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Transformational Leadership and Employee Satisfaction in a U.S. Fast-Food Restaurant

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Joshua Adam Folmar

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Review Committee

Dr. Susan Fan, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Tim Truitt, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. George Bradley, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2020

Abstract

Transformational Leadership and Employee Satisfaction in a U.S. Fast-Food Restaurant

by

Joshua Adam Folmar

MS, Lasell College, 2015

B.S., University of Phoenix, 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2020

Abstract

Fast-food managers struggle with understanding what makes employees satisfied within the organization. An understanding of employee satisfaction may help fast-food managers support employees' needs and improve their job satisfaction. Grounded in transformational leadership theory, the purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction. The participants included 31 fast-food employees and entry-level supervisors from 1 organization in the Midwestern region of the United States. Data were collected through electronic and paper surveys comprising Bass and Avolio's multifactor leadership questionnaire and Spector's job satisfaction survey. Data were then analyzed using a multiple regression statistical test. The model as a whole was able to significantly predict employee satisfaction, $F(5, 25) = 3.478, p = .016, R^2 = .350$. A key recommendation is the implementation of a transformational leadership style within U.S. fast-food restaurants to promote employee satisfaction. The implications for positive social change include the opportunity to provide a foundation for organizational policies and programs to support employee satisfaction to improve community infrastructures.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to my wife, Mary Jo, and four children, Marcy Jo, Mayleigh Jo, Meredith Monroe, and Joshua Memphis. Without them, I would not have continued this journey. I push myself more each day so that they strive to be the best versions of themselves! However, I am glad this journey is nearing an end, as I am ready to spend more time with them!

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Thank you to Dr. Susan K. Fan for her guidance, wisdom, and continued mentorship throughout this journey with me. I have probably taken longer than most students. Still, she has always been supportive of my choices, such as changing my mind with shifting from qualitative to quantitative and switching organizations for my study. I am forever grateful to her, and I would never change the mentorship I received at Walden University. Additionally, thank you to Dr. George Bradley. You have been extremely helpful with my study and sharing your wisdom regarding quantitative methods. Lastly, thank you to Mary Jo! You have been by my side throughout this journey, and when I could not concentrate on my study, you knew what to do--mostly, taking the kids out so I could focus! Thank you!

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Employees' mindsets are different from employee to employee; however, employee satisfaction is essential when it comes to having employees achieve organizational goals and objectives (Mendis, 2017). In this research study, I used a quantitative method and correlational design to evaluate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in a U.S. fast-food restaurant. The results of this study may add to the limited existing knowledge on leadership and satisfaction in the U.S. fast-food industry. The understanding of whether there is a correlation between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction may help restaurant managers grow and change their restaurant to support the needs of employees and further their job satisfaction. If employees are not supported by managers, they may not feel satisfied with their jobs, which may adversely affect their job performance (Mendis, 2017). Positive organizational outcomes may include the potential to improve employee satisfaction and reduce the unemployment rate in the U.S. fast-food industry. Positive social change outcomes may include the impact of a reduction in unemployment in the communities serviced by U.S. fast-food restaurants.

Background of the Problem

A U.S. fast-food restaurant is like any retail establishment or customer service organization. Customers go into the restaurant, looking to purchase food to consume inside the restaurant or visit the drive-thru to take the food home. Customers put their trust in the employees, entry-level supervisors, and restaurant managers of the U.S. fast-food restaurant and choose to visit that restaurant for their cravings for fast-food or

service. The customer may or may not think about whether the employee is having a bad day or if the employee's satisfaction level is low. The customer looks to receive the food and customer service no matter the employee satisfaction levels. Thus, the managers of the restaurant must employ leadership skills to train and engage employees in increasing the employees' knowledge, skill, and competency while incorporating an enjoyable atmosphere for the customer and employee (Akhter et al., 2016).

Poor employee satisfaction may result from a deficiency of learning, improvement, and action within the workplace and may lead to disengagement of the employee to the organization (Tampubolon, 2016). Organizations that employ components that boost a positive work environment may be able to create improvements in employee job satisfaction and performance while avoiding harmful employee behaviors (Cravens et al., 2015). Managers of U.S. fast-food restaurants must incorporate a leadership style that encourages employees through a guided vision and keeps employee satisfaction levels high. However, Powell (2017) stated that leaders still struggle to execute strategies effectively, even with the impact of change and the need for an organization's survival. For an organization to strive ahead and achieve goals, leaders must execute business strategies, which include leading employees. Transformational leaders build relationships and create change by concentrating on shared vision and emphasizing values (Martin, 2015). Organizations should have a leader who can provide a vision for an organization to ensure success in many organizational change initiatives (Militaru & Zafir, 2016).

Transformational leadership tendencies include better performance, increases in intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, perceptions of competence, self-efficiency, life satisfaction, cohesion, enjoyment, positive experiences, peak performance, intrinsic satisfaction, dedication and effort, well-being, and positive effect and team resilience (Alvarez et al., 2016). Many researchers have analyzed transformational leadership and employee satisfaction, and various research articles in this study include the hotel industry, banking industry, automotive industry, academia, and military. Still, limited studies exist, according to my review of the literature, on transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in U.S. fast-food restaurants, in particular in the Midwestern region of the United States.

Problem Statement

Employees are more likely to stay with an organization when they are satisfied with their job (Chinyio, Suresh, & Salisu, 2018). In the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration's 2018 Employee Viewpoint Summary, 40% of employees expressed dissatisfaction with leaders' abilities to generate motivation and commitment from employees, 43% expressed dissatisfaction with their opportunity to find a better job in the organization, 45% felt pay raises do not depend on how well employees perform in their jobs, and 42% felt they did not have the resources to complete their job (National Archives and Records Administration, 2018). The general business problem is that employee satisfaction is often low in U.S. U.S. fast-food restaurants. The specific business problem is that U.S. fast-food restaurant managers do not know the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. The predictor variables were employee perceptions of their leader's (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. These concepts are associated with transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978). The dependent variable was employee satisfaction. The target population consisted of employees and entry-level supervisors of a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region of the United States. The contributions to business practice include the potential to provide a fuller understanding of why employees lack satisfaction in the workplace. The implications for positive social change include the potential to improve employee satisfaction, bolster transformational leadership tendencies in managers, and include the impact of a reduction in the unemployment in the communities serviced by U.S. fast-food restaurants. Understanding the factors that promote employee satisfaction may help managers of U.S. fast-food restaurants to support their employees better and promote their job satisfaction.

Nature of the Study

Research Method

I chose the quantitative method for this study. When using quantitative methods, a researcher generates statistical and numerical data through deductive reasoning, which includes case-control, cross-sectional, cohort, and clinical trials (Hansen et al., 2016). When a researcher uses deductive methods, the researcher will formulate a set of

hypotheses and then test these hypotheses with a relevant methodology (Zalaghi & Khazaei, 2016). In contrast, qualitative researchers generate non-numeric and verbal data through inductive reasoning, which includes focus groups, interviews, and case studies (Hansen et al., 2016).

Mixed methods are a combination of both deductive (quantitative) and inductive (qualitative) reasoning. However, deductive, and inductive research methods are not mutually exclusive to qualitative or quantitative, and they commonly supplement each other (Zalaghi & Khazaei, 2016). The qualitative method and mixed methods were not appropriate for this study because of the need to make conclusions on the hypotheses through deductive reasoning, specifically regarding the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables. In this study, I sought a greater understanding of transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in a U.S. fast-food restaurant. Using a quantitative method allowed me to statistically analyze the study results related to transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in the U.S. fast-food industry.

Research Design

The correlational design was appropriate for this study. Researchers use the correlational design to examine a relationship between two or more variables (Curtis, Comiskey, & Dempsey, 2016). The correlational design was appropriate for this study because the primary aim of this study was to examine the relationship between the predictor variables (components of transformational leadership) and dependent variable (employee satisfaction). Researchers use a correlational design to determine the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables (Emerson, 2015).

Experimental and quasi-experimental designs are appropriate when the researcher seeks to evaluate a level of cause and effect (May, Joshi, & Nair, 2012). Emerson (2015) cautioned individuals who apply the correlational design against associating correlation with causation. The experimental and quasi-experimental designs were not appropriate for this study, as my goal was not to determine the cause and effect of poor job satisfaction in the U.S. fast-food industry. Because I wanted to examine the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables, I concluded that a correlational design was appropriate.

Research Question

What is the relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction?

Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

The foundation of this study was the transformational leadership theory, which Burns (1978) developed. The transformational leadership theory is a leadership approach where leaders cause a change in individuals and social systems (Bass, 1998). Moreover, Burns introduced the concept of leaders and followers, helping one another to advance to a higher level of motivation and morale. Leaders can inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work toward common goals (Burns, 1978). Accordingly, Burns identified the following key constructs underlying the theory: (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. Organizations will need to develop a vision of where they see their business operations in the future. Transformational leadership is vital to this vision because of the need to grow a trusting relationship between the organization's restaurant managers and their employees and to encourage these restaurant managers and employees to achieve the overall vision. Moreover, leadership scholars have asserted that transformational leadership plays a significant role in enhancing employee performance, trust, and commitment in organizations (Choi et al., 2016). Transformational leaders support, recognize, and reward employees for a task that an employee seeks to reach and complete (Frieder, Wang, & Oh, 2018). Therefore, developing a trusting relationship between employees and leaders may address an organization's vision or goals and help leaders of U.S. fast-food restaurants develop a culture grounded in high employee satisfaction.

Operational Definitions

Extrinsic motivation: Behaviors performed for reasons beyond those inherent in the activity (Zhao, Detlor, & Connelly, 2016).

Intrinsic motivation: Behaviors performed based on self-interest and connected to an internal reward (Zhao et al., 2016).

Job satisfaction: Positive feelings an employee has toward his or her job (Sailaja & Naik, 2016).

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS): A 36-item scale with nine facets that measure employee attitudes about the job and aspects of the job (Spector, 1985). Each facet is evaluated with four items, and a total score is computed from all items (Spector, 1985). The nine facets are pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work, and communication (Spector, 1985).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ): A 45-item questionnaire created for the identification of leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 1997). The questionnaire measures leadership styles, attitudes, and behaviors of managers (Sola et al., 2016).

Transformational leader: A leader who motivates employees to transcend their self-regard for the sake of the organizational vision and who seeks to develop employees to their fullest potential (Bass, 1985).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

An assumption is something valid but has not been verified (Nkwake & Morrow, 2016). The first assumption was that employees would be willing to participate in this

study. A second assumption was that participants would answer the questions honestly. A third assumption was that employees would possess enough knowledge of their leader to participate in the study.

Limitations

Limitations are weaknesses or conditions that affect the external validity of a study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The first limitation was not receiving the appropriate response rate to quantify the results. The second limitation was that results are limited to a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region of the United States and may not be transferable to another region. The third limitation was that information provided by employees may not be accurate and factual. The fourth limitation was the length of the survey instrument. The electronic or paper survey (English or Spanish) required 30 minutes to complete, which could have resulted in participants feeling fatigued and rushing to get through the survey. A fifth limitation was the transformational leadership theory as this theory has been criticized in the past

Delimitations

Delimitations are choices researchers make about a study that defines the parameters of the investigation (Soilkki et al., 2014). Delimiting factors such as the variables, theoretical framework, and the population chosen for the study were in my control. The first delimitation for this study was that it included only employees and entry-level supervisors from a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region of the United States. The second delimitation was the selection of transformational leadership theory as the theoretical framework.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

U.S. fast-food restaurant managers may use the information from this study to understand the factors that may increase or decrease employee satisfaction in correlation to transformational leadership, which may encourage them to develop programs to aid in increasing employee satisfaction. Employees contribute to the organization by providing a service to customers through the skills and training they receive from these programs. Thus, satisfied employees may become the future leaders of U.S. fast-food restaurants, and these employees will support the future needs of their organization and the U.S. fast-food industry.

Implications for Social Change

Employees may benefit from this study if the U.S. fast-food restaurant managers of the U.S. fast-food restaurant understand the possible modifications needed to encourage employee satisfaction. These changes, implemented by U.S. fast-food restaurant managers, may bring about higher employee self-worth if he or she knows the organization is trying to promote employee satisfaction. The increase in knowledge about employee satisfaction may help organizational leaders to reduce the unemployment rate in the U.S. fast-food industry and provide a foundation for organizational policies and programs to support employee satisfaction. These programs may meet the possibility of not only helping leaders of the U.S. fast-food industry but leaders of other retail service industries as well. Accordingly, the results of the study may aid restaurant managers in understanding the employee's opinions, which may result in implementing

transformational leadership programs within communities. Additionally, these transformational leadership programs may encourage restaurant managers and followers to strive toward a vision in their communities, which may promote community infrastructures, such as, better transit, housing, schools, emergency services, and an increase in jobs.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. I used multiple online research databases to conduct the literature review. I used keywords, sometimes in combination, such as *leadership, transformational leadership, employee morale, retail, fast-food, quantitative, qualitative, employee motivation, and employee satisfaction*. The primary database used was Academic Search Complete, and the secondary database used was Google Scholar.

Another technique of obtaining literature was reviewing empirical literature referenced in the articles found using the primary and secondary databases. Furthermore, I reviewed Walden University Library's dissertations and theses databases. The remaining sources were not peer-reviewed; these included books and governmental reports that helped provide empirical literature about transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. To ensure that 85% of the total number of sources were peer-reviewed journal articles, I used Ulrich's Periodicals Directory. Crossref's metadata website was also used to verify digital object identifiers. I used date filters for each search to minimize the return of articles within the 5-year scope of my expected

graduation date. I used Boolean terms such as "AND" and "OR" to filter articles that provided the most relevant empirical literature to support my study of transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. The comprehensive literature search includes journal articles, educational documents such as dissertations and theses, books, and reports from governmental organizations. There are a total of 204 references in this study, which include 177 (87%) peer-reviewed journal articles, nine (4%) books, three (1%) thesis or dissertations, two (1%) government sites, and 13 (7%) non-peer-reviewed journal articles.

