

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS IN
MANUFACTURING ORGANIZATIONS

by

Graham W. Howard

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Business Administration

Liberty University, School of Business

May 2020

Abstract

This study investigated and analyzed leadership's impact on frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States that were non-union companies. This study is a qualitative, multiple case study that investigated leadership practices at three different manufacturing facilities. The specific effects of leadership that this study focused on was how leaders affected employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. The results of this study identified a need for leadership training in blue-collar, manufacturing industries as well as the need to develop stronger leader-follower relations in order to improve employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation within manufacturing industries.

Key words: blue-collar leadership, turnover, satisfaction, motivation

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to multiple individuals. First, I want to dedicate this work to John Myers. While we worked together years ago in a manufacturing facility and I was also working on my MBA you constantly asked me about what I was studying and were genuinely interested in what I was learning and wanted to relate the principles I was studying to the blue-collar factory you were managing during that time and I often struggled to find applicable topics that addressed the specific problems you faced as a leader. This inspired me as I started my doctoral studies to dig into leadership of blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries and find what this demographic of workers truly valued in a leader. I found in my higher education that most teachings on leadership focus on a white-collar setting, not in a blue-collar, manual labor setting. So, I set out to research this topic specifically, and because of your encouragement and genuine interest in my studies over the last several years, I want to dedicate this work to you.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I want to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. For it is through You I have been given the strength and drive to start and complete this goal. You continued to give me strength when things got difficult and I wanted to quit. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians, 4:13). I kept this verse in mind daily throughout this process. I also want to thank my family, my parents, Dr. John Franklin Howard, and Kari Howard who encouraged me throughout the entire process and always offered advice when it was needed. Additionally, I want to thank my brothers, John Howard, Philip Howard, and Josiah Howard who also encouraged me and listened to me when I was tired of working on the constant assignments during this process.

I want to thank all my friends and colleagues who encouraged me for the past few years to continue on and complete this degree, Clint Cooper, Michael and Becky Dorman, Stephen Scally, Luke Harris, Michael Autenreith, Corbin and Kara Brewer, Kelly Lions, Lucy Winsett, Allison and Jaime Lease, Malakia Hilton, Jeff Tew, Bryan Miller, Don Witczak, Doug Young, Dustin Styles, Laura Bennefield, Tim Lilly, Steph Zok, Daniel Zeman, Amber Huskins, Tim and Noreen McAllister, Nicole Carrow, Jackie Bonczar, Amanda Obenshain, and many others, you have all encouraged me to complete this degree and it meant more to me than you will ever know. It motivated me to continue to move forward and complete this degree because of the love and support you all showed me.

Last but certainly not least, I want to thank my chair, Dr. Betty Ahmed, and committee member, Dr. D. Keith Mathis who have been with me since the beginning of this dissertation process and I could not have completed this without your help. Dr. Ahmed, your guidance through this has helped me reach this goal and I cannot thank you enough.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The focus of this research study was to identify poor leadership practices of blue-collar workers in a manufacturing facility and understand the effects managers can have on employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and motivation. The focus of this investigation was why leaders in these factories may lack effective leadership skills and additionally what this lack of leadership skill is doing to the blue-collar workforce which they manage. This qualitative, multiple case study includes a discussion of the results of leadership practices from multiple manufacturing facilities in the Southeastern United States. This study also cross analyzes the results to identify the negative effects of poor leadership and discuss ways leadership can minimize these undesirable effects of poor leadership.

Background of the Problem

The general problem to be addressed was poor leadership of blue-collar, frontline employees in manufacturing industries resulting in lack of employee motivation, high levels of turnover and high levels of employee dissatisfaction within the industrial manufacturing setting. Downing (2016) found in his research that managers in authority positions in industries such as factories have not treated subordinates consistently, thus noting that there is a leadership issue for managers of these types of blue-collar or working-class people. When managers cannot lead effectively, it can result in low worker morale and job dissatisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). It is especially problematic in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States, where there is little research on effective leadership practices in manufacturing industries.

Ariyabuddhiphongs and Kahn (2017) stated that immediate managers are the number one predictor of employee turnover in the United States. They also state that many employees reported that they were leaving their organization because their manager's expectations were

unclear or because their manager provided inadequate equipment, materials, or resources. The leadership style used by immediate managers may have a major influence on employees' turnover intention, as well as overall job satisfaction and motivation. Research results indicated that an appropriate leadership style for a certain business context and culture could result in decreased turnover intention, increased employee satisfaction, and increased employee motivation (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). Leadership can affect morale and job satisfaction, turnover, motivation, security, job quality, and the achievement of an organization (Listianti & Hamali, 2015).

Leadership is a process of directing and affecting activity related to the work of the group members. Manufacturing and factory industries are easily overlooking and viewing their frontline workers as replaceable members of an organization instead of viewing them as a valuable asset to the organization. As a Christian leader, changing the way individuals view these types of employees within the organization may lead to higher employee motivation, satisfaction and reduce employee turnover. An employee who management appreciates will do more than expected (Anderson, 2015). Leadership is a process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. Because of the strong influence of leadership on followers and organizational processes, leadership can play a critical role not only in relating to goal achievement and efficiency but also regarding employee motivation, job satisfaction, and employee turnover (Nielsen, Skogstad, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2016). The identified gap missing in the existing literature is research that focuses on poor leadership of blue-collar, frontline workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States, resulting in high levels of employee turnover, dissatisfied employees, and a lack of motivation.

Problem Statement

The general problem to be addressed was poor leadership of blue-collar, frontline employees in manufacturing industries resulting in lack of employee motivation, high levels of turnover and high levels of employee dissatisfaction within the industrial manufacturing setting. Downing (2016) found in his research that managers in authority positions in industries such as factories have not treated subordinates consistently, thus noting that there is a leadership issue for managers of these types of blue-collar or working-class people. When managers cannot lead effectively, it can result in low worker morale and job dissatisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). A result of ongoing poor leadership may lead to high employee turnover. When workers are unmotivated because of poor organizational culture, coming from poor leadership, employees often leave the organization (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014).

