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The Leader-Follower Relationship and How it Relates to Employees' Perception of their Own Leadership

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THE LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIP AND HOW IT RELATES TO
EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF THEIR OWN LEADERSHIP

by

Pamela Payne

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Olivet Nazarene University

Olivet Nazarene University

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in the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Ethical Leadership

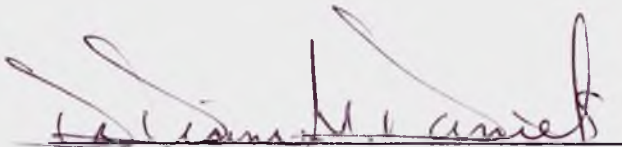
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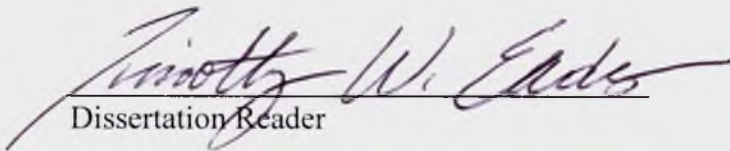
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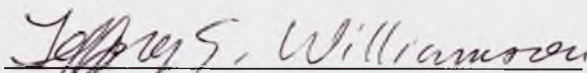
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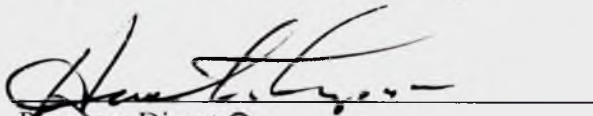
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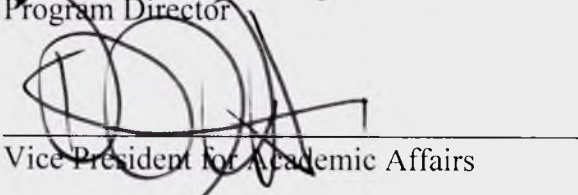
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DEDICATION

To my beautiful mother, Anna Louise Brantley.

A woman of grace.

ABSTRACT

Organizations are dealing with many challenges in this rapidly changing complex environment that impedes upon their abilities to sustain and maintain a competitive advantage. These organizations have come to understand that excellent leadership is imperative to their existence in an ever changing and unpredictable world. This study is to assist in providing strategies for institutions to address the leadership crisis by developing the next generations of leaders within the organization. This quantitative correlational study was designed to determine if the leader-follower relationship has an affect on the development of leadership qualities in the follower, as well exploring the follower's leadership perception among job classification groups. The study surveyed employees at a medium sized university in the Midwest. A pre-selected group of employees (followers) were invited to measure their relationship with their supervisor (leaders) through the Leader Member Exchange (LMX-7) assessment, as well as evaluate their own leadership perception through the Leadership Self-Identity Scale (LSI). The study showed a weak positive relationship between the two variables (LMX7 & LSI), but the correlation is not statistically significant. In addition, there was no significant difference between the LMX7 scores among the three job classification groups. This study has implications for follower leadership development research that can aid organizations in cultivating the next generation of leaders.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly changing and complex environment, leaders and followers within organizations are experiencing many challenges in order to gain and/or maintain a competitive edge (Toor & Ofori, 2009). As demands on organizations increase to do more with less, fiscal resources are dwindling, especially in the higher education sector. For instance, colleges and universities struggle with the challenges of reduced funds from states, decreased federal financial aid funding for students, and increased competition for students from for-profit institutions (Hagedorn, 2000; Tandberg, 2010). These institutions are under economic pressures to cut organizational costs, while maximizing human-resource potential to meet the increasing demands (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

In order to provide high quality service, leaders of higher education institutions must identify components that will enhance the quality of service provided. Adequate leadership is vital to move institutions of higher learning forward, organizations aspire to have an abundant resource of leaders and leadership to increase their commitment and performance to help transform the organization (Caldwell, Hayes, Bernal, & Karri, 2008; Hiller, 2005). Excellent leadership is essential for organizations to adapt, survive, and thrive in an increasingly competitive and changing world. Leadership is a two-way process in which the leader influences, and is influenced by, their followers (Stephenson, 1959). Leadership is not solely about the title a person holds, but is also

about the degree of influence they have on others and the effect of that influence on individuals, organizations, and communities. “The true measure of leadership is influence -nothing more, nothing less” (Maxwell, 1998, p. 11). Influence is developed by the quality of the relationship that a person has with another. If the follower perceives a positive relationship with their leader, that follower may begin to take ownership within their sphere of influence and go beyond their job classification role to achieve desired goals (Fisk & Friesen, 2012).

Leadership self-identity is another important factor in the development of future leaders. There is little research on how individuals in organizations perceive themselves as leaders, and what the effects of leadership self-perceptions might be on their willingness and ability to lead. Understanding self is an important component to understanding leadership. This knowledge of leadership requires more than an understanding of traits that individuals believe are connected with leaders (Hiller, 2005). Cross and Markus (1994) stated that without a well-developed self-identity, individuals may experience difficulty maintaining a high level of performance on a task over time, even if they have the required competencies. Hence, if a person does not see himself or herself as a leader they are less likely to take on a leadership role or choose leadership activities when needed. Understanding what develops a persons’ perception of leadership can assist organizations in cultivating the next generation of leaders by providing a framework to develop leadership competencies in individuals who do not view themselves as a leader.

Statement of Problem

Organizations have limited capacity to handle relentless changes and challenges before the impact becomes externally exposed (Johnson, 2011). For years, efforts to understand the leadership concept has been focused on people in leadership roles, without looking at how these challenges impact the relationship between the leader and follower (Ruiz, Ruiz, & Martinez, 2011). Leadership practices contribute to changes in the leader-follower relationship, which influence the follower's performance and leadership abilities. Organizations need leaders who can influence followers to perform beyond expected job duties (Pillai, Scandura, & Williams, 1999). Building leadership capacity in followers is essential for organizational growth and commitment. Human capital is our most valuable resource in the world of work and organizations have to retain, develop and sustain that resource in order to remain innovative and competitive (Lee, 2008).

The purpose of this study is to determine if leader-follower relationship has an affect on the development of leadership qualities in the follower, as well exploring the follower's leadership perception among job classification groups. The Leader Member Exchange 7 questionnaire and the Leadership Self-Identity Scale were administered to the followers in order to collect appropriate data regarding the correlation between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception.

Background

The effectiveness of an organization is strongly dependent on how human resources are being utilized within the organization. When human resources are utilized effectively, employees and supervisors experience positive outcomes (Rothmann et al., 2002). In the past, researchers have studied the various employee work related outcomes such as, organizational commitment, performance, job satisfaction, loyalty, and organization citizenship behavior. In previous studies, the quality of the leader-follower relationship predicted organizational outcomes, such as follower performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982; Green, Anderson, & Shivers, 1996). If organizations are going to find the key to their success, it behooves them to understand how to assist their leaders in having the best relationships with their followers in order to continue to develop future leaders. The Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) is the primary theory that looks at the relationship between the leader and follower (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Leader-follower relationships that operate at a high level tend to have an outcome associated with staff development, such as mentoring, empowerment, career progression, leadership abilities and increased delegation (Gerstner & Day). Researchers have noted that a positive correlation between high quality relationships among leaders and followers is associated with retention, performance and job satisfaction (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hagedorn, 2000; Stringer, 2006; Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Leadership perception has become an important topic of exploration by leadership researchers. Leadership development encompasses the increasing connection between requirements of the leader role and the perception of how the individual views

themselves as a leader (Day & Sin, 2011). Leader identity and personal identity is essential in developing leadership competence and effectiveness (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). There is a rising perspective that leadership development processes need to consider the role of leader identity. Due to limited human resources in the workplace, workers are finding themselves in leadership positions yet may not see themselves as leaders. In order to develop competence in their leadership abilities they first must become confident in their ability to complete the leadership task. As a person thinks of himself or herself as a leader, leadership behavior will become more prevalent in their action and they will seek opportunities to continue to develop their leadership abilities (Day & Sin). Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) suggested that there is a need for future research in the areas of followership and leadership development, especially focusing on how the follower and relationship domain relate to leadership outcomes in the follower.

The central question for this study is whether the quality of the LMX relationship from the follower's perspective has a direct correlation on how the followers perceive themselves as a leader. This question leads us to determine if there are differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification, gender, or length of time in the position. The reviewed literature has not made a clear correlation between the above variables as it pertains to leadership development. Therefore, the following research questions guided this study:

Research Questions

1. Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception?

2. Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff?

Description of Terms

The study utilized the following terms.

Follower. The term follower, as used in the study, is preferred to the terms subordinate and member as commonly used in numerous leadership theories and literature. Chaleff (2009) explicates that a follower is one who “shares a common purpose with the leader, believes in what the organization is trying to accomplish, wants both the leader and the organization to succeed, and works energetically to this end” (p. 15). A follower's accomplishments are also dependent upon effective communication with the leader (Bright, 2009).

Leader. A leader is responsible for motivating followers, has the interpersonal skills to build consensus, the verbal capacity to communicate enthusiastically, the organizational talent to coordinate efforts, and the desire to lead (Kelley, 1988). Defined as a supervisor as used in this study.

Leader Self-Identity. A leader self-identity scale developed by Hiller (2005) was used to measure self-rated leader identity. The goal of the measure is to understand and quantify the extent to which a leader identity is considered to be understood by the individual (Hiller).

Leadership Style. A conceptualized approach in which an individual leads by possessing particular traits, behaviors, or relational standpoint in order to provide direction, implement a plan and influence others (Northouse, 2013).

Leader-follower relationship. The relationship that exist between the leader (supervisor) and the follower (employee) in which the leader often initiates the relationship, develops the communication connection, sets the vision, and carries the burden for maintaining the relationship (Northouse, 2013). Northouse adds that the leader has the ethical responsibility to attend to the needs and concerns of the followers. In this relationship, the leader is not above or better than the follower, they are viewed as equals.

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX). Leader-member exchange theory studies the quality of relationships between supervisors (or leaders) and subordinates (or followers). The LMX theory addresses leadership as a process centered on the interactions between leaders and followers. The leader-member relationship is the main concept in the leadership process (Northouse, 2013). Leadership occurs when leaders and followers are able to develop effective relationships (partnerships) that result in incremental influence. The theory describes how effective leadership relationships develop among dyads (e.g., leaders and members/followers) to generate bases of leadership influence, as well as show the value of these leadership relationships for organizational outcomes (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Job Classifications & Definition of Employees.