In the beginning of Section 1, I identified the theoretical framework for the study, Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory. The use of this theory helped answer the research question, What is the relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction? The thorough literature review that follows contains an analysis of empirical literature related to the transformational leadership theoretical framework (predictor variable) and employee satisfaction (dependent variable). Additionally, Bass and Avolio's (1997) MLQ and Spector's (1985) JSS were the two instruments used to measure transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in this study. Furthermore, the literature review incorporates an analysis of the rival leadership styles and theories of transformational leadership. I also discuss the link between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction.

Application to Business Problem

The study of leadership spans more than 100 years (McCleskey, 2014). The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. The research question was, What is the relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction? The null and alternative hypotheses were as follows:

H_0 : There is no relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

H_1 : There is a relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

Transformational leadership is essential to the U.S. fast-food industry because of the need to develop a trusting relationship between organizations and employees. Jyoti and Bhau (2015) stated that transformational leaders motivate followers by building trust and confidence. Although I surmised that the transformational leadership theory was the style of leadership best suited for U.S. fast-food restaurant managers, I reviewed the research to scrutinize whether this type of leadership is the most effective method. Findings from my literature review support that transformational leadership is the most

effective leadership style for U.S. fast-food restaurant managers and that transformational leadership has a statistically significant correlation with employee satisfaction.

In reviewing the literature, I found limited information relating to transformational leadership and employee satisfaction specific to the U.S. fast-food industry in the Midwestern region of the United States. However, the empirical literature reviewed in this study helped to provide a framework to support the predictor and dependent variables in this study. The focus of the remaining sections in the literature review, will be an analysis of empirical literature relating to transformational leadership and employee satisfaction, along with rival leadership styles and theory.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The theoretical framework used for this study was the transformational leadership theory developed by Burns in 1978. Since its publication in 1978, Burns' theory has received a significant amount of attention, with some researchers backing the theory and stating that transformational leaders bring forth positive organizational change (Holten & Brenner, 2015). Also, the transformational leadership theory has emerged as one of the most dominant leadership theories in the past 30 years (Mhatre & Riggio, 2014).

Transformational views of leadership emphasize the symbolic behavior of leaders, such as setting a vision, giving inspirational messages, giving individual attention, and providing intellectual stimulation to construct contemporary models of leadership (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999). Burns (1978) introduced the concept of leaders and followers, helping one another to advance to a higher level of motivation and morale. Moreover, a leader is concerned about employees and wants them to develop to their

fullest potential (Bass, 1985). Burns identified the following key constructs underlying the theory: (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration.

Having a leadership style, such as the transformational leadership style, can inspire change and motivation as well as support employees, in addition to having the potential to revolutionize organizational performance (Pradhan & Pradhan, 2015). Tourish (2014) described transformational leadership as a process by which a person interacts with others and creates a stable relationship. A transformational leader is one who motivates employees to surpass their self-regard, builds a relationship between people, and creates change by emphasizing value and creating a shared organizational vision (Bass, 1985; Martin, 2015). Furthermore, Bass (1985) stated that transformational leadership is a leadership style in which followers have trust and respect for the leader who motivates followers to achieve organizational goals. Leaders can inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work toward common goals.

Communication plays a vital role in executing a clear and attainable vision for an organization. Morgan, Paucar-Caceres, and Wright (2014) stated that research on leadership and teams had highlighted the importance of communication as an aspect for leaders and employees to build relationships and trust through various communication methods. Similar to Morgan et al., Holmes and Parker (2016) found that organizational success depends on clear communication to achieve motivation, leadership, and productivity within an organization. My research supports that organizational success is no different in the U.S. fast-food industry than any other industry. The objective is to

produce a profit from a sustainable business model that focuses on keeping existing customers and building a new customer loyalty base to the organization. To achieve organizational success through communication, managers within the organization must understand how their efforts tie into the overall success of the organization's goals (Holmes & Parker, 2016). Thus, it is essential to have managers understand the importance of communicating important information throughout an organization's change toward an organization's goals (Holten & Brenner, 2015).

Idealized influence (attributes and behaviors). According to Bass (1985), a transformational leader with the idealized influence trait is someone who instills pride in followers, acts in a manner for the greater good of the organization, displays a sense of power and confidence, and speaks about one's values and beliefs while aligning those values and feelings toward a specific goal. In their quantitative correlational study of 205 employees, Wang et al. (2016) identified transformational leadership as positively related to employees' feedback-seeking to trust their leader. Moreover, Wang et al. stated that leaders must recognize and meet the needs of employees by stimulating an environment that enables employees to develop, prosper, and maximize their potential. Moreover, transformational leadership supports an understanding of leadership perceptions that are necessary for leaders when designing best practice solutions that help managers execute organizational strategies (Keskes, 2014). Thus, transformational leaders' idealized influence trait is essential for setting the tone for the organization. Leaders display their idealized attributes as a sense of pride and the greater good for the organization and instill the same idealized behavior into the employee.

A transformational leader with idealized behaviors persuades an employee to commit to an organization by regularly speaking highly of the organization and uses examples of how specific goals align with the organization's goals. Caillier (2014) supported the ideas of Bass (1985) by stating that leaders who incorporate idealized influence can inspire followers to align their personal goals with organizational goals to achieve positive outcomes. Consequently, the idea of inspiration for an employee to align their personal goals with organizational goals is consistent with the quantitative cross-sectional research study of 480 IT professionals by Pradhan and Pradhan (2015). They found a significant correlation between transformational leadership on the employee's organizational commitment to the goals of the organization.

Intellectual stimulation. Bass (1985) described a transformational leader with the intellectual stimulation trait as someone who seeks different perspectives, encourages followers to look at problems differently, and encourages critical thinking. In a quantitative study by Anitha (2014), the researcher found that inspiring and challenging employees promoted employee engagement. Additionally, inspiring, and empowering employees to think outside the box helps develop an employee's ability to make decisions without having to get approval from their leaders. Henker, Sonnentag, and Unger (2015) stated that transformational leadership focuses on the promotion of an employee, which in turn contributes to the innovation and creativity of the employee. In their quantitative study of 200 employees, Choi et al. (2016) found that empowerment is the main factor for enhancing job satisfaction and mediating the role of transformational leadership. Thus, leaders need to encourage critical thinking from the employee to promote the

engagement of the employee to the organization.

Qu, Janssen, and Shi (2015) stated that in a large sample of leader-follower dyads, followers' perceptions of leader expectations for creativity acted as a boundary condition for the relationship between transformational leadership and creativity. Thus, the creativity of the employees or followers identified with the transformational leader will increase. In their quantitative study on 224 employee-leader dyads working in South Korea, Byun et al. (2016) had consistent findings for employee creativity, indicating training can be useful to guide leaders on how to empower their employees to promote employee creativity. To additionally support intellectual stimulation, Byun et al. also found a positive relationship between empowering leadership and employee creativity, which provides statistical evidence to support the proposition that empowering leadership, task visibility, and intrinsic motivations interact to influence employee creativity and satisfaction. However, Kark, Dijk, and Vashdi (2017) found that inspiring employee creativity is more complicated than destroying employee creativity. Consequently, Kark et al. (2017) stated that events that have a negative valence, such as losing money or losing friends, will have more of an impact than positive valences, such as winning money or gaining new friends.

Inspirational motivation. Bass (1985) described a transformational leader with inspirational motivation traits as someone who is optimistic and visualizes a compelling vision. Transformational leadership, regarding inspirational motivation, has the value of encouraging individuals, valuing employees, and becoming a mentor and teacher to empower others while being able to communicate with employees effectively (Mokhtari,

2016). Thomas, Brown, and Thomas (2017) also suggested that having management work alongside employees can help the manager better empathize with staff and manage human capital more effectively, along with boosting morale. Moreover, Bass also stated that leaders with inspirational motivation are confident they will accomplish goals, encourage teamwork, and inspire followers' enthusiasm.

Transformational leadership supports an understanding of leadership perceptions necessary for leaders when designing best practice solutions, which help managers execute organizational strategies that are part of the vision (Keskes, 2014). In their study of 180 organizations on the importance of a transformational leadership climate for organizational performance, De Jong and Bruch (2013) stated that transformational leaders would strengthen the organizational climate through the ability to motivate employees. De Jong and Bruch also noted that a positive climate within the organization of transformational leadership tendencies would increase the performance of the organization. An increase in organizational performance ties into inspirational motivation as leaders need to motivate employees through a compelling vision to accomplish goals.

In their quantitative correlational study on 424 employees, Choi, Kim, and Kang (2017) indicated transformational leadership contributed to team output effectiveness, and shared leadership improved the team's organizing and planning effectiveness. Supporting an organizational climate increases team output and is also consistent with Tse and Ashkenazy's (2015) research study that transformational leadership helps team members think outside the box and visualize a much bigger picture while ensuring their

commitment toward the effective accomplishment of the vision. Incorporating a culture that supports creativity is a way to motivate employees and encourage followers to be creative and develop new ideas that attain competitive advantage (Manafi & Subramanian, 2015).

Individualized consideration. Bass (1985) described transformational leaders' individualized consideration trait as someone who coaches and teaches followers, someone who promotes self-development of employees, someone who understands their team member's needs, abilities, and aspirations, and someone who is a listener and looks to develop team members. In their study, Alvarez et al. (2016) found transformational leadership shows to be an effective leadership style associated with motivation, psychosocial, and performance aspects in sports. Furthermore, Alvarez et al. (2016) stated sports practice is like an organizational culture where leaders motivate and coach employees through psychological and performance aspects. Leaders who coach and promote self-development of employees will encourage positive employee engagement. In their quantitative study of 61 cadets of leadership and commitment, Breevaart et al. (2014) found a correlation between higher levels of employee engagement and informal communication. Leaders who listen and talk with their employees, not just on a formal level, may increase employee engagement. Additionally, Breevaart et al. (2014) stated leaders should develop the transformational tendencies of employees by allowing employees to use personal discretion in their job resulting in higher employee engagement.

To speculate, Amankwaa and Anku-Tsede (2015) found there is a correlation between transformational leadership and employee turnover intention. In their quantitative correlational study of 305 employees, Amankwaa and Anku-Tsede (2015) found employees require more attention to reach personal goals and have become more knowledgeable in ways to secure another job; therefore, it is essential organizations employ a transformational leadership style; especially individualized consideration, to cater to their employee's needs. Pater (2015) found developing leaders is critical for moving toward the highest levels of overall performance, and by focusing on these components, organizations can continue to build and achieve a high level of overall performance. However, in Mozammel and Haan's (2016) study of 128 participants, the researchers indicated using a transformational leadership style did not assure the employee will engage in the organizational vision.

Criticisms, Leadership Styles, and Rival Theories

As with any leadership style, transformational leadership does have its objections. One criticism is that Burns discussed the advantages of using transformational behaviors but did not address the disadvantages. Lee (2014) stated some researchers identified weaknesses in the transformational leadership theory. Additionally, Lee identified one criticism is that a transformational leader's vision may be impractical or deceptive, and followers may risk following a vision that is not for the benefit of the organization. Another criticism is that the transformational leadership theory is too leader-centric, and too much focus is on the leader and not a follower (Tourish, 2014). Tourish stated having this much focus on the leader and not the follower can be problematic if, in the future of

an organization, the followers share power with leaders. Lee also noted that followers tend to free-ride on the transformational leaders' social networks and obtain connections more quickly than without a transformational leader. Thus, an employee may not take the necessary route or the path for their advancement if they were to use a transformational leader's social network.

Naik and Srinivasan (2016) stated leadership is a process of setting the tone within the organization. To use a leadership style appropriately, a leader must understand what type of leadership style he or she may use. The quality of the relationship between leaders and followers support (a) trust, (b) respect, (c) loyalty, and (d) mutual obligations (Keskes, 2014). The result of the relationship created is leaders develop a unique relationship with each of their followers. Caillier (2014) stated leadership is the ability to motivate employees, where transformational leaders inspire employees to achieve the organizational vision through mentoring and giving challenging assignments that require problem-solving. Transactional leaders motivate employees through rewards (transactions). Scholars have developed many leadership styles that align with the process of motivation and influence, such as situational leadership, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership (Hasabeh et al., 2015). Transformational leadership has been discussed; thus, a foundation of empirical literature relating to situational leadership, transactional leadership, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation will now be analyzed.

Situational Leadership. Developed by Hersey and Blanchard in the 1960s, situational leadership is a leadership theory where a manager uses a particular leadership

style with a specific situation. Hersey (1984) stated a leader's effectiveness is contingent on his ability to modify his management behavior to the level of his subordinates' maturity or sophistication. Once the leader determines a follower's overall level of maturity, the leader should adjust his behavior in a way that most effectively manages the follower's behavior, considering the follower's timeline. Hersey stated there are four primary leadership styles:

Style 1 (S1) is the directing approach and is for employees who require high directive and low supportive leadership. Leaders inform employees what task they need to complete. Ali (2017) stated directive leaders could give specific functions without the employee having to worry about making complex decisions.

Style 2 (S2), is the coaching approach and is for employees who require high directive and high supportive leadership. Leaders provide information and direction for employees to complete requirements.

Style 3 (S3) is the supporting approach and is for employees who require low directive and high supportive leadership. Leaders involve employees by sharing decision-making responsibilities. Supporting leadership combines mutual respect and engagement, which builds diversity, community, and creates a shared interest in the organization (Ali, 2017).

Style 4 (S4), is the delegating approach and is for employees who require low directive and low supportive leadership. Leaders may appoint many responsibilities to employees and then monitor their progress toward these responsibilities. Ali (2017)

stated leaders delegate responsibility to those employees who require fewer directives but will check in occasionally to visualize the development of the task.

