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Dimensions of transformational leadership and relationship with employee performance in hotel front desk staff

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**Dimensions of transformational leadership and relationship with employee
performance in hotel front desk staff**

by

Eric Adam Brown

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Foodservice and Lodging Management

Program of Study Committee:
Susan W. Arendt, Major Professor
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Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2008

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Transformational leadership (TL) has been researched extensively. TL behaviors have been shown to increase organizational performance and learning (Aragón-Correa, García-Morales, & Cordón-Pozo, 2007), decrease employee job stress and burnout (Gill, Flaschner, & Shacher, 2006), increase personal and social identification and self efficacy (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003), and increase organizational commitment and collective efficacy (Walumba, Wange, Lawler, & Shi, 2004). TL has been studied in hotels, but the research has been limited to mission and role clarity (Tracey & Hinkin, 1994, 1996).

Employee performance has been an interest of researchers and practitioners. Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) identified items important when judging overall performance. Hartline and Jones (1996) found performance of front desk personnel to have a strong effect on the overall quality of a hotel. Additionally, performance has been shown to affect customers' perceptions of overall quality and value (Hartline & Jones, 1996), to possibly decrease with employee's age (Iun & Huang, 2007), to be rated differently based on gender (Patiar & Lokman, 2008), and to be affected by the way groups are formed and led (Markulis, Jassawalla, & Sashittal, 2006). Performance is an understudied area in hotel employees, especially when it comes to front desk staff.

The relationship between TL and performance has been studied in many contexts including: infantry combat soldiers (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003), service and manufacturing organizations (Bono & Judge, 2003; Purvanova, Bono, & Dzieweczynski, 2006), defense forces (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002), in acquisitions (Nemanich & Keller, 2007), and master of business administration graduate students (Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, & Chen, 2005). The relationship between TL and performance has received little attention in the hospitality field. Because performance has been shown to lead to increased perceptions of overall quality and value in hotels (Hartline & Jones, 1996), the relationship warrants additional research.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to assess supervisors' TL behaviors, as perceived by employees, and analyze how TL behaviors affect performance of hotel front desk personnel.

Specific objectives include:

1. Determine which, if any, dimensions of TL have high correlation when doing research with hotel supervisors.
2. Determine the variability of perceived TL behaviors as reported by subordinates.
3. Examine whether perceived TL differs based on an employee's age, length of time working with a supervisor, or size of hotel.
4. Identify which dimensions of TL have a relationship with overall front desk staff performance.

Significance of Study

In the hospitality field, TL and performance have received little attention. This study will be important to both future researchers and practitioners as a first step in developing managers' training program for increasing employee performance. If TL behaviors have an impact on performance, then training programs could be targeted to develop TL behaviors in managers. A tool developed by the researcher may prove to be reliable in measuring performance of hotel front desk employees, which could lead to the development of a more accurate measure of employee performance.

Definition of Terms

Transformational leadership (TL): This is a style of leadership whereby a leader can motivate a subordinate to perform above and beyond what he/she had previously believed possible (Bass, 1985). The four dimensions of TL are defined below.

Idealized influence: When a leader is trusted and respected by his/her subordinate, this type of leader will tend to put his/her subordinates' needs before his/her own (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Inspirational motivation: This is shown in a leader when he/she acts in a way that causes subordinates to perform better by instilling a sense of meaning in their work (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Individualized consideration: This type of leader is usually thought of as a coach or mentor, he/she tends to be concerned for each of their subordinates' independent needs (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Intellectual stimulation: This dimension is exhibited when a leader asks questions to increase innovation and creativity (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Performance: How well a person completes tasks and also the attitude with which he/she completes the tasks.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Transformational leadership (TL) and performance have been studied by other researchers. In this literature review, TL and the dimensions of TL will be defined. Also, the relationship between TL and employee performance will be discussed.

In the first section, the researcher will review TL literature and how TL relates to organizational performance and learning, employee job stress and burnout, personal identification and self efficacy, organizational commitment, and collective efficacy. In the second section, the researcher will look at employee performance. The researcher will review how certain groups affect performance, how different items are used to judge overall performance, how performance relates to age, and how performance affects overall perceived quality and the value of an operation. The third section contains literature about the relationship between TL and performance. The final section contains information on measurement tools for both TL behaviors and performance.

Transformational Leadership

Bass (1985) defined TL as the ability to motivate followers to perform beyond what he/she would normally expect. TL consists of four dimensions including: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Idealized influence is exhibited when followers respect and trust their leaders and want to be like them, also the leader tends to put his/her followers' needs over their own. Inspirational motivation is when a leader acts in a way that causes people around him/her to be motivated to work better, usually caused by the leader instilling a sense of meaning in the work for the follower. Individualized consideration is shown when a leader gives attention to each employee and is concerned with his/her individual needs; also the leader is generally seen as a coach or a mentor. Intellectual stimulation is demonstrated when a leader asks questions to try and increase productivity and innovation (Avolio & Bass, 2004). TL has since been a heavily studied topic in areas other than hospitality.

Aragón-Correa et al. (2007) studied 408 companies in Spain; service companies were part of the sample. CEOs of each company (45% response) completed a questionnaire on company information and his/her own TL behaviors. The authors used five questions from a

previously published tool to measure TL behaviors and a self-developed tool to measure organizational performance. The authors found TL behaviors to be correlated with organizational learning and organizational learning to be correlated with organizational performance. The authors also found an indirect relationship between TL behaviors and organizational performance, mediated through organizational learning. Based on their findings, the authors believe TL is important for improving financial performance.

Gill et al. (2006) surveyed 137 customer-contact service employees (33% from hotels and 67% from restaurants). TL behaviors were measured using a published twelve-item tolerance-of-freedom questionnaire. The authors found if employees perceived their manager exhibited TL behaviors, the employees had lower job stress, compared to employees without TL managers. The authors also found higher levels of job stress to be related to higher levels of burnout. The authors offered suggestions on how to implement TL in hospitality operations.

Employees and 76 managers in a large Israeli banking organization were studied by Kark et al. (2003). Complete data were available for 888 employees (89% response). TL was measured using items from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X. The authors found TL behaviors to be significantly related to personal identification, defined as identification with the leader, and social identification, defined as identification with the work group. The authors found personal identification to be significantly related to dependence and social identification to be significantly related to self efficacy, organization-based self-esteem, and collective efficacy.

Rafferty and Griffin (2006) studied 2,864 employees (63% response) at an Australian public organization. An employee attitude questionnaire was used and included scales for supportive and developmental leadership. Supportive and developmental leadership are constructs of TL within the individualized consideration dimension. The authors found significant evidence that these two constructs are distinct and affect followers in different ways. The authors also found the two constructs to have a high correlation. The authors suggested researchers are not studying developmental leadership because they are treating the two constructs as one.

Walumba et al. (2004) researched 402 employees from Chinese and Indian financial firms. The authors measured TL behaviors using 20 questions adopted from the MLQ. The authors found TL behaviors to be significantly related to organizational commitment and inversely related to job and work withdrawal. The authors also found TL behaviors to be related to collective efficacy, an employee's judgment of his/her group being able to perform a task. The authors suggest if an employee develops collective efficacy through TL then withdrawal behaviors will go down.

Whitelaw and Morda (2004) used a snowballing technique to survey 264 participants. Participants were employed in the hospitality industry. The researchers used the MLQ Form 5X to measure leadership behaviors, effectiveness, satisfaction, and extra effort. Both male and female participants agreed that a mix of TL and transactional leadership was needed. Small differences between genders were noted, whereby males perceived inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation as important factors in receiving satisfaction and extra effort. Females tended to lean towards contingent rewards, part of transactional leadership.

Tracey and Hinkin (1994) looked at the relationship between TL behaviors and leader satisfaction and effectiveness by studying 141 hospitality employees, including corporate employees (75% response) and general managers (84% response). TL behaviors were measured using the MLQ Form 5X. The authors found TL behaviors to predict leader satisfaction and effectiveness. The authors also found TL behaviors to have a positive effect on mission clarity, role clarity and perceptions of open communication.

Later, Tracey and Hinkin (1996) studied 77 (56% response) lower and middle level managers from different lodging properties in the US. The authors used the MLQ Form 5X to measure the TL behaviors of the participants' supervisor. The authors found TL had a direct effect, as well as mediated through mission clarity and role clarity, on perceptions of leader satisfaction and effectiveness. The authors suggested TL be used as a way to keep up with the ever-changing hospitality industry.