Administrative Staff. Full-time and part-time senior and middle administrators who plan, direct, supervise, or coordinate research, instructional, student administration and services, and other educational activities and departments at postsecondary institutions. (National Center for O*NET Development, 2010).

Professional Staff. Full-time or part-time non-support and non-supervisory employees engaged in work that is predominantly intellectual and varied in character that

involves consistent exercise of discretion and judgment in its performance (Office of the Law Revision Counsel United States Code, 1947).

Support Staff. Full-time and part-time employees who perform routine clerical and administrative functions (National Center for O*NET Development, 2012).

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the implications of the leader-follower relationship as it relates to the influence on the follower's leadership perception. By researching the effect of the leader-follower relationship on the follower, the intent of the research is to show a correlation between leader-follower relationship and leadership self-identity of the follower. Expanding our knowledge in this area will provide organizations with a framework to build and develop the next generation of leaders at all job classification levels. Building leaders from within will assist in developing a firm foundation for growth, innovation, and organizational commitment in order to maintain a competitive advantage.

Process to Accomplish

Methodology

This quantitative research study utilized correlation methodology to test if there is a relationship with the leader-follower relationship and the leadership perception of the follower. The use of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation determined the extent to which the relationship exists. In addition, an ANOVA test of a comparison analysis among groups was performed to examine if there were differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification. The LMX7 questionnaire and the Leadership Self-Identity Scale were administered to the followers

in order to collect appropriated data. In addition to job classification, the researcher asked participants for gender and length of time in the position.

Participants

The sample was drawn from a population of 103 employees at a private university in the Midwest. This population consisted of benefit eligible employees with job classification of administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff.

Measures

The researcher used a quantitative approach in gathering data for the study by utilizing two instruments. The leader-follower relationship was measured by using Leader-Member Exchange (LMX7). The instrument was derived from the Leader-Member Exchange theory, which conceptualizes leadership as a process that is focused on a twofold relationship between the leader and the follower. The relationship goes back and forth and is not just a vertical exchange. During this exchange follower's and leader's personality and other personal characters are contributing factors that determine the quality of the relational exchange (Northouse, 2013). Studies have shown when the quality of the relationship is perceived as high, the follower performance goes beyond their position description and the leader provides more for the follower in term of influence, confidence opportunities to for growth or leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). In addition, Graen and Uhl-Bien studies showed the LMX theory contributing positive outcomes to organization by showing a correlation to performance, innovation, empowerment, and organizational commitment.

LMX7 is a seven-item questionnaire, which measures the quality of the relationship between leaders and followers as it pertains to respect, trust, and obligation

(Northouse, 2013). Items are assessed on a 5-point ordinal Likert scale (e.g. Rarely (1) to Very often (5) and Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)). LMX7 coefficient alpha reliabilities for supervisor were .85 and subordinate was .94 with .92 overall (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX7 was designed to be completed by both the leader and the follower. For the purposes of this study, the questionnaire was used to measure the follower's perception of the relationship. Participants were scored from very high to very low and could obtain a maximum score of 30. Scores between 25 and 30 indicate a stronger, high-quality leader-member exchange. In this instance, followers perceive themselves as being connected to the leader and their coworkers. Scores in the lower range show a lesser quality relationship in which the follower may perceive himself or herself as being disconnected from their leader and the rest of the team (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The second instrument measured the participant's perception as a leader. The Leadership Self-Identity Scale measures the self-identity one holds in the leadership area by asking directly about leadership self-views (Hiller, 2005). The Leadership Self-Identity was derived from the theoretical construct of the leadership self-schema developed by Engle and Lord (1997). The Leadership Self-Schemas was designed to measure "*the self-rated importance of traits associated with leadership, but not leadership itself*" (Hiller, p. 8). Hiller enhanced the concept by developing a component that directly assessed the extent to which the person sees himself or herself as a leader called the Leadership Self-Identity Scale.

The Leadership Self-Identity scale is theorized and assessed along three related sub-dimensions: self-descriptiveness, certainty, and personal importance of that self-

identity. The premise of the scale is to understand and quantify the extent to which an individual leadership identity is considered descriptive of, and important to them. In the first section, participants rate themselves on a five-point ordinal Likert scale (1=not at all descriptive to 5=extremely descriptive). The following four statements provide insight in to how they view themselves: (a) I am a leader, (b) I see myself as a leader, (c) If I had to describe myself to others I would include the word leader, and (d) I prefer being seen by others as a leader. The Leadership Self-Identity score is the sum total of the mean of the descriptiveness, certainty, and importance scores for each person (Hiller, 2005). The Leadership Self-Identity Scale reliability within the subscale areas of Descriptiveness, Certainty, and Importance dimensions of Leadership Self-Identity had reliability values (coefficient alpha) of .92, .88, and .83 respectively. The overall reliability of the instrument was .90 (Day & Sin, 2011).

Questionnaires for the employees were sent via e-mail within the institution. Enclosed in the email to the employee was a link to Survey Monkey to administer the LMX7 and the Leadership Self-Identity Scale (LSI) questionnaires in a confidential manner. The Survey Monkey link also housed the informed consent letter. In addition, a cover letter was placed within the email explaining the study and its importance as well as the voluntary nature of participation and the confidentiality procedures. The cover letter also explained the procedure in which the questionnaires' information would be collected and provided contact information of the researcher in case of questions.

Participants were not required to identify themselves on any part of the questionnaires but were asked to provide job classification such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff, as well as, gender and length of time in the position.

The data collected address the research questions in the following manner.

1. Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception? was answered by reviewing the scores from the Leader-Member Exchange of each participant and comparing it to that individual's score from the Leadership Self-Identity. The scores were analyzed to determine if there were any statistical correlations. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the extent of the relationship. 2. Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff? was answered by the information collected from the participants. This information was compared to the follower's LMX7 scores using an ANOVA test to determine possible correlations between variables.

Ethics

An informed consent letter was sent to all participants. In addition, the questionnaire responses were kept confidential and locked in a secure off-site location. Only aggregate data was shared with participants and stakeholders if requested.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine if there is a correlation between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception. In addition, the study investigated whether there were differences in the job classification groups (administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff) and their perception of their leader-follower relationship. The study was implemented through a quantitative correlation study that provided questionnaires to employees in order to assess their perception of the leader-follower relationship and leadership self-identity. The

information regarding the leader-follower relationship, as reported by the follower, was collected through the LMX7 questionnaire. In addition, the follower's leadership perception was assessed with the LSI Scale. The researcher hopes this study will lead to a deeper, research based understanding of the leader-follower relationship and its impact on leader perception. With such a foundation, organizations can better develop a strategy for leadership development at all job classification levels.

The literature review for this study includes a brief overview of leadership development in higher education institutions. Literature related to the leader-follower relationship, the leadership self-identity of the follower and how these concepts are used as a strategy to create leadership development across job classification will be reviewed in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II

The literature review of this study includes a brief synopsis of some of the challenges that organizations are currently facing. Literature related to leadership, the relationship between supervisor and employee, and its impact on the employee's perception of his or her own leadership identity is reviewed as well.

Overview of Current Organizational Challenges

The institutional challenges that face organizations are multifaceted. The increase in global economic pressure, hiring and retaining qualified employees, environmental issues, remaining current with technological advances, developing diverse and inclusive workplaces, producing effective work teams, and dealing with difficult people are all major leadership challenges (Penney, 2011). Moreover, developing an effective leadership style, acquiring adequate data, dealing with the media, and managing political processes are concerns of top organizational leaders across the nation (Penney, Leigh, & Norassakkunkt, 2002). Succession planning is considered a global issue in organizations worldwide (Pook, 2011). Organizational effectiveness and staffing/recruitment of a skilled work force are current issues that these organizations face (Pook, 2011). Pook reported that organizational effectiveness, leadership development, and management of changes were viewed as anticipated future challenges for organizations. The author reported strategic workforce management, effective recruiting, employer branding, and retention management as key components to the changes in demography and the labor market.

Organizational Challenges in Higher Education

Leaders in institutions for higher education face additional challenges. These challenges include the increase in enrollment of high school graduates and returning adult students that are academically under-prepared, reduced federal and state funding, low completion rates, and the expectation to decrease the cost of education, while maintaining and producing quality education. All of these challenges contribute to the complexities of higher education in America (Baum, Kurose, & McPherson, 2013).

Leaders in institutions for higher education are challenged to become innovative, adaptive, and flexible in the midst of these complexities, while maintaining fiscal efficiency, hiring and retaining quality employees and developing future leaders (Baum, Kurose, & McPherson, 2013). Mayfield and Mayfield (2007a) suggested that organizational innovation leads to growth in the global economy. The authors stated that organizational outcomes will increase with the balance of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators of creativity, which inspires employee innovation (Amabile, 1997; Amabile et al., 2002). The elements of extrinsic motivators include: organizational innovation, available resources, and management practices (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007b). The perspective of management practices being an influence on organizational innovation is consistent with the findings of other researchers (Glor, 1998; Nonaka, 1990; von Krogh, 1998). This information is significant in leadership training and development. In addition, Amabile's Component Theory of Creativity acknowledges that skills, motivation, and abilities are three elements needed to develop creative mental models in employees that can be influenced by leader behaviors (Amabile, 1998).

Matzler and Abfalter (2013) suggested that managers in higher education institutions are the impetus of innovation and risk-taking behaviors for employees within the institutions. “A university’s top management plays a decisive role for its performance” (Matzler & Abfalter, p. 149). If leaders exemplify these behaviors, employees are more likely to adopt the behaviors in the organization. The attitudes, values, approach, and thought patterns of the management determine the sustainability of the organization’s success (Matzler & Abfalter). The challenge for many leaders in higher education is the maintenance of a connection with employees at all levels. This can demonstrate an interest in people, while creating an environment of trust, innovation, and inspiration and while leading the organization by making necessary changes to end the business as usual mentality (Hunter, 1998). Matzler & Abfalter also state that people are the essential components for achieving extraordinary performances in higher education institutions.