The effectiveness of a leader depends on the ability of a leader to switch to a leadership style (S1, S2, S3, S4) to meet the situational need of an employee.

Amanchukwu, Stanley, and Ololube (2015) stated diverse leadership styles might be more applicable to different types of situations. However, situational leadership would not benefit this study as the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction through the lens of the overarching vision of the organization and not by situations. Moreover, Ali (2017) stated a limitation of situational leadership is that any action by a leader may be irrelevant or ineffective if an employee requires a different leadership style at a point in time. Thus, a leader must consider the ability level of themselves and employees when using situational leadership. Comparing transformational leadership and situational leadership, one can see transformational leaders motivate employees to complete an organizational vision. In contrast, situational leaders motivate employees relating to a specific situation and not looking ahead (vision) as transformational leaders would.

Transactional Leadership. Transactional leadership consists of three concepts: (a) contingent reward, (b) active management by exception, and (c) passive management by exception (Keskes, 2014). Transactional leaders establish specific goals, monitor progress, and select a reward expected for employees (Keskes; Mokhtari 2016). Mokhtari goes into further detail, stating leaders give a task for the employees to complete along with clear expectations. If the employee completes the task, and the

performance is satisfactory, they will receive the contingent reward. If employees do not achieve the task, then the employee may receive punishment. Even though transactional leadership uses a system of rewards, it can also use punishments (transactions) to influence employees (Henker et al., 2015). Also, employees are more likely to have resentment toward leaders who focus on continuous exchanges of rewards (McCleskey, 2014). Therefore, the downfall is if transactional leaders focus on tasks and do not provide a vision like with transformational leaders. If a leader leaves the company, the employees may not know how to continue without their leader.

In a quantitative correlational study of academic library deans, directors, and university librarians, Martin (2015) examined the rates of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. He found a correlation between experience and the use of transactional leadership. Thus, transactional leaders with more experience take an active or passive approach to prevent or resolving mistakes. However, in their qualitative longitudinal survey of 351 followers, Holten and Brenner (2015) found during the initial stage of change that transactional and transformational leadership impacted followers; however, transformational leadership had a positive long-term effect of the followers on the change. Thus, a transformational leader who proposes a vision early on may attain a positive acceptance of change in the final stages.

Transactional leaders who focus on continuous tasks play a significant role in hindering creativity and commitment of an employee because the employee concentrates too much on expectations instead of being creative and thinking "outside of the box" (Kark et al., 2017). Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016) stated transformational leadership and

transactional leadership supports organizational commitment, yet transformational leadership more effectively enhances the involvement of the employee. Thus, transformational leadership differs from transactional leadership because it creates a deep internal desire for motivation and not through transactions; instead, motivation for the follower is through true inspiration or transformation in the desire to achieve goals (Kim & Yoon, 2015). Furthermore, Kim and Yoon (2015) stated most scholars preferred using the transformational leadership theory over the transactional leadership theory to examine organizational phenomena.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation. Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation (1964) consists of the following three components: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Vroom (1964) stated an employee acts in a manner that produces enjoyment over pain when there is a motivating presence through expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. In his expectancy theory, Vroom describes motivation as an effort that leads to performance, performance leads to rewards, and the rewards offered are desirable (Purvis, Zagenczyk, & McCray, 2015). Expectancy is the belief by having the right resources, right skill, and necessary support, an increased effort will lead to improved performance. Instrumentality is the belief of having a clear understanding of the performance and outcome, trust in the people who decide the outcome, and transparency of the process of determining the result; a person would receive a valued result with valued performance. Valence is the importance the individual places upon the expected outcome. Consequently, understanding what motivates employees is essential to the success of organizational objectives (Guillen, Ferrero, & Hoffman, 2015).

Limitations of Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation may ironically include lack of motivation because of employees not valuing or believing in the amount of the reward given. If a leader of an organization were to offer a particular reward as a motivator, the employee might not feel the reward was large enough. Thus, the employee would lack the motivation to complete a task. Therefore, leaders within the organization must find out what the employees' value as a reward and must accurately understand the capabilities of each employee and what will help them complete their jobs and become successful in the organization. Leaders who possess a transformational leadership style drive change in followers through a vision for the organization, while promoting the follower's self-interest of values to benefit themselves for the greater good (Lee, 2014). Consequently, the transformational leadership theory is the lens this study's focus is through instead of Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation.

Employee Satisfaction

Spector (1985) noted employee job satisfaction might differ between cultures and countries; however, employee satisfaction is complicated and depends on the employees' expectations (Bocuzzo, Fabbris, & Pacagnella, 2015). Job satisfaction definitions can vary across organizations, but the importance of job satisfaction is indisputable to the employee and the organization. A U.S. fast-food restaurant is not different when it comes to having satisfied employees as satisfied employees are more engaged in their organization (Duffy, Autin, & Bott, 2015), are more likely to meet the demands of the organization (Huang & Gamble, 2015), and can increase their organization's productivity and profit (Mathieu & Baiak, 2016). Additionally, Mendis (2017) also had the same

correlation between job satisfaction and performance as bank assistants in Sri Lanka reported that job motivation, employee engagement, and job satisfaction positively and significantly influenced employee performance. However, if an employee has a lower level of motivation, engagement, or satisfaction, then their attitude and behavior may impact their job (Gözükara and Çolakoğlu, 2015).

Job satisfaction involves the good, and bad feelings employees have toward their job (Gözükara and Çolakoğlu, 2015). Additionally, job quality includes many characteristics, including fair pay, skills development, and opportunities for employee representation (Grote and Guest, 2017). In their quantitative survey study of 246 employees, Mafini and Dlodlo (2014) examined the relationship between extrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction amongst employees in a public organization. Mafini and Dlodlo also found statistical evidence supporting the relationship between job satisfaction and motivation factors such as compensation, quality of work, supervision, and teamwork. Like Mafini and Dlodlo, Callea et al. (2016) found in their quantitative study of 638 employees of different Italian organizations that intrinsic and extrinsic factors affect employee job satisfaction levels. However, Demyen & Lala-Popa (2013) stated employee satisfaction will always be a single evaluation criterion because the needs, preferences, and satisfaction levels differ from one individual to another, being very difficult, if not impossible, to generate a uniform satisfactory.

Having a proactive approach to understanding what affects employee satisfaction levels may help reduce employee dissatisfaction and, in a worst-case scenario, employee turnover. Rathi and Lee (2015) identified an organization should show support and

concern for an employee while strengthening the connection between the employee and the organization in their research. The authors presented a study based on 318 participants in the automotive industry to find out what the employees viewed as essential and satisfying. The following sections are common themes seen with employee satisfaction broken down by Spector's (1985) JSS.

Pay. Selden, Schimmoeller, and Thompson (2013) stated organizations must foster a culture to pay incentives that increase employee satisfaction and commitment. In their quantitative survey study of 22 retail restaurants with 1,800 employees-completed questionnaires, Huang, and Gamble (2015) stated male employees reported pay as a significant predictor of employee satisfaction. In contrast, female employees reported pay as not significant to employee satisfaction. Huang and Gamble continued in their research stating male employees did not mind working more hours than their female counterparts, which will support the notion of more pay. Therefore, Huang and Gamble's conclusions on why men did not mind working more hours may be a result of knowing most retail employees contribute 50% of their household's income with their paycheck (Ruetschlin, 2015).

Demyen & Lala-Popa (2013) stated wage definitions differ from one to another, but the general description is an employee receives money for the rendering of activities under an employment contract. Employees of an organization represent fair compensation with task completion, and appropriate systems attract and retain sustainable employees based on their motivation levels and social relationships (Borromeo et al., 2017). Furthermore, Demyen & Lala-Popa stated wage policy

represents a tool for stimulating organizational performance and efficiency, which may increase employee satisfaction. Also, fair wages are more likely to engage and encourage employees to work harder, seek promotions, and improve their overall psychological well-being (Borromeo et al., 2017; Larkin & Pierce, 2016).

Ryu (2016) stated in his quantitative study of public employee's well-being when working long hours there is a significant relationship between employee satisfaction and pay and no correlation between working longer hours and employee satisfaction. Ryu found employees have lower satisfaction when the organization does not provide the employees with a wage equal to the employee's well-being. Moreover, Ryu reported time was valuable to the employee; thus, reiterating the employee does not mind the long hours if the pay supports the time the employee is at work. Furthermore, Samnani and Singh (2014) stated pay would help increase employee productivity and accountability. Additionally, Anitha (2014) indicated lack of compensation does not motivate employees to achieve more, focus on the promotion, or obtain personal development within the organization. Samnani and Singh also supported the notion by Anitha stating pay can be a driver of employee attitude, employee engagement, employee satisfaction, and behavior toward the organization.

Hortacsu & Syverson (2015) stated the retail sector has experienced growth in productivity, but not wage growth. Organizational leaders can influence a culture that drives engagement and ensures compensation is fair to promote employee satisfaction (Taneja, Sewell, & Odom, 2015). According to reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), retail wages from 2003 – 2014 have experienced a negative 0.5 growth

every year. However, in their study, Holtz-Eakin & Gitis (2015) identified the rise in the minimum wage to 12.00 or 15.00 could affect up to 55 million individuals, but only 6 million are in poverty. The hike in pay raises would also abolish three million jobs.

Promotion. Huang and Gamble (2015) stated employees reported training and career development in the hotel industry as a significant predictor of employee satisfaction. In Pan's (2015) study, Pan said training and education inside and outside of the company usually suggest promotion and better pay, which includes training programs and on-the-job learning, which the employee may receive at the hotel. Thus, organizations may foster a culture for employee training initiatives and alternating job assignments that increase employee satisfaction and commitment (Selden et al. 2013). Rana, Ardichvili, and Tkachenko (2014) had similar views to Selden et al. in which management has a responsibility to support a self-governing culture and training which supports self-actualizing situations that offer challenging situations to help train, develop, and engage the employee.

Supervision. A dissatisfied employee could be the result of bullying from the manager if they fail to realize the disengagement from the employee (Hollis, 2015). In Pan's (2015) study on hotel employees and employee satisfaction, Pan found supervision is of median importance. Still, supervision is second on the list behind job content when it comes to employee satisfaction. However, in a quantitative study by Anitha (2014), employee engagement levels were high with the support and constant communication between the supervisor and the employee.

Along with constant communication from the supervisor to the employee, the

employee's contributions were essential for organizational success. However, in Lu, Lu, and Gursoy's (2016) quantitative ANCOVA study of line-level employees and supervisors of 29 mid to upscale hotels, supervisors were significantly more engaged than line-level employees with employee satisfaction attributes being the same across the board. This finding in Lu et al. 's (2016) study may be the result of multiple variables, but Pan (2015) noted it is common to find well-trained and highly experienced supervisors along with employees free from uncertainty, which will lead to higher employee satisfaction.

Fringe Benefits and Contingent Rewards. In Pan's (2015) quantitative research study of 474 total responses from hotel employees in a tourist hotel located in Taiwan, Pan found a correlation in the compensation package an employee receives and an employee's satisfaction level. The compensation package includes bonus-based performances, the right fit for the right job, on the job training combined with the relationship between work and training, and professional allowances. Breevaart et al. (2014) suggested higher employee engagement occurs with increased freedom from learning transformational tendencies, having positive psychological climates from supervisors, and receiving contingent rewards.

Operating Procedures. Organizational climate derives from policies and procedures. In a qualitative study of an information technology department of a grocery chain, information technology department of an aerospace company, and an industrial engineering department, Purvis et al. (2015) found the motivation to participate is significantly influenced by the organizational climate. Therefore, having an environment

that supports an employee in all facets of the job they are completing will help keep the employee motivated and satisfied. Keeping employees motivated and satisfied is not always the case, unfortunately; for example, in their quantitative survey study of 22 retail restaurants and 1,800 employees, Huang and Gamble (2015) stated female employees reported significantly lower levels of job satisfaction compared with males. However, in Lu et al. 's (2016) study, the results suggest females are more satisfied than males with their jobs. They are having this kind of outcome that may relate to having an employee who may agree or disagree with the policies or procedures from time to time. The employee may not even agree or disagree with the policies and procedures but must still complete that part of the job. Thus, an organization needs to obtain feedback from the employees and establish an open line of communication with the human resource department or immediate leader, so changes that support employee satisfaction may occur.

Coworkers. In Lu and Gursoy's (2016) study, they found generational identity can influence workplace attitudes that may have an impact on employee satisfaction. An example Lu and Gursoy provided is that the younger generation, such as the millennials, are more technology savvy. In contrast, baby boomers are not, which may result in employees becoming less satisfied with the stress of they are not technologically savvy like their younger coworkers. Therefore, everyone in the organization needs to work together and learn from each other, no matter the age group.

Nature of Work. An organizational environment plays a vital role in nurturing employees and enhancing their employee satisfaction along with their retention

(Hanaysha, 2016). Pryce (2016) stated employees typically have voluntary turnover due to behavior favorable to unhappiness. This unfavorable happiness can include work conditions that are inappropriate along with employees performing a job that they just do not like. Also, turnover in many industries may result in the hiring of inexperienced workers who make mistakes, which may lead to costly fines (Lu & Gursoy, 2016), but also dissatisfied employees and customers. It is important to note, however, in Rathi and Lee's (2015) quantitative study, they suggest organizations may include communication logs that communicate employee and organizational accomplishments both internally throughout the organization and externally around the community. Of course, this may have an impact on the organization, but may give an employee a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment, and belonging personally and to the organization.

In Pan's (2015) study of employees in a hotel environment, job content is not as crucial as some of the factors such as pay and work environment; however, job content which includes responsibility, job richness, job achievement, job meaningfulness, and appreciation did score the highest when it came to employee satisfaction. Thus, high satisfaction and low importance may mean employees match their roles at the hotel. In contradiction, Huang, and Gamble (2015) stated employees reported workload is not a significant predictor of employee satisfaction. Still, female employees reported higher satisfaction levels with having the ability to interact with customers, and no satisfaction difference in males.

