farh et al., 2021; Kane & Levina, 2017).

The literature also highlights several general influence mechanisms. In particular, global leaders affect organizational outcomes by exercising control over the design and implementation of processes and systems. For instance, global leaders' use of control over communication can accelerate or decelerate certain initiatives (Iwashita, 2021), as can control over how headquarters and subsidiary communications are translated – and are thus perceived by their respective constituents (Ciuk et al., 2019). Global leaders also influence employee recruitment and retention (Crowley-Henry et al., 2021), which affords them substantial control over the direction of the organization.

When examining the articles on power in global leadership in aggregate, it also becomes evident that global leaders exercise power not only through positive and productive behaviors but also through negative and counterproductive behaviors. On the positive side, global leaders use their power to empower and connect others (Farh et al., 2021; Kane & Levina, 2017; Moeller et al., 2016; Neeley & Reiche, 2022), to limit the impact of language barriers in teams (Tenzer & Pudelko, 2015), and to reduce conflict in negotiations (Schotter & Beamish, 2011). However, there is also plentiful evidence that global leaders exercise power to benefit themselves at the expense of others or their organization (Moore, 2006, 2012), for instance by controlling the flow of knowledge and communication (Kane & Levina, 2017; Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999) or by deploying negative stereotypes against groups of people to enhance their own social power over subordinates (Sutton et al., 2013).

In addition to framing global leaders' exercise of power in terms of leader behaviors, several studies view global leaders' exercise of power in terms of leader actions toward the fulfillment of a goal. These studies highlight global leaders' use of delegation (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, 2013), negotiation (Khakhar & Rammal, 2013), talent management (Crowley-Henry et al., 2021), and implementation of best practices (Ferner et al., 2012; Geppert & Williams, 2006; Williams & Lee, 2011) to enact their power. As the foregoing analysis indicates, global leaders exercise power in a myriad of ways. However, the literature currently lacks cumulative progress within any particular area.

RQ4. Which Factors Influence Global Leaders' Exercise of Power? The factors moderating global leaders' abilities to exercise power fall broadly into four categories: (i) personal attributes of the leader/agent of power, (ii) features of the leader–follower relationship, (iii) organizational attributes, and (iv) cross-national differences. In terms of the personal attributes that promote global leaders' abilities to exercise power, scholars point to professional expertise, sociocultural understanding, linguistic proficiency, and social capital (e.g., Gundling et al., 2014; Gyamfi & Lee, 2020; Kane & Levina, 2017). Given previous scholarly emphasis on the roles of individual personality, cultural intelligence, and global mindset for global leadership competencies (Bird & Stevens, 2013), it is surprising that these traits and capabilities do not feature more prominently in research on power in global leadership. The roles of global leader attitudes, such as emotional intelligence, empathy, optimism, or motivation, have also so far been overlooked in investigations of power.

Although features of the leader–follower relationship for global leader power are comparatively understudied, qualitative work by Fee et al. (2017) highlights the importance of interpersonal trust, perceived equality, openness, interdependence, and social interaction between leaders and followers. Furthermore, Stock and Ozbek-Potthoff (2014) and Chevrier and Viegas-Pires (2013) note the moderating impact of followers' expectations of leader behavior on global leaders' abilities to exercise their power. Future research may thus wish to integrate aspects of the leader–follower relationship as moderators in studies that conceptualize global leader power in terms of ability to influence or as control over resources. For instance, moderators such as power differentials between leaders and subordinates, psychic distance between leader and follower perceptions of leader effectiveness, or differences in leaders' and subordinates' KSAOs may help explain relationships between global leader influence and higher-level outcomes.

Organizational characteristics have also been shown to influence global leaders' abilities to exercise power. For instance, Geppert and Williams (2006) find that subsidiary managers' ability to exert (upward) influence over managers at headquarters is greater at higher levels of subsidiary performance and if the subsidiary enjoys greater strategic significance. Organizational language policies can also enhance global leaders' abilities to capitalize on their power (Tenzer & Pudelko, 2017). However, since much of our current understanding of power in global leadership relies on findings from case studies and interviews where within-study variance in organizational characteristics is typically limited, their moderating role remains poorly understood. For instance, there is little research on the moderating influence of organizational structure, ownership, entry mode, mandate, age, size, growth – to name only a few characteristics. To fill this gap, it is necessary for scholars to perform larger-scale quantitative studies with sufficient variance in organizational characteristics.