Retaining Qualified Employees

Penney, Leigh and Norassakkunkt (2002) argued that hiring and retaining exceptional staff is the most important leadership challenge for any organization and is the essential component for achieving exemplary institutional performance. A study facilitated by Penney (2011) supported the previous statement that retaining qualified employees is the biggest challenge of top leaders in the country. Bunchapattanasakda, Wiriyakosol, and Ya-anan (2012) concurred that organizations are struggling with turnover and retention of talented employees. Furthermore, retention is a challenge within higher education institutions (Matzler & Abfalter, 2013). Grant (1996) notes that employees who are talented and knowledgeable are not retained if their employers do not

utilize their skills in the workplace. Therefore, leaders need to identify strategies to retain these employees.

The aforementioned researchers indicated that certain strategies could lead to increased retention rates. These strategies can include providing compensation that is compatible with the job market, ensuring employee satisfaction, creating succession plans, and focusing on new-hire onboarding processes (Bunchapattanasakda et al., 2012). Penney's (2011) research findings suggested that leadership qualities should be developed in everyone and that leadership development is enhanced when a person is able to lead from his or her position. The study revealed that it is essential for leaders to discover and develop talent within the organization, engage with them, and retain them by finding opportunities for them to lead (Penney). Brundage and Koziel (2010) noted that leaders who cultivate an organizational culture where employees are the top priorities could increase employee retention rates. These authors suggested that the success of retention relies strongly on cohesive staffing systems that are based on a common foundation and apply to all employees of the organization equally.

The findings of other studies suggested that job satisfaction and leadership are the most defining factors that contribute to high retention in organizations (Angle & Perry, 1981; Applebaum et al., 2003; Gould, 1995; Lok & Crawford, 1999). Organizations should focus on these areas when developing strategies to increase organizational commitment (Applebaum et al.). Although employees with high organizational commitment are less likely to leave the organization, Applebaum et al. believed that there might be counter effects to employee retention. Employees with continued high organizational commitments may be unmotivated to complete more than the bare

minimum amount of work required to maintain their jobs (Sethi, Barrier, & King, 1999). Furthermore, those who maintained their positions due to job scarcity reported increased levels of absenteeism and poor work performances (Appelbaum, Bethune, & Tannenbaum, 1999) Eventually, these individuals feel unchallenged and become disengaged, thus leading to a lack of commitment and retention (Martin & Schmidt, 2010). The development of a diverse pool of future leaders is difficult to obtain without the retention of talented employees. The creation of emerging leaders program within an organization is essential for maintaining a competitive economic advantage (Penney et al., 2002).

Leadership Development for Future Leaders

Organizations have the ability to thrive and survive through turbulent economic times by turning employees into leaders (Martin & Schmidt, 2010). Most organizations have programs that are meant to develop the next generation of leaders from within the institution. However, these programs have not provided the results that the organization sought (Martin & Schmidt). A study conducted by Martin and Schmidt (2010) discovered that approximately 40% of employees identified as future leaders were unsuccessful in receiving promotions. Their findings suggested that senior managers tended to operate from some misconceptions regarding how to develop their future leaders. Martin and Schmidt identified these misconceptions as the following: 1. high-performance employees are highly engaged, 2. current high-performance leads to success in future roles, 3. leadership development of high-performance employees would be optimized by line managers line managers, 4. top managers are better suited presenting a conservative approach in allowing high-performance employees to develop leadership skill, 5. high-

performance employees would maintain maximum performance during the organization's tumultuous economic crisis without receiving recognition or financial compensation, and

6. connecting high-performance employees to the organizations' strategies would prove irrelevant to their continued high-performance. Martin and Schmidt found that unrewarded and unchallenged high-performance employees decreased in engagement and exhibited low performance over time. Confidence in their managers' and the organizations' strategic abilities is one of the most important factors for the engagement of high performers (Martin & Schmidt).

Fisk and Friesen (2012) agreed with the findings of Martin and Schmidt (2010), regarding the significance of the relationship between the employees and their supervisors. These authors found that an employee who has a positive relationship with his or her supervisor is more inclined to be engaged and take ownership within their position or role within the organization (Fisk & Friesen). This can lead the employee to work beyond his or her work position to achieve desired results. Executive leaders should promote these entrepreneurial behaviors to stimulate innovations (Souder, 1981).

Leadership is an important tool in managing human resources in every organization (Bunchapattanasakda et al., 2012). Many leadership theories suggest that the behavior of individuals can impact the behavior of others (Northouse, 2013; Spendlove, 2007). Burns (1978) offered a leadership model that presented the behavior of leaders as either transactional or transformational. In transactional leadership, the relationship between the leaders and followers is based on the exchange of requests and services, which can create independent objectives (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership is a process that transforms and motivates the followers through emotions, values, ethics,

standards, and long-term goals; this can allow employers to achieve goals beyond the scope of organizational expectations (Northouse, 2013). Due to its emphasis on intrinsic motivation and follower development (Northouse, 2013), some researchers have viewed transformational leadership as a more effective leadership style in educational organizations (Muijs et al., 2006; Neumann & Neumann, 1999).

Boerner, Eisenbeiss, and Griesser (2007) studied how transformational leadership supports different followers' behaviors that lead to follower performance and follower innovations by examining the intervening effects of two follower behaviors: organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and controversial discussion of task related issues. The researchers' study confirmed that transformational leaders improve follower performance when OCB and debate is stimulated in the followers, which, in turn, increases the followers' innovations. Boener et al. provided some clarity on how transformational leadership influences an organization's success.

Basu (1991) suggested that relationship-oriented leaders tend to promote innovative behaviors in employees. The author added that the LMX is associated with creating an innovative environment as well as encouraging innovation in employees. Krause (2004) supported the findings of the previous researcher as well as offered additional variables that may contribute to the innovations in followers. Krause applied the Lazarus theory (a cognitive stress-coping theory) to the context of innovation to develop a model that would explain how leadership affects cognitive processes of perceived work settings, innovative behaviors (generation and testing of ideas and implementation), and innovation-blocking behaviors (intrapsychic coping and flight). According to Krause, intrapsychic coping is a behavior defense mechanism for handling

situations associated with a change, whereas flight is a behavior used to escape a perceive challenging situation as opposed to improve the situation by generating and testing ideas. The researcher examined leadership-related conditions of innovation at the individual level, analyzing specific cognitive determinants of innovation-related behaviors and investigating the degree to which cognitive processes and innovation behaviors are affected by influence-based leadership (Krause).

Krause (2004) investigated whether situational perceptions and innovation-related behaviors of middle managers are predictable by looking at influence-based leadership. The researcher found that the correlations between leadership's components of influence and implementation are all significant and positive (Krause). These results are complemented by the findings that each component of influence-based leadership has a significant negative correlation with innovation-blocking behaviors such as intrapsychic coping and flight (Krause). The author's study marks the first time that components of influence-based leadership were measured as predictors of the situational perceptions and innovation-related behaviors of middle managers (Krause).

Moreover, Krause's (2004) study indicated that identifying leadership (i.e. transformational leadership) in the context of innovation might be a less important factor of influence in leadership, whereas granting freedom and autonomy may prove to be a more important factor. The author showed that innovation depends not only on delegating the middle manager degrees of freedom but also on enabling them to take part in the decision-making processes as well as imparting expertise (Krause). Other researchers suggested that employees who have a high-quality relationship or high LMX score are

more likely to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviors that foster conditions in innovative environments (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen & Scandura, 1987).

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Since its inception in the 70s, the leader-member exchange theory has gone through several evolutions (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Initially, LMX began as yet another leadership style (Vertical Dyad Linkage), which eventually transformed into a formula for producing more effective leadership theories to cultivate and maintain leadership relationships (Graen & Uhl-Bien).

Leader-member exchange is a classification of leadership approach that addresses three areas of leadership: leader, follower, and the leader-follower relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). According to Graen and Uhl-Bien, researchers have found it difficult to define leadership and describe how it can be obtained in order to achieve desired outcomes. Graen and Uhl-Bien believed that this lack of clarity and definition is because leadership development has been traditionally studied from the taxonomy of traits, behaviors, and styles of the leaders; this is in contrast to studying how those characteristics impact the leadership operations from the perspective of both the followers and leaders. In addition, there have been many studies that focus on the leader's perspective but very few conducted from the perspective of the follower and the leader-follower relationship (Northouse, 2013).

The leader-member exchange leadership theory research has been associated with the follower's turnover intention (Graen, Liden, & Hoel, 1982; Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2009; and Ruiz et al., 2011), assimilation process (Graen, Orris, & Johnson, 1973), ethical decision making, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and

organizational citizenship (Harris et al.; Ruiz et al., 2011), innovation and creativity (Basu, 1991; Scott, 1993; Tierney; 1992), ability to sustain a negative work environment, positivity, and perception of conflict in the work place (Avey, Bruce, & Luthans, 2011; Varon & Lee, 2008; Xin & Pelled, 2003).

As shown previously, many researchers have linked the leader-member exchange with specific follower work related outcomes, yet there are researchers who have found contradictory evidences of the connection between the leader-member exchange and the follower's productivity (Vecchio & Gobdel, 1984) and turnover intentions (Vecchio, 1985). Discrepancies in empirical research suggest that there may be variables that account for the inconsistencies among the findings in LMX leader research (Scandura, 1999). Scandura asserted there are plethora of research studies that continue to document how differences in the leader-follower relationship impact it and the job-related outcomes of the follower, despite the limited empirical studies that suggested otherwise.

Leader-Member Exchange and Job Related Outcomes on Followers

A study by Graen et al. (1973) investigated the role assimilation processes at several points in time during the first few months of a new employee's tenure. Graen et al. reviewed role-taking variables such as role preferences, time and energy allocation, conflict, and ambiguity of 62 participants who were nonacademic employees from several administrative departments of a large university. The researchers studied traditional success measures such as job performance ratings, satisfaction, and turnover (Graen et al.).

The results from the study provided preliminary data relating the assimilation process and role orientation (the extent to which the new employee felt his or her job was

relevant to his or her career) as an important variable in understanding the assimilation process (Graen et al., 1973). In addition, the researchers concurred that effective leadership occurred when the relationship between the leader and the follower was strong and mature (Graen et al.).

Other research has shown that the quality of the leader-follower relationship can influence the ethics and job performance of the follower. Ruiz et al. (2011) investigated the implications of the ethical leader's influences on followers as it relates to ethics and job performance. The researchers studied how the moral dimension of leaders impacts the leader-follower relationship. The authors stated that the "leader-follower" relationship is good when the individuals (i.e., followers) perceive moral or ethical leadership in top managerial levels (Ruiz et al., 2011).