Leadership is a central driving force for worker motivation and job satisfaction and directly affects worker performance positively or negatively (Ugwu, Enwereuzor, & Orji, 2016). Leaders play a vital role in the formation of such an organizational culture. They have the responsibility of influencing individuals and directing them to achieve strategic objectives (Tortorella & Fogliatto, 2017). While several leadership theories can apply to a manufacturing or blue-collar setting, the lack of understanding of the blue-collar worker's needs and personal feelings towards leadership differ from that of the white-collar workers and leadership may not always realize this. Many individuals view their work as just a means of income, but research suggests that people in all levels of work and jobs can find meaningfulness in their work (Lips-Wiersma, Wright, & Dik, 2016). The specific problem to be addressed was poor leadership of blue-collar workers in factories in the Southeastern United States, resulting in high turnover, low motivation, and high employee dissatisfaction.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case research study was to add to the body of knowledge by expanding on the understanding of reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of employee motivation. The specific demographic for this study was frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States. This study sought to draw attention to employee dissatisfaction, turnover, and lack of motivation that may be the result of poor managers and leadership. This research investigation explored the problem through an in-depth study of employee dissatisfaction, turnover, and lack of motivation caused by poor management practices, lack of management skills, or lack of leadership training in manufacturing organizations in the Southeastern United States.

The leadership style of managers or leaders and the job satisfaction of employees have noticeable effects on employee work outcomes (Babalola, 2016). Therefore, adopting a leadership style that works best for an organization and its employees remains one of the most effective and efficient means by which organizations achieve their objectives and that of employees' satisfaction (Babalola, 2016). Employee turnover costs are a significant challenge for many firms. Studies show that employee turnover can cost around twenty percent of salary in terms of recruiting, training, and lost productivity, although some estimates are much higher (Carter, Dudley, Lyle, & Smith, 2019).

While organizations continue to experiment with innovative ways to improve employee retention, one of the most enduring aspects of a job that affects worker satisfaction may be the relationship that workers have with their manager or leader. What often differentiates a good boss from a bad one is leadership ability (Carter et al., 2019). From motivating and rewarding effort, organizing capital and labor, establishing the work pace, serving as a role model for

employees, and setting the overall tone of an organization's work environment, a boss' leadership ability is apt to impact how employees view their job (Carter et al., 2019).

Nature of the Study

In the nature of the study, I discussed the research method and design chosen for this study as well as the rationale of the selected method and design. The research methodology selected was qualitative. However, in this section, quantitative and mixed methods was discussed as well. The qualitative research design chosen was a case study, specifically a multiple-case study, but I also discussed other research designs such as narrative, phenomenological, and grounded theory in this section.

Discussion of method. The appropriate research method for this research study was qualitative methodology, and specifically, the research design was a multiple-case, case study design taking place in multiple manufacturing factories in the Southeastern United States. Qualitative research can be an effective way to gain understanding in contexts of human behavior by observation and interviewing individuals (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Qualitative research methods are sets of data collection and analysis techniques used to provide a description, build theory, and test theory (Shah & Corley, 2006). The qualitative method provides a means for developing an understanding of complex phenomena from the perspectives of those who are living it (Shah & Corley, 2006). The primary benefits of qualitative methods are that they allow the researcher to discover new variables and relationships, to reveal and understand complex processes, and to illustrate the influence of the social context (Shah & Corley, 2006).

The quantitative research method deals with quantifying and analyzing variables to get results. Quantitative involves the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical techniques to answer questions like who, how much, what, where, when, how many,

and how (Apuke, 2017). Apuke (2017) described quantitative research methods as the explaining of an issue or phenomenon through gathering data in numerical form and analyzing with the aid of mathematical methods and in particular statistics. Quantitative research uses quantifiable data to frame facts and discover patterns in research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more structured than qualitative data collection methods (Bryman, 2006).

Mixed method research at its core, involves a research design that uses multiple methods or incorporates multiple worldviews (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). Mixed methods research methodology can provide a deeper understanding of certain research problems by combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods, however, it can also be difficult to accurately combine the two methods appropriately to conduct reliable research (Venkatesh et al., 2013). Bryman (2006) stated that for mixed-method research, unless there is some foundation for the use of multi-strategy research, there is the likelihood of data redundancy. Meaning, some of the data gathered would repeat and be very unlikely to shed light on the research topic. Data redundancy in mixed-method research would entail not just a waste of research resources, but also a waste of participants' time (Bryman, 2006).

For this research, the selected method of investigation was qualitative methodology, because of the nature of studying leadership and employee behaviors in the context of manufacturing factories in the Southeastern United States. This study was a complex social phenomenon that would be difficult to put statistical or mathematical measures to that would provide valuable data. Qualitative research is mainly investigative research. Qualitative research looks to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of individuals. Qualitative research also tries to discover trends in thought and opinions of people, and dive deeper into the problem (Bryman, 2006).

Discussion of design. For the research, the selected research design was a multiple-case study design. Qualitative multiple-case study design can produce valuable information regarding contextual drivers in multiple factories, such as employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and lack of motivation, as well as outcomes of leadership behaviors in the factory setting of the research (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). Multiple-case studies can be more rigorous because they can use cross-case analysis to discover themes and outcomes, as well as differences in multiple organizational settings. That is why this study used the multiple-case study design to study multiple manufacturing companies. Case study research design concentrates on scientific explorations that go in-depth and into the environmental context of a phenomenon that is happening in real life, such as a manufacturing setting with many blue-collar employees. Case study research design also focuses on a problem, an organization, an individual, a group, an event, or an anomaly (Yin, 2014).

A multiple-case study research design can provide a more in-depth understanding of a phenomenon regarding a complex environment (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018) such as in manufacturing factory organizations where blue-collar workers account for a large number of employees. Because of this capability in multi-case study design will allow for researching and comparing the outcomes and effects of multiple factories with the outcomes of multiple leadership styles and the effects on blue-collar, front line employees, located in different, but similar organizational settings or with different managers and employee participants. By pursuing an interpretive, multiple-case study design and strategy, using in-depth, qualitative collection and analysis procedures (Andrews & Htun, 2018), this research aimed to reveal the lived experiences of blue-collar or frontline employees. This will help show how management practices and individual traits have effects on and perpetuated within a manufacturing setting.

For this qualitative research method, the multi-case study will allow for the study of workers from multiple manufacturing factories along with the effects that different managers have on the individual employee's job satisfaction, turnover rates, and motivation.

Several research designs are available for qualitative methodology. The narrative research design and inquiry report stories and findings from a personal perspective. The narrative research design focuses on a single person or a small group of people, two or three individuals. A researcher often selects one individual for a narrative project based on a certain criterion that the researcher considers significant. A narrative researcher may select multiple participants, but the goal is the same, to report stories about the individual's life and experiences that explain an issue of some kind (Creswell, 2016). A narrative research study takes place in many varying forms, but at the method's basic core, it begins with an individual's experiences and told through their account of these experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Since the narrative design is based on human experiences and tells stories of human phenomena, it is appropriate in many fields of study in the social science world (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The narrative design is an appropriate design to use when studying a phenomenon that happens involving an individual or a few individuals that can then provide the unique personal experience for a researcher to gain better insight into the studied issue. However, for this research, gathering information from many participants in different factories, the narrative design is not a good fit. While the narrative design focuses on one individual or a few individuals and tells a story from their perspective, a phenomenological study details a common meaning for multiple individuals about their personal lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Creswell (2016) stated that for a phenomenological study the researcher needs to outline a detailed description of how several individuals experience a specific phenomenon. Creswell

(2016) described phenomenological research as a design inquiry that focuses on philosophy and psychology where the researcher details the stories of lived experiences of a group of individuals that experienced the same phenomenon. A phenomenological study focuses on the essence of the lived experiences by the individuals that are a part of the study.