Performance

Patiar and Mia (2008) wanted to see if there were differences in self ratings and ratings by supervisors. They surveyed general managers and departmental managers of 66 (40% response) four or five star hotels and resorts in Australia. The questionnaires were

distributed and returned via mail. The researchers used a nine item instrument to measure performance. The general managers rated the departmental managers and the departmental managers rated themselves. The researchers found departmental managers rated their own performance higher than the general manager did. When the researchers compared female and male departmental managers self ratings to general managers' ratings, the researchers noted a difference. The researchers concluded the disparity in ratings were due to male departmental managers' over inflation of self-ratings.

Markulis et al. (2006) studied three sections of an organizational behavior class (77 students total); each section contained six teams. Each team was assigned a semester long project. In the first section, leaders were allowed to emerge, in the second leaders rotated, and in the third the instructor asked for a volunteer to be team leader. The leaders went through training sessions where they learned about effective leadership and teamwork. At the end of the semester, all students were asked to complete a questionnaire focusing on conflict, perceived leadership, group effectiveness, and communication. The authors found the groups with team leadership to have no significant effect on performance. The authors found the groups with an emerging leader to score lower on perceived leadership, group effectiveness, and communication but scored higher on conflict. The authors noted emerging leadership should be avoided as it created a leaderless group without direction, thus causing tension and conflict. The authors also found students wanted a chance to lead sometime during their undergraduate degree and so the authors supported use of rotational leadership.

Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) looked at the performance of 1,136 U.S. Air Force mechanics. Overall performance was measured with a supervisor questionnaire consisting of three questions rated on a 7-point scale. The questions included whether the mechanic exceeded performance standards, how the mechanic performed relative to others, and how much the mechanic contributed to unit effectiveness. Six questions were answered by the supervisor and used to measure task performance. Interpersonal facilitation, such as helpfulness, consideration, and cooperation, was measured using seven questions. Job dedication was measured using eight questions, measuring effort, self-discipline, and persistence. The authors found task performance, interpersonal facilitation, and job dedication to be important when measuring subordinates' overall performance level.

Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez (1998) developed the Role-Based Performance Scale, a theory based scale used to measure performance. The authors developed and pilot tested the tool. The researchers collected information from employees and managers at six companies. There were 700 employees available, and 90 employees were selected randomly for the pilot test. The authors found the Role-Based Performance Scale to be reliable and valid. Managers of one company changed their performance appraisal system after participating in the study. The authors described tool advantages such as short length, reliability, and validity. This tool has since been used by other researchers (Bono & Judge, 2003; Purvanova, et al., 2006)

Iun and Huang (2007) surveyed 599 employees (70% response) from restaurant and lodging companies in Hong Kong. Questionnaires were distributed to the employees and their supervisors. Employees answered questions about job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The supervisors answered questions about the employees' performance and organizational citizenship behavior. Performance was measured using a previously published three-item tool developed by Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996). The authors found age to have a significant negative effect on performance scores. However, the authors noted older employees had performance scores that were lower than younger employees only when emotional attachment to the company was low.

Hartline and Jones (1996) studied 1,351 hotel customers of 279 hotels. Questionnaires were used to measure performance and each customer was asked to rate the employees' performance on a 5-point scale. The customers were asked to base their performance evaluation on friendliness and service. The authors found performance ratings of front desk, housekeeping, and parking employees to have a significant relationship with overall perceived quality. Performance ratings of the front desk staff had the strongest effect on overall quality ratings. Performance ratings of front desk and room service employees had a significant relationship with overall perceived value. The authors suggested training efforts should focus on hotel front desk employees, as their performance had the biggest impact on overall quality and value ratings.

Transformational Leadership and Performance

Bass et al. (2003) studied the leadership of platoon sergeants and platoon leaders of 72 platoons, each consisting of approximately 30 light infantry combat soldiers. There were

1,340 soldiers rating platoon leaders, 1,335 rating platoon sergeants, and 1,594 rating unit cohesion and potency. TL behaviors were measured using a modified version of the MLQ Form 5X. Transactional leadership and potency, defined as group confidence when faced with challenges, were measured using published instruments. Cohesion was measured using a tool developed for this study. The authors found TL behaviors in platoon leaders to have a significantly positive relationship with unit and platoon performance. The authors found TL behaviors in platoon sergeants to have a significantly positive relationship with platoon performance. There was evidence of partial mediation of TL behaviors with platoon performance through potency and cohesion.

Bono and Judge (2003) explored why followers of transformational leaders exhibit higher performance, motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment by studying leaders in service and manufacturing organizations. There were 247 leaders (76% response) who completed the questionnaire. Up to 6 followers for each leader were invited to complete a questionnaire. Of the 1,368 surveyed, 954 followers completed the initial questionnaire, the MLQ. Sixty days after the initial questionnaire, a second set of questionnaires were completed by 243 leaders and 775 followers, giving an overall response rate of 70% for leaders and 57% for followers. For the second set, leaders completed job performance questionnaires on their followers and the followers submitted job attitude questionnaires. A 15-item tool was used to measure followers' job performance, this tool included items for both task performance and initiative aspects of performance. The tool had items on self directions developed by Stewart, Carson, and Cardy (1996), innovation and task performance adapted from the Role-Base Performance Scale developed by Welbourne et al. (1998), and personal initiative which were developed for this study. The authors found TL behaviors, as evaluated by followers, to be positively related to followers' job performance.

Dvir et al. (2002) studied 160 cadets from the Israel Defense Forces. In the first phase of the study, cadets were assigned to a TL workshop or to no workshop. In the second phase, 54 of the 160 cadets (34%) were assigned to lead basic training platoons. These 54 cadets worked with 90 noncommissioned officers and 724 recruits. The noncommissioned officers' and recruits' performances were measured before and after basic training. The authors found the platoons led by the TL trained cadets outperformed those led by the cadets without

leadership training. Improved performance measures included: the written light weapons test, the obstacle course, and the practical light weapons test. The authors concluded cadet TL training led to significantly higher levels of follower development and performance compared to the cadets not trained.

Nemanich and Keller (2007) received usable questionnaires from 449 employees (49% response) and 344 supervisors (77% response) of a recently acquired company. Employees answered questions about the TL behaviors of their immediate supervisor, as well as their own feelings on the acquisition and job satisfaction. Supervisors answered questions one month after the employees and were asked about their employees' performance. TL behaviors were measured using the MLQ. Performance was measured using two items about employees' accomplishment of objectives and acceptability of interpersonal behaviors, both were rated relative to other employees. The authors found TL behaviors had a significantly positive relationship with acquisition acceptance and to be positively related to goal clarity, creative thinking, and follower performance. The authors suggested TL be used to face challenges, such as those encountered during an acquisition.

Piccolo and Colquitt (2006) studied 217 full-time employees (15% response). TL were measured using the MLQ Form 5X. Task performance, how an employee completes duties and fulfills responsibilities, was measured using a seven-item scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). The authors found TL behaviors to have a significantly positive relationship with task performance. They also found intrinsic motivation and goal commitment to significantly mediate the relationship between TL behaviors and task performance. The authors gave suggestions for TL training and manager development plans.

Purvanova et al. (2006) invited employees from a manufacturing plant and the customer service department of a private company via e-mail to complete web-based questionnaires. The study included 254 employees from the manufacturing company and 258 employees from the service company (79% response). The employees completed questionnaires describing the leadership behaviors of their managers. After two months, the managers, 68 from the manufacturing company and 56 from the service department, responded to questionnaires about the citizenship behaviors of their employees. The MLQ Form 5X was used to measure TL behaviors. The Role-Based Performance Scale, developed

by Welbourne, et al. (1998), was used to measure citizenship performance. The authors found if job complexity was controlled, TL behaviors were significantly related to citizenship performance and perceived job characteristics. Perceived job characteristics were significantly related to citizenship performance.

Wang et al. (2005) studied 81 managers enrolled in master of business administration courses at a Chinese university and 162 of their immediate subordinates (68% response). The leader-member exchange multidimensional scale was used to measure the leader-member exchange, the two-way relationship between a leader and follower. TL behaviors and organizational citizenship behavior were measured using Chinese versions of previously developed scales. Task performance was measured using items adopted from a tool developed by Tsui, Pearce, Porter, and Tripoli (1997). Each manager rated task performance and organizational citizenship behavior of his/her followers and each follower rated TL behaviors of the manager and the leader-member exchange between them self and the leader. The authors found TL behaviors and the leader-member exchange to have significant relationships with task performance and organizational citizenship behavior. The authors also found the leader-member exchange to fully mediate the relationship between TL and task performance. The authors believe TL strategies, especially those that enhance the leader-member exchange, should be included in management training.