The authors addressed three hypotheses about the influence in the leader-follower relationship and performance. The first hypothesis reviewed the effect of the top manager's ethical leadership on the follower's job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and organizational citizenship. The second hypothesis studied the same elements between the supervisor's ethical leadership and the followers. Finally, the research looked at the trickle-down effect on ethics from the top to the bottom (Ruiz, et al., 2011).

The researchers performed a quantitative study by gathering data through a survey instrument to test the relationship of the previously described hypotheses. The researchers surveyed 525 individuals that were permanent employees of the organizations and had tenure of one year or more at the participating organizations.

The findings of the study suggested that when ethical leadership trickled down from the top managers to the immediate supervisors, followers improved in their job responses and ethical performances (Ruiz, et al., 2011). In addition, the study demonstrated that ethical leadership in top management and in the immediate supervisor had a positive impact on the follower's job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and organizational citizenship. In addition, the researchers found that ethical leadership from top management had a greater influence on a follower's positive job response than his or her immediate supervisors (Ruiz, et al.). Furthermore, findings showed that organizations with ethical leaders produced followers with great job response, as well as a propensity to perform at a higher level (Ruiz, et al.).

Previous studies have assessed leadership within organizations through multiple domains: the leader (charisma), the follower (follower's innovative role expectations; follower's attitude toward innovation), and the dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower (Basu, 1991; Scott, 1993; Tierney, 1992). The results of these studies imply that followers of charismatic leaders have demonstrated high levels of innovation, as well as stronger leader-follower relationships (Basu; Scott; Tierney).

Investigating leadership from the three domains (leader, follower, and leader-follower relationship) may show different ways to enhance the effectiveness of leadership within situations (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Examining leadership from these perspectives is essential in influencing the followers to produce a desired outcome (Graen & Uhl-Bien). Studies exploring these factors could provide new information to enhance leadership development training programs (Graen & Uhl-Bien).

Since 2002, 130 research projects indicated a continued interest in exploring the leader-member exchange (Anand, Hu, Liden, & Vidyarathi, 2011). Studies have been completed on the individual and group levels, as well as by international organizations. For example, Harris et al., (2009) researched how the LMX impacted empowerment in job outcomes (job satisfaction, turnover, job performance, innovation and organizational citizenship behaviors). They found that employees who did not feel empowered valued the quality of the leader-member exchange the most. Through this study, LMX research found that leaders who can produce quality relationships with their employees will gain many benefits (Northouse, 2013). Northouse (2013) stated that leaders and followers who have good relationships have better attitudes and accomplish more, which helps the organization advance and prosper. Varon and Lee (2008) support Northouse's conclusion.

Varon and Lee (2008) explored the extent to which the quality of LMX affected employees' responses to the negative situations of organizational injustice in the workplace. The researchers used an experimental design that contained two negative situations of organizational injustice scenarios. The subordinate participants varied from high to low in the LMX scores regarding the quality of their relationship with their supervisor. Varon and Lee suggested that followers are more likely to persist in a negative work situation if there is a high-quality LMX relationship. Furthermore, these employees are less likely to leave or reduce their job performance in a negative work environment. The researchers found that the employees are more likely to be loyal and supportive to their leaders than their peers who exhibit low-quality LMX. The research findings indicate the potential negative correlation between the LMX quality and the

strategic response choice of employees lowering their work performance when faced with a negative work environment (Varon & Lee, 2008).

Brown & Leigh (1996) examined employee perceptions of the organizational environment created by leaders and how they are related to job involvement, effort, and performance. Brown and Leigh created an operational definition of a psychological climate that was based on how employees perceive characteristics of the organizational environment and interpret them in relation to their own well-being. The researchers hypothesized that employee perceptions of the organization as a psychologically safe and meaningful work environment are positively related to job involvement, effort, and performance (Brown and Leigh). Their findings showed crucial connections between the psychological climate and job involvement to work performance. The researchers' results indicate that an organizational environment perceived by the follower to be psychologically safe and meaningful correlates directly to follower's job involvement, effort, and work performance.

Additional studies have linked the leader-follower relationship to positivity, performance, and perception of conflict in the follower.

Bono and Ilies (2006) examined the effects of leaders' positive emotional expressions on the followers' moods and perceptions by investigating the role of positive emotional expressions in charismatic leadership. The researchers found a link to charisma in a natural work setting was associated with the leaders' positive emotional expressions. In addition, positive correlation between leader emotions and follower moods was found (Bono & Ilies). The researchers' outcomes suggest that mood contagion may be one of the psychological mechanisms by which charismatic leaders influence their followers.

Avey, Bruce, and Luthans (2011) completed a quantitative study that investigated how positive organizational behavior influenced leaders, followers, and their effectiveness. The authors explored the role of leaders' positive characteristics on their followers' positivity and performances. The leader and follower positivity was measured by a term called *psychological capital* that is comprised of four components, including efficacy or confidence, hope, optimism, and resiliency.

The researchers administered four experimental conditions. These experiments analyzed the level of complexity associated with the problem that is to be solved by the followers and the impact that complexity may have on the positivity of the followers. Avey et al. (2011) expected that problems that are more complex would negatively influence the follower's positive psychological capital and his or her ability to solve problems and perform.

The researchers found that the study results supported all four hypotheses. Concluding that there was a positive correlation between the leaders' positivity and the followers' positivity and performance as well as a negative correlation between problem complexity and follower positivity (Avey et al., 2011). These results showed the strong affect that leaders have on the levels of followers' positivity. Avey et al. suggested that the followers' positive psychological capital can be influenced by perceptions of their leaders' positive behaviors. Avey et al. (2011) offered practical implications regarding effective leadership development and performance management for followers in an increasing complex and problem-ridden society.

Norman, Avolio, and Luthans (2010) obtained similar results by examining how a leader's positivity and transparency impacted followers' perceived trust and the

effectiveness of the leader. Norman et al.'s empirical study found that the level of transparency exhibited by the leader and the leader's level of positive psychological capacity had a positive impact on the participants' rated trusts and perceive effectiveness of their leaders. Moreover, Norman et al. showed that the leaders that exhibited high positive psychological capacity and transparency were rated as more effective leaders.

Xin and Pelled (2003) completed a quantitative study that investigated a set of hypotheses regarding the structure of supervisor-subordinate conflict and the effects of that conflict on the subordinate's perception of the leader's behavior. The subordinate's perceptions of the leader's behavior had not been an outcome variable in research that examined how conflict impacted the supervisor-subordinate relationship prior to this study (Xin & Pelled). More extensively, the researchers looked at the degree to which subordinates perceive supervisors as providing leadership behaviors.

The population studied included 72 supervisor-subordinate dyads at the upper management levels of a variety of high-technology companies (Xin & Pelled, 2003). The supervisors were participants in a management development program at a major university. The researchers administered a questionnaire to both the supervisor and subordinate. The supervisor's questionnaire measured conflict and the subordinate's questionnaire measured perceived leadership behavior (Xin & Pelled).

The researchers found that the study results supported all four hypotheses. Xin and Pelled (2003) concluded that two kinds of conflict arose in the supervisor-subordinate relationship: pure emotional conflict and mixed conflict, which is a combination of task and emotional conflict. Both kinds of vertical conflict had a negative association with perception of the supervisor's leadership behavior, but emotional

conflict had a significantly more negative association than mixed conflict. Furthermore, the researchers' findings suggested that conflict structure may differ according to the relative hierarchical positions of those involved in the conflict (Xin & Pelled). The researchers' findings also state that pure emotional conflict in supervisor-subordinate dyads may impair evaluations of the supervisors. When subordinates engaged in such conflict they believed that their supervisors lacked the ability to provide emotional support and to encourage creativity (Xin & Pelled). Furthermore, emotional conflicts cause damage to the leader-follower relationship, which influences the follower's organizational functioning (Xin & Pelled). Other researchers' findings align with Xin & Pelled's study results connecting the leader-follower relationship to the followers organizational functioning.

Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, & Kramer (2004) conducted a study that investigated the leader's behavior as it relates to perceived leader support and how this impacts the follower's creativity in the work environment. Two qualitative study analyses were administered using daily diary narratives written by subordinates (Amabile et al., 2004). The researchers first examined certain leader behaviors that predicted leader support, which showed both effective and ineffective forms of leader behaviors. In the second qualitative analysis Amabile et al. (2004) looked at the behavior of two team leaders to determine subordinates' reactions and creativity to the leaders' behaviors. The finding suggested that through certain behaviors, a leader who has daily interaction with subordinates may influence the subordinates' daily perceptions, feelings, and performances, ultimately impacting a follower's overall creativity.

De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) presented similar results. The researchers studied what specific leader behaviors are likely to enhance employee innovation behaviors, which include idea generation and application. The authors aimed to contribute to the literature regarding individual innovation by providing an inventory of leader behaviors that may influence followers' innovation behaviors (De Jong & Den Hartog).

De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) found that leaders are able to influence followers' innovative behaviors through common interactions and actions designed to enhance idea generation and application, as well as the behaviors related to idea generation and application behavior. The researchers identified 13 leadership behaviors that contributed to the researchers' findings (De Jong & Den Hartog). The leadership behaviors that stimulated innovation among followers included “*innovative role-modeling, intellectual stimulation, stimulating knowledge diffusion, providing vision, consulting, delegating, support for innovation, organizing feedback, recognition, rewards, providing resources, monitoring, and task assignment*” (De Jong & Den Hartog, pp. 49).

Other researchers found the dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower essential components for follower's retention and satisfaction with their supervisor. An empirical study conducted by Vecchio and Gobdel (1984) tested the vertical dyadic relationship between 45 supervisor-subordinate dyads. The researchers confirmed previous findings that in-group status was linked to increased satisfaction with the supervisor and reduced propensity to quit (Vecchio & Gobdel). Vecchio and Gobdel's findings did not provide conclusive evidence that the follower's productivity was associated with the dyadic relationship between the leader and follower.

LMX development has evolved as an approach to social exchanges to the Leadership Making model (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991a; Uhl-Bien & Graen 1992, 1993a). This approach involves increasing high-quality relationships within organizations and providing processes to achieve this through dyadic partnerships between the leader and followers. The followers improve their performances significantly when they accept the invitation by the leader to develop a high-quality relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Followers who choose to develop high-quality LMX relationships receive benefits. These include preferential treatment, increased performance-related feedback, increased job-related communication, and more access to supervisors (Harris et al. 2009).