The phenomenology design typically includes several features in all studies conducted in phenomenology designed research studies. These features include exploring a phenomenon that is a single idea or concept. Exploration of a phenomenon that involves a group of people who have all experienced the same phenomenon. A data collection process that can involve interviewing individuals that have experienced the phenomenon and detailing the experiences of these individuals that explain what they experienced and how they have experienced this phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) noted a few challenges with a phenomenological study. One problem that a researcher may encounter when doing a phenomenological study is that in a phenomenological study, of the researched topic, the researcher must have a broader philosophical assumption. Typically, these philosophical assumptions are abstract which makes it difficult to adequately write in a phenomenological study. The second challenge of phenomenological research is the validity of the information gathered. Vicary, Young, and Hicks (2017) described phenomenological research as an interpretive method, meaning the participants must interpret their own experience and the researcher must interpret the information the participant is providing to the researcher.

The grounded theory inquiry design differs from narrative and phenomenology design. While narrative research focuses on individual stories described by participants and phenomenology highlights the shared experiences for several individuals, the purpose of a grounded theory study is to go beyond description and to generate or uncover a theory (Creswell

& Poth, 2018). This qualitative research design focuses on a process or an action that a researcher wants to understand. Through this research, the researcher creates a generalized theory and accompanies it with a sequence of events to explain how the theory unfolded (Creswell, 2016). Ethnography is a research design that stems from anthropology and sociology. The researcher studies shared patterns of language, behavior, and actions of a group of individuals that are in the same cultural group over an extended period (Creswell, 2014). The case study design was the most appropriate research design for this study because case study focuses on an organization, entity, individual or many individuals, whereas other methods such as narrative only focuses on a single individual's experience in the context of the problem, or phenomenological that focuses on certain people who have experienced a phenomenon (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007).

Summary of the nature of the study. There are multiple types of research methodology, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods that a researcher can choose. A researcher must choose the methodology that best fits the research problem and research study. The chosen methodology for this research study is qualitative because of the ability to research and understand contextual drivers of human behavior (Qu & Dumay, 2011), specifically in manufacturing facilities in the Southeastern United States. For qualitative methodology, a multiple-case study is better fitting compared to the narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, and other qualitative research designs. This is because a multiple-case study design allows for the study of several factories and participants from each location, which provides cross-case analysis in the research. A multiple-case study research design can provide an in-depth understanding of complex human behavioral issues (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018), which was the rationale for the choice in this research study.

Research Questions

Leadership style is one of the main topics of leadership theory, and therefore of significant importance to the fields of organizational behavior and human resource management. As a significant aspect of the employee work environment, leadership style highly influences employee mental state and potential development (Li, Castaño, & Li, 2018). Burawat (2019) suggested that the most crucial thing that leadership does is to maximize organizational performance by inspiring or motivating employees to excel and build a team's self-confidence in others. As well as, provoke positive change, set direction, draw strength from adversity and increase self-awareness. Leadership and managers can have a positive or negative effect on employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction, and turnover. I sought to identify what impact leaders truly have on employees and what types of leadership styles and qualities positively and negatively affect overall employee satisfaction in a blue-collar manufacturing industry.

RQ1. Why do leaders in factories lack leadership skills?

RQ1a. What can managers do to improve their leadership skills to enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction?

RQ1b. How do poor leadership practices affect employee satisfaction?

RQ2. How does poor leadership practices affect employee turnover?

RQ2a. What leadership skills can reduce turnover rates in factory workers?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the research relates to employee turnover, employee dissatisfaction, employee motivation, and leadership concepts and theories. Poor leadership may lead to several organizational problems at any level of an organization. This research focused on the effects of poor leadership on blue-collar and frontline employees in manufacturing facilities

in the Southeastern United States and how weak leaders affect employee satisfaction, employee turnover, and employee motivation. Employee turnover can harm organizational performance and result in high replacement costs (Mathieu, Fabi, Lacoursière, & Raymond, 2016). Mathieu et al. (2016) discussed how job satisfaction is either an overall feeling about the job or is a correlated set of attitudes about different duties of the job. Research has shown that unsatisfied employees leave their jobs more often than satisfied employees, and as the popular saying states, employees do not quit their companies, they quit their boss, and research has proven this saying to be true (Mathieu et al., 2016).

Discussion of employee turnover concept. Employee turnover – the voluntary severance of employment made by the employee (Hom, Lee, Shaw, & Hausknecht, 2017) attracted the attention of scholars and practitioners for many years. In the beginning stages of turnover theory, the studies pointed to an individual's personal history and thought that would predict whether an employee stayed with a company or not, but research identified this as false in validity testing. The employee turnover theory then began to look at employees' attitudinal responses to workplace conditions, which appeared to be a more valid basis for turnover research (Hom et al., 2017). In turnover theory, research shows how human resource management and leadership practices affect employees' behaviors and attitudes toward their job (Rahman & Nas, 2013).

Research about individuals' job perceptions of their working conditions led the way for research on job dissatisfaction as a predictor of employee turnover to become evident. Early research inquiry further noted that employees who left their organization negatively perceived their leaders (Hom et al., 2017). Turnover of employees is detrimental to organizations with replacement costs, work disruption and loss of production or lowering performance (Rahman &

Nas, 2013). There are many reasons for employee turnover, however, poor management is one of the top reasons for employees leaving organizations (Rahman & Nas, 2013).

Discussion of job satisfaction concept. Job satisfaction – a pleasurable or positive emotional feeling that an employee experiences that are a direct result of ones’ feeling of their job experience (Alvinius, Johansson, & Larsson, 2017). Job satisfaction is also a measurement of employee satisfaction represented by work performance and attitude regarding their job and is one of the most regularly researched topics in vocational behavior and covers several disciplines (Rottinghaus, Hees, & Conrath, 2009). Job satisfaction is a key outcome that managers and organizations seek that lead not only to satisfied employees, but also to the tenure of employees (Rottinghaus et al., 2009).