Judge and Piccolo (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of 87 studies measuring transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The authors included articles that contained comparable measures between the three types of leadership. The authors used previously published methods to determine the correlation and validities of TL and transactional leadership. The authors found TL to show the highest overall validity, while contingent reward leadership was a close second. The authors found more validity with TL than contingent rewards when looking at leader effectiveness. Contingent reward was found to be more valid for leader performance. The authors found the differences in validity were not significant for follower motivation and group performance. The authors found, through their meta-analysis, TL had a positive relationship with follower job satisfaction, follower leader satisfaction, follower motivation, leader job performance, group performance, and rated leader effectiveness.

Measurement Tools

Transformational Leadership

Aragón-Correa et al. (2007) evaluated TL behaviors using a questionnaire that measured overall TL, not the individual dimensions. Gill et al. (2006) used items from a tolerance-of-freedom scale to measure TL behaviors. This tool did not divide TL into the four dimensions. The MLQ is a tool used by many researchers (Bass et al., 2003; Bono & Judge, 2003; Kark, et al., 2003; Nemanich & Keller, 2007; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Purvanova, et al., 2006; Tracey & Hinkin, 1994, 1996; Walumba, et al., 2004). In hotels the tool has been used by Tracey and Hinkin (1994, 1996). The MLQ contains questions about four dimensions of TL, three dimensions of transactional leadership, and one dimension of laissez-faire leadership. A modified version of the tool, only including questions regarding certain types of leadership, has been used by Bass et al. (2003) and Walumba et al. (2004). The latest version of the MLQ is the Form 5X (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Performance

Hartline and Jones (1996) used a three question tool, filled out by guests of a hotel, as a measure of employee performance. Welbourne et al. (1998) developed the Role-Based Performance Scale, later used by Bono and Judge (2003) and Purvanova et al. (2006), to measure employee performance. This tool was used in general business. Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) developed a tool, later adapted by Iun and Huang (2007), to study the performance of Air Force mechanics. This tool had questions designed to measure performance in relationship to other employees. Patiar and Mia (2008) used a nine-item instrument to measure managerial performance.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research study was designed to analyze the relationship between the dimensions of the transformational leadership (TL) of supervisors and performance of their subordinates. This study included two questionnaires; one to measure supervisors' TL behaviors (referred to as the Subordinate Questionnaire) and one to measure employee performance (referred to as the Supervisor Questionnaire).

Use of Human Subjects

The Iowa State University Human Subjects Form was submitted with information regarding the procedures and instruments used for this study. The Institutional Review Board Chair declared this study exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations. The approval letter can be found in Appendix A.

Participants

Participants in this study included hotel front desk employees and supervisors. Participation was limited by location and type of hotel. The location was limited to a 60 mile radius around Ames, IA. The type of hotel was limited by the number of rooms; only hotels with 25 or more rooms were selected because it was assumed that hotels with less than 25 rooms would have fewer employees than needed to participate in the study. The list of hotels came from the American Automobile Association TourBook (2007). There were a total of 393 hotels in Iowa and 364 hotels (93%) had 25 rooms or more. Ninety-five hotels (24%) met the location criteria and 93 hotels (24%) met both criteria (American Automobile Association, 2007).

In order to get an accurate measure of supervisors' TL behaviors, only supervisors with at least three subordinates were invited to participate. Supervisors from the participating hotels were asked by their general manager to participate in the study. To ensure subordinates could accurately rate their supervisors' behaviors and so the supervisors could accurately rate the subordinates' performance, subordinates were allowed to participate in the study if he/she had worked with the supervisor for at least six months. Eleven of the 93 hotels did not meet this criteria so 82 hotels were left in the sample.

Instruments

The two questionnaires contained different rating scales. The subordinate questionnaire had a scale of 0 to 4 and the supervisor questionnaire had a scale of 1 to 5. The 0 to 4 scale was used for the subordinate questionnaire to be consistent with published past research.

Subordinate Questionnaire

TL behaviors were measured using a modified version of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The modified version only included statements about the four dimensions of TL, leaving out the statements on transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Permission to use, and include sample statements from, the MLQ can be found in Appendix B. Sample statements from the MLQ can be found in Appendix C; the questionnaire in its entirety could not be included due to copyright restrictions. In the questionnaire used for this study, there were 5 subordinate demographic questions and 20 statements about the supervisor's leadership behaviors.

The MLQ has been used by many researchers (Bass et al., 2003; Bono & Judge, 2003; Hinkin & Tracey, 1994; Kark, et al., 2003; Nemanich & Keller, 2007; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Purvanova, et al., 2006; Tracey & Hinkin, 1996; Walumba, et al., 2004), and has been shown to have a high validity (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). A modified version of the MLQ has been used in past studies and has been proven reliable and valid (Bass et al., 2003; Walumba et al., 2004). Tracey & Hinkin (1996) used the modified version with hospitality managers and found Cronbach's alpha, internal consistency reliability estimates, of 0.88 to 0.91 for each of the four dimensions of TL.

Supervisor Questionnaire

In reviewing literature some performance measures were found; none were deemed usable in this study. Due to a lack of research in measuring front desk employee performance, a questionnaire was developed using an employee appraisal form from Kineth Hospitality Companies based out of North Liberty, IA. According to J. Vick (personal communication, April 9, 2008), it is believed this tool was developed in-house years ago, has been used for more than six years, and has not been previously tested. A permission letter for use of this instrument can be found in Appendix D. A copy of the instrument can be found in

Appendix E. This questionnaire contained 4 supervisor demographic questions, 4 subordinate demographic questions, and 10 performance rating statements about the subordinate. This tool was used because it contained statements regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees. The scale for this item was changed from a poor to outstanding scale to a never to always scale as suggested by Salant and Dillman (1994).

Pilot Study

Both questionnaires were pilot tested to detect problems with wording and understanding as recommended by Salant and Dillman (1994). The pilot test group consisted of 31 students in an advanced lodging course at one university. There were 17 students who completed the pilot version of the subordinate questionnaire and 14 students who completed the pilot version of the supervisor questionnaire. The students were asked to fill out the questionnaire and then answer follow-up questions regarding clarity and understandability. A copy of the pilot questionnaire can be found in Appendix F. After analysis of pilot data, some questionnaire wording was changed in order to clarify statements. An example of this was in changing the word “their” to “his/her.” Also, one statement was titled “overall judgment” and this was changed to “judgment” in order to remove the notion it was an all encompassing statement.

Procedures

The researcher called all 93 hotel locations meeting the initial inclusion criteria and asked for the general manager. If the general manager was available, the researcher explained the study and asked for commitment to participate. A standard call script was developed and utilized for each of the calls (See Appendix G). Follow-up calls were made if a general manager was not available the first call. Of the 93 hotel general managers called, the researcher was able to explain the details to 64 general managers and received 37 (58%) commitments to participate. After talking with general managers of 11 hotels they were removed from the sample due to having an insufficient number of front desk employees.

For general managers of hotels in which the researcher had trouble contacting by phone, the researcher stopped by the hotel while in the area to meet the general manager face to face to try and receive commitment to participate. The researcher stopped at 11 hotels and was able to speak with 6 general managers, of which 4 committed to participate. After

receiving commitment to participate, the researcher set up a date and time to go to the hotel and drop off the questionnaires. The time and date were as flexible as possible, while trying to schedule drop offs in similar locations on the same day.

Ravichandran and Arendt (2008) looked at the response rate of mailed and hand delivered questionnaires. Mailed questionnaires had a response rate between 11% and 59%. In one study (Peters & Buhalis, 2004), the researcher noted a response rate of 65% when the questionnaires were hand delivered. In order to increase response rate and ensure the questionnaires are filled out properly, the researcher went to each hotel to meet with the general manager, deliver the questionnaires, and later retrieve the questionnaires. Ravichandran and Arendt (2008) gave some suggestions to increase response rate, including: make initial contact with a key corporate representative, make the questionnaire appear attractive, and make reminder telephone calls. All of these suggestions were followed in this research study.