Burris, Rodgers, Mannix, Hendron, & Oldroyd's (2009) investigation of the influence of the leader on the follower's performance suggests additional benefits to a high-quality leader-follower relationship. The researchers' findings showed consistently that personal relationships between leaders and followers can affect decision-making, and supported the ideas that the leaders tend to favor their inner circle members and that favoritism plays a role in how the inner-circle membership affected followers' influences (Burris et al.). Furthermore, Burris et al.'s results suggested that followers' willingness to contribute their ideas were based on their relationships with the leader. The researchers noted that the followers that felt more psychologically safe in contributing their insights were more willing to share their ideas with their leaders and other members of the organization. Graen and Uhl-Bien (1991a) suggested that there should be more examination of how the relationship between the leader and his or her followers affects leadership outcomes.

Leadership Self-Identity

There is little research that investigates an individual's leadership self-identity. Hiller (2005) suggested it is difficult to determine the true origin of a person's leadership self-identity. According to Hiller, leadership self-identity is influenced by experiences, personality, motivation to lead, self-monitoring, and self-assessments of leadership qualities. The LSI scale was designed to understand and quantify the extent to which leader identity is understood by the individual.

The LSI scale was derived from the theoretical construct of the leadership self-schema, developed by Engle and Lord (1997). The leadership self-schema was designed to measure "the self-rated importance of traits associated with leadership, but not leadership itself" (Hiller, 2005, p. 8). Hiller enhanced the concept by developing a component to assess the extent to which a person sees himself or herself as a leader. This component is called the LSI Scale.

A person's schema is the impetus of self-discovery in his or her own social behavior (Markus, 1977). Past experiences that required leadership are likely to lead to greater leadership self-identity (Hiller, 2005). For instance, if the individual performs a task that is perceived as difficult and complex for a long duration, then the individual has a stronger view of himself or herself as a leader (Hiller).

Personality and core self-evaluation are factors in the development of an individual's leadership self-identity. Personality traits such as self-esteem, efficacy, locus of control, and neuroticism are core factors in an individual's leadership self-identity. These factors contribute to how individuals evaluate themselves, in terms of confidence, worth, and the ability to help themselves (Hiller, 2005). A study by Engle and Lord

(1997) found that those with a high core self-evaluation are more likely to view themselves as leaders.

Motivation to lead is a vital component of a person's leadership self-identity (Hiller, 2005). The element of motivation encompasses several constructs. These include effective identity (likeliness of a person to lead others), non-calculative (the person's calculative beliefs about the costs of taking on leadership), and social-normative (leadership due to a sense of duty or responsibility) (Hiller). Regardless of cognitive ability, individualism/collectivism, personality traits, and the motivation to lead have a great impact on how a person identifies himself or herself as a leader (Chan & Drasgow, 2001).

The cognitive orientation of a person is essential in the self-identity of their leadership perception (van Quaquebeke, van Knippenberg, & Brodbeck, 2011). Pattern matching is a strategy that individuals can use to identify leadership behaviors and traits. They can match those behaviors and traits to what they believe a leader should be (Hiller, 2005). Engle and Lord (1997) defined pattern matching as leadership self-schema. Hiller argued that pattern matching should be directly linked to the measurement of leadership self-identity. As an individual begins to match patterns of leadership—in terms of matching behaviors and traits with the behaviors and traits that they believe a leader should possess—the individual may begin to see themselves as having these leadership traits. This means that the individual can identify himself or herself as a leader. Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999) stated that if subordinates view themselves within the same vein as a positive viewed supervisor, the subordinates will tend to view themselves with a more positive perspective. The authors further concurred that self-identity that is

developed by leaders can have significant implications on the followers behavior and leadership perceptions. The relationship between the leader and the follower serves as a connection of how the follower interprets their leadership attributes within themselves (Lord et al.).

Conclusion

In conclusion, organizations are confronted with complex challenges such as hiring and retaining qualified employees, maintaining a globally inclusive workplace, relentless economic constraints, and remaining technologically relevant while being environmentally conscious. Leaders in these organizations, especially higher education organizations face additional challenges, which include reduced federal and state funding, decreasing enrollment, and an increasing academically underprepared student body. The literature review identifies retaining qualified employees as the prominent concern for top leaders in organizations (Penney, 2011). Leaders indicated that creating session plans to develop the next generation of leaders as a crucial strategy to retain talented employees (Bunchapattanasakda et al.). The literature review supports that organizations have the ability to succeed and thrive during difficult fiscal trials by investing in developing the next generation of leaders (Martin & Schmidt, 2010).

Furthermore, the literature focused on how the leader-follower relationship and the leadership self-identity of the follower can be used to create leadership development. The quality of the leader-follower relationship can help foster the elements of leadership in all employees and encourage the development of more innovative techniques to solve challenges within organizations.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate if leader-follower relationship has a correlation on the development of leadership qualities in the follower, as well exploring the follower's leadership perception among job classification groups. Chapter III will discuss the methodology of a quantitative correlational study that provided questionnaires to employees in order to assess their perception of the leader-follower relationship and leadership self-identity. The leader-follower relationship, as reported by the follower, was collected through the Leader-Member Exchange LMX7 questionnaire and the follower's leadership perception was assessed with the LSI Scale.

These questionnaires were used to answer the following research questions:

1. Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception?
2. Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff?

Furthermore, Chapter III will provide extensive chronicles regarding the methodology utilized, as well as the population of the participants, process to accomplish, how the data was collected and measured. Finally, this chapter will discuss any limitations of the study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter will discuss the methodology used in the study, which included an extensive explanation of the population of the participants, description of survey instruments, the procedures utilized to answer each research question, data collection, and measurements, as well as a discussion of limitations of conducting the study.

In the current economy, organizations are struggling to handle relentless changes and challenges in order to lead through rough waters (Johnson, 2011). These stressors encompass increasing global economic pressure, hiring and retaining qualified employees, managing environmental issues, developing diverse and inclusive workplaces, and producing effective work teams, are all major leadership concerns (Penney, 2011). With the increase in retirements, succession planning is considered a worldwide issue (Pook, 2011).

Leaders within higher education institutions are facing similar complexities, while trying to maintain fiscal efficiency, hire and retain quality employees, and developing future leaders (Baum et al., 2013). Hiring and retaining exceptional staff is the most vital leadership challenge for any organization. In addition, the development of a diverse pool of future leaders within an organization is crucial for maintaining a competitive economic advantage (Penney et al., 2002).

Organizations need leaders who can influence followers to perform beyond expected job duties (Pillai et al., 1999). Building leadership capacity in followers is

essential for organizational growth and commitment. Investment in the followers within an organization produces organizational commitment, ownership, innovation, and economic stability (Lee, 2008).

Several leadership theories propose that the behavior of individuals can impact the behavior of others (Northouse, 2013; Spendlove, 2007). Furthermore, relationship-oriented leaders tend to promote innovative behaviors in employees (Basu, 1991).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the implications of the leader-follower relationship as it relates to the follower's leadership perception. By researching the effect of the leader-follower relationship on the follower, the intent of the research is to examine whether there is a correlation between leader-follower relationship and leadership self-identity of the follower, as well exploring the follower's perception of their leader-follower relationship among three job classification groups (administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff). Therefore, the central question for this study is whether the quality of the leader-follower relationship from the follower's perspective has a direct correlation on how the followers perceive themselves as a leader. This question leads us to determine if there are differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification, gender, or length of time in the position. Chapter III will review the methodology used to address the following research questions.

The following research questions guided this study:

Research Questions

1. Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception?

2. Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff?

Research Design

This section delineates the methods and procedures utilized to address each research question, as well as provides the theoretical construct for the methodology used in this study. This quantitative research study utilized a correlational methodology to test if there is a relationship with the leader-follower relationship and the leadership perception of the follower. A correlational study examines the extent to which two variables are related (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The benefit of utilizing a correlational methodology is that it allows researchers an opportunity to make predictions regarding how one variable correlates with another (Salkind, 2012). These predictions can provide a foundation for organizations to better develop strategies for leadership development at all job classification levels.

The first research question, Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception? was answered by reviewing the scores from the Leader-Member Exchange Survey of each participant and comparing it to that individual's score from the Leadership Self-Identity Scale.

LMX7 is a seven-item questionnaire, which measures the quality of the relationship between leaders and followers as it pertains to respect, trust, and obligation (Northouse, 2013). Items are assessed on a 5-point ordinal Likert scale (e.g. Rarely (1) to Very often (5) and Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)). Participants were scored

from very high to very low and could obtain a maximum score of 30. Scores between 25 and 30 indicate a stronger, high-quality leader-member exchange.

The LSI Scale measures the extent to which an individual perceives their leadership identity in terms of descriptiveness, certainty, and importance to them. In the first section, participants rate themselves on a five-point ordinal Likert scale (1=not at all descriptive to 5=extremely descriptive). The following four statements provide insight in to how they view themselves: (a) I am a leader, (b) I see myself as a leader, (c) If I had to describe myself to others I would include the word leader, and (d) I prefer being seen by others as a leader. The LSI score is the sum total of the mean of the descriptiveness, certainty, and importance scores for each person (Hiller, 2005).

The scores of both surveys were analyzed to determine if there were any statistical correlations. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the extent of the relationship between two continuous variables – the leader-follower relationship (LMX7) and the follower's leadership perception (LSI). The LMX7 questionnaire and the Leadership Self-Identity Scale were administered to the followers in order to collect appropriate data.

The second research question, Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship (LMX7) based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff? was answered with a Quasi-experimental methodology using the simple analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) as the statistical test. This analysis evaluates the differences in the (LMX7 scores) between subjects, across more than two groups of job classifications (administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff) (Salkind, 2011).

Measures

The quantitative approaches used in gathering data for the study included the use of two instruments. The leader-follower relationship was measured by using LMX7. The instrument was derived from the Leader-Member Exchange theory, which conceptualizes leadership as a process that is focused on a twofold relationship between the leader and the follower. The relationship goes back and forth and is not just a vertical exchange. During this exchange follower's and leader's personality, and other personal characters, are contributing factors that determine the quality of the relational exchange (Northouse, 2013). Studies have shown when the quality of the relationship impact both the leader and the follower. When the follower perceives the quality of the leader-follower relationship as high, the follower's performance goes beyond their position description. When the leader perceives the quality of the leader-follower relationship as high, the leader provides more for the follower in term of influence, confidence in their abilities, and opportunities for growth or leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). In addition, Graen and Uhl-Bien studies showed the LMX theory contributing positive outcomes to organization by showing a correlation to performance, innovation, empowerment, and organizational commitment.