Communication. Communication not only transmits information; it facilitates relationship-building and trust. A disengaged employee can be another example of a

dissatisfied employee. A disengaged employee focuses on the task they are performing rather than the vision or the goals of the organization (Anitha, 2014). Therefore, the employee only focuses on one job without thinking about how one task plays in part to the overall vision of the organization. A disengaged employee may not take the extra shift to help the organization out, they may not go out of their way to help another customer out before closing time, and they may not want to go to an extra training class to help them sell or become more experienced to make more money. Thus, communicating precise tasks and ensuring an employee understands their job role in the organization will limit job role stresses that may negatively influence employee's performance toward customers (Naik & Srinivasan, 2016).

To go further in detail into the issue of disengagement, the organization sometimes refer to employees as petty thieves (Hollis, 2015). Stealing, in terms of petty thieves, can be a reference to stealing from the productivity of an organization. Furthermore, Kim, Knutson, and Choi (2015) administered a Likert scale questionnaire to 341 respondents. They found Gen Y employees had lower values of voice, delight, satisfaction, loyalty, and turnover intention was more significant as well in Gen Y employees. Thus, creating an organizational climate that fosters clear communication and supports employees' needs is extremely important for an organization to limit dissatisfaction and turnover. Creating a pleasant work environment and giving more opportunities for employees to express their opinions will be valuable in attracting and keeping employees (Kim, Knutson, & Choi, 2015).

Linking Transformational Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

Transformational leadership appears to support the notion employees are more engaged and satisfied (Hoxha, 2015), and leaders must understand their employee's perceptions of their leadership and continually monitor levels of satisfaction, motivation, and engagement (Pan, 2015). Moreover, Choi et al. (2016), identified transformational leadership positively impacting job satisfaction.

In Dilka's (2014) quantitative survey study of 185 school district employees, Dilka examined the relationship between transformational leadership and job attitude and found a correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction was positive and statistically significant. Ali and Farid (2016) had similar results to Dilka in their quantitative simple linear regression study. Results indicated transformational leadership is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, and with one unit increase in transformational leadership, job satisfaction also increased by 0.299 times (Ali & Farid, 2016).

To further support transformational leadership, Nel, Stander, and Latif (2015) stated the empowerment of employees would increase employee engagement, feelings of self-sufficiency, and satisfaction. Rana et al. (2014) supported the statements of transformational leadership having a significant correlation to job satisfaction by stating organizational leadership should ensure management is fostering employee engagement and satisfaction. This engagement of organizational leadership may improve the organizational culture and competitive advantage over their competitors.

As the purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction, minimal

information exists on the relationship of these variables in the U.S. fast-food industry. There is substantial literature related to the effects of transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in a variety of industries, including retail. Yet, an apparent gap exists in the U.S. fast-food industry. A U.S. fast-food restaurant is at the heart of customer service-based industries, which are subject to customer demand; therefore, employees and entry-level supervisors of the U.S. fast-food industry are more at risk for burnout, which is costly to the restaurant and organization (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Interestingly, Rathi and Lee (2015) indicated in their quantitative study of 186 employees that when employees perceive the organization is more highly regarded by the outside world than the employee's commits to the organization, and they are less likely to leave the organization. Therefore, there is a specific need to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in the U.S. fast-food industry to try and capture an understanding if a transformational leader can affect employee satisfaction.

Transition

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. In Section 1, I discussed the framework for the study, and I conducted a literature review that contains an analysis of empirical literature related to the transformational leadership theoretical framework (predictor variable) and employee satisfaction (dependent variable). Additionally, I discussed the MLQ developed by Bass and Avolio (1997) and JSS produced by Spector (1985). Lastly, I discussed rival leadership styles and theories to

transformational leadership. The literature review in Section 1 aided me in providing an examination of how transformational leadership and employee satisfaction may help U.S. fast-food restaurant managers understand their role in leading employees of the organization.

In Section 2, I presented further detail regarding the project. The project encompassed a discussion of the participants, population, research method, and research design, along with the instrumentation used to access the leader's leadership tendencies and the necessity of ensuring the external validity of the research study exists. Section 2 supports the business problem and purpose of the research identified in the study. Section 3 covered the purpose of the study, restatement of the research question, a presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, reflections, and a concluding statement. Section 2, the project of the study, will now be discussed.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I explain the purpose of this quantitative correlational study and the role I play in collecting data. I discuss the participants of the study and the strategy to obtain participants from the selected population. I also provide greater detail about the research method and research design I used to support the study, including the instrumentation and data collection and analysis procedures. The section also includes a discussion of ethical considerations and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. The predictor variables were employee perceptions of their leader's (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. These concepts are associated with transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978). The dependent variable was employee satisfaction. The target population consisted of employees and entry-level supervisors of a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region of the United States. The contributions to business practice include the potential to provide a fuller understanding of why employees lack satisfaction in the workplace. The implications for positive social change include the potential to improve employee satisfaction, bolster transformational leadership tendencies in managers, and add the impact of a reduction in the unemployment in the communities serviced by U.S. fast-food restaurants. Understanding the factors that promote employee

satisfaction may help managers of U.S. fast-food restaurants to support their employees better and promote their job satisfaction.

Role of the Researcher

My role as a researcher of this quantitative correlational study was to confirm the careful selection of data sources along with the validity of study results. My responsibility was to collect and interpret data to ensure accuracy by selecting the appropriate tool to analyze the data (see Moon, 2015). Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) stated that a researcher's goal is to gain a holistic view of the context within the study, the social arrangement, and the rules of the framework. I have worked for over ten years in the management of various organizations in different capacities. I have most recently worked in the retail industry. Working in the retail sector in a management capacity has provided me with valuable insights into how employees react to different leadership styles. My observations of these employees include a lack of satisfaction due to leadership. Furthermore, I have a bachelor's degree in business and a master's degree in management, which also implies the close involvement of this study in my professional career.

Roulston and Shelton (2015) stated that researchers must be objective, neutral, and practical in the research process. Based on my observations as a manager and my doctoral coursework and research, I decided to base my study on the business problem of low employee job satisfaction. Accordingly, I decided to base my research on transformational leadership and employee satisfaction within the U.S. fast-food industry. Researchers must be able to state their perceptions of participants before starting data

collection to ensure personal biases will not affect their analysis (Coburn & Penuel, 2016). The participants were from a population in the Midwestern region of the United States. Researchers should not take their role for granted, and their role within the study should be clear (Halpern & Leite, 2015). In quantitative studies, participants should act independently as if the researcher is not there. Then the researcher examines the relationship between variables with statistical testing to see if the correlational analyses will support the hypotheses (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Using the quantitative method will help the researcher avoid bias by bridging the gap between reality and perception (Scopelliti et al., 2015).

In addition to the role of the researcher, Page and Nyeboer (2017) stated that it is the role of the researcher to initialize the review process and avoid ethical dilemmas. Additionally, Institutional Review Board (IRB) members ensure that research conforms to practices, principles, and other regulatory aspects outlined in the *Belmont Report*. The *Belmont Report*, which was published in 1979, is a source of practices, principles, and other regulatory elements a researcher must follow to ensure participants received informed consent and remained anonymous (Miracle, 2016). The protocol in the report summarizes basic ethical principles that should underlie the conduct of biomedical and behavioral research involving human subjects (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, (1979). The principles of the *Belmont Report* are (a) respect of persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (Fiske & Hauser, 2014). These principles applied to this research study as it involved human

subjects' answers to survey questions, because the study had human subjects, the attainment of informed consent.

Participants

The research question was, What is the relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction? Researchers must ensure that participants have enough information about the research topic and that their characteristics align with the research question(s) (Hoyland, Hollund, & Olsen, 2015). Therefore, the informed consent and eligibility criteria ensured the participants had enough knowledge and experience to participate, along with understanding the context of giving informed consent (Wallace & Sheldon, 2015).

In this study, I obtained data from eligible participants who completed either an online survey administered through the Google Forms platform or paper survey packet distributed in the organization. Both survey formats were available in English and Spanish. I wanted to gain the perspective of employees and entry-level supervisors of the U.S. fast-food industry in the Midwestern region of the United States. Martinez-Mesa et al. (2016) noted that eligibility could be affected if the requirements are too strict. To minimize this potential impact, the eligibility criteria for the participants were that participants must be employees and entry-level supervisors of the U.S. fast-food industry, 18 years of age or older, and must be working with the organization for at least one month. Prospective participants first completed an informed consent then completed the

questions on whether or not they were 18 and older and had at least one month of tenure. If employees had at least one month of tenure and were not a restaurant manager, they completed the rest of the survey. If they did not have at least one month of tenure, were not 18 years of age or older, or if they were not an employee or entry-level supervisor, they did not qualify to participate. Maki, Floyd, and Roberson (2015) stated that specifying participant criteria upfront will enable a researcher to select the right participants.

The strategy for gaining access to participants was using the organization's internal network of employees. I communicated with the owner/operator to obtain permission to distribute surveys to employees and entry-level supervisors of a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region. Gandy (2015) stated that by visiting organizations or e-mailing them, the researcher provides enough information about the study for the organization to decide on participation. In my meeting with the owner, I included an overview of the study along with the eligibility requirements and the link to participate in the survey. Additionally, I asked the restaurant managers not to help the participants fill out the surveys or be present as the participants filled out the surveys. Denhoff et al. (2015) suggested that an e-mail link to the actual survey is the best way to achieve response results.

The strategy for establishing a working relationship with the participants was to meet with the owner/operator of the organization. However, the research must contain a consistent effort of communication between the researcher and participants in building and maintaining the relationship (Barrios-O'Neill & Schuitema, 2016). Therefore, the

plan for distributing and communicating the survey (English or Spanish) was by visiting with the owner and restaurant managers of the store and having them distribute the survey link through their organization's intranet, through email, and flyers. Once the participant entered the link, they saw the informed consent page then the eligibility questions. The informed consent and eligibility criteria ensured the participants had enough knowledge and experience to participate, along with understanding the context of giving informed consent (Wallace & Sheldon, 2015).

Once the participant was on the informed consent page, the participant read through the form and declared he or she understands the study is voluntary. They have the right to decline to participate in the survey. Additionally, it was assumed that by the participant filling out the paper survey and submitting it back to the lockbox that he or she declared their informed consent. Note, the participant also had the right to withdraw at any time during the process after the survey had started if they chose so without any form of penalty. Second, the consent form included the purpose of the study, the nature of the research and procedures of the study, sample questions of the study, and how the study would affect participants. Accordingly, a researcher must provide enough information about essential study details to prospective participants to ensure they make an informed decision about participating (Roberts, 2015; Hunter, 2015). Third, I explained participants have the right to reach out and ask questions, obtain a summary of key findings by emailing me, and have their privacy respected. Researchers must gain participants' trust to establish a working relationship before the survey starts (Condit et

al., 2015). Thus, if participants did not agree to participate, they could exit the survey at any time by exiting their web browser.

Additionally, with the paper survey, participants could just stop the survey then shred/recycle the survey. However, if the participants agreed to participate, respondents completed the survey, and then the data was used for analysis. Teitcher et al. (2015) stated online surveys allow participants to have complete anonymity from the researcher for honest responses. Last, the participant provided information on their position, tenure with the organization, employment status, and if they are male or female.

Research Method and Design

The method selected was quantitative, and the design was correlational. The chosen method and research design support the research question for this study. Chu (2015) stated there are three types of research methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. In the following sections, there is an explanation for the selection of the research method and research design.

Research Method

This section is an extension of the research method in Section 1. The quantitative method was appropriate for this study because the researcher tests a theory and identifies connections that may exist (Park & Park, 2016). The basis of the quantitative method is in the facts and allows for an analytical approach (Jackson, 2015; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Thus, this study consisted of the constructs of the predictor variable (transformational leadership) and one dependent variable (employee satisfaction).

The qualitative method was not appropriate for this study because researchers of the qualitative method to focus a group, person, organization, or situation on gaining insight about a problem (Wilkinson et al., 2016). Qualitative research is appropriate for when the aim is to explore participants' experiences in a naturalistic setting to investigate every day or the extraordinary lives of individuals, groups, societies, and organizations (Miles et al., 2014). The researcher of the qualitative methodology focuses on the dynamic information not precisely known or determined (Jackson, 2015). The researcher interprets the data based on responses in situations where the research looks to understand the meaning behind specific behaviors or actions (Lopez, Callao, & Ruisanchez, 2015). However, this study involves the researcher testing hypotheses based on established theories and examining the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables through statistical data; thus, the qualitative method is not suitable for this research study.

The final method, mixed methods, the researcher enhances and triangulates findings from qualitative and quantitative methods (Jackson, 2015; Kavanoz, 2017). The mixed-method can be a complicated approach by integrating multiple methods in a study (Fetters, 2016). However, mixed methods were not appropriate for this study as the goal of the research is for the researcher to examine the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables through a quantitative method and not to explore the who, what, how, and why of a situation found in a qualitative method.

Research Design

This section is an extension of the research design in Section 1. Wilson (2016) stated researchers need to decide on a research design after they choose a research method. The correlational design supports the examination of the predictor variables (transformational leadership) and the dependent variable (employee satisfaction) by the researcher (Gabbiadini & Greitemeyer, 2017).

The experimental design was not appropriate for this study. The researcher of the experimental design uses random assignment to manipulate the independent variable (Siler & Klahr, 2015). Researchers of experimental designs assess causal relationships through the manipulation of variables or predicting outcomes based on intervention activities (Yaripour et al., 2015; Rucker, McShane, & Preacher, 2015). Curtis et al. (2015) stated the use of experimental design does not justify the requirement to examine the relationship between variables without causality. The use of experimental design does not warrant the need to examine the relationship between variables with causality. Therefore, the experimental design was not applicable, as the researcher is not assessing causality, but the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables.