The supervisor was asked to take an alphabetical list of his/her employees, or a schedule, and then asked to choose every third, fourth, fifth, or the incremental number required to get a sample of three subordinates per supervisor. The randomly selected subordinates filled out the modified MLQ about the supervisory function, and the only identification on the form was a property code for the hotel. No personal identification were noted on either questionnaire; only information in regards to demographics was collected. The direct supervisors of the employees were asked to fill out a questionnaire about the performance of their employees. The employees filled out a questionnaire about TL behaviors of their supervisor(s). A code was given to each property and was pre-printed on the envelopes included with each questionnaire to ensure the questionnaires were matched up properly. A log was kept in order to keep track of the number of questionnaires distributed to each coded hotel site. As a thank you for participating in the study, the general manager of each hotel was offered the pooled results from the study. In order to ensure anonymity and to prevent the supervisors from knowing who had filled out the questionnaire, the researcher looked at the collective TL behaviors of the supervisors at the property.

Data Analysis

SPSS Version 15.0 (2006) was used for all data analysis. Data coding and entry were done according to recommendations by Salant and Dillman (1994). Descriptive statistics were calculated for all statements. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to ensure reliability of all measurement scales. For three dimensions of TL (inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation) there were four statements, the remaining dimension, idealized influence, had eight due to the separation of attributes and behaviors. For each dimension the researcher took a mean of all answered dimension statement ratings, and that was the score for that dimension of the supervisory function of the hotel. The performance score was divided into two parts, one being tasks and the other being attitude, with five statements for each. The researcher calculated a mean score for each part and used those scores as the performance value for each subordinate. ANOVA was used to examine if perceived TL behaviors differed based on demographic characteristics (age, length of time with the supervisor, and size of hotel).

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated to determine which dimensions of TL, as perceived by front desk employees, have high correlations. Any found to be highly correlated were pooled together for the remaining analysis. Multiple regression was used to determine which dimensions of TL have a significant relationship with employee performance. This analysis was also used to determine the magnitude of each dimension's affect on each dimension of performance. The correlations of each dimension of TL behaviors and performance were looked at as well. The researcher looked at the standard deviations to determine the variability of responses among subordinates of their supervisors.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 82 hotels that met all criteria, a total of 41 general managers (50%) agreed to participate and received questionnaires. Staff of 34 hotels (83% response) completed the questionnaires. Supervisors were asked to fill out at least three questionnaires, one for each subordinate, but each supervisor was given four in case he/she was able to complete an additional questionnaire. On average, each supervisor filled out 3.47 questionnaires. Each general manager of a hotel was given three subordinate questionnaires, all of which were to be filled out. On average, 2.68 subordinates per hotel completed the questionnaire. The only supervisors and subordinates able to return questionnaires were from the 34 hotels where the researcher was able to collect questionnaires. There were 136 supervisor questionnaires and 102 subordinate questionnaires distributed to the 34 hotels. Of these, 118 supervisor (87% response) and 91 subordinate (89% response) questionnaires were collected.

Of the 93 hotels called, the researcher was unable to speak with the general manager of 23 and 11 did not meet all criteria for participation. This means there were 18 general managers who declined participation and 23 that were unreachable, for a total of 41 hotels that could not be included in the study. This points to the difficulty in obtaining input from industry representatives due to unwillingness to participate or unavailability when contacting managers in the hospitality field. . In order to continue the advancement of hospitality knowledge, professionals in our industry need to be more willing to participate in studies and more willing to take, or return, phone calls from researchers.

Demographics of Supervisors

The demographics of the supervisors who participated in this study are presented in Table 1. The most prevalent age of supervisors was between 26 and 30 years (32.4%), followed by 41 years or older (29.4%). The most common shift worked by supervisors was the 7am to 3pm shift (61.8%). The majority of supervisors had worked as a supervisor of front desk employees for 2 years or more (52.9%), with the largest category being 4 years or more (38.2%). All of the supervisors worked at least 33 hours per week with the majority working 41 hours or more (67.7%). The most common length of time working with a rated subordinate was 6 months to 1 year (30.5%).

Demographics of Subordinates

The demographics of the subordinates in this research study are presented in Table 1. The most prevalent age category was 22 to 25 years (26.4%) followed by 41 years or more (24.2%). It should also be noted that there is a fairly even distribution of ages for the categories 22 to 25 years and up, directly comparable data could not be found to verify if this distribution was common. The majority of subordinates worked the 7am to 3pm (64.8%) and the 3pm to 11pm shifts (54.9%). Most of the subordinates have worked at the front desk for a year or more (58.2%); the most common category was 6 months to 1 year (35.2%) followed by 4 years or more (25.3%). Front desk employees primarily worked 24 hours or less (52.7%) with the most common hours per week being 17 to 24 (47.3%). Employers try to keep labor costs down and therefore may schedule front desk employees for less than full-time hours to avoid paying benefits. Subordinates most commonly had worked with supervisors for 6 months to 1 year (27.5%).

Table 1. Demographics of Supervisors ($N = 34$) and Subordinates ($N = 91$)

Characteristic	Supervisors		Subordinates	
	<i>n</i>	% ^a	<i>n</i>	% ^a
Age				
18 to 21 years	0	0	7	7.7
22 to 25 years	5	14.7	24	26.4
26 to 30 years	11	32.4	19	20.9
31 to 40 years	4	11.8	19	20.9
41 years or more	10	29.4	22	24.2
Shifts worked				
7am to 3pm	21	61.8	59	64.8
3pm to 11pm	16	47.1	50	54.9
11pm to 7am	9	26.5	23	25.3
Other	16	47.1	11	12.1
Time worked^b				
Less than 6 months	1	2.9	6	6.6
6 months to 1 year	6	17.6	32	35.2
1 to 2 years	5	14.7	18	19.8
2 to 3 years	5	14.7	7	7.7
3 to 4 years	0	0.0	5	5.5
4 years or more	13	38.2	23	25.3
Hours worked per week^b				
16 or less	0	0.0	5	5.5
17 to 24	0	0.0	43	47.3
25 to 32	0	0.0	16	17.6
33 to 40	7	20.6	10	11.0
41 to 50	16	47.1	8	8.8
50 or more	7	20.6	9	9.9
Time worked with rated individual^c				
Less than 6 months	25	21.2	24	26.4
6 months to 1 year	36	30.5	25	27.5
1 to 2 years	18	15.3	15	16.5
2 to 3 years	13	11.0	10	11.0
3 to 4 years	17	14.4	8	8.8
4 years or more	9	7.6	9	9.9

^aPercentages may not total 100% due to non-response or multiple responses to questions.

^bTime and hours worked refers to as a supervisor of front desk employees for supervisors and as a front desk employee for subordinates.

^cSupervisors rated 3-4 employees so $N = 118$ for this question for supervisors.

Transformational Leadership

The transformational leadership (TL) of a supervisor was rated by his/her subordinates. The means and standard deviations of each TL dimension and statement can be found in Table 2. Due to some statements being unanswered, the number of responses to each statement ranged from 87 to 91. The means for each dimension ranged from the lowest for intellectual stimulation, 2.76 ($SD = 0.88$), to the highest for inspirational motivation, 3.11 ($SD = 0.82$). These means were slightly lower than those in the research done by Tracey and Hinkin (1996); the means they found ranged from 3.13 ($SD = 0.79$) for intellectual stimulation to 3.45 ($SD = 0.89$) for inspirational motivation. The leaders rated in their study held upper-management positions; perhaps the higher the level of management, the higher the perceived leadership behaviors. Gill et al. (2006) found TL behaviors to be inversely related to job stress and burnout. The supervisors in these hotels appear to have high levels of TL, which could mean the employees are less likely to burnout or become stressed through work.

The highest rated statement overall was in the idealized influence dimension of TL. The statement read, "My supervisor displays a sense of power and confidence," and had a mean score of 3.42 ($SD = 0.78$). With this statement being the highest rated, it is possible that a supervisor displaying this sense of power and confidence may be perceived as an effective leader. Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) found personal power to decrease a subordinate's job stress, which displaying this sense of power would be considered a personal power rather than the positional power which the authors found to increase job stress.

Tsai, Goh, Huffman, and Wu (2007) found both industry professionals and hospitality educators agreed that leadership was one of the most important competencies for a new trainee of an entry-level management position. If having a sense of power and confidence causes a manager to be perceived as a leader, perhaps these concepts should be integrated into the curriculum for hospitality students. If power can lead to lower subordinate job stress, then showing this power to employees would be a good way to keep them productive. In order for supervisors to display this sense of power, they may need to be trained either through formal training in the workplace or through educational programs, such as a hospitality management curriculum. Leadership concepts could be taught and practiced

through role plays, group work, or in a lab where management roles are filled by students. Markulis et al. (2006) found students wanted a chance to lead sometime during their undergraduate degree, with the eagerness to lead students may be more willing to learn other leadership techniques.