Instruments:

LMX7 is a seven-item questionnaire, which measures the quality of the relationship between leaders and followers as it pertains to respect, trust, and obligation (Northouse, 2013). Items are assessed on a 5-point ordinal Likert scale (e.g. Rarely (1) to Very often (5) and Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)). LMX7 coefficient alpha reliabilities for supervisor were .85 and subordinate .94, with .92 overall (Graen & Uhl-

Bien, 1995). LMX7 was designed to be completed by both the leader and the follower. For the purposes of this study, the questionnaire was used to measure the follower's perception of the relationship between the leader and the follower. Participants were scored from very high to very low and could obtain a maximum score of 30. Scores between 25 and 30 indicate a stronger, high-quality leader-member exchange. In this instance, followers perceive themselves as being connected to the leader and their coworkers. Scores in the lower range show a lesser quality relationship in which the follower may perceive himself or herself as being disconnected from their leader and the rest of the team (Graen & Uhl-Bien).

The second instrument measured the participant's perception as a leader. The LSI Scale measures the self-identity one holds in the leadership area by asking directly about leadership self-views (Hiller, 2005). The LSI Scale was derived from the theoretical construct of the leadership self-schemas developed by Engle and Lord (1997). The Leadership Self-Schemas was designed to measure "the self-rated importance of traits associated with leadership, but not leadership itself" (Hiller, p. 8). Hiller enhanced the concept by developing a component that directly assessed the extent to which the person sees himself or herself as a leader called the LSI Scale.

The LSI Scale is theorized and assessed along three related sub-dimensions: self-descriptiveness, certainty, and personal importance of that self-identity. The premise of the scale is to understand and quantify the extent to which an individual leadership identity is considered descriptive of, and important to them. In the first section, participants rate themselves on a five-point ordinal Likert scale (1=not at all descriptive to 5=extremely descriptive). The following four statements provide insight in to how they

view themselves: (a) I am a leader, (b) I see myself as a leader, (c) If I had to describe myself to others I would include the word leader, and (d) I prefer being seen by others as a leader. The Leadership Self-Identity score is the sum total of the mean of the descriptiveness, certainty, and importance scores for each person (Hiller, 2005). The LSI Scale, within the subscale areas of Descriptiveness, Certainty, and Importance dimensions of Leadership Self-Identity had reliability values (coefficient alpha) of .92, .88, and .83 respectively. The overall reliability of the instrument was .90 (Day & Sin, 2011).

Population

This section describes the population. The sample was drawn from a population 103 employees at a private university in the Midwest. The population of employees was a preexisting committee, established to implement campus-wide process improvement initiatives. Hence, the population was not randomly selected.

This population consisted of a cross-section of the university benefit eligible employees with job classification of administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff. The institution's human resources department provided the population of the benefit employees used in this survey.

Strict protocols were implemented to ensure the highest level of confidentiality. Participants were not asked to identify themselves on any part of the questionnaire. The records were kept off campus in a locked location and were not accessible to the participating institution for any purpose. Once the questionnaires were completed, responses were completely anonymous, even to the researcher. The invitees were informed that only aggregate data would be shared with participants and stakeholders, if

requested. In addition, the invitees were notified that in the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information would be shared.

Of the 103 invitees, 43 responded to the survey, 8 declined to participate, and one survey was not complete. Hence, the researcher was able to gather data from 34 participants. The demographics of the 34 participants include 10 males and 24 females. Job classification was collected as an additional component of the survey (see Table 1).

Table 1

<i>Job Classification</i>		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Support staff - clerical and administrative functions	29.4%	10
Professional staff - non-support and non-supervisory employees	23.5%	8
Administrative staff - senior and middle administrators	47.1%	16
Total		34

Data Collection

This section provides a description of the data collection process. The research study was conducted over a period of two months from October through December 2013.

The researcher was provided a list of names and email addresses from the human resources department for the participating institution. The invitees were sent an introduction cover letter via email explaining the study and its importance as well as the voluntary nature of their participation and the confidentiality procedures.

In addition, the cover letter explained the procedure by which the questionnaires would be disseminated, as well how to contact the researcher in case of questions. Furthermore, the cover letter provided a logistical outline of when and how the research questionnaires and consent form would be sent.

The employees obtained a link to Survey Monkey containing the consent letter, LMX7 and the LSI Scale questionnaires via e-mail within the institution. Administering the questionnaires through Survey Monkey provided confidentiality, as well as anonymity.

Participants were not required to identify themselves on any part of the questionnaires but were asked to choose a job classification category such as administrative staff, professional staff, or support staff, as well as gender and length of time in the position. Job classification category definitions of administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff were defined in the survey as seen in Table 1.

After the invitees read the consent form, they were asked to choose to participate or not to participate. If the invitee chose to participate, they electronically consented that they had read the consent form letter, they voluntarily agreed to participate, and they

were at least 18 years of age. After the demographic questionnaire completion, participants completed the LMX7, and then the LSI Scale.

Participants were offered an incentive of the chance to win a \$60.00 Amazon gift card for completion of the questionnaires. In order to maintain confidentiality, participants were asked to self-select in order to be entered into the drawing, and the drawing was facilitated through a third-party company affiliated with Survey Monkey.

Analytical Methods

Each instrument was tested to measure the internal consistency of the participants' responses across both of the instruments' items. The internal consistency of the seven-item LMX7 and the twelve-item LSI Scale was tested. Through SPSS the researcher ran the means, standard deviations, variance, and Cronbach's alpha or coefficient alpha. The Cronbach's alpha or coefficient alpha is the most commonly used method to assess the reliability of a measure (Yockey, 2011). This statistical method measures the internal consistency among a set of items to determine if the items all measure the same characteristic (Yockey).

The data collected address the research questions in the following manner.

1. Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception? was answered by reviewing the scores from the LMX7 Scale of each participant and comparing it to that individual's score from the LSI Scale. The scores were analyzed to determine if there were any statistical correlations. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used because it delineated to what extent there is a relationship between two continuous variables - the leader-follower relationship LMX7 and the follower's leadership perception LSI (Yockey, 2011). Continuous variable one

(x) is leader-follower relationship LMX7 and the continuous variable two (y) is follower's leadership perception LSI Scale.

2. Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship LMX7 based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff? was answered with a Quasi-experimental methodology using the simple one-way between subjects analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) as the statistical test. The ANOVA tests the means of two or more groups to determine if the mean differs significantly among the groups based on the dependent variable (Yockey). For instance, an ANOVA test will test to see if there is a difference in the LMX7 scores across the three job classification groups (administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff).

Limitations

In this section, limitations that were most important and that had a significant impact on this research will be discussed.

The first limitation was the population and sample. The population was preselected by the executive leaders of the institution from a group of employees serving on a prior committee responsible for making organizational wide improvements within the university. The preselected population limited the percentage of the sample size for each job classification group, across gender, and within tenure. Furthermore, since the sample was drawn from a population that was serving on a process improvement committee, participants may have a predisposition to certain leader-self-identity. In addition, the population was drawn from a homogeneous industry.

The second limitation was low response rates by the employees. Prior to the researcher conducting the study, the participating organization experienced a cyber-attack. Thus, the organization's IT department strongly warned employees not to open unfamiliar emails or links.

Due to these limitations, the researcher may find it difficult to make broader predictions, based on the research findings, for a larger population (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

Summary

This chapter depicted a step-by-step examination of the research methodology, description of survey instruments, and procedures utilized to answer each research question. This chapter also discussed the limitations of the research study that may have an impact on the results.

In Chapter IV, the results of the statistical analysis, conclusions, implications, and recommendation regarding the research study will be discussed. Chapter IV is the final chapter of this dissertation.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This study investigated the implications of the leader-follower relationship as it relates to the follower's leadership perception. In addition, the study explored whether there were differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification groups such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff. This final chapter will discuss the findings of the data collection and analysis. In addition, the conclusions, implications, and recommendations regarding the study are presented.

Basu (1991) suggested that relationship-oriented leaders tend to promote leadership behaviors in employees. This study examined if the dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower had a correlational affect on the development of leadership qualities in the follower. The study utilized the LMX7 questionnaire and the LSI Scale to collect appropriate data regarding the correlation.

Gerstner and Day (1997) stated that the dyadic relationship between the leader and the follower can be explained through the Leader-Member Exchange Theory. The LMX is measured by the LMX7 Scale.

Leader-follower relationships that operate at a high level tend to have positive outcomes associated with leadership abilities (Gerstner & Day 1997). Researchers have suggested a positive correlation between high-quality relationships among leaders and

followers and better performance and job satisfaction (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hagedorn, 2000; Stringer, 2006; Uhl-Bien, 2006). In addition, employees who have a high-quality relationships or high LMX7 scores are more likely to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviors that enhance leadership self-identity, which is honed in innovative environments (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen & Scandura, 1987).

LMX7 is a seven-item questionnaire that measures the quality of the relationship between leaders and followers as it pertains to respect, trust, and obligation (Northouse, 2013). Items are assessed on a 5-point ordinal Likert scale (e.g., Rarely (1) to Very often (5); and Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)). LMX7 coefficient alpha reliabilities for supervisor were .85 and subordinate .94, with .92 overall (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The questionnaire was developed to be completed by both the leader and the follower. For the purposes of this study, the questionnaire is used to measure only the follower's perception of the relationship between the leader and the follower. Participants were scored from very high to very low and could obtain a maximum score of 30. Scores between 25 and 30 specify a stronger, high-quality leader-member exchange. In this instance, followers perceive themselves as being connected to the leader and their coworkers. Scores in the lower range show a lesser-quality relationship in which the follower may perceive himself or herself as being disconnected from their leader and the rest of the team (Graen & Uhl-Bien).

Leadership self-identity is a significant component in the development of future leaders. Although there have been 130 studies investigating the relationship between the leader and the follower since 2002 (Anand et al., 2011), there has been limited to no known research correlating the LMX with regard to the leadership perception of the

follower. In addition, what effects LMX has on the follower's willingness and ability to lead has been narrowly explored.