The quasi-experimental design was not appropriate for this study. Researchers of quasi-experimental designs assess causal relationships using “as good as” random variation in the exposure of interest, which is not usually directly controlled by the researcher (Reeves, Wells, & Waddington, 2017). Moreover, researchers of a quasi-experimental design do not test the causal relationship of the variable inside a laboratory-like the experimental design (Cook, 2015). Researchers of a quasi-experimental design

focus on the cause and effect relationship between variables, which does not justify the use of this design as the researcher is examining the relationship (correlation) between the variables (Schwartz, Wilson, & Goff, 2015). Therefore, the quasi-experimental design was not applicable, as the researcher was not assessing causality, but the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables.

The correlational design was appropriate when testing non-causal relationships between variables (Gabbiadini & Greitemeyer, 2017). Participants provide data on a situation; then, the researcher analyzes the data to test the hypothesis or hypotheses to establish future empirical evidence (Stroet, Opdenakker, & Minnaert, 2015). Researchers use the correlational design to examine the relationship between two or more variables through analyzation of data from questionnaire scores, databases, or surveys (Bray, Adamson, & Mason, 2015). Therefore, the correlational design was appropriate for this study because of the need to examine the relationship between the predictor variables and the dependent variable of this study and not determine cause and effect between the variable as in an experimental and quasi-experimental design.

Population and Sampling

The population from which the sample size came from were employees and entry-level supervisors of the U.S. fast-food industry in the Midwestern region of the United States. The population is a more significant collection of individuals or objects from where the researcher gathers a research sample for a study (Emmel, 2015). To achieve alignment with the research question, the target population for this study consisted of employees and entry-level supervisors of the U.S. fast-food industry in the Midwestern

region of the United States. Colombo et al. (2016) recommended scholars align the population with their overarching research question. This population had the best opportunity to provide perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

The two sampling strategies are probabilistic and non-probabilistic. The four non-probabilistic sampling techniques are availability (convenience), purposive, quota, and snowball. Non-probabilistic sampling strategies are inexpensive and preferred for larger-scale studies (Catania, Dolcini, Orellana, & Narayanan, 2015); however, weaknesses of non-probabilistic sampling are the limited control over sample participants and the limited ability to generalize the results (Catania et al., 2015). Catania et al. (2015) stated the use of convenience sampling allows researchers to accurately examine the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables without concern for generalizability. Additionally, convenience sampling allows for subjects that are accessible, inexpensive, and easy to recruit (Ingham-Broomfield, 2014). Hays, Liu, and Kapteyn (2015) suggested convenience sampling can potentially result in a low response rate and cause limitations on generalization to a different population.

The purposive sampling strategy is the second non-probability sampling strategy and is where the sample is not randomly chosen or assigned. Additionally, Etchells and Woodcock (2017) stated purposive sampling might draw on local expert knowledge and select a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses, such as knowledge or experience on a topic (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Thus, purposive sampling may

open the researcher up to bias in the selection process. Purposive sampling is also commonly used in qualitative studies where the topic is specific and addressed by individuals with specific expertise (Apostolopoulos & Liargovas, 2016). Therefore, I used the non-probabilistic convenience sampling strategy to accurately examine the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables in this quantitative study. Probabilistic sampling involves random selection for which this study population did not represent. Additionally, the downfall of using the random sampling technique can be costly, require a sampling frame, and the possibility of introducing significant sampling errors (Kandola et al., 2014). The population for which the sample came was from convenience and not a random probability.

The primary statistical procedures for this study were linear regression analysis. Alhamide, Ibrahim, and Alodat (2016) stated multiple linear regression is a common tool used to analyze data. The factors considered for this study included the power of the study, the effect size of the study, and the level of significance for the study. When conducting the power of a quantitative study, researchers use a power analysis to determine the sample size needed (Stokes & Allor, 2016). The power analysis also helps the researcher determine the probability of a statistical test by rejecting the null hypothesis when it is false (Perugini, Constantini, & Gallucci, 2018). The effect size is statistically significant because it measures the strength of the relationship between the predictor and dependent variables in the analysis (Walum, Waldman, & Young, 2016). In this study, the effect size was categorized into three parts: small, medium, and large.

Walum et al. suggested using Cohen's effect sizes of 0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, and 0.35 = large.

The level of significance (alpha) was set to .05. I calculated the sample size using the software, G*Power (Version 3.1.2). G*Power (Version 3.1.2) is free software that researchers will use to calculate the sample size using linear regression analysis. Akobeng (2016) stated calculating the sample size using power, effect size, and significance will help the researcher understand whether their sample size is large enough for the research. Considering five predictor variables, an accepted power of .80, a large effect size of .35, and a significance (alpha) level of .05, the desired sample size to achieve empirical validity of the linear regression model was 43 participants. Increasing the power to .99 increased the sample size to 83 participants. For this reason, I sought between 43 and 83 participants for the study.

Ethical Research

Data collection began after receiving IRB approval from Walden University. Scholars must wait to start the data collection after receiving IRB approval (Fiske & Hauser, 2014). Resnik (2015) stated IRB protects the welfare and rights of participants. Also, before collecting data, the researcher must obtain an informed consent form from each participant (Tam et al., 2015). Researchers use informed consent to provide information about the participant's voluntary responses (Grady, 2015), and Tam et al. additionally stated that the informed consent is to protect the participants and their privacy.

The informed consent form was designated first once the participant entered the survey (English or Spanish) link or the first page of the paper survey. They were asked for eligibility criteria after agreeing to informed consent. A researcher must provide enough information about a study to prospective participants to ensure they make informed decisions about participating (Roberts, 2015). First, on the informed consent page, the participant understood the study was voluntary, and the participant had the right to decline to participate in the survey by refusing informed consent. Tam et al. (2015) stated the participant in a research study should be voluntary. The participant also had the right to withdraw at any time during the process after the survey had started if they choose so without any form of penalty by closing their web browser (Harriss & Atkinson, 2015) or not submitting the paper survey back to the designated lockbox. Second, the consent form included the purpose of the study, the nature of the research and procedures of the study, and how the study would affect participants. Third, I explained participants had the right to reach out and ask questions, obtain a summary of key findings by emailing me, and have their privacy respected. Fourth, the participant provided information on their position, tenure with the organization, employment status, and if they are male or female.

Researchers may offer incentives such as cash and cash vouchers, gift cards, or monetary value items if it does not affect the validity of the study (Bouter, 2015). In this study, there were no direct benefits or incentives to them as research participants. However, the benefits to science and society may encourage employee satisfaction may

help restaurant managers of each restaurant develop and change their restaurant to support the need for satisfied employees.

Linder, Elek, and Calderon (2014) raised concerns regarding the ethical challenge of maintaining confidentiality participants. Furthermore, Mitchell and Wellings (2013) stated researchers must consider the ethical issues when using human participants. To ensure the ethical protection of the participant, I disclosed all information related to the study, confirmed participants had given their informed consent, removed any identifiable information regarding participants and the organization to maintain their confidentiality. Once the analysis of the research was complete, I stored the research data password-protected file in a password protected personal cloud storage location for which I will keep for five years. After five years, I will destroy the research data. The final doctoral manuscript includes the Walden IRB approval number (07-15-19-0599391). Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details that might identify participants, such as the location of the study, also will not be shared.

Data Collection Instruments

The stability and consistency of an instrument will relate to the reliability of the research quality (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The survey instruments included the use of the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1997) and the JSS (Spector, 1985). Participants had access to the survey through the link I provided in Google Forms and through paper packet distribution. In total, the survey (English or Spanish) took about 30 minutes to complete. The data collected for each construct from the MLQ and JSS was an interval. Raw data

from the participants are securely kept in password-protected personal cloud storage; only I have access to this file.

The MLQ is a 45-item questionnaire created for the identification of the leadership style. The five components are idealized attributes, idealized behavior, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, demonstrate an alignment between organizational objectives and employee values while supporting employee identification (Effelsberg & Solga, 2015). I obtained the MLQ manual through the MindShare website, where the survey is located. Future licenses will need to be purchased to distribute the survey. The MLQ is a 45-item questionnaire and was created by Bass and Avolio in 1997. The 45-item questionnaire is rated on a 5-point Likert scale where *0 = not at all*, *1 = once in a while*, *2 = sometimes*, *3 = fairly often*, and *4 = frequently if not always*. The MLQ has the following constructs of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence (attributed), (b) idealized influence (behavior), (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual consideration, and (e) individualized consideration. The MLQ measures transactional leadership using two components: (a) contingent reward, and (b) management by exception (Bass & Avolio, 1997). The MLQ measures laissez-faire leadership using management by exception (Bass & Avolio, 1997). The constructs detail the MLQ related questions for transformational leadership:

1. Idealized influence (attributed): MLQ Questions 10, 18, 21, 25, represent this construct of transformational leadership.

2. Idealized influence (behavior): MLQ Questions 6, 14, 23, 34, represent this construct of transformational leadership.
3. Individualized consideration: MLQ Questions 15, 19, 29, 31, represent this construct of transformational leadership.
4. Intellectual stimulation: MLQ Questions 2, 8, 30, 32, represent this construct of transformational leadership.
5. Inspirational motivation: MLQ Questions 9, 13, 26, 36, represent this construct of transformational leadership.

JSS is one of the most common, valid, and reliable survey tools. The JSS is a 36 item, nine facet scale to assess employee attitudes about the job and aspects of the job. Each facet assesses four items, and a total score is computed from all items. The nine facets are pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards (performance-based rewards), operating procedures (required rules and procedures), coworkers, nature of work, and communication (Spector, 1985). In addition to Spector's JSS, Spector (2018) provided updated average scores for the retail industry: Pay – 13.40, Promotion – 14.10, Supervision – 19.10, Fringe Benefits – 16.40, Contingent Rewards – 14.90, Operating Procedures – 16.40, Coworkers – 17.90, Nature of Work – 17.80, and Communication – 15.70. Spector's JSS aided in understanding employee satisfaction in the U.S. fast-food industry. The JSS is rated on a 6-point Likert scale where 1 = *disagree very much*, 2 = *disagree moderately*, 3 = *disagree slightly*, 4 = *agree slightly*, 5 = *agree moderately*, and 6 = *agree very much* (Spector, 1985).

I obtained permission to use the JSS from Paul Spector through email confirmation (Appendix B). To understand the relationship between employee job satisfaction and the characteristics of their supervisors, Saiti and Papadopoulos (2015) used the JSS to understand the correlation between the nine subscales of employee job satisfaction. The JSS is a 36 item, nine facet scale to assess employee attitudes about the job and aspects of the job. Each facet is evaluated with four items, and a total score is computed from all items. The nine facets are pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards (performance-based rewards), operating procedures (required rules and procedures), coworkers, nature of work, and communication (Spector, 1985). Scores on each of nine facet subscales, based on four items each, can range from 4 to 24, while scores for total job satisfaction, based on the sum of all 36 items, can range from 36 to 216 (Spector, 1985). Each item is scored from 1 to 6, where 6 is the most substantial agreement if the original response choices are used (Spector, 1985). According to researchers at Mind Garden (2014), “The MLQ provides an excellent relationship between survey data and organizational outcome and is the benchmark measure of transformational leadership (MLQ).” Additionally, the researchers at Mind Garden stated the JSS is a well-known and established multidimensional instrument compared to other job satisfaction scales, often investigated for validity and reliability. It is suitable for measuring employee job satisfaction. The reliability of the instrument relates to the consistency of the MLQ and JSS used in this study.

The purpose of all researchers is to achieve perfect reliability and validity in research studies (Myrick & Feinn, 2014). Thus, researchers should use reliable and valid

instruments in studies, which will, in turn, lead to reliable and valid results (Bryman, 2015). Researchers often use Cronbach's alpha as a measurement of reliability, and the acceptable value of Cronbach's coefficient is more significant than .70 (Taber, 2017). According to Abbasi and Zamani-Miandashti (2013), the MLQ is a highly validated and reliable instrument, used for identifying the leadership styles of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leaders. Taylor et al. (2015) examined the reliability of the MLQ survey in different cultures, finding a sufficient level of consistency to identify leadership styles. Researchers verified the reliability of the MLQ with 3,786 respondents in 14 predictor samples ranging in size from 45 to 549 in the United States (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999) through factor analyses, resulting in a six-factor model for the MLQ. Bass and Avolio (1995) analyzed a set of nine samples (N = 2,154) for reliability and found each of the leading factor scales to have reliabilities between 0.74 and 0.94. The average correlation coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) among the transformational subscales was .83. Idealized influence has an alpha of .73, inspirational motivation has an alpha of .82, intellectual stimulation has an alpha of .74, and individualized consideration has an alpha of .78 (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Moreover, Taylor et al. identified that the MLQ is a strong predictor of leader performance, which is why it is considered the best instrument to measure leadership styles

Researchers should include Cronbach's coefficient alpha calculation in their study for study validity as well (Cor, 2016). Construct validity is the extent to which an instrument measures a characteristic that cannot be directly observed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). Convergence and divergence validities are subcategories of construct validity and

the best demonstration of construct validity (Janssen et al., 2014). These subcategories must act together to show evidence of variable correlations.

To examine the construct validity of the MLQ, confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1995). Construct validity was thoroughly explained with factor analyses, which resulted in a six-factor model for the MLQ. According to Bass and Avolio, MLQ has strong validity, and many researchers use this system. Previous researchers have also indicated that the MLQ instrument has a Cronbach's alpha coefficient that ranges from 0.63 to 0.92 (Maritz, Pretorias, & Plant, 2012). Additionally, Antonakis et al. (2003) applied an equation modeling technique using a sample size of 6,525, incorporated from a review of 18 independent studies. By combining 18 independent samples ($N = 6,525$), Antonakis, Avolio, and Sivasubramaniam (2003) concluded that the MLQ attains convergent validity, an alpha of at least 0.80 across the leadership styles. Moreover, Muenjohn and Armstrong (2008) tested the nine-factor model (examining the structural validity) by applying confirmatory factor analysis to a variety of organizations consisting of 138 cases in Thailand and London. Muenjohn and Armstrong determined the modification did impact the structural validity of the nine-correlated factor model (full-range leadership model) without any major adjustments. The data indicated that the MLQ's nine-correlated leader model was "most appropriately and adequately capturing the factor constructs of transformational leadership" (Muenjohn & Armstrong, 2008).