While most job satisfaction research has linked employee’s attitudes towards the job and commitment to the organization research has shown a strong relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment when employees have a positive view of their leader (Alvinius et al., 2017). Job dissatisfaction theory notes that individuals are likely to leave a company if they perceive the relationship with the organization or leader as being unbeneficial to them. Job dissatisfaction theory implies that dissatisfied employees are likely to have an intention to leave the company and thus a threat to terminate employment because of their dissatisfaction (Chinomona & Mofokeng, 2016).

Discussion of employee motivation concept. Employee motivation – the reason an employee has for acting or behaving in a particular way – appears in a large number of research studies, but the exact understanding of motivation continues to evolve (Zhang, Zhang, Song, & Gong 2016). Although the precise understanding of employee motivation continues to evolve most of the motivation theories have categorized motivation into two main focuses (i.e., intrinsic

motivation and extrinsic motivation) and then investigated the effects on work performance and organizational commitment (Zhang et al., 2016). Extrinsically motivated behaviors are observed through an external mechanism such as receiving incentives or avoiding punishment, whereas intrinsically motivated behaviors come from personal interest (Zhang et al., 2016).

Haroon and Akbar (2016) detailed how leadership affects employee motivation from how leaders communicate and interact with subordinates. Effective communication between managers and employees can enhance employee motivation and performance, which reduces job dissatisfaction (Haroon & Akbar, 2016) and can thus reduce employee turnover. Leaders have a profound influence on organizational performance and their members (Van Kleef et al., 2009). Leader's emotional display have a strong potential influence on employee's motivation, including the way they think, feel, and act while working on the job (Van Kleef et al., 2009). Managers seek effective ways to support, increase, or sustain the motivation of employees, which has a direct effect on organizational performance (Zhang et al., 2016).

Discussion of leadership concept. Implicit leadership – are individual beliefs of the process of and interactions between leaders and followers (Schyns & Riggio, 2015). Implicit leadership theory asks the questions of why leaders behave the way they do, and why do employees react the way they do? Implicit leadership theories (ILTs) are everyday theories that people believe to be true about leaders in general. They are representations that a person has of a leader and can influence how an individual or employee acts toward leaders and can also affect how leaders act based on the cognitive representations the leader holds (Schyns & Riggio, 2015).

Schyns and Schilling (2011) discussed how research about implicit leadership theories typically are positive or effective leadership styles or traits, however, research shows that leaders are responsible for the success and failure of organizations and therefore implicit leadership

theories can also be negative. Consequently, research should regard managers and leaders as effective and ineffective equally in study findings (Schyns & Schilling, 2011). Guhr, Lebek, and Breitner (2019) posited that managers and leaders can motivate employees to engage in certain types of behaviors, and accordingly, managers have a significant impact on employee behaviors that both affect the organization positively and negatively. The effects of poor leadership can result in employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and lack of motivation. Leaders may find it difficult to influence followers when followers have a negative view of leadership (Schyns & Schilling, 2011).

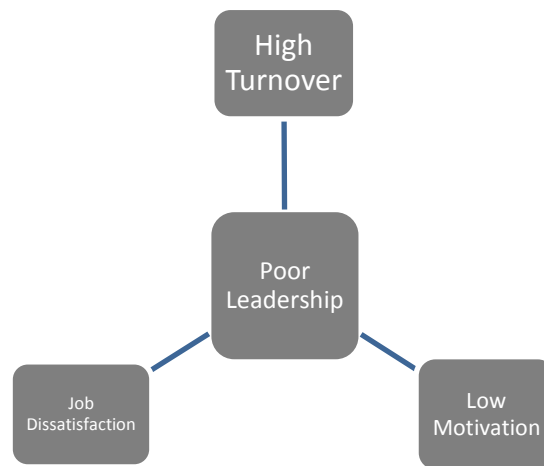


Figure 1. Relationships between concepts.

Discussion of relationships between concepts. At the center of employee turnover is job dissatisfaction and low motivation, while poor leadership or ineffective leadership may be a significant reason for these negative outcomes. Stark and Kelly (2016) stated that one of the main reasons employees leave a company or change jobs is because of their boss. When the job market is faring well employees do not have to settle for poor leaders (Stark & Kelly, 2016). Leaders can correct this issue and retain and motive employees (Stark & Kelly, 2016), but

leaders may need to improve on their leadership skills, become more self-aware and emotionally intelligent to change their effects on blue-collar employees (Downing, 2016).

The main focus of this study is poor leadership, specifically in blue-collar work environments, and how poor leadership affects employee turnover, motivation, and employee satisfaction. Additionally, this study sought to identify how can leaders change and obtain more appropriate leadership skills to reverse the negative effect of poor leadership within the context of manufacturing facilities in the Southeastern United States.

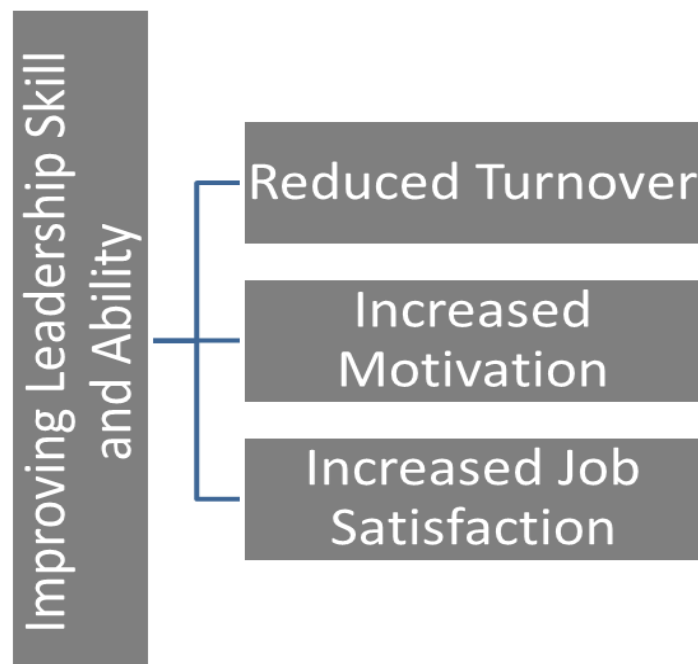


Figure 2. Leadership improvement concept.

Summary of the conceptual framework. Employee turnover theory, dissatisfaction theory, and motivation theory can all be related to leadership theory and effective leadership practices. Downing (2016) noted that transformational leadership and emotional intelligence in leaders improved employee motivation and job satisfaction, which also led to reduced employee turnover in blue-collar industries. The conceptual framework of this research is to understand why leaders in blue-collar organizations lack these leadership qualities and how can they obtain

them and understand the effects of leaders not obtaining these qualities. Leader effectiveness has a major impact on organizational performance and employee commitment and leaders need to understand how to have a positive impact on their employees (Van Kleef et al., 2009).