Examining leadership development in the follower from these perspectives may exhibit different ways to enhance the overall effectiveness of leadership in difficult situations, produce positive work outcomes among followers, and enhance leadership development training programs (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Furthermore, gaining knowledge in this area can assist organizations in cultivating a plan for developing the next generation of leaders. Lord et al., (1999) note that leaders profoundly influence follower self-perceptions; hence this influence impacts the follower's behavior and social processes. The researchers suggested that self-identity that is developed by leaders can have substantial implications on the follower's behaviors and leadership perceptions. The relationship between the leader and the follower functions as a link to how the follower conceptualizes the leadership traits within themselves (Lord et al.). The researchers surmise that if the follower positively aligns his or her self with the leader, the follower will intend to view him or her self positively. On the other hand, the more dissimilar the follower views the dyadic relationship, the more the follower may have a negative self-perception (Lord et al.). The followers self-identity cultivated by the leader can have enormous implications, not only on the behaviors of the follower but also on the leadership perceptions of the follower. The leader-follower relationship is reciprocal and dynamic in its influence on both the leader and the follower's expression of leadership behaviors and practices (Lord et al.).

Heldenbrand and Simms (2012) suggested that the followers' leadership development integrated in their day-to-day interaction with leaders is one of the catalysts for sustaining change within the organization.

Hiller (2005) created the LSI Scale, which measures how a person perceives himself or herself as a leader. The scale provides insights to understand and quantify the extent to which a person perceives his or her leadership identity in terms of how he or she describes himself or herself as a leader, his or her certainty of that description, and the overall importance of identifying himself or herself as a leader.

The LSI Scale is conceived and evaluated along three related sub-dimensions: self-descriptiveness, certainty, and personal importance of that self-identity. In the first section, participants rate themselves on a five-point ordinal Likert scale (1=not at all descriptive to 5=extremely descriptive). The subsequent four statements provide insight into how they view themselves: (a) I am a leader, (b) I see myself as a leader, (c) If I had to describe myself to others I would include the word leader, and (d) I prefer being seen by others as a leader. The LSI score is the sum total of the mean of the descriptiveness, certainty, and importance scores for each person (Hiller, 2005). The LSI Scale, within the subscale areas of Descriptiveness, Certainty, and Importance dimensions, had reliability values (coefficient alpha) of .92, .88, and .83 respectively. The overall reliability of the instrument was .90 (Day & Sin, 2011).

Lee (2008) noted that building leadership capacity in followers is essential for organizational growth and sustainability. It is vital that organizations retain, develop, and sustain their most valuable resource, human capital, in order to remain innovative and competitive. Hiring and retaining exceptional qualified employees is the biggest

leadership challenge for any top leader and their organization (Penney et al., 2002; Penney, 2011). High-performing employees need to utilize their skills and abilities in their positions in order to be retained in the organization (Grant, 1996). Hence, it is crucial that leaders identify strategies to retain these employees.

For example, Penney et al. (2002) suggested that hiring and retaining exceptional staff is an essential component to an organizational plan for developing the next generation of leaders. The researchers proposed the development of an emerging leaders program that would increase a diverse pool of talented staff as a means to provide an abundant supply of great leaders within the organization. The emerging leaders program promoted leadership abilities within the staff through relationship-oriented leaders who coach and mentor employees, as well as their insights regarding topics such as: understanding the internal and external political climate, resolving disputes, valuing diversity, dealing with the media, and fostering a work/life balance.

Penney et al. (2002) argued that the development of a diverse pool of future leaders is difficult to obtain without the retention of talented employees and that the development of an emerging leaders program is vital for maintaining a competitive economic advantage (Penney et al.). For this reason, it is critical that leaders nurture leadership qualities in all employees by discovering and encouraging leadership from his or her position (Penney, 2011).

Therefore, the central question for this study was whether the quality of the leader-follower relationship from the follower's perspective has a direct correlation to how the followers perceive themselves as leaders. This question leads us to determine if there are differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship

based on job classification. Chapter VI will review the statistical findings of the following research questions.

The following research questions guided this study:

Research Questions

1. Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception?
2. Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship based on job classification groups, such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff?

Findings

In October of 2013, 103 employees of a private university in the Midwest were invited to participate in this research study. This population consisted of benefit-eligible employees with job classification of administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff. The data were collected from the participants over the duration of a three-month period. Out of the 103 invitees, 43 responded to the survey, 8 declined to participate, and one survey was not completed. Hence, the research was able to gather data from 34 participants. The demographics of the 34 participants were 10 males and 24 females. Job classification was collected as an additional component of the survey (see Table 1, p. 45).

Research Question 1

The first research question *Does a correlation exist between the leader-follower relationship and the follower's leadership perception?* was answered by reviewing the scores from the LMX7 of each participant and comparing them to each individual's score from the LSI Scale. In order to determine whether a statistical correlation exists, a

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to delineate to what extent there was a relationship between two continuous variables—the leader-follower relationship LMX7 and the follower’s leadership perception, LSI (Yockey, 2011). Continuous variable one (x) is the leader-follower relationship LMX7, and continuous variable two (y) is the follower’s leadership perception LSI Scale, as shown in Figure 1.

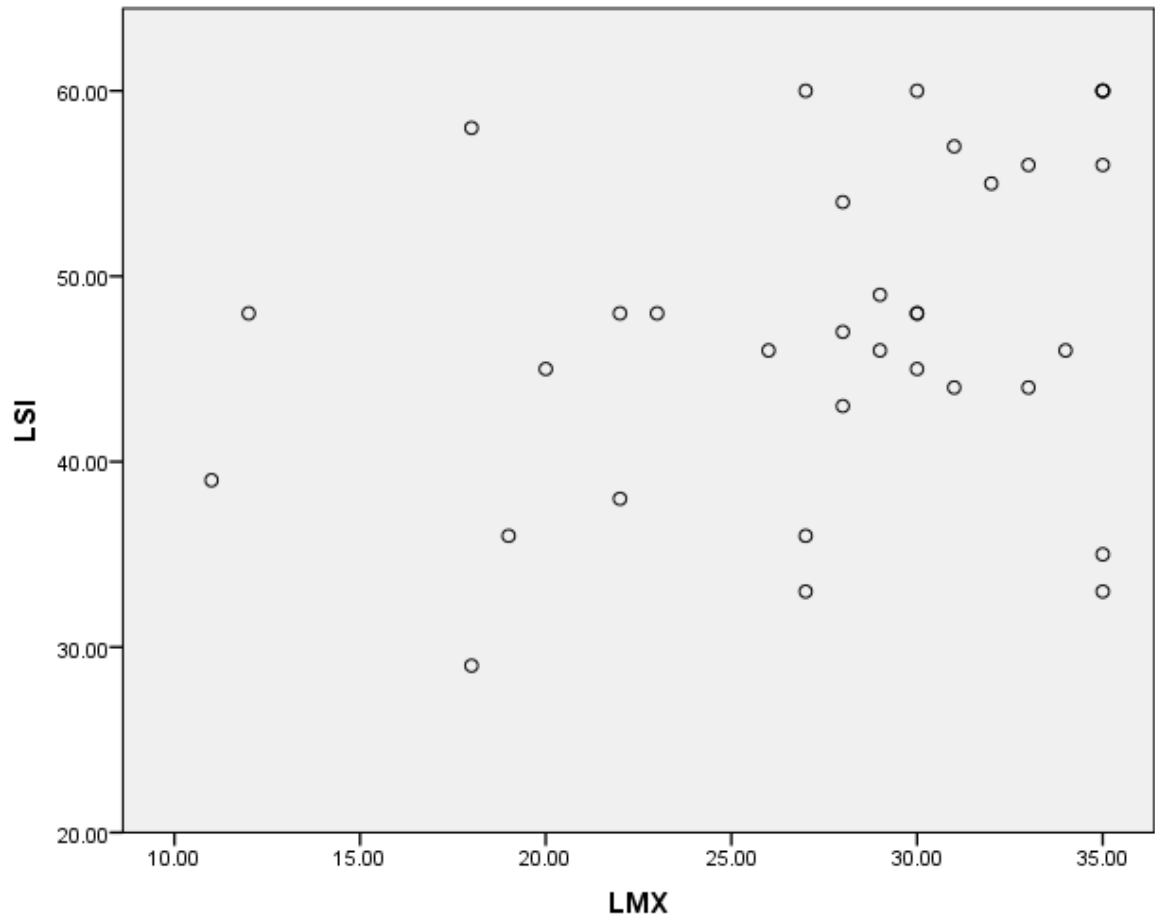


Figure 1 Scatterplot indicates a weak positive correlation.

The correlation between the LMX7 score (which indicates the quality of the relationship between the leader and the follower, from the follower’s perspective) and the LSI score (how the follower sees himself or herself as a leader) is approximately $r(32) = .32, p = .06$ (Table 2). These results show that there is a weak positive relationship

between the two variables, but the correlation is not statistically significant. Computing the coefficient of determination indicates that 10.2 % of the variation in the LSI is explained by the variation in the LMX7 score and vice versa.

Table 2

Pearson Correlation of LMX7 Scores and LSI Scores

		Correlations	
		LMX7	LSI
LMX7	Pearson Correlation	1	.32
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.06
	N	34	34
LSI	Pearson Correlation	.32	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.06	
	N	34	34

Statistical analysis shows that LMX7 and LSI have no statistically significant correlation since $p > .05$, and the results indicate a weak positive correlation of $r(32) = .32$. It is important to note that $p = .06$ is extremely close to being statistically significant, suggesting that there may be a chance that a correlation exists.

Research Question 2

The second research question *Are there differences in the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship (LMX7) based on job classification groups, such as administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff?* was answered with a quasi-experimental methodology using the simple analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) as the statistical test. This analysis evaluates the differences (in the LMX7 scores) between

subjects across more than two groups of job classifications (administrative staff, professional staff, and support staff) (Salkind, 2011).

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for the LMX7 Scores

<i>Job Classification</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Support staff - clerical and administrative functions	10	28.90	6.12
Professional staff - non-support and non-supervisory employee	8	25.50	9.02
Administrative staff - senior and middle administrators	16	27.81	5.54
Total	34	27.59	6.56

Reviewing the means for the different job classifications, support staff (mean = 28.90) had the highest LMX7 scores, while administrative staff (mean = 27.81) had the second highest, and lastly, professional staff (mean =25.50) had the lowest LMX7 scores among the three groups (Table 3).

Table 4

Levene Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX7)			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.28	2	31	.29

Since $p > .05$ (.29), the null hypothesis is not rejected, and it is therefore assumed that the population variances are equal for all groups (Table 4). So, based on the Levene test, the population variances are equal for the three groups.