The greatest interest by scholars occurs in the fourth category, with researchers striving to understand the moderating role of cross-national differences for global leaders' power. In terms of their findings, several studies indicate that greater power distance enhances global leaders' abilities to exercise power (Li et al., 2017; Stock & Ozbek-Potthoff, 2014), while greater cultural distance between the leader and follower impedes it (Malik & Yazar, 2016). Scholars also explored the role of economic and political factors (e.g., Khakhar & Rammal, 2013; Rule & Tskhay, 2014). Taken together, the breadth of scholarly interest offers many disparate insights, but the literature has yet to yield a coherent account of the phenomenon.

RQ5. What Are the Outcomes of Global Leaders' Exercise of Power? The articles in this review offer many useful insights into the sources of global leaders' power, into how power is exercised, and regarding what factors promote or impede its enactment. Few studies, however, examine the outcomes of global leaders' power. Among the studies that do examine the consequences of global leaders' power, several find that its productive use results in improved team functioning (George et al., 2022; Tenzer & Pudelko, 2015, 2017) and can affect organizational-level outcomes including the aggressiveness of firm internationalization (Boustanifar et al., 2022) and the formation of alliance agreements (Rao & Schmidt, 1998). Others find that productive use of global leader power can influence subordinates' trust in their supervisor and their work effort (Vogel et al., 2015). Conversely, unproductive use of power can inhibit subordinates' identification with the leader (Stock & Ozbek-Potthoff, 2014). Deft use of power has also been found to benefit global leaders themselves. For example, downward deference toward subordinates improves global leaders' job performance ratings and increases their likelihood of promotion (Neeley & Reiche, 2022). Despite these important contributions, the broader question what it is that global leaders are seeking to accomplish in exercising their power remains largely unexplored.

A potential path forward is to think of power enactment in terms of individual, group, and organizational outcomes. For instance, researchers can explore the enactment of power in terms of attitudinal outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment, engagement, turnover intentions), behavioral outcomes (e.g., effort, motivation, cooperation), or performance outcomes (e.g., task-based performance, productivity) of individual followers. For group-level outcomes, studies can further explore relationships between power enactment and team functioning (e.g., cohesion, trust, respect, conflict, collective efficacy) or team processes (e.g., communication, coordination, conflict resolution, and decision-making). Some global leaders may also be able to directly impact organizational outcomes, and in those cases, studies could examine the outcomes of power enactment in terms of organizational profitability or in terms of other key metrics of interest (e.g., corporate social responsibility, innovation, diversification). Finally, given that extant studies have uncovered several instances of global leaders looking out for their own self-interest, future inquiry may also include examinations of their own professional outcomes, such as career

progression, compensation, and professional reputation. The effect of personally held power on global leaders' emotions or attitudes may also be explored.

Agenda for Future Research

Power in global leadership is a nascent literature and there are numerous avenues for future research to pursue. In what follows, I highlight three of the most critical knowledge gaps. These relate to (i) incompleteness in how power is conceptualized in global leadership research, (ii) inattention to leader personality traits as sources or enablers of global leaders' power, and (iii) a lack of research on the implications of exercising power in global contexts. I discuss each of these main gaps in greater detail and reflect on how they can be addressed through future inquiry. Finally, I reflect on the methodological approaches that may be useful for extending our understanding of global leader power.

Viewing power as a Bilateral Process of Mutual Influence

The first gap reflects scholars' tendencies to view global leaders' abilities to influence constituents as depending on the position, personal characteristics, knowledge, skills, or environment of the influencer. Yet one's ability to exert influence and control likely depends also on the relative power of those subject to influence and control. Unfortunately, relation-based considerations of power are largely absent in much of the current literature (with the exception of studies explicitly investigating instances of lateral and upward influence, e.g., Janssens, 1994; Malik & Yazar, 2016; Rao & Schmidt, 1998). For future research to capture the phenomenon of power in global leadership more fully, power should be viewed as a bilateral process of mutual influence between agents and subjects of influence, where the relative standing of both participants is explicitly considered. The global organizational context is particularly well suited for these kinds of investigations, given the countless sources of variance in relative power positions that can be studied. For instance, one could examine whether there are within-leader differences in how they choose to exercise their power depending on whether their influence is aimed upward, laterally, or downward. Another path could explore if the ways in which global leaders exercise power change depending on whether the subject is a compatriot or a foreigner, if the subject is from a developed versus a developing country, etc. These are just a few examples that seem worthy of additional study, and much can be added to our understanding of power in global leadership by pursuing research that considers power as a property of the relationship between the agent and subject of influence.