The next highest rated statement was another idealized influence statement which read, "My supervisor puts the good of the hotel before his/her self," and had a mean score of 3.38 ($SD = 0.83$). The highest rated statement for inspirational motivation was, "My supervisor talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished," and received a mean score of 3.26 ($SD = 0.93$). For intellectual stimulation, the highest rated statement read, "My supervisor seeks different perspectives when solving problems," with a mean score of 3.00 ($SD = 1.00$). The highest mean for an individualized consideration statement was 3.34 ($SD = 0.92$) and the statement was, "My supervisor treats me as an individual rather than just a member of the group."

TL consists of four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The internal consistency reliability estimates (Cronbach's alpha), means, and standard deviations can be found in Table 2. The Cronbach's alpha for the dimensions of TL ranged from .81 to .89. These values are consistent with previous research in hospitality; Tracey and Hinkin (1996) found the Cronbach's alphas to be from .88 to .91.

For research objective number one, correlations were calculated between each of the four dimensions of TL. The correlation matrix can be found in Table 3. The correlations between all dimensions were high and significant at the .01 level. The Cronbach's alpha for the pooled dimensions was .96. With such a high Cronbach's alpha, it appears that within this sample, all of the statements are measuring the same construct. All four dimensions were pooled for the remainder of analysis.

Research objective number two was to look at the variability of perceived TL behaviors of supervisors as reported by subordinates. The standard deviation of each dimension is located Table 2. The standard deviations vary from 0.73 to 0.88; these numbers are comparable to the results from Tracey and Hinkin (1996). They had a range of standard deviations between 0.79 and 0.98, which are slightly higher than the ones in this study. It

appears as though there is relatively low variability of perceived TL behaviors of supervisors as reported by subordinates in this study. With a low variability in ratings, it may be appropriate to sample only one employee in order to get an accurate depiction of a supervisor's leadership behaviors.

Research objective number three was to see if subordinates perceived TL behaviors of their supervisors differently based on the subordinates' age, length of time working with the supervisor, or size of hotel. One-way ANOVA was run for each of these three demographics as the independent variable and TL as the dependent. The relationship between age and perceived TL was not statistically significant, $F(4, 85) = 0.644, p = .632$. Length of time working with the supervisor was not statistically significant either, $F(5, 84) = 1.064, p = .386$. In order to maintain consistency with the other demographics, size of hotel was divided into four categories based on number of rooms: 25 to 100, 101 to 200, 201 to 300, and 401 or more. There was no statistically significant difference found between these categories, $F(3, 86) = 0.752, p = .524$. If there is no significant difference between these variables and the perceived TL behaviors then it may not be necessary to restrict a sample by any of these demographics.

Table 2. Internal Consistency Reliability Estimates, Mean Ratings, and Standard Deviations for Transformational Leadership of Supervisors ($N = 87-91$)

Dimension^a Statement ^d	α^b	Mean ^c	SD
Idealized Influence	.88	3.07	0.73
Displays a sense of power and confidence		3.42	0.78
Puts the good of the hotel before his/her self		3.38	0.83
Acts in ways . . . respect		3.21	1.00
Considers the moral . . . decisions		3.09	0.95
Instills pride . . . him/her		3.00	1.10
Stresses the . . . sense of purpose		2.96	1.14
Emphasizes . . . sense of mission		2.96	0.98
Talks . . . values and beliefs		2.48	1.12
Inspirational Motivation	.89	3.11	0.82
Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished		3.26	0.93
Expresses . . . will be achieved		3.23	0.96
Talks . . . the future		3.05	0.97
Describes a . . . of the future		2.87	0.96
Intellectual Stimulation	.84	2.76	0.88
Seeks different perspectives when solving problems		3.00	1.00
Gets me to . . . many different perspectives		2.86	0.98
Suggests new . . . front desk assignments		2.79	1.12
Re-examines own beliefs . . . are appropriate		2.34	1.22
Individualized Consideration	.81	2.96	0.83
Treats me as an individual rather than just a member of the group		3.34	0.92
Considers me as . . . other employees		2.99	1.01
Helps me . . . strengths		2.79	1.06
Spends time . . . me		2.73	1.16

^aLeadership dimensions and statements used with permission from Mind Garden (Appendix B).

^bInternal consistency rating calculated for each dimension of transformational leadership.

^cScale for statements: 0=not at all 1=once in a while 2=sometimes 3=fairly often 4=frequently if not always.

^dStatements could not be included in their entirety due to copyright restrictions

Table 3. Correlations Between Dimensions of Transformational Leadership (N = 87-91)

Dimension	1	2	3	4
1. Idealized influence	-	.82	.83	.89
2. Inspirational motivation		-	.71	.71
3. Intellectual stimulation			-	.82
4. Individualized consideration				-

Note. All correlations found to be significant at the .01 level.

Performance

The performance of a subordinate was rated by his/her direct supervisor, this resulted in 118 questionnaires used to rate the performance of subordinates. The means and standard deviations of each rated area can be found in Table 4. The highest rated areas were “Attitude toward guest” and “Safety/care of equipment,” both with means of 4.48 ($SDs = 0.75$ and 0.71 , respectively). The lowest rated area was “Initiative/motivation,” with a mean of 3.98 ($SD = 0.94$). The rating scale for this questionnaire had 4 equal most of the time. For all areas, other than “Initiative/motivation,” the mean score was higher than 4. According to the supervisors sampled, on average, employees displayed each of the rated areas most of the time or always, with the exception of “Initiative/motivation.”

The “Initiative/motivation” area was lower than the other areas. This lack of initiative or motivation could be tied to the lack of opportunities a front desk employee has to exhibit them. Many hotels, particularly chains, have very strict rules and procedures to follow when interacting with guests. Because the front desk staff interact with guests frequently, and may be restricted in how they do so, they may lack the opportunity to have the initiative or motivation in the workplace.

Upton and Cook (2002) defined reliability as a measure of the confidence one can have in a test. Cronbach’s alpha is an approximation of the reliability coefficient (Upton & Cook, 2002). Cronbach’s alpha was calculated on the supervisor questionnaire, used to rate performance of subordinates. The Cronbach’s alpha for all 10 statements was .81. This questionnaire was developed for this research study so there are no directly comparable studies. A Cronbach’s alpha of .81 is reasonably high and therefore it was concluded all statements were measuring the same construct. Factor analysis was run on the statements and

no component factors were found. The performance was going to be broken into two dimensions, tasks and attitude. Due to the high Cronbach's alpha and no smaller factors being found, for the remainder of the analysis a mean performance rating for each employee was used; this mean was considered an overall performance score.

This questionnaire is unique in that it is a reliable tool that measures performance of front desk employees. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2007) suggested tying a performance appraisal to the desired attributes or behaviors of the employees. The questionnaire used has 10 statements that relate to the knowledge, skills, and abilities of front desk employees. These knowledge, skills, and abilities are also tied into a typical job description of a front desk employee. Welbourne et al. (1998) mentioned a performance appraisal needed to be easy to complete as one supervisor may have to rate more than one employee. The questionnaire used in this study consisted of 10 statements, half as many as the one used in their study. The questionnaire used by Van Scotter and Motowildo (1996) measured employee performance in relation to other employees, the questionnaire used in this study does not and therefore a high performing employee should be rated high even if the entire staff are good performers. Hartline and Jones (1996) found a relationship between employee performance and overall perceived value and overall quality ratings of the hotel. If the relationship does exist, having an accurate way to measure performance and then fix areas where problems arise would be beneficial to hotels. This questionnaire appears to be a good tool to measure employee performance.