Several analyses provided support for high construct and convergent validity. The transformational scales of the MLQ showed high and significant convergent validity

to the transformational leadership scales of the transformational leadership inventory, developed by Podsakoff and colleagues in 1993, which is between .22 and .79 (Rowold, 2004). This study lends further credibility to the validity of the MLQ. In sum, this translation of the MLQ is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing leaders' behavior.

Researchers verified the reliability of the JSS by assessing item selection, item analysis, and determination of the 36 equally valued item scale relating to the nine facets of job satisfaction. The correlation of JSS scores was consistent with findings involving other job satisfaction scales (Spector, 1985). Additionally, the nine sub-scales related moderately to well between each other, internal consistency, a score of .60 for a coworker to .91 for the total scale. Overall, an average of .70 for internal consistency was obtained out of a sample of 3,067 individuals (Job Satisfaction Survey, 2018). In a study by Fesharaki et al. (2012). Cronbach's Alpha method was also used to report a 0.86 internal consistency amongst 301 health care workers. Considering that the validity and reliability indexes of the questionnaire are reported in an acceptable range, The JSS is a valid and reliable questionnaire for measuring job satisfaction among military health care workers. The validity of JSS has been investigated through the concurrent method and using the JDI questionnaire. The coefficient of 0.61 to 0.80 has been calculated for each of sub-domains of this questionnaire with the JDI questionnaire, which shows good validity for the JSS (Spector, 1985). Additionally, Yelboga (2009) used confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis among a sample of Turkish workers to determine if the JSS was internally reliable and unidimensional, which would indicate it had construct

validity. Cronbach's alpha for items on the questionnaire ranged from .60 to .88 with an overall value of .78.

Data Collection Technique

The plan for administering the survey (English or Spanish) was to use the Google Forms application for the hosting of the survey as well as handing out paper survey packets. According to Mavletova (2015), participants like to partake in online surveys and increase the participant's likelihood to complete the survey (Guo et al., 2016). Additionally, when researchers use an online survey, the ethical protection of participants is assured by maintaining anonymity (Lowry, D'Arcy, Hammer, & Moody, 2016). However, with the option of paper survey packets, the researcher must help preserve the anonymity of the employee. To maintain anonymity, the employee placed the completed packet into a lockbox kept in the breakroom. This lockbox was picked up two weeks after the paper surveys are administered. The employee had access to the survey link address through an email from the owner/operator or seen on the flyer, which included the informed consent, eligibility requirements, demographic information, MLQ, and JSS.

Additionally, the employee had access to a paper survey packet as well. Once the participant completed the survey requirements, the information was then automatically transferred into a Google excel file so I can sort the data for data analysis. However, if the employee completed a paper survey, I moved the information from the paper survey to an excel file. From the excel file, I sorted the information, but I then ultimately transferred this information into the software package, SPSS, to analyze the data. Cavallo and Rigobon (2016) stated in their study of price collection that data collection

through an electronic survey is cheap, fast, and accurate and compliments the use of conventional data collection methods.

Data Analysis

The research question was, What is the relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction? The null and alternative hypotheses were as follows:

*H*₀: There is no relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

*H*₁: There is a relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction.

Brezavscek, Sparl, and Znidarsic (2014) recommended the use of the most current version of SPSS with a correlational design, which is version 25; therefore, I entered the data into SPSS version 25 for Windows. I used a multiple regression statistical test to examine the correlation between the predictor variables and the dependent variable. The assumptions are (a) multicollinearity, (b) outliers, (c) linearity, (d) homoscedasticity, and (e) normality (Frempong, Aboagye, & Duncan, 2016). To test these assumptions, researchers using probability plots and scatterplots to avoid errors and bias gathered from data (Jeong & Jung, 2016; Rutter, Roper, & Lettice, 2016). The assumption of multicollinearity indicates the results may not be valid due to the numerical instability of

the predictor variables (Yu, Jiang, & Land, 2015). Linearity means the predictor variables, and the dependent variable will have a straight-line relationship (Lin & Tsai, 2015). Homoscedasticity indicates residual values are equal (Meuleman, Loosveldt, & Emonds, 2014). Scatterplots are used to validate assumptions, and the violations of the assumptions can be corrected through bootstrapping (Nahorniak, Larsen, Volk, & Jordan, 2015).

Study Validity

Rotenberry and Kass (2016) stated validity is the accuracy of the measurement. The validity of this study was comprised of internal and external validity aspects. Internal validity is only relevant in studies in which researchers seek to examine causal relationships, which is seen in experimental and quasi-experimental designs. However, since this was a correlational study (nonexperimental), there were no threats to internal validity, but statistical conclusion validity was a potential concern.

Statistical Conclusion Validity

Type I error rates, and Type II error rates can be inflated due to threats to statistical conclusion validity. The reliability of the instrument, data assumptions, and sample size are the three areas of statistical conclusion validity. A valid instrument will help the researcher examine the relationship between variables (Aravamudhan & Krishnaveni, 2016).

Data assumptions may pose a threat to statistical conclusion validity. According to Solomon, Howard, and Stein (2015), statistical analyses rely on various assumptions about data distribution. If these assumptions are violated, then the validity of the

statistical conclusion would impact the credibility of the study. Therefore, when I analyzed the data, I addressed the assumptions of multiple linear regression.

The sample size is necessary to obtain statistical power, which is dependent on the population value and the unknown effect size (Anderson, Kelley, & Maxwell, 2017). In this study, the effect size was categorized into three parts: small, medium, and large. Therefore, I calculated the sample size using G*Power (Version 3.1.2). The effect size was determined by using a sample effect size from a prior published study (Anderson et al., 2017). Considering a large effect size of .35, and accepted power of .80, and a significance level of .05, the desired sample size to achieve empirical validity of the linear regression model was 43 participants. Using a power analysis before the data collection will minimize the threat to validity (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

External Validity

External validity involves how many generalizations of the results can expand to a larger population. Probabilistic sampling strategies ensure the participants are equivalent to the population, which increases the external validity (Olsen & Orr, 2016; Leviton, 2017). Non-probabilistic sampling strategies hinder external validity (Finnegan et al., 2016). Additionally, non-probabilistic sampling limits the ability to generalize the results to the larger population, measurement, or setting. In this study, however, I used a non-probabilistic convenience sampling strategy. To achieve a non-probabilistic convenience sample, I went with a population that was available to participate in the study. All employees, not including restaurant managers (as the study is on the restaurant managers), of the organization, had the opportunity to participate in providing feedback

on their restaurant managers and job satisfaction. The participants were not selected or forced to participate and were completely voluntary. The participant chose whether or not to participate, which helps amplify the fact of an unbiased, non-probabilistic convenience sampling strategy.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was for the researcher to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. In section 2, I discussed the importance of my role as the researcher, the criteria for participants, support for the research method and design, ethical and validity considerations when administering a quantitative correlational study, and the process for delivering the surveys. In section 3, I presented the findings of the study, implications for social change, and any future recommendations.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. The predictor variables were employee perceptions of their leader's (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. These concepts are associated with transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978). The dependent variable was employee satisfaction. The target population consisted of employees and entry-level supervisors of a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region of the United States. A multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between the variables. The null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Transformational leadership significantly predicted employee satisfaction. As I discussed in Section 2, correlational design was the most appropriate quantitative research design for this study.

The goal of this study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. I surveyed 31 employees from one U.S. fast-food restaurant. The MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1997) consists of 45 questions for which idealized attributes represented Questions 6, 14, 23, and 34; idealized behavior represented Questions 10, 19, 21, and 25; individualized consideration represented Questions 9, 13, 26, and 36; intellectual stimulation represented Questions 2, 8, 30, and 32; and inspirational motivation represented Questions 15, 19, 29, and 31. The JSS (Spector,

1985) consists of 36 questions for which pay represented Questions 1, 10, 19, and 28; promotion represented Questions 2, 11, 20, and 33; supervision represented Questions 3, 12, 21, and 30; fringe benefits represented Questions 4, 13, 22, and 29; contingent rewards represented Questions 5, 14, 23, and 32; operating procedures represented Questions 6, 15, 24, and 31; coworkers represented Questions 7, 16, 25, and 34; nature of work represented Questions 8, 17, 27, and 35; and communication represented Questions 9, 18, 26, and 36. My objective in including question items from both instruments was to explore the relationship between leadership traits and employee job satisfaction.

In this section, I review the descriptive statistics for the dependent variable (employee satisfaction) and transformational leadership predictor variables, which included the leader's (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. Nineteen participants (61.3%) received an English-language survey packet and 12 (38.7%), a Spanish-language one. Of the 31 organizational members, 12 (38.7%) were front-of-house team members, 15 (48.4%) were kitchen staff, and four (12.9%) were entry-level supervisors. More than half (18 staff members, 58.1%) were full-time employees, while 13 (41.9%) were part-time employees. Last, 23 (74.2%) of the staff members were women, and eight (25.8%) were men.

Presentation of the Findings

In this subsection, I review the tests of the assumptions, present descriptive statistics on the predictor and dependent variables, show inferential statistic results, discuss the findings in relation to the study's theoretical framework, and conclude with a

concise summary. As I discuss, I replaced the original, planned power analysis with a new posthoc power analysis. To calculate a new power, I used the actual number of survey participants (31) using a posthoc analysis within the G*Power software. The input parameters remained at five predictor variables, an effect size of .35, .05 error probability rate, and the actual number of survey participants (31). The new power was .61, which is below the usually accepted minimum power of .80 by Cohen.

Tests of Assumptions

The assumptions of multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals were evaluated.

Multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is evaluated by viewing the correlation coefficients in collinearity statistics among the predictor variables. The coefficient collinearity tolerance was not above .9, and the VIF was below 10 for the restaurant managers. The violation of the assumption of multicollinearity was not evident. Table 1 contains the correlation coefficients.

Table 1

Collinearity Among Predictor Variables in the Fast-Food Restaurant

Model	Tolerance	VIF
Individualized attributes	.587	1.703
Individualized behaviors	.378	2.643
Intellectual stimulation	.442	2.261
Inspirational motivation	.305	3.274
Individualized consideration	.347	2.884

Outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals. I evaluated outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals. I examined the normal probability plot (P-P) of the regression standardized residuals (see Figure 1) for outliers, Shapiro-Wilk test results (see Table 2) for normality, scatterplots (see Figures 2-6) of each predictor variable for linearity, and the scatterplot of the standardized residuals versus predicted values (see Figure 7) for homoscedasticity. The examinations indicated there were no significant violations of these assumptions. The tendency of the points to lie in a reasonably straight line for the restaurant managers (see Figure 1), diagonal from the bottom left to the top right, provides evidence that the assumption of normality has not been violated (Pallant, 2016).

Additionally, the Shapiro-Wilk test (see Table 2) shows a significance larger than .05, which supports that normality has not been violated. Figures 2–6 show consistent scattered dots in all five predictor variables; thus, linearity is not apparent. In Figure 7, homoscedasticity is visible as the scatter of dots is relatively equally distributed throughout the plot. Therefore, homoscedasticity is not violated.

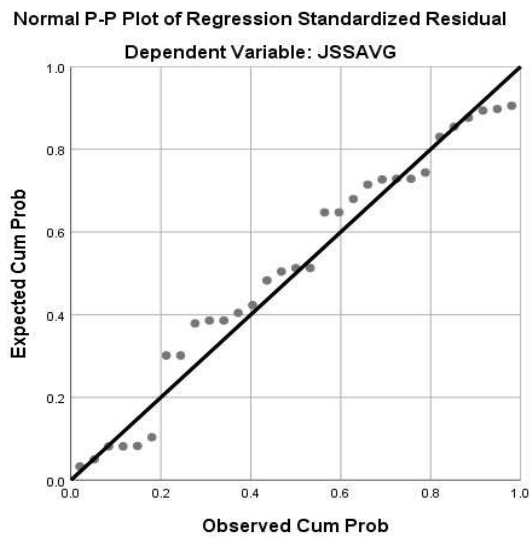


Figure 1. Normal P-P plot for restaurant managers.

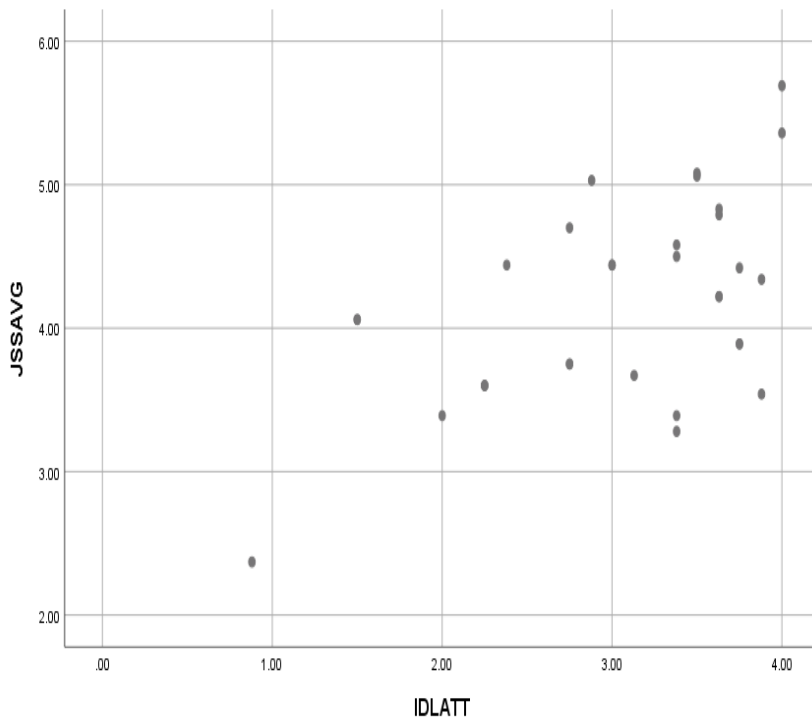


Figure 2. Scatterplot of individualized attributes.