Table 5

One-Way ANOVA Tests Between Subjects for LMX7 Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	52.90	2	26.45	.60	.56
Within Groups	1367.34	31	44.11		
Total	1420.24	33			

Table 5 reveals the answer to research question 2 regarding whether or not the LMX7 scores differ for the three job classification groups. Since $p > .05$ (.56), there is no

significant difference between the LMX7 scores among the three job classification groups; hence, the variances are equal.

Overall, the research findings for question 2 indicate that the findings were not significant. These results concluded that participants' LMX7 scores did not differ across the job classification groups, $F(2,31) = .01$, $p = .56$. In addition, the effect size, $\eta^2 = .04$, indicated that the job classification groups accounted for a 4% variance or difference in the LMX scores of the participants.

Conclusions

The premise of this research study was to investigate whether the leader-follower relationship had an effect on the development of leadership qualities in the follower, as well as to explore if the quality of the leader-follower relationship differs among job classification groups.

In terms of *research question 1*, the results concluded that there was a weak positive correlation of $r(32) = .32$ with LMX7 and LSI but that it still was not statistically significant. Although there was no significance in terms of correlation, the closeness of the $p = .06$ suggests that a correlation may exist but is weak. According to Salkind (2011), this weak correlation may be attributed to a Type II error. This error occurred when the researcher mistakenly accepted a false null hypothesis (Salkind, 2012). For instance, there really could be a difference among the population that is represented by the sample group, but the researcher inadvertently states that there is no difference. Type II errors are difficult to control for because of their sensitivity to the number of participants in the sample (Salkind, 2012). As previously stated in Chapter III, one of the limitations to the study was the small sample size. The university pre-selected

a group of 103 employees to participate in the study. Of the 103 invitees, 43 responded to the survey, 8 declined to participate, and one survey was not complete. Hence, the researcher was able to gather data from only 34 participants.

Another element that may impact the explanation of the significance of the correlation is effect size. Statistical significance is determined if $p < .05$ (Salkind, 2011). Since the p -value is comprised of the size of the effect *and* the size of the sample, the effect size provides additional information for the researcher to consider when drawing conclusions from the research data (Salkind, 2011; Salkind, 2012; Yockey, 2011). In terms of the data from this study, Cohen's guidelines imply that the correlation of $r(32) = .32$ corresponds to a medium effect size, suggesting some sort of correlational relationship between the leader-follower relationship (LMX7) and the follower's leadership perception (LSI) (Yockey).

In *research question 2*, the findings revealed that the quality of the leader-follower relationship (LMX) did not show a significant difference ($p = .56$) among job classification groups. Cohen's guidelines indicate that the effect size, $\eta^2 = .04$, was very small, showing only a 4 % variance among job classification groups in terms of the LMX scores of the participants (Yockey, 2011). Although there is a small variance among the groups, sample size may not be a factor in terms of statistical significance as found in the explanation of *research question 1*. Adding additional participants may not be of value because the participants may view themselves differently according to their roles or job classification (Schaubroeck et al., 2012). In addition, due to the small sample size, the study may not completely represent the population; hence definitive inferential conclusions would be cautioned against.

Implications and Recommendations

From the research findings, several implications and recommendations can be made about the impact of the leader-follower relationship and its relationship to the follower's leadership self-perception. Organizations continue to struggle due to the lack of strong leadership and followers who are not committed to advance the greater good of the organization (Bunchapattanasakda et al., 2012). This study addressed a need to increase understanding on how cultivating the leader-follower relationship can enhance leadership development within organization to nurture the next generations of leaders. Lord et al. (1999) concurred that followers' self-identity is cultivated by the leader, who has critical influences on both the follower and leader's leadership perceptions through its dynamic and dyadic relationship. These authors support that further exploration in the area of the development of the followers' self-perception is important.

Although the results from the study indicated a slight correlation between how the follower perceived the quality of the leader-follower relationship and his or her own self-perception as a leader, it provides some evidence that the quality of the relationship between the leader and the follower is imperative to the follower's leadership development despite other factors that may contribute to their self-identity.

Researchers believe that the quality of the leader-follower relationship can help foster the elements of leadership in all employees and encourage the development of more innovative techniques to solve challenges within organizations (Penney, 2011; Martin & Schmidt, 2010; Scandura, 1999; Vecchio & Gobdel, 1984). Regardless of the findings, the study provides an additional avenue to increase leadership development within organizations. Organizations are struggling to sustain and maintain competitive

advantages within increasingly complex fiscal environments (Toor & Ofori, 2009). The economic pressures to cut organizational costs while maximizing human-resource potential to meet the increasing demands provides a tremendous challenge to executive leadership (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

In addition, leaders in institutions for higher education face additional challenges, such as the increase in enrollment of high school graduates and returning adult students that are academically under-prepared, reduced federal and state funding, low completion rates, retirements, and the expectation to decrease the cost of education while maintaining and producing quality education (Baum et al., 2013). Regardless of the organization, all the leaders seem to concur on the need to hire and retain quality employees and develop future leaders (Baum et al., 2013; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Penney et al., 2002).

Furthermore, exceptional leadership is crucial for organizations to adapt, survive, and thrive in an increasingly competitive and changing world. Leadership is a dyadic process in which leaders influence, and are influenced by, their followers (Stephenson, 1959). A positive relationship with the leader perceived by the follower produces ownership within the follower to operate beyond their job classification role and utilize their sphere of influence to achieve desired outcomes (Fisk & Friesen, 2012). Building leadership capacity in followers is vital for organizational growth and commitment (Lee, 2008).

Further studies in this area will lead to a deeper, research-based understanding of the leader-follower relationship and its impact on leader perception. Future research could include a longitudinally experimental investigation to explore the leader-follower

relationship as it relates to the follower's leadership self-perception as it relates to gender, ethnicity and multigenerational employees.

Similarly, it would be interesting to conduct a study in a variety of industries and organizations, which would allow great access to a more eclectic group of employees. This researcher surmises that having a sample population that was a preselected group responsible for making organizational-wide improvements—albeit a cross section of the organization—may have already skewed the group's perception of how they viewed their relationship with their leader and how they self-identified as leaders. By virtue of his or her role on the committee, the individual may have already had the propensity to see himself or herself and his or her leader in a certain way.

Understanding what develops a follower's self-perception of leadership can aid organizations in cultivating the next generation of leaders and developing leadership competencies in individuals who do not view themselves as leaders. The hope of this study was to provide organizations with an additional perspective to create strategies that continue to enhance leadership development of all employees.

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Appendix A

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX7) Questionnaire

LMX 7 QUESTIONNAIRE*

Instructions: This questionnaire contains items that ask you to describe your relationship with either your leader or one of your subordinates. For each of the items, indicate the degree to which you think the item is true for you by circling one of the responses that appear below the item.

1. Do you know where you stand with your leader (follower) ... [and] do you usually know how satisfied your leader (follower) is with what you do?

Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Fairly often	Very often
1	2	3	4	5
2. How well does your leader (follower) understand your job problems and needs?

Not a bit	A little	A fair amount	Quite a bit	A great deal
1	2	3	4	5
3. How well does your leader (follower) recognize your potential?

Not at all	A little	Moderately	Mostly	Fully
1	2	3	4	5
4. Regardless of how much formal authority your leader (follower) has built into his or her position, what are the chances that your leader (follower) would use his or her power to help you solve problems in your work?

None	Small	Moderate	High	Very high
1	2	3	4	5
5. Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your leader (follower) has, what are the chances that he or she would "bail you out" at his or her expense?

None	Small	Moderate	High	Very high
1	2	3	4	5
6. I have enough confidence in my leader (follower) that I would defend and justify his or her decision if he or she were not present to do so.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5
7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader (follower)?

Extremely ineffective	Worse than average	Average	Better than average	Extremely effective
1	2	3	4	5

By completing the LMX 7, you can gain a fuller understanding of how LMX theory works. The score you obtain on the questionnaire reflects the quality of your leader-member relationships, and indicates the degree to which your relationships are characteristic of partnerships, as described in the LMX model.

You can complete the questionnaire both as a leader and as a subordinate. In the leader role, you would complete the questionnaire multiple times, assessing the quality of the relationships you have with each of your subordinates. In the subordinate role, you would complete the questionnaire based on the leaders to whom you report.

Scoring Interpretation

Although the LMX 7 is most commonly used by researchers to explore theoretical questions, you can also use it to analyze your own leadership style. You can interpret your LMX 7 scores using the following guidelines: very high = 30–35, high = 25–29, moderate = 20–24, low = 15–19, and very low = 7–14. Scores in the upper ranges indicate stronger, higher-quality leader-member exchanges (e.g., in-group members), whereas scores in the lower ranges indicate exchanges of lesser quality (e.g., out-group members).

SOURCE: Reprinted from "Relationship-Based Approach to Leadership: Development of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory of Leadership Over 25 Years: Applying a Multi-Level, Multi-Domain Perspective," by G. B. Graen and M. Uhl-Bien, 1995, *Leadership Quarterly*, 6(2), 219–247. Copyright © 1995. Reprinted with permission from Elsevier Science.

Appendix B

Leadership Self-Identity (LSI) Scale

Leadership Self-Identity Scale

1. Please rate the extent to which the following statements describe you, using a scale from 1 (*not at all descriptive*) to 5 (*extremely descriptive*).

	Not at all Descriptive 1	Mostly Not Descriptive 2	Occasionally Descriptive 3	Mostly Descriptive 4	Totally Descriptive 5
I am a leader.					
I see myself as a leader.					
If I had to describe myself to others, I would include the word "leader".					
I prefer being seen by others as a leader.					

2. How certain are you about the ratings you gave for each statement above? Please rate from 1 (*not at all certain*) to 5 (*extremely certain*).

	Totally Uncertain 1	Mostly Not Uncertain 2	Somewhat Certain 3	Mostly Certain 4	Extremely Certain 5
I am a leader.					
I see myself as a leader.					
If I had to describe myself to others, I would include the word "leader".					
I prefer being seen by others as a leader.					

3. Think about your overall self-concept. How important are each of the statements to yourself-identity. Answer the following questions below, from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*extremely important*).

	Not at all Important 1	Mostly Unimportant 2	Somewhat Important 3	Mostly Important 4	Extremely Important 5
I am a leader.					
I see myself as a leader.					
If I had to describe myself to others, I would include the word "leader".					
I prefer being seen by others as a leader.					

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