Table 4. Supervisor Mean Ratings for Performance of Subordinates (N = 118)

Rating Area^a Description	Mean ^b	SD
Attitude toward guest Shows interest and respect of guest; is courteous and helpful; sensitive to guests' feelings; answers questions and tries to satisfy guest needs.	4.48	0.75
Safety/care of equipment Follows safety rules; never takes chances; alert to safety. Respects Equipment; reports equipment needing attention.	4.48	0.71
Attitude toward supervision Positively accepts others and assignments; cooperative; loyal to company and department; supports company objectives.	4.43	0.72
Attendance/punctuality On-time and present when needed. Calls in when late or absent.	4.42	0.85
Attitude toward work/co-workers Gets along with fellow employees; team work; willingly pitching in to help others.	4.32	0.82
Dependability Gets the job done with minimal supervision. Meeting schedules, deadlines; keeping promises and appointments. Being available when needed.	4.31	0.81
Quality of work Neat, accurate, thorough, careful.	4.29	0.74
Job knowledge and skills Has the know-how and skill necessary to do the job. Knowledgeable on company and department policies and procedures.	4.23	0.72
Judgment Makes sound decisions; knows limitations; anticipates problems; knows consequences of decisions; ability to analyze and evaluate problems.	4.07	0.78
Initiative/motivation Has the drive and energy and applies it to the job; sense of responsibility; self-starter, willing to do more without being asked.	3.98	0.94

^aPerformance rating statements adapted with permission from Kinseth Hospitality Companies (Appendix D).

^bScale for statements: 1=never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4=most of the time 5=always.

Transformational Leadership and Performance

Research objective number four was to examine the relationship between TL behaviors of supervisors and overall front desk performance. The four dimensions of TL were pooled as one overall TL behavioral score due to the high correlation among dimensions. ANOVA was run with TL as the independent variable and overall performance as the dependent variable. No significant relationship between these two variables was found. Researchers in other areas have found a relationship between TL behaviors and performance (Bass et al., 2003; Bono and Judge, 2003; Judge and Piccolo, 2004; Nemanich and Keller, 2007; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006; Purvanova et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2005).

The lack of a relationship between TL behaviors and performance may be due to many factors. Possible factors include: lack of consistency in ratings, fear of possible retaliation, bias in hotels, a lack of commitment, or no relationship exists.

If the rating supervisor hired the employee, he/she may be more lenient in the ratings because he/she selected the best employee. This could lead to a “leniency error,” meaning the supervisor may have given inaccurately high ratings to all employees (Noe et al., 2007). Essentially this could turn the 5-point scale into a 3-point scale for some supervisors. Another error that may have caused inaccurate ratings would be “halo and horns.” The halo error refers to a supervisor rating an employee high in all areas based on doing well in one performance aspect; the horns error refers to the opposite (Noe et al., 2007). Perhaps an employee recently received a comment card from a guest praising a certain front desk employee; this may cause a supervisor to overrate the employee in all performance aspects.

Some supervisors or subordinates may have had an inconsistent understanding of what each number meant on the rating scale. Even though words were used to describe the lowest and highest rating, one supervisor’s 5 rating may be another’s 3; the same could be possible with subordinates. Inaccurate ratings similar to this may be caused by the leniency error, strictness error, or central tendency. The leniency error would mean the supervisor may only use the top portion of the scale. The strictness error means a supervisor may give all employees low scores because he/she has unreasonably high standards (Noe et al., 2007). The strictness error would lead to a supervisor only using the bottom portion of the scale. The central tendency would mean a supervisor would rate all employees in the middle of a

rating scale, ignoring the highest and lowest scores (Noe et al., 2007). All three of these rating errors would lead to inaccurate response and incomparable results.

The letter with the elements of consent clearly stated to place the completed survey in the provided envelope and seal it. Even with this assurance from the researcher, employees were not completely guaranteed that the supervisor or manager would not open the envelope. The researcher also picked up some questionnaires that were not in the provided envelopes, which means the subordinates' responses could have been read by a supervisor. Not having an absolute guarantee that their supervisors would not see the responses, some subordinates may have rated their supervisors differently than they would have otherwise.

Even though general managers at hotels were told no hotel specific data would be published, the hotels knew the researcher was looking at the relationship between TL behaviors and performance. Knowing what relationship the researcher was looking for, the supervisors or subordinates may have inflated the numbers in order to make their hotel look better. There may have been a lack of commitment to the research by the employees of the hotel. It is possible that the employees filled out the survey because they were asked to by their supervisor and took little time to think through responses.

It is also possible that no relationship exists between the TL behaviors of supervisors and the performance of their subordinates at the front desk of a hotel. Front desk staff employees may work so closely with their supervisors that they have many of the same job duties; thus perceiving their supervisors as equals. The direct supervisor could also be so high above the subordinate that the employee does not feel like he/she is actually led by the supervisor, such as a busy general manager. Other studies have found a significant relationship between TL behaviors and a performance measure. Nemanich and Keller (2007) had a sample where the employees were rated by their direct supervisor, but this took place in a large multi-national firm where there may be a more distinct line between supervisor and employee. Purvanova et al. (2006) studied managers and employees from two large organizations who had just gone through a leadership development program. With the leadership development program, the employees may have been better educated on how to evaluate leadership behaviors. Also, with the sample coming from two large organizations, the distinction between employee and supervisor job duties could be greater.

Conclusion

While TL behaviors and performance were found to have no significant relationship, there were many other findings worth noting. The high response rate (72% for supervisors, 74% for subordinates) means the methods used to survey these individuals were effective. The lack of variability between subordinates' ratings of their supervisors could mean it is not necessary to survey more than one employee per supervisor. The tool used to measure performance was found to be reliable and because it relates with the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees, a similar tool may be effective in measuring front desk employee performance.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

This chapter contains three parts. First, a summary of the research will be discussed. Then, limitations of this study will be addressed and finally recommendations for future research will be presented.

Summary of Research

The researcher found all four of the dimensions of transformational leadership (TL) to be highly correlated. For this study it appeared as though all four dimensions were rating the same construct. The researcher found the variability of perceived TL behaviors of supervisors as rated by subordinates to be relatively low. This low variability means it may not be necessary to have three subordinates rate the TL behaviors of their supervisor. There were no significant differences found in the ratings of subordinates in different age categories, length of time working with the supervisor, or size of the hotel. Because the four dimensions of TL were highly correlated they were treated as one construct. The researcher failed to find a significant relationship between the TL construct and hotel front desk employee performance.

Limitations of Study

Because this study took place at hotels in a limited geographical area, the results may not be generalizable to other areas or other industries. Even though anonymity is assured to all participants, some may have felt uneasy about rating their direct supervisors and this may have caused errors in the results. The training of supervisors in rating the performance of their subordinates is unknown; therefore rater errors may have affected the performance scores of subordinates.

Patiar and Lokman (2008) found differences in performance ratings, and Whitelaw and Morda (2004) found small differences in leadership behaviors, based on gender. Gender was not included as a demographic question in this study, and thus these relationships could not be assessed. Ethnicity was not included in the demographic questions either and thus differences between ethnicity and performance or leadership behaviors could not be assessed.

Recommendations for Future Research

In order to increase response rate, researchers should follow similar methods used in this research study. The researcher followed recommendations made by Ravichandran and

Arendt (2008) in this study. The researcher contacted the general manager ahead of time to receive commitment, used letterhead paper to make the surveys look more presentable, and hand delivered and retrieved questionnaires. All of these measures may have led to the high response rate in this study. Out of the four general managers that committed to the study when the researcher stopped by the hotel, only two completed the surveys. Even though the numbers are lower, it still appears that the initial phone contact resulted in a higher response rate. Contacting key figures, such as the general manager, prior to visiting or sending questionnaires is recommended.

The performance tool used in this study was found to be reliable. The tool measures performance by addressing the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in a front desk employee. These knowledge, skills, and abilities also align well with the job description of a typical front desk employee. A similar tool should be used by future researchers when attempting to measure the performance of hotel front desk personnel. Demographic questions regarding gender and ethnicity, both of which could have an affect on leadership or performance, should be added to the questionnaires

The relationship between TL behaviors and performance was found not to be significant in this study; it does not mean the relationship does not exist. Future researchers in this area should look at educating supervisors about how to accurately rate the performance of their subordinates, this is one way to reduce rater errors (Noe et al., 2007). This includes at least making supervisors aware of the possible rater errors. Also recommended by Noe et al. (2007), supervisors should be provided with examples and types of performance so they know how to use the 5-point rating scale.

Another possible way to reduce the error would be to try and calibrate the supervisors in how they rate subordinates, in order to make all ratings comparable. Calibration of the supervisors would be a very extensive process, but something that could greatly increase the reliability of the results. One way to calibrate the supervisors would be to give descriptions of behaviors of an employee to each supervisor and see how they would rate that employee. Next you would need to coach the supervisors on possible differences in ratings. Reminding supervisors to use the entire scale, not just the top half, could also lead to more reliable results.