Understanding and improving leadership effectiveness in blue-collar organizations can reduce employee turnover, increase motivation, and increase job satisfaction which can have an overall positive impact on organizational performance.

Definition of Terms

Blue-collar/frontline workers: Employees or workers and work environments related to manual labor, manufacturing, fabrication, production, and repair settings (Downing, 2016).

Employee turnover: Employees' voluntary-ended employment with an organization (Hom et al., 2017).

Implicit leadership: Leadership style is a process of interaction between leader and follower (Schyns & Riggo, 2015).

Job satisfaction: Means pleasurable, positive feelings based on the appraisal of job practices (Saari & Judge, 2004).

Motivation: The general willingness to do or not to do something regarding an individual's job tasks (Zhang et al., 2016).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

Assumptions are somewhat in the researcher's control, but without them, the research problem could not exist. Assumptions presume that statements are to be true, if only temporarily, for a specific purpose such as constructing a theory (Simon, 2011). Limitations are potential weaknesses in the research study that are typically out of the researchers' control and

delimitations are characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundary of the study and are in the researcher's control (Simon, 2011).

Assumptions. There were several assumptions for this particular study. First, the assumption that all managers and factory workers answer all survey questions truthfully, without bias or undue social or occupational pressure. For research participants to willingly answer truthfully, I strictly kept anonymity and confidentiality, and participants took part as volunteers and could choose to withdraw at any time without ramifications. Second, the assumption of the surveys used is representative of the research, such as employee turnover, job satisfaction and motivation as it relates to leadership practices. Third, the assumption that the selected organizations and sample population were an accurate representation of blue-collar workers and their respective managers accurately describe the intended research problem. The selection and observation process of each participating facility will help mitigate these assumptions.

Limitations. General limitations are that research quality can be largely dependent on the researcher's ability to investigate a phenomenon and not allow personal bias to influence the data gathered. In qualitative research, it can be more challenging to maintain and demonstrate rigor in the study (Anderson, 2010). The researcher's presence in qualitative research data collection can affect the subjects' responses to interview questions or questionnaires (Anderson, 2010). Additionally, the qualitative data can be less adequate in some studies and the researcher must utilize data collection methods appropriately to gather enough information (Munthe-Kaas, Glenton, Booth, Noyes, & Lewin, 2019).

Limitations specific to this research study may be that all chosen manufacturing facilities are all in the geographic region of the Southeastern United States and results may vary in different geographic regions. Another limitation may be the selection of this section of all

manufacturing facilities and results may not be generalizable for all blue-collar work (e.g., construction, commercial landscaping, and other skilled or unskilled work environments). As in any study dealing with individual attitudes of respondents, there is a risk of inconsistency between reported attitudes and actual attitudes. A limitation of this study may be the response rate of participants and the length of the study. There can also be an inherent bias in certain facilities that the researcher is not aware of that might limit the study. The empirical results reported in this study may have limitations and readers should be aware of this.

Delimitations. Delimiting factors of this research study include the chosen demographic of employees in manufacturing facilities and their direct managers, the geographic location, and the specific focus of leadership on employee rate of turnover, job satisfaction, and motivation. The questionnaires used in this study sought to answer the research questions specifically. The results of this study may be generalizable to: a) blue-collar managers; b) manufacturing facilities in the Southeastern United States; and c) organization leaders seeking to improve leadership skill that reduces turnover, dissatisfaction, and low motivation within the blue-collar workforce.

Significance of the Study

Mathieu et al. (2016) stated that leadership solves the question of how to organize a company's collective efforts including organizational personnel and that leadership is the key to organizational effectiveness. To be successful, manufacturing companies need employees who are being productive and efficient in their job performance. Organizations face many challenges in production and productivity among employees and the productivity of employees plays a significant role in organizational competitive advantage (Zondo, 2018). However, Downing (2016) stated that many managers in blue-collar work environments may not be knowledgeable in leadership behaviors that enhance employee productivity that generates higher levels of

performance. By identifying effective leadership practices for blue-collar workers and defining why leaders lack these leadership skills, this research can help to shed light on ways organizations and managers can begin to improve employee outcomes. Employee outcomes such as, turnover rates, improve motivation, and job satisfaction which may also lead to improved organizational performance (Downing, 2016). Organizations could then implement education for frontline managers that would help to increase their leadership understanding and leadership skills.

Reduction of gaps. While there is a large amount of scholarly literature on employee turnover, job satisfaction, and motivation, as well as a plethora of research and literature on leadership, there is little research on why leadership in blue-collar industries lack effective leadership implementation (Russell et al., 2018). Russell et al. (2018) discussed how many organizational and leadership practices develop through human resource management, but the implementation often falls on organizational frontline managers. The degree to which the implementation of such leadership practices varies depending on the frontline managers' commitment and ability. Frontline managers' characteristics and abilities often affect the perceived effectiveness of the implementation, and consequently, the individual and organizational outcomes of these effective leadership efforts (Russell et al., 2018). This study sought to help fill in the gaps of where frontline managers may fail in the implementation of leadership practices that seek to reduce turnover, job dissatisfaction, and motivation in a blue-collar job.

Implications for Biblical integration. This research study sought to offer a deeper understanding of leadership styles that can resonate with blue-collar, frontline employees who are not thought of very often when it comes to leadership practices. The Bible states in Matthew

(25:40) “The King will reply, truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (New International Version). Organizations often view low level, frontline employees, as a part of a machine, instead of a valuable asset of the organization. As a Christian leader, one should change the way they view these types of employees and by doing so it can lead to high employee motivation, satisfaction, and reduce employee turnover.

Colossians says:

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism. (3:22-25).

While this can relate to subordinates obeying their supervisors, it is critical for supervisors to treat employees with the respect that all people are children of God and leaders should “not lord it over those entrusted to you but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter, 5:3).

An employee who feels appreciated will do more than expected (Anderson, 2015). The Bible also states in Matthew (7:12) “so in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” Leaders should treat employees in the same way they would want for themselves. “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” (1 Thessalonians, 5:11). Managers should seek ways to motivate employees by encouraging them and not by demanding or pressuring them.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day approaching. (Hebrews, 10:24-25)

Leaders can have a meaningful impact on employees and a Christian leader must keep the word of God at the center of their actions when leading others, the Bible states “and we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone” (1 Thessalonians 5:14). When leaders are effective, they can motivate and help employees reach organizational goals positively. “Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns” (Deuteronomy 24:14). This is a clear call for leaders to treat employees as leaders would want for themselves and Christian leaders should implement Christ-like leadership within their organizations.