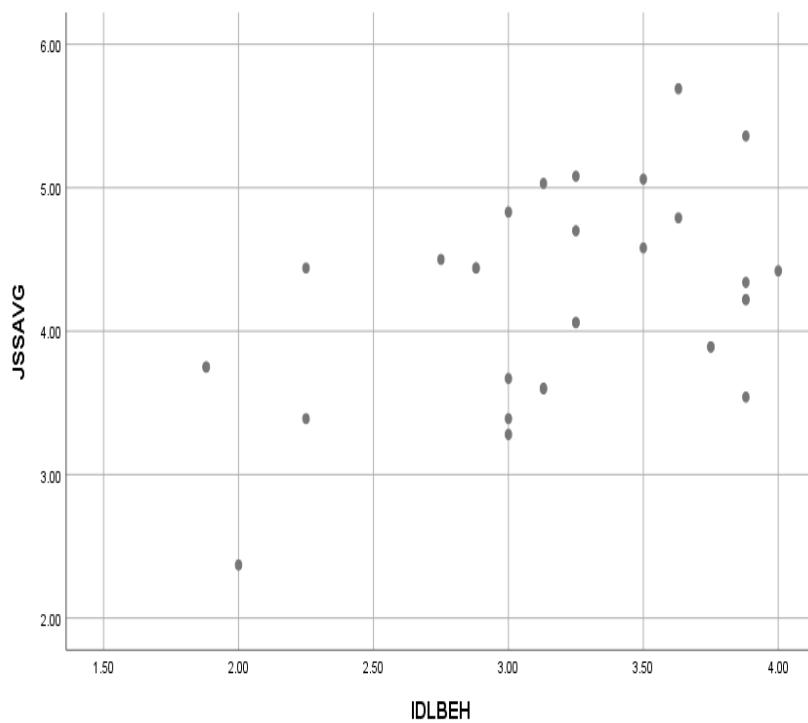


Figure 3. Scatterplot of individualized behaviors.

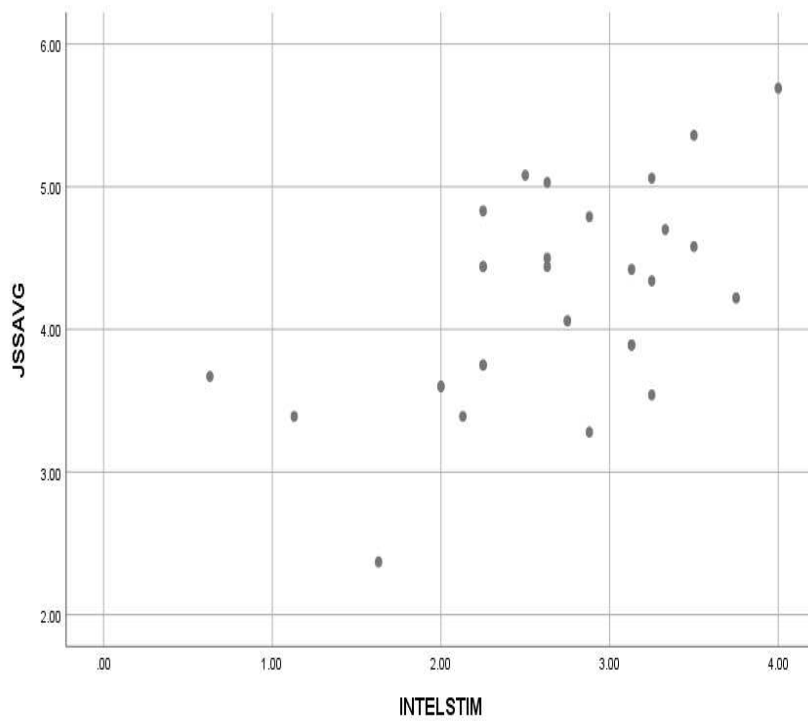


Figure 4. Scatterplot of intellectual stimulation.

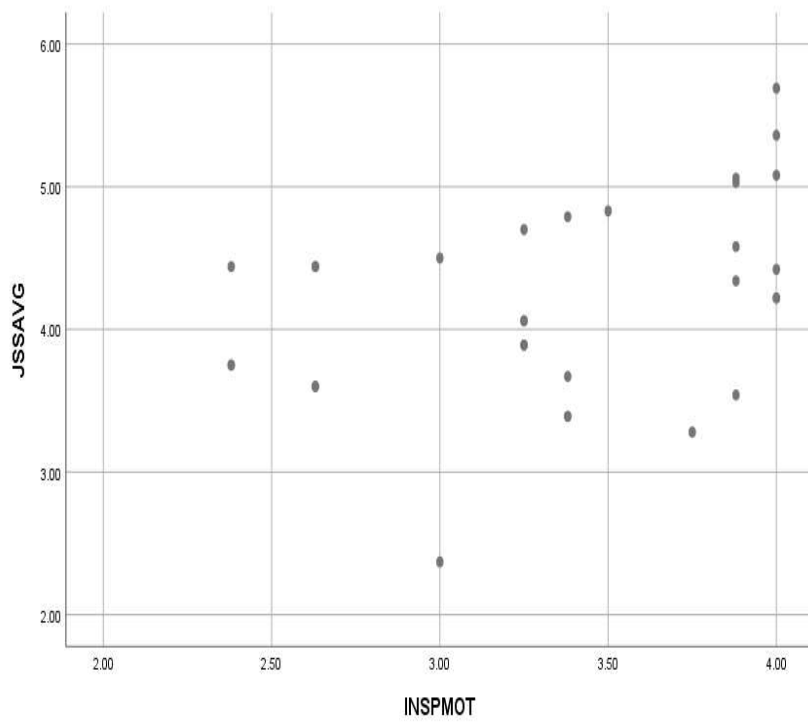


Figure 5. Scatterplot of inspirational motivation.

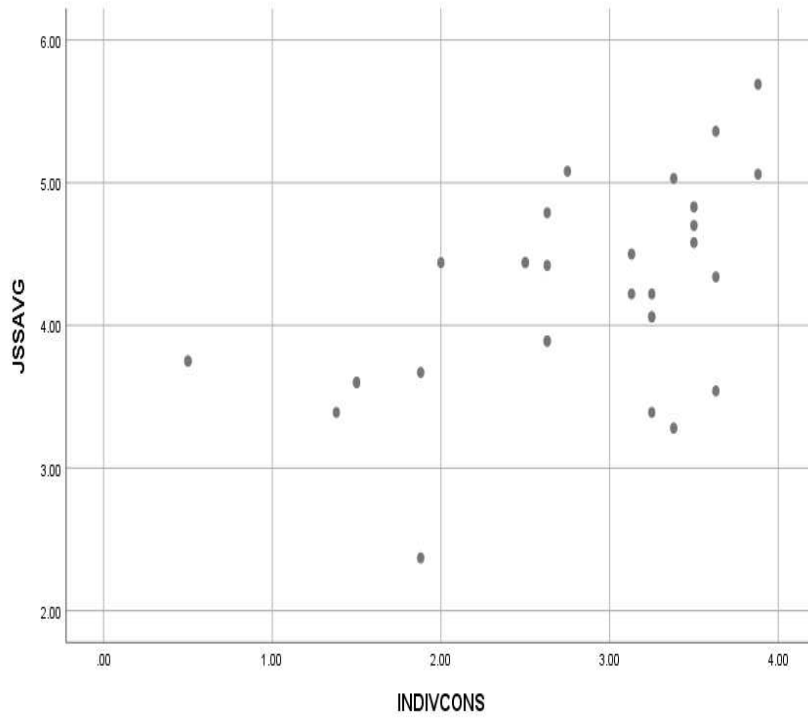


Figure 6. Scatterplot of individualized consideration.

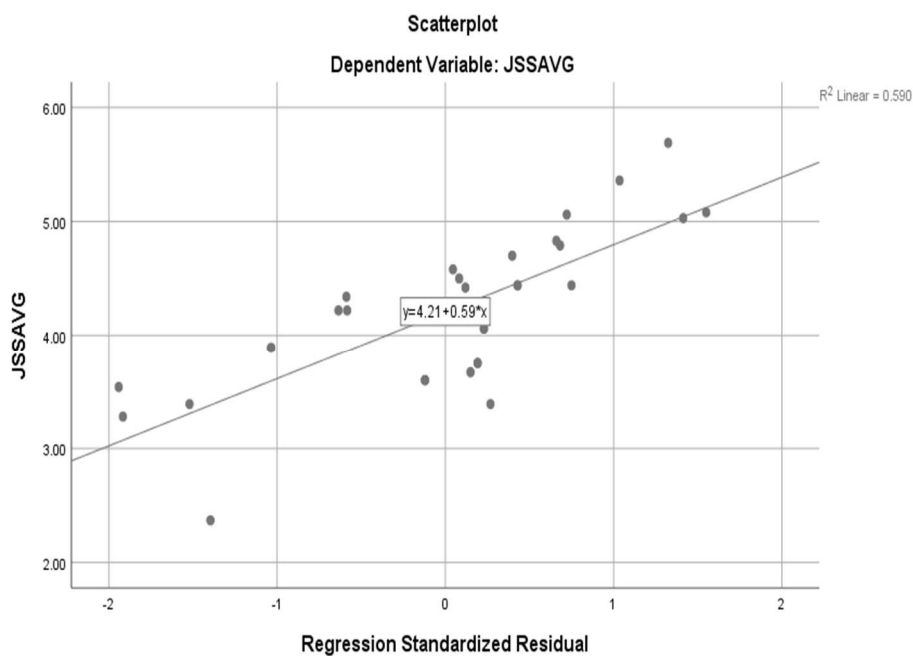


Figure 7. Scatterplot of the standardized results for restaurant managers.

Table 2

Shapiro-Wilk Test for Restaurant Managers

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
JSSAVG	0.071	31	.200*	0.985	31	0.925

Descriptive Statistics

In total, I received 31 surveys. Table 3 contains predictor variable descriptive statistics for the restaurant managers. Table 3 includes the transformational leadership predictor variables along with the mean score of each item and the standard deviation within this study. Table 4 contains dependent variable descriptive statistics for employee satisfaction. Table 4 consists of the nine job satisfaction facets which make up the

employee satisfaction dependent variable. Each facet included the mean score of each item and the standard deviation within this study.

Table 3

Predictor Variable Descriptive Statistics for Restaurant Managers

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Individualized attributes	3.067	.806
Individualized behaviors	3.171	.617
Intellectual stimulation	2.690	.761
Inspirational motivation	3.357	.557
Individualized consideration	2.728	.931

Table 4

Job Satisfaction Survey Descriptive Statistics

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
JSS PAY	3.645	1.136
JSS PROMOTION	4.075	1.001
JSS SUPERVISION	4.798	.997
JSS FRINGE BENEFITS	3.183	1.160
JSS CONTINGENT REWARDS	3.497	1.244
JSS OPERATING PROCEDURES	4.452	.915
JSS COWORKERS	4.610	.928
JSS NATURE OF WORK	5.032	.816
JSS COMMUNICATION	4.387	.985

Looking at the means of the predictor variable descriptive statistics in Table 3, we see that there are some opportunities for the organization. The predictor variables include

the leader's (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, and (e) individualized consideration. The MLQ is rated on a 5-point Likert scale where 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *once in a while*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *fairly often*, and 4 = *frequently if not always*. Therefore, individualized attributes (3.067) are in between *fairly often* and *frequently, if not always*. The restaurant managers are acting for the greater good of the organization by displaying their attributes *fairly often* and *frequently, if not always*. Individualized behaviors (3.171) are in between *fairly often* and *frequently, if not always*. The restaurant managers are persuading employees to commit to the organization by regularly speaking highly of the organization *fairly often* and *frequently, if not always*. Intellectual stimulation (2.690) is in between *sometimes* and *fairly often*. The restaurant managers are getting followers to look at problems differently and encouraging critical thinking *sometimes* and *fairly often*. Inspirational motivation (3.357) is in between *fairly often* and *frequently, if not always*. The restaurant managers are displaying a sense of optimism and visualizing a compelling vision *fairly often* and *frequently, if not always*. Individualized consideration (2.728) is in between *sometimes* and *fairly often*. The restaurant managers are coaching and teaching followers while promoting self-development of employees *sometimes* and *fairly often*. Therefore, the two areas of opportunity at this moment are intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. The restaurant managers may be able to promote more critical thinking and employee participation while also encouraging employees to better themselves and becoming an overall better listener for their employees. Finding ways to focus more on

the employees while tying into the overall vision of the organization may help encourage higher mean values.

Looking at the means of the JSS descriptive statistics in Table 4, we see that there are some opportunities for the organization. The nine facets are pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work, and communication (Spector, 1985). The JSS is rated on a 6-point Likert scale where 1 = *disagree very much*, 2 = *disagree moderately*, 3 = *disagree slightly*, 4 = *agree slightly*, 5 = *agree moderately*, and 6 = *agree very much* (Spector, 1985). Therefore, employee satisfaction with pay (3.645) is in between *disagree slightly* and *agree slightly*. Promotion (4.075) is in between *agree slightly* and *agree moderately*. Supervision (4.798) is in between *agree slightly* and *agree moderately*. Fringe benefits (3.183) is in between *disagree slightly* and *agree slightly*. Contingent rewards (3.497) are in between *disagree slightly* and *agree slightly*. Operating procedures (4.452) is in between *agree slightly* and *agree moderately*. Coworkers (4.610) are in between *agree slightly* and *agree moderately*. The nature of work (5.032) is in between *agree moderately* and *agree very much*. Communication (4.387) is in between *agree slightly* and *agree moderately*. Therefore, the areas of most opportunity appeared to be fringe benefits, contingent rewards, and pay. The focus may be shifted toward employee development through a better compensation package, which may include bonus-based pay on performances, the right fit the right job, on the job training, and professional allowances. Additionally, pay may be an area of opportunity to increase the mean value of job satisfaction in terms of pay.