Expanding Inquiry Into Global Leaders' Source of Power

Second, I wish to spotlight understudied sources of power that may be salient in global leadership contexts. In the research to date, much of the attention has been on global leaders' demographic or experiential attributes as sources of power. In particular, nation of origin, MNC of origin, international experience, and language proficiency have either been conceptualized as sources of power in their own right (e.g., Ciuk et al., 2019; Fernando, 2021; Iwashita, 2021; Paunova, 2017) or as attributes that can enhance global leaders' position, expert, referent, or information power (e.g., Tenzer & Pudelko, 2017). In contrast, very little attention has been paid to personality traits and individual differences. This is surprising given how central investigations of leader personality are to the literature on global leader effectiveness (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; Rickley & Stackhouse, 2022). Future research may therefore wish to explore whether particular personality traits or certain personality profiles are associated with ascendance to power, with

the way in which power is exercised, and effectiveness in wielding formal or informal influence in global leadership contexts.

In addition to power deriving from individuals' personal attributes, the nature of global work itself can also amplify or constrain individuals' abilities to exert influence. For instance, scholars already note that individual power is determined in part by the strategic importance of the unit they represent (e.g., Geppert & Williams, 2006). However, global leaders may also acquire or forfeit power due to factors entirely outside their control, such as geographically determined time zones (Reiche et al., 2019). On the one hand, being located in a time zone characterized by substantial overlap with other organizational units may provide leaders with better access to information and thus greater influence over global decision-making. On the other hand, operating in a distant or nonoverlapping time zone may endow leaders with greater autonomy and allow them to deepen their influence over local matters. Global leaders' power can also be affected by a change in the environment or by crisis. Recent crises, such as conflicts between nations or global pandemics (Adler et al., 2022), may offer insights on the extent to which global leaders' power is internally derived or context-dependent.

The Purpose of Power

The third knowledge gap highlighted by this review is relative silence by scholars on a key question: what are global leaders seeking to accomplish in exercising their power? As the literature slowly accumulates evidence from ethnographic accounts, interviews, and survey-based research about where global leaders' power comes from and how global leaders exercise power, the field has yet to make a concerted push toward understanding the purpose of power in global leadership. For instance, do global leaders perceive their power to be in the service of achieving organizational or unit goals? How do global leaders use power to balance between organizational and unit goals in multinational contexts characterized by dual pressures of global integration and local adaptation? Do global leaders perceive their influence to be oriented toward individuals or groups? Are global leaders using their power to mobilize subordinates in order to achieve set goals, or are they instead using power to build coalitions and "manage up" to better serve their own interests? What do subordinates see as the purpose of global leaders' power? What do global leaders' superiors see as the purpose of global leaders having power? In answering these questions, the field of global leadership has a substantial opportunity to contribute to the broader literature on international management.

Methodological Approaches

In terms of methodological requisites, scholars are encouraged to address these critical gaps, and the others noted in this review, through qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches. The field remains nascent, and therefore ethnographic, case-based, and interview-based inquiries are still likely to contribute much needed insights, especially with respect to gaining deeper understanding of the bilateral process of mutual influence between leaders and subordinates. In other areas, such as in works seeking to understand the antecedents and consequences of global leaders' power, scholars may wish to execute larger-scale quantitative studies that can capture patterns of variance in leader, follower, organizational, and environmental characteristics to better model the phenomenon. Large-sample quantitative studies may also be useful for creating descriptive typologies and defining ideal types of power in global leadership (Allen et al., 2022). For instance, latent profile analysis or traditional cluster analysis may be invoked to typify powerful global leaders in terms of personality trait combinations or skill combinations. Similarly, profile analysis can be used to better understand how global leaders combine multiple power bases

(position, expert, reference, information, reward, and coercive) or tactics (legitimacy, reason, inspiration, consultation, exchange, friendliness, ingratiation, coercion) to exercise influence.

Conclusion

Although global leadership research is the study of influence over diverse and dispersed constituents, power has yet to receive adequate scholarly attention. To stimulate interest in this important topic, I performed a systematic review structured around the following questions: (i) how is power defined in global leadership research? (ii) what power bases do global leaders possess? (iii) how do global leaders exercise power? (iv) what factors influence global leaders' exercise of power? and (v) what are the outcomes of global leaders' exercise of power? In the process of mapping the field, several themes emerged, as did critical knowledge gaps, which invite further inquiry.

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- *Indicates that these articles are included in the literature review and listed in Table 1.