The goal of the business manager and the employee are similar in that each one benefits from the good of the company by using their distinct gifts to create the best product or service that the company can offer. Thus, they fulfill the organizational vision of the company and in doing so, management and labor employees have the opportunity to experience one aspect of the abundant life that Jesus came to bring (John 10:10b). At their best, Christian business leaders see themselves as co-workers with labor workers. This mindset ensures that whether it is on an individual basis, or a corporate level, fruitful and fulfilling work takes place that brings meaning to the company, the employees, and the customers, realizing the vision of Jesus. “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit, fruit that will last” (John, 15-16a).

Relationship to field of study. Ariyabuddhiphongs and Kahn (2017) stated that immediate managers are the number one predictor of employee turnover in the United States. Many employees reported that they were leaving their organization because their manager's expectations were unclear or because their manager provided inadequate equipment, materials, or resources. The leadership style used by immediate managers can have a major influence on employees' turnover intention, as well as overall job satisfaction and motivation.

Research results indicated that an appropriate leadership style for a certain business context and culture can result in decreased turnover intention, increased employee satisfaction, and increased employee motivation (Downing, 2016). This information relates to the field of leadership because leaders affect employee satisfaction, motivation, and turnover intentions. This research study sought to reveal appropriate leadership styles and management practices that focus on blue-collar or frontline workers and help to develop a learnable method for leading and managing blue-collar workers in a manufacturing setting. Leadership in an organization has an especially significant role because of its presence; there can be a process of helping and supporting employees to work hard to achieve their goal. Leadership can affect the morale and job satisfaction, turnover, motivation, security, job quality and the achievement of an organization (Listianti & Hamali, 2015). Leadership is a process of directing and affecting activity related to the work of the group members. Often overlooked in manufacturing and factory settings, leaders may view blue-collar workers as replaceable members of an organization instead of seeing them as a valuable asset to the organization and that is why this topic is significant to study.

Summary of the significance of the study. This research study offers a look into effective leadership practices in blue-collar, manufacturing environments, but can apply to

diverse types of organizations where frontline managers struggle with employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and motivation. The significance of this study is to help organizations and managers understand how leadership affects employees and organizational outcomes through leadership capabilities. Also, the study results may contribute to the body of current literature on effective leadership practices.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative study was to review research and literature on manufacturing industries that test the theories that leadership style and effectiveness influences employee outcomes, as well as to understand why leaders in these industries may lack leadership effectiveness and how leaders can improve leadership ability to improve employee outcomes. The specific employee outcomes concerning leadership measured are employee turnover, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation. The existing literature discussing leadership, employee turnover, motivation, and satisfaction to provide background and rationale for this study are reviewed in this section.

Employee turnover. For over 100 years, employee turnover has been a topic of research that empirical studies and literature seek to understand (Hom et al., 2017). Early literature on employee turnover explored attitudinal responses to the workplace environment as a prime turnover predictor, while other scholars linked turnover to job dissatisfaction (Hom et al., 2017). Soon after, literature started to investigate further into the relationship between employees who left a company and their manager or supervisor and found employees who left a job more negatively perceived leadership and their direct supervisor (Hom et al., 2017). Employee turnover research is a concept that comes from three core perspectives. The first focuses on turnover models, wherein employee turnover is a consequence of employees' job satisfaction and

organizational commitment. The second perspective focuses on the leadership literature and leader-member exchange or relationship of follower and leader, whereas the third emphasizes organizational support theory (Mathieu et al., 2016).

Employees may leave the organization for several reasons, thus they can negatively affect the organization in terms of overall expenses and the abilities to distribute the minimum required services. When employees leave the organization, this may not only have an impact on the organization itself, but also on the workforce within the organizations. Due to its emotionally depressing impact in many cases, employee turnover is a relevant topic for scholars, academics, and managers (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Carter et al. (2019) showed that better managers relate to employee productivity and reduced employee turnover and that strong leadership from immediate managers increases retention among direct employees. Researchers and literature have also discussed the overall organizational and corporate culture of how a company affects the employee turnover. However, the most critical issue here is trust in and respect for the management team. If organizations appreciate employees, treat them with respect, and provide benefits, compensation, and rewards that demonstrate respect and caring, the employees are more likely to stay with the organization. In other words, employees appreciate a workplace in which communication is transparent, management is accessible and is approachable and respected, and direction is clear and understood (Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Several research studies note that the costs associated with recruiting, selecting, and training new employees can often exceed the annual salary paid for that position. In addition, there are several other direct and indirect costs associated with employee turnover intentions, such as work disruptions, losses of organizational knowledge, and memory and emotional impacts on co-workers (Ju & Li, 2019). Turnover intention and actual employee turnover are

highly correlated and turnover intention connects to the negative influences of job dissatisfaction which correlates to failures in the training domain in some cases (Egan, Yang, & Bartlett, 2004). Common organizational strategies to prevent turnover intention are a rewards structure, training opportunities, employee engagement, perceived organizational support, work-life balance, and frontline management or direct supervisor involvement (Sikora & Ferris, 2014). When companies fail to offer training opportunities to employees, it can lead good workers and quality employees to look for another employer who will provide these opportunities. When management and leaders promote training that employees perceive positively, it reduces turnover intention in an organization (Ju & Li, 2019).

Kim and Hyun (2017) linked workplace engagement with lower levels of turnover intentions and discussed that workplace engagement is a leading factor in talent management. When management and leaders try to develop strategic ways to support and retain employees in their organizations, managers should consider supporting employees to have high levels of personal resources. Resources such as self-efficacy and optimism can help facilitate employees to be more engaged in their work and is more effective and efficient than just helping them to decrease their turnover intentions. Frontline management should also consider collaborating with executives and supervisors to find ways to create and maintain a workplace environment where individual employees have opportunity to gain the education to have elevated levels of personal resources. This can lead to improving their work engagement and positive outcomes (Kim & Hyun, 2017).