TL behaviors were not found to be significantly related to performance in this study; perhaps another type of leadership would be more apt to increase performance of front desk employees. Future researchers should include the transactional leadership and laissez-faire statements in order to see if they are significantly related to employee performance. It may also be beneficial to have the supervisors fill out the self rated form of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and compare the results to those of the subordinate.

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APPENDIX A. HUMAN SUBJECTS FORM

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Assurances
Vice President for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515 294-4566
FAX 515 294-4267

DATE: November 29, 2007

TO: Eric Brown
7E MacKay Hall

CC: Susan W. Arendt
9E MacKay Hall

FROM: Jan Canny, IRB Administrator
Office of Research Assurances

IRB ID: 07-607

Study Review Date: 27 November 2007

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair has reviewed the project, "Dimensions of transformational leadership and relationship with employee performance in hotel front desk staff" (IRB ID 07-607) and has declared the study exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b), Exempt Category (2). A description of this exemption category can be found in the list on the next page. Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review by the IRB. Only the IRB may make the determination of exemption, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.

The IRB determination of exemption means that this project does not need to meet the requirements from the Department of Health and Human Service (DHHS) regulations for the protection of human subjects, unless required by the IRB. We do, however, urge you to protect the rights of your participants in the same ways that you would if the project was required to follow the regulations. This includes providing relevant information about the research to the participants.

Because your project is exempt, you do not need to submit an application for continuing review. However, you must carry out the research as proposed in the IRB application, including obtaining and documenting (signed) informed consent if you have stated in your application that you will do so or if required by the IRB.

Any modification of this research should be submitted to the IRB on a Continuation and/or Modification form, prior to making any changes, to determine if the project still meets the Federal criteria for exemption. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, then an IRB proposal will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.

Exempt Categories

- (1) *Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.*
- (2) *Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.*
- (3) *Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, if: (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) Federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.*
- (4) *Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.*
- (5) *Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of Department or Agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) Public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.*
- (6) *Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.*

APPENDIX B. MIND GARDEN PERMISSION FORM

For use by Eric Brown only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on February 25, 2008

www.mindgarden.com



To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material;

Instrument: *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*

Authors: *Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

Copyright: *1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

for his/her thesis research. Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Vicki Jaimez Mind
Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

APPENDIX C. SUBORDINATE CONSENT FORM AND SAMPLE STATEMENTS

January 20, 2008

Dear front desk employee,

The purpose of this research study is to see how leadership behaviors of supervisors relate to the performance of their subordinates. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a front desk employee at a hotel.

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for approximately 15 minutes. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time. Return of a completed questionnaire indicates your willingness to participate in this study. During the study you may expect the following procedures to be followed. You will fill out the subordinate questionnaire about your supervisor. After completion, please place the questionnaire in the envelope provided, seal it, and a researcher will collect them in the envelope provided for return to the researcher.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: 1) questionnaires will remain completely anonymous and no personal identification will be asked 2) no hotel will be identified by name in the published research, rather pooled data will be reported 3) only the identified researchers will have access to the study records 4) all questionnaires will be placed in a sealed envelope by the person filling them out, and not opened except by the identified researchers and 5) study records will be kept in a locked office. There are no foreseeable risks at this time for participating in this study. You will not incur costs by participating in this study and you will not be compensated.

We hope that the information gained in this study will benefit society by helping to identify what dimensions of leadership are beneficial for supervisors within the hotel industry. If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire or if you would like a summary of research findings, please contact Eric Brown at 515-451-6289 or Dr. Susan W. Arendt at 515-294-7575.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Eric Brown
Graduate Student
ebrown@iastate.edu

Susan W. Arendt, PhD, RD
Assistant Professor
sarendt@iastate.edu

Subordinate Questionnaire
Demographics

Please circle your response to each of the following questions:

1. What is your age?

- a. 18-21 years
- b. 22-25 years
- c. 26-30 years
- d. 31-40 years
- e. 41 years or older

2. What shifts do you work (Circle all that apply)?

- a. 7am-3pm
- b. 3pm-11pm
- c. 11pm-7am
- d. Other: _____

3. What is the length of time you have worked with the supervisor you are rating?

- a. Less than 6 months
- b. 6 months to 1 year
- c. 1 to 2 years
- d. 2 to 3 years
- e. 3 to 4 years
- f. 4 years or more

4. What is the length of time you have worked in front desk position:

- a. Less than 6 months
- b. 6 months to 1 year
- c. 1 to 2 years
- d. 2 to 3 years
- e. 3 to 4 years
- f. 4 years or more

5. How many hours do you work per week at this job?

- a. 16 or less hours
- b. 17 to 24 hours
- c. 25 to 32 hours
- d. 33 to 40 hours
- e. 41 to 50 hours
- f. More than 50 hours

Subordinate Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: The following questionnaire is designed for an employee to fill out about his/her supervisor. The questionnaire is designed to measure the leadership behavior of a supervisor. Please circle the appropriate response for each statement.

My supervisor . . .

	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Once in a while</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Fairly often</i>	<i>Frequently if not always</i>
1. Helps me . . . Strengths	0	1	2	3	4
2. Talks . . . values and beliefs	0	1	2	3	4
3. Seeks different perspectives when solving problems	0	1	2	3	4
4. Talks . . . the future	0	1	2	3	4
5. Instills pride . . . him/her	0	1	2	3	4
6. Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished	0	1	2	3	4
7. Stresses the . . . sense of purpose	0	1	2	3	4
8. Spends time . . . Me	0	1	2	3	4
9. Puts the good of the hotel before his/her self	0	1	2	3	4
10. Treats me as an individual rather than just a member of the group	0	1	2	3	4
11. Acts in ways . . . respect	0	1	2	3	4
12. Considers the moral . . . decisions	0	1	2	3	4
13. Displays a sense of power and confidence	0	1	2	3	4
14. Describes a . . . of the future	0	1	2	3	4
15. Considers me as . . . other employees	0	1	2	3	4
16. Gets me to . . . many different perspectives	0	1	2	3	4
17. Re-examines own beliefs . . . are appropriate	0	1	2	3	4
18. Suggests new . . . front desk assignments	0	1	2	3	4
19. Emphasizes . . . sense of mission	0	1	2	3	4
20. Expresses . . . will be achieved	0	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX D. KINSETH HOSPITALITY COMPANIES PERMISSION FORM



February 20, 2008

Mr. Eric Brown
1510 Delaware Ave #1
Ames, IA 50014

Dear Eric:

As a follow up to our email communication on October 20, 2007, I am sending this letter. Please use this document as permission to utilize the Kinseth Hospitality Companies' Employee appraisal form in development of your questionnaire for your thesis research. The appraisal form may be used as long as Kinseth Hospitality Companies is acknowledged as the source of the questions.

Sincerely,



Jessica Vick
General Manager

APPENDIX E. SUPERVISOR CONSENT FORM AND QUESTIONNAIRE

January 20, 2008

Dear front desk supervisor,

The purpose of this study is to see how leadership behaviors of supervisors relate to the performance of their subordinates. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a supervisor of front desk employees at a hotel.

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for approximately 15 minutes. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time. Return of a completed questionnaire indicates your willingness to participate in this study. During the study you may expect the following procedures to be followed: You will fill out the same supervisor questionnaires for **three to four of your employees** – these are attached and identified as “Employee A” through “Employee D.” After completion, please place the questionnaires in the envelope provided, seal it, and a researcher will collect them in the envelope provided for return to the researcher.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: 1) questionnaires will remain completely anonymous and no personal identification will be asked 2) no hotel will be identified by name in the published research, rather pooled data will be reported 3) only the identified researchers will have access to the study records 4) all questionnaires will be placed in a sealed envelope by the person filling them out, and not opened except by the identified researchers and 5) study records will be kept in a locked office. There are no foreseeable risks at this time from participating in this study. You will not incur costs by participating in this study and you will not be compensated.

We hope the information gained in this study will benefit society by helping to identify what dimensions of leadership are beneficial for supervisors within the hotel industry. If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire or if you would like a summary of research findings, please contact Eric Brown at 515-451-6289 or Dr. Susan W. Arendt at 515-294-7575.