Inferential Results

Standard multiple linear regression, $\alpha = .05$ (two-tailed), was used to examine the relationship between transformation leadership and employee satisfaction. The predictor variables are idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration. The dependent variable is employee satisfaction. The null hypothesis is there is no relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction. The alternative hypothesis is there is a relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction. Analyses of multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals were conducted to assess whether the assumptions were met; no severe violations were noted.

The model as a whole (see Table 5) for the restaurant managers was able to significantly predict employee satisfaction, $F(5, 25) = 3.478, p = .016, R^2 = .350$. The R^2 (.350) value indicated that approximately 35% of variations in employee satisfaction is accounted for by the linear combination of the predictor variables (idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration). However, in the final model (see Table 6), idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual

stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration did not explain any significant variation in employee satisfaction as single predictor variables.

Table 5

ANOVA for Restaurant Managers

Variable	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	6.080	5	1.216	3.478	.016 ^b
Residual	8.739	25	.350		

Note. The dependent variable was employee satisfaction.

^bPredictors (Constant) were idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspiration motivation, and individualized consideration.

Table 6

Coefficients of Restaurant Managers

Variable	Unstand. coefficients		Stand. coefficients		Sig.	Collinearity statistics	
	B	<i>SE</i>	Beta	t		Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.722	.736		3.700	.001		
Idealized attributes	.287	.175	.330	1.645	.113	.587	1.703
Idealized behaviors	.023	.285	.020	.079	.937	.378	2.643
Intellectual stimulation	.203	.213	.220	.952	.350	.442	2.261
Inspirational motivation	-.211	.351	-.167	-.602	.552	.305	3.274
Individualized consideration	.254	.197	.336	1.290	.209	.347	2.884

Note. The dependent variable was employee satisfaction. Unstand = unstandardized; Stand = standardized.

Analysis summary. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) inspirational motivation, (e) individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction. Assumptions surrounding multiple regression were assessed. Again, I must declare the assumption of using the central limit theorem due to falling below the original power analysis and reveal the new posthoc power. To calculate a new power, I must use the actual number of survey participants (31) using a posthoc analysis within the G-Power software. The input parameters remained at five predictor variables, an effect size of .35, .05 error probability rate, and the actual number of survey participants (31). The new power will be .61, which is below the usually accepted minimum power of .80. Still, the model, as a whole, was able to predict employee satisfaction significantly. However, the predictor variables of transformational leadership were not able to significantly predict employee satisfaction when they were separate from the model as a whole.

Interestingly enough, even though the predictor variables were not significantly related to employee satisfaction, it is essential to note that in Table 6, one can see that the manager's idealized attributes unstandardized coefficient (B) is .287. Thus, when 1 unit increases in the value of idealized attributes, then employee satisfaction increased by .287. Individualized consideration,

intellection stimulation, idealized attributes, and idealized behaviors all have a positive effect on employee satisfaction. However, inspirational motivation had the opposite effect. As inspirational motivation goes up 1 unit, then employee satisfaction goes down by 0.211 for inspirational motivation.

Theoretical conversation on findings. The results of this study revealed a statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. The results of this study were consistent with the existing literature on transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. Zamokuhle et al. (2017) determined that transformational leadership played a significant role between the satisfaction and intention to stay with the organization. Additionally, Lee, Kim, and Perdue (2016) reported a positive effect of empowerment on employee satisfaction with a higher impact on customer-facing than non-customer facing employees. As this study is based on a U.S. fast-food restaurant, facing customers is part of the job, and it appears the employees were empowered to help these customers. The results of the study align with the tendencies of transformational leadership and the effects these tendencies have on employee satisfaction. A U.S. fast-food restaurant is not different when it comes to having satisfied employees as satisfied employees were more engaged in their organization (Duffy, Autin, & Bott, 2015), were more likely to meet the demands of the organization (Huang & Gamble, 2015), and can increase their organization's productivity and profit (Mathieu & Baiak, 2016). Additionally, Mendis (2017) also had the same correlation between job

satisfaction and performance as bank assistants in Sri Lanka reported that job motivation, employee engagement, and job satisfaction positively and significantly influenced employee performance.

Applications to Professional Practice

In reviewing Table 5, one can see that the model for transformational leadership shows a significant relationship with employee satisfaction ($p > .05$, where p is .016). Thus, leaders can effectively use the findings from this study to aid in using transformational leadership as a whole to produce higher employee satisfaction. Leaders in the U.S. fast-food industry may also use the mean values of these transformational leadership predictor variables and the nine facets of employee satisfaction to understand where they may be able to make changes. There were clear areas of opportunity for these U.S. fast-food restaurant managers to make changes to promote more of a transformational leadership lifestyle. The restaurant managers and organization have a chance to use this information to make changes to increase employee satisfaction regarding each of the nine facets of job satisfaction. Organizations within the U.S. fast-food industry may also use this information as a guide to understand that leadership plays a part in employee satisfaction along with identifying means of each area in employee satisfaction according to the JSS (Job Satisfaction Survey).

Implications for Social Change

Now that the data has been analyzed, it was concluded that there is a relationship between employee perceptions of their leader's idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction. Therefore, employees may benefit from this study if the restaurant managers of the U.S. fast-food restaurant understand the possible modifications and implement these modifications needed to encourage employee satisfaction. These changes, implemented by U.S. fast-food restaurant managers, may bring about higher employee self-worth if he or she knows the organization is trying to promote employee satisfaction. The increase in knowledge about employee satisfaction may help organizational leaders to reduce the unemployment rate in the U.S. fast-food industry and provide a foundation for organizational policies and programs to support employee satisfaction. In this study, the researcher provided an analysis with various information displayed in tables that showed the mean values of how employees reacted to certain variables. In reviewing Table 3, it is seen that inspirational motivation has the highest mean value for the predictor variables. Looking back, Bass (1985) described transformational leaders' inspirational motivation traits as someone who is optimistic and visualizes a compelling vision. Transformational leadership, regarding inspirational motivation, has the value of encouraging individuals, valuing the employees, and becoming a mentor and teacher to empower others while being

able to communicate with employees effectively (Mokhtari, 2016). However, we can see in Table 6, whereas 1 unit of inspirational motivation goes up, then employee satisfaction goes down by .211. Not a huge effect, but why did the employees rate the restaurant managers highly in inspirational motivation, and their employee satisfaction goes down? These are great questions for the organization to consider. However, these variables related to employee satisfaction and, in turn, can help develop innovative and creative programs within the organization. These programs may meet the possibility of not only assisting leaders of the U.S. fast-food industry but leaders of other retail service industries as well. Accordingly, the results of the study aid restaurant managers in understanding the employee's opinions, which may result in implementing transformational leadership programs within communities as these leaders see fit. Additionally, these transformational leadership programs may encourage managers and followers to strive toward a vision in their communities, which may promote community infrastructures, such as, better transit, housing, schools, emergency services, and an increase in jobs.

Recommendations for Action

The results of this study indicated that a statistically significant relationship exists between transformational leadership's idealized attributes, idealized behavior, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and employee satisfaction. Based on these findings, I recommend U.S. fast-food restaurant managers should use metrics

such as the MLQ and JSS to measure transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in their U.S. fast-food restaurant. Restaurant managers may use this information to increase the five transformational leadership constructs developed by Bass and Avolio (1999), the nine employee satisfaction factors produced by Paul Spector in the JSS (1985).

Nguyen et al. (2017) determined that transformational leadership had both a positive and direct impact on managerial performance, along with helping leaders develop and grow an employee, which adds value to how the employee feels. Additionally, Bass and Avolio (1997) suggested that leadership in an organization should use a transformational leadership approach. Thus, I recommend that all organizational leadership use the transformational leadership style to affect employee satisfaction.

The publication of this study will add to the body of knowledge, and researchers could use the knowledge in future studies concerning transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. I intend to present the findings of the study to the organization of participation, professional affiliations, and peers throughout my career.

Recommendations for Further Research

Limitations were reviewed as weaknesses or conditions affecting the external validity of a study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This doctoral study had four limitations. The first limitation was not receiving the appropriate response rate to quantify the results. As this study fell short of the expected

sample size results of 43 and 83, calculated using G*Power 3.1, the researcher was able to use the central limit theorem and calculate the posthoc power of .61 to continue the study. To mitigate this from happening in other research, the researcher must assure that an organization has the number of employees needed to ensure an appropriate response rate; especially, factoring in the number of minors that may affect the response rate. The second limitation was results were limited to a U.S. fast-food restaurant in the Midwestern region of the United States, and results may not be transferable to another region.

These results, even with a smaller sample size, were still crucial to smaller U.S. fast-food restaurants in other areas of the world. The research is valuable to understanding the relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. However, having a higher sample size would increase the likelihood of transferability. The third limitation was information provided by employees may or may not be true and factual. This limitation can be evident in any research; however, it is essential to ensure the employee feels comfortable filling out the survey. Thus, these employees had the opportunity to fill out the survey online or by paper in a comfortable location at the organization or home. The fourth limitation was the length of the survey instrument. The electronic or paper survey combined to make up 30 minutes of total survey time, which could result in the participant feeling fatigued and rushing to get through the survey. Recommendations for future research were to survey only one of the restaurant managers at a time instead of two to shorten the

survey and lessen fatigue from the employees. Therefore, recommendations for future research included finding an organization with a higher number of employees who could participate in the survey to quantify the results. Additionally, only surveying one manager at a time and shortening the survey so that employees would not feel so overwhelmed may increase the likelihood of quality answers with quantity.

Reflections

First of all, thank you to Walden University, the staff, Dr. Susan K. Fan, my committee members, and all the peers that I ran across in this journey. My experience with Walden University's Doctoral program has been a fantastic experience that I would do over in another lifetime. Except for the next lifetime, I will ensure that I pick a topic of study and stick with it! I have spent the last three years switching my study from a qualitative to a quantitative study as well as switching from the automotive industry to the U.S. fast-food industry. As I look back, though, choosing the U.S. fast-food industry was well worth it as I have had not any experience in the U.S. fast-food industry. The lack of experience and knowledge of the U.S. fast-food industry has ensured that any biases I may have had in my work history did not apply to this industry. Most of my experience has been in hospitality. This experience is very similar to the fast-food as we both deal with customers daily; however, a U.S. fast-food restaurant sees more customers in a lunch rush than I would expect to see in a whole day in a hotel or hospitality environment.

This journey into studying the U.S. fast-food industry has made me realize that the employees of U.S. fast-food restaurants have such a high customer turnover that it is hard to have a relationship between the employee and customer. Meaning, the employee has little to no time to fix the situation with an upset or potentially upset customer. If employees were not dissatisfied in the organization, then will the employee care to try to ensure customers were happy with the service. Thus, the restaurant managers of a U.S. fast-food restaurant must develop a culture grounded in high employee satisfaction transformed by a vision of the organization.

Conclusion

Leadership scholars asserted transformational leadership plays a significant role in enhancing employee performance, trust, and commitment in organizations (Choi et al., 2016). Transformational leaders were individuals who encourage employees to set aside their plans for the organization's vision. The results of this study indicated that transformational leadership significantly increased employee satisfaction. However, each individual construct of transformational leadership did not significantly relate to employee satisfaction. The results contributed new information to the research on transformational leadership and employee satisfaction in the U.S. fast-food industry by identifying that the model of transformational leadership and employee satisfaction were significantly related.

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Appendix A: Permission to Use the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire by Mind

Garden

Remote online use of the Mind Garden instrument stated below is approved for the person on the title page of this document.

Your name:

Joshua Folmar

Email address:

[email redacted]

Company/institution:

Walden University

Mind Garden Sales Order or Invoice number for your license purchase:

[number redacted]

The name of the Mind Garden instrument you will be using:

MLQ English and MLQ Spanish

Appendix B: Permission to Use the Job Satisfaction Survey by Paul Spector

From: "Spector, Paul" [email redacted]
Subject: RE: Job Satisfaction Survey and Permission for Use (JSS)
Date: February 24, 2018 at 12:02:11 PM CST
To: Joshua Folmar [email redacted]

Dear Joshua:

You have my permission to use the JSS in your research. You can find copies of the scale in the original English and several other languages, as well as details about the scale's development and norms, in the scales section of my website. I allow free use for noncommercial research and teaching purposes in return for sharing of results. This includes student theses and dissertations, as well as other student research projects. Copies of the scale can be reproduced in a thesis or dissertation as long as the copyright notice is included, "Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved." Results can be shared by providing an e-copy of a published or unpublished research report (e.g., a dissertation). You also have permission to translate the JSS into another language under the same conditions in addition to sharing a copy of the translation with me. Be sure to include the copyright statement, as well as credit the person who did the translation with the year.

Thank you for your interest in the JSS, and good luck with your research.

Best,

Paul Spector, Distinguished Professor
Department of Psychology
[email and phone redacted]
<http://shell.cas.usf.edu/~spector>

From: Joshua Folmar [email redacted]
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2018 5:36 PM
To: [email redacted]
Subject: Job Satisfaction Survey and Permission for Use (JSS)

Dear Professor Spector

My name is Joshua Folmar and I am a student at Walden University currently conducting research for the completion of my Doctoral degree. I am conducting a research study on the "Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Employee Satisfaction in the Fast-Food Industry."

I wanted to reach out to obtain permission to use the job satisfaction survey in my research study.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joshua Folmar
Walden University
[telephone number redacted]