Manager or supervisor support represents a central part of the social support system in the workplace which is an indication that there is an employee-focused work environment that can help to reduce turnover in an organization (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017). It seems that the

presence of social support for a supervisor is a vital job resource contributing to employees' career adaptability and job satisfaction. When individuals work in a supportive environment that includes support arising from leaders and direct supervisors, they are likely to have affective outcomes such as career satisfaction and intention to remain in the organization (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017). Research and management practices about frontline employees are lacking and it is imperative to acknowledge this due to the role these employees play in the organization. The needs of frontline employees differ from other employees and a supportive environment from supervisors or leadership can show these employees they are vital to the organization (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017). Also, a lack of employee recognition is one of the significant factors that can contribute to employee turnover. Organizations must provide genuine appreciation and recognition to employees for employee retention. Otherwise, there is a probability that employees tend to leave the organization (Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Employee emotions are relatively complex and reflect the ups and downs of the organization's work environment and culture. Failure to manage emotions effectively can lead to job-related stress, which can lead to job dissatisfaction, turnover and potentially create personal health risks (Cho, Rutherford, Friend, Hamwi, & Park, 2017). In part, these risks contribute to high annual costs to firms as a result of employee absenteeism, employee turnover, and medical and legal insurance. Beyond the heavy personal and financial costs, employee turnover has the potential to create gaps in production output, customer service, and produce higher variations of quality or in the level of service provided to customers (Cho et al., 2017). Given the potential adverse effect of mismanaged emotions, organizations and leaders have become more interested than ever in understanding employees' ability to manage and control their emotions, as well as their ability to observe and understand the emotions of others (Cho et al., 2017). While job

satisfaction and organizational commitment are significant predictors of turnover intentions, both of these concepts focus on employees' feelings toward their company, coworkers, or supervisors (Cho et al., 2017). Looking beyond employee feelings toward their management or organizational aspects that impact the experience of these employees in the workplace may be critical in terms of understanding the emotional management process of frontline employees and understanding turnover intentions from this perspective (Cho et al., 2017).

Employee turnover has been a critical issue of human resource management, although recruiting capable employees is crucial to building an effective workforce of equal or even greater importance is retaining those employees (Cho & Song, 2017). Employee turnover is not only the loss of the human capital of an organization, but also the loss of job knowledge and institutional knowledge of the organization. Meaning, when an employee leaves an organization, the intangible knowledge that the employee learned from the organization also leaves the organization (Cho & Song, 2017). To attain comparable personnel, the organization needs to find ways to recruit and keep talented employees, and leaders in the organization can help in this regard (Cho & Song, 2017). To avoid turnover, recruiting, assessing, and motivating employees to be efficient and effective should be a top priority of management and direct supervisors (Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Many organizations, especially manufacturing organizations, have performance goals for frontline employees and managers often focus on the organizational outcomes rather than organizational processes to achieve these goals, which can cause stress for frontline employees (Stritch, Molina, & Favero, 2018). While there are challenges to effectively using performance goals, the identification of organization performance goals and targets is significant for several reasons in many organizations. First, goals and performance targets achieve a key evaluative

function, serving as benchmarks in the assessment of organizational level effectiveness and the performance of employees or a collective entity. Goals and performance targets can assist with enhanced accountability and the oversight of employees, and information on current performance can help to improve future performance (Stritch et al., 2018).

Second, organizational goals and performance targets play a significant role for leaders and an organization's decision making, guiding the alignment of resources, activities, and outputs in pursuit of performance targets and objectives. The identification of organization or department performance targets and goals allows managers to communicate clear objectives that employees work to meet within a specified time (Stritch et al., 2018). However, there can be an underlying difficulty of performance goals and how they might affect an organization's frontline employees. At the individual level, challenging and concise performance goals are a criterion in the directing and controlling of human behavior toward higher levels of performance in an organizational setting (Stritch et al., 2018). However, very often an organization's goals or performance targets are not realistic and considered unattainable. Previous research demonstrates there are a number of potential negative consequences for employees and their organizations when goals are unattainable. The negatives can include turnover, dissatisfaction, decreased work effort, and feelings of alienation and withdrawal, which is a key organizational outcome with consequences for personnel management (Stritch et al., 2018).

There is a large amount of evidence from research and literature that suggests organizational tenure influences job attitudes and turnover intentions. For instance, research strongly argues that tenure at a company is the single best predictor of turnover because it represents an employee's past behavior and summarizes his or her relationship with the organization (Alexandrov, Babakus, & Yavas, 2007). The attraction-selection-attrition

hypothesis proposes that individuals want to work for a company that fits with their ideals and satisfies their needs and goals. In those cases where there is a good fit for the individual, a company would expect low levels of attrition, and therefore, longer tenure (Alexandrov et al., 2007). In cases where the individual does not fit well within the organization or with the immediate supervisor, however, a company should expect high attrition rates and, therefore, shorter tenure, provided that other job opportunities are readily available. Thus, job tenure correlates with climate perceptions, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Alexandrov et al., 2007).

Creating and maintaining a highly productive workforce in organizations is a central job for strategic human resource management. A certain level of turnover can create motivation for employees and helps maintain creativity in some organizations. However, compelling evidence in research shows that excessive employee turnover is detrimental to organizational performance because it can disturb production and create additional costs for the company in replacement costs for those that leave. With the high costs accompanying voluntary employee turnover, a large amount of research and attention is focusing on understanding why individuals leave their jobs (Sun & Wang, 2017).

Many empirical research studies on voluntary employee turnover use individuals as the only source of analysis. The fundamental assumption is that whether an employee remains with an organization or not is a decision made on an individual basis. This line of research and studies, therefore, suggests that the approaches for reducing turnover can only be effective when managers understand each individual's desires and needs and can create a work environment that individual employees want (Sun & Wang, 2017). However, individual motives can vary, and managers in organizations may not have much discretion over individual factors such as pay,

promotion, and benefits, which shows to considerably affect individual employees' job satisfaction, motivation, and turnover intentions (Sun & Wang, 2017).

Consequently, the organizational approaches developing from these research studies may have limited success in practical implementation. For these reasons, the research on employee turnover needs to understand the factors that constitute the organizational environment. The organizational culture and climate of the workplace can significantly form individuals' outlook of their organizations and their decisions to stay or leave (Sun & Wang, 2017). Sun and Wang (2017) developed and empirically test in their research, a conceptual model that connects two organizational factors, specifically, supervisors' leadership and organizational culture that show a relationship between employee turnover intention and actual voluntary turnover behavior. The level of leader support and the degree of unity within an organization are among the most significant organizational conditions to reduce employee turnover (Sun & Wang, 2017).

For many years in research, transformational leadership and employee turnover intentions were two different areas of research. However, attention in merging these two separate concepts has grown over the past several years and focuses on the assumption that the leadership behavior of immediate supervisors is more likely to affect employees' turnover intentions (Gyensare, Anku-Tsede, Sanda, & Okpoti, 2016). Reducing the turnover of good employees who meet and surpass organizational goals can have a tremendous impact on the organization's overall profitability. Researchers report that transformational leadership contributes to managing employee turnover by increasing the organization's financial performance (Gyensare et al., 2016).

Researchers who study the effect of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee well-being found transformational leadership to be more effective in enhancing

employee well-being and minimizing turnover intention (Gyensare et al., 2016). In these research studies, transformational leadership is a key variable in decreasing turnover intention and enhancing employee's overall well-being. Yet, there is still a need to understand whether or not transformational leadership will lead to a reduction in turnover intention, but there is evidence that transformational leadership has a negative relationship to employee turnover intention (Gyensare et al., 2016).

Employee satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a positive or even pleasurable emotional state that is a direct result of an individual's job or job experience (Mirfakhrai, 1985). Job satisfaction is the overall well-being that comes from one's job and job environment (Mirfakhrai, 1985). Job dissatisfaction can occur from a dislike of job tasks, working conditions, or a negative relationship with leaders or managers in an organization and can have a direct correlation to employees leaving an organization (Hom & Kinicki, 2001). Chan (2019) linked employee satisfaction directly with a participatory relationship with management where the employee is a part of the decision making regarding an employee's specific job duties.

Employees that have a higher degree of workplace engagement are more likely motivated by role modeling from their supervisor. Employees observe and imitate their leaders and they are more likely to perform effectively at work if their direct supervisor is engaging them (Chan, 2019). The relationship between participative leadership and employees' work performance affects employees' work engagement. Participative leadership behaviors also affect employee job satisfaction, with work engagement again acting as the mediator (Chan, 2019). With job satisfaction acknowledged by different parties in an organization as a core indicator of overall organizational functioning and performance, a better conceptual understanding of how an

employee's bond with his or her direct supervisor and broader organization correlates with job satisfaction (Karanika-Murray, Duncan, Pontes, & Griffiths, 2015).

Many researchers and authors consider the employee–supervisor relationship a key factor that influences employee job satisfaction. In this respect, factors such as the extent to which an immediate supervisor effectively delegates and gives autonomy to employees highly impacts the employees' view of their jobs (Alegre, Mas-Machuca, & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016). The literature of job satisfaction proposes that the leadership style of an employee's direct supervisor can have positive and negative effects on the employee's organizational commitment and job satisfaction. In particular, the degree to which an employee's direct supervisor provides encouragement and support to the employee concerning the employee's work is a strong factor in the employee's overall attitude toward his or her job (Alegre et al., 2016). Numerous studies investigate this relationship in several job contexts and highlight the importance of promoting a supportive work environment and adequate management support, as these factors affect employees' work-related attitudes and perceptions of the job (Alegre et al., 2016).

Mathieu et al. (2016) reported that studies of perceptions of aversive leadership have positively related to employee resistance and negatively related to employees' job satisfaction. They further reported in their study that there was a significant correlation between leadership style and employees' job satisfaction. Also, Mathieu et al. (2016) noted that the most positive correlation to employee satisfaction was between employee-oriented dimensions of leadership as opposed to task-oriented leadership behaviors. Williams and Hazer (1986) found a stronger influence on job satisfaction and organizational commitment when looking at consideration leadership style rather than task-oriented leadership style. Vandenberghe, Bentein, and Stinglhamber (2004) found that affective commitment to the direct manager of an employee

predicted affective commitment to the overall organization, which also predicted intention to quit and therefore could predict actual turnover. Mathieu et al. (2016) further noted that job satisfaction correlated the effects of the supervisor-subordinate relationship on an intention to leave the company and partially correlated the relationship between supervisor-subordinate on organizational commitment.

Research evidence from theoretical as well as empirical literature indicates that turnover intentions represent a dependable indicator of actual voluntary employee turnover and highly correlate to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Alexandrov et al., 2007). For example, Hom et al. (2017) maintained that employees decide to leave their organization when they become dissatisfied with their jobs, supervisor, or lose their commitment to the organization. Likewise, research argues that when an employee's dissatisfaction with their job is present, their desire to remain in their organization starts to decline. Initial consequences of these negative effects, in the form of low job satisfaction and organizational commitment, are turnover intentions (Alexandrov et al., 2007). Research and literature indicate that job satisfaction is a strong predictor of turnover intentions and extensive research shows that job satisfaction predicts both commitment and turnover intentions, and commitment predicts only turnover intentions (Alexandrov et al., 2007).

Of all the available resources a company uses in their business, organizations are beginning to realize and understand that employees are their most precious assets and research has indicated that employees' job satisfaction is not an independent concept, but it coincides with several other aspects of the organization (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). Employee satisfaction, motivation, retention, and commitment are critical matters for organizations to understand and consider in their business strategy. Job satisfaction is dependent upon many organizational

variables such as organizational leadership, organizational structure, working conditions, organizational size, and compensation, which generally is a good indicator of the organizational climate and culture (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). Because of this, it is difficult to assess and measure the degree of an employee's job satisfaction, because the concept of job satisfaction is behavioral, and several organizational factors can influence employee job satisfaction, originating from the internal and external environments of the organization.

In recent studies, research indicated that a job characteristic is an aspect of a job that produces good conditions for employees that turn to a high degree of motivation, satisfaction, and performance. Since the concept of job satisfaction is complex and it depends on aspects of manager and employee characteristics as well as organizational culture, research needs to look at these factors in different contexts and different organizational cultures (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). In addition, an individual with a high degree of job satisfaction seems to maintain a positive attitude and have an overall good feeling about his or her job, supervisor, and work environment. An individual who is experiencing job dissatisfaction seems to have negative feelings and attitudes towards his or her job, supervisor, or environment and there could be a propensity to have less commitment or turnover intentions about the job and the company as well, even though previous research considers employee job satisfaction as one standalone variable (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016).

Springer (2014) stated that job satisfaction is the extent to which individuals like or dislike their jobs, or in other words, whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs. An older definition found in literature describes job satisfaction as an emotional state resulting from the assessment or appraisal of one's personal job experience. As with job motivation, job satisfaction has several concepts and theories associated with it. Three predominant theories of

job satisfaction include the historical situational occurrences theory, discrepancy theory, and motivation-hygiene theory (Springer, 2014).

The situational occurrences theory has an emphasis on the difference between fixed aspects of an organizational environment, known as situational characteristics and situational occurrences. Situational characteristics include compensation, office, and frontline working conditions, while situational occurrences are more provisional aspects of the working environment and culture such as changing organizational policies, poor coworkers, or poorly working equipment. The balance between these variables and job satisfaction represents the focus of the situational occurrences' theory (Springer, 2014). Discrepancy theory links job satisfaction to an employee's appraisal of how facets of his or her job compare with their own goals and job expectations, meaning the closer one's job expectations meet their personal goals, the greater the level of job satisfaction. Lastly, the historical motivation-hygiene theory relates to how well an employee's motivating factors such as compensation, interpersonal relations, supervisor relations, and working conditions match actual job opportunities, called hygiene (Springer, 2014).

Harrison, Newman, and Roth (2006) established a close relationship between job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. Also known in the literature as attitudinal commitment, affective commitment shares a strong relationship