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Eric Brown
Graduate Student
ebrown@iastate.edu

Susan W. Arendt, PhD, RD
Assistant Professor
sarendt@iastate.edu

Supervisor Questionnaire
Demographics

Please circle your response to each of the following questions:

1. What is your age?

- a. 18-21 years
- b. 22-25 years
- c. 26-30 years
- d. 31-40 years
- e. 41 years or older

2. What shifts do you work (Circle all that apply)?

- a. 7am-3pm
- b. 3pm-11pm
- c. 11pm-7am
- d. Other: _____

3. How long have you worked as a supervisor of front desk employees:

- a. Less than 6 months
- b. 6 months to 1 year
- c. 1 to 2 years
- d. 2 to 3 years
- e. 3 to 4 years
- f. 4 years or more

4. How many hours do you work per week as a supervisor of front desk employees:

- a. 16 or less hours
- b. 17 to 24 hours
- c. 25 to 32 hours
- d. 33 to 40 hours
- e. 41 to 50 hours
- f. More than 50 hours

Supervisor Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS: Think of one front desk employee who you supervise, rank this employee's performance in each area using the definitions given in italicized lettering. Please circle the appropriate response for each item.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always
1. Attendance/punctuality: <i>On-time and present when needed. Calls in when late or absent.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2. Safety/care of equipment: <i>Follows safety rules; never takes chances; alert to safety. Respects equipment; reports equipment needing attention.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
3. Job knowledge and skills: <i>Has the know-how and skill necessary to do the job. Knowledgeable on company and department policies and procedures.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
4. Initiative/motivation: <i>Has the drive and energy and applies it to the job; sense of responsibility; self-starter, willing to do more without being asked.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
5. Dependability: <i>Gets the job done with minimal supervision. Meeting schedules, deadlines; keeping promises and appointments. Being available when needed.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
6. Attitude toward work/co-workers: <i>Gets along with fellow employees; team work; willingly pitching in to help others.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
7. Attitude toward supervision: <i>Positively accepts others and assignments; cooperative; loyal to company and department; supports company objectives.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
8. Attitude toward guest: <i>Shows interest and respect of guest; is courteous and helpful; sensitive to guests' feelings; answers questions and tries to satisfy guest needs.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
9. Judgment: <i>Makes sound decisions; knows limitations; anticipates problems; knows consequences of decisions; ability to analyze and evaluate problems.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
10. Quality of work: <i>Neat, accurate, thorough, careful.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<p>11. How long have you worked with Employee A?</p> <p>a. Less than 6 months b. 6 months to 1 year c. 1 to 2 years d. 2 to 3 years e. 3 to 4 years f. 4 years or more</p> <p>12. What is the approximate age of Employee A?</p> <p>a. 18-21 years b. 22-25 years c. 26-30 years d. 31-40 years e. 41 years or older</p> <p>13. What is the approximate number of hours Employee A works in a week?</p> <p>a. 16 or less hours b. 17 to 24 hours c. 25 to 32 hours d. 33 to 40 hours e. 41 to 50 hours f. More than 50 hours</p> <p>14. What shift does Employee A work (Circle all that apply)?</p> <p>a. 7am-3pm b. 3pm-11pm c. 11pm-7am d. Other: _____</p>					

APPENDIX F. PILOT TESTING

Introduction:

My name is Eric Brown and I am currently doing research for my Master's thesis, and Dr. Jeong has allowed me to use this class to pilot test the questionnaires.

Background on research:

I am looking at the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors of supervisors and the performance of their subordinates, the front desk employees. The purpose of this pilot test is to test the reliability of the questionnaires as well as to make sure the questionnaires are worded in a way that is easily understood.

The questionnaires are to be done on an individual basis and there are two different questionnaires I will be testing. Half of the class will be filling out a questionnaire designed for the supervisors; this questionnaire will measure the performance of their subordinate. The other half will be filling out the questionnaire designed for the subordinates; this questionnaire will measure the transformational leadership behaviors of the employee's supervisor.

Has anyone here not taken 380? – If there are people who have not, I will make sure they receive the subordinate questionnaire, otherwise I will just divide the class in half.

When filling out the questionnaire please fill it out in regards to someone you have worked with in the past. For those of you filling out the supervisor questionnaire, feel free to think about when you were the kitchen manager or a head position in 380 and evaluate the performance of one of your employees. For those of you filling out the subordinate questionnaire; fill it out in regards to a supervisor you currently have or have worked with in the past, again this can be a kitchen manager you worked with in 380.

Be sure to read the instructions carefully and elaborate as much as possible on the open ended pilot test questions are the first page.

Thank you for your assistance.

If you are willing to be contacted regarding your responses, please write your name below.
Name _____

This pilot test is intended to test reliability and wording of instruments. This instrument will be used for thesis research at area hotels. Please fill out the following questionnaire about a **supervisor** you have worked with in the past. Feel free to make notes on the questionnaire if you feel getting your point across would be easier by doing so. After filling out the questionnaire, please respond to the following questions:

1. Were the questions understandable? _____
If not, please indicate which question number and what is difficult to understand _____

2. Were the scales (rankings) understandable? _____
If not, please indicate what you feel could be done to make the scale easier to understand _____

3. Overall, what suggestions do you have to improve the questionnaire? _____

Thank you for all your help with this pilot test, your input is appreciated.

Eric Brown
M.S. Candidate, Foodservice and Lodging Management

If you are willing to be contacted regarding your responses, please write your name below.

Name _____

This pilot test is intended to test reliability and wording of instruments. This instrument will be used for thesis research at area hotels. Please fill out the following questionnaire about a **subordinate** you have worked with in the past. Feel free to make notes on the questionnaire if you feel getting your point across would be easier by doing so. After filling out the questionnaire, please respond to the following questions:

1. Were the questions understandable? _____
If not, please indicate which question number and what is difficult to understand _____

2. Were the scales (rankings) understandable? _____
If not, please indicate what you feel could be done to make the scale easier to understand _____

3. Overall, what suggestions do you have to improve the questionnaire? _____

Thank you for all your help with this pilot test, your input is appreciated.

Eric Brown
M.S. Candidate, Foodservice and Lodging Management

APPENDIX G. STANDARD CALL SCRIPT

Hello (name of general manager), my name is Eric Brown and I am a Foodservice and Lodging Management graduate student at Iowa State University. I am doing a research study about leadership behaviors of supervisors and employee performance of hotel front desk staff. I am seeking your assistance with my research. Is this something you might be interested in hearing more about?

-If yes - continue

-If no - Thank you for your time, I hope you have a wonderful day.

For this research I will be using brief questionnaires and have employees fill out these questionnaires – it should take them no longer than 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. I would like at least one front desk supervisor and at least three of the employees this supervisor oversees to fill out the questionnaires. Also, I will need the supervisor and employees to have worked together for at least six months. Does your property meet this requirement?

-Reasoning in case asked: I need the supervisor to have worked with the employees for at least six months so both the employees and the supervisor will be able to accurately respond to questions about the other.

-If yes, continue

-If no, unfortunately I do need this requirement to be met in order for your property to participate. Your interest in my research study is appreciated; however I will be unable to include your property in this study. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to possibly working with you in the future.

For your information, neither questionnaire will ask for names, there will only be a property code for your hotel on each questionnaire for tracking purposes. Only summary data will be published, and so there is no foreseeable way your employees will find out about the supervisor responses and vice-versa.

Can I go ahead and add you to my list of participants in this study?

-If yes, continue

-If no, Thank you for your time and interest in my research study, I hope you have a wonderful day and I look forward to possibly working with you on future research.

Your assistance is much appreciated. For this study I will be delivering the questionnaires to you, so I will need to set up a time to do this. Dropping off the questionnaires and explaining the procedures I need followed should take no more than 15-20 minutes, is there a particular day of the week or time of day that works best for you?

I would like to return the same time the following week to pick up the questionnaires. We can discuss a particular day/time convenient for you when I come to drop them off.

(Once day/time of drop off is confirmed). Repeat day/time of drop off. Now, in order to make sure I bring enough questionnaires I need to know how many front desk supervisors

will be able to fill out the questionnaire and how many of their employees will need questionnaires.

Great, I will make sure I have an appropriate number of questionnaires for your property.

Would you like to see a copy of the questionnaires in advance?

-If yes, I would be happy to send them to you, would you prefer them sent to you via mail or e-mail? (Get/confirm appropriate method)

-If no, proceed.

Are there any questions you have for me at this time?

-If yes, go respond to questions.

-If no, continue

Once again your participation in my research study is much appreciated, if you have any questions at any time feel free to call me at 515-451-6289 or you can email me at ebrown@iastate.edu. To confirm my information is correct, I will be delivering the questionnaires to you on (DATE) at (TIME), is that correct? Thank you for your time, and I look forward to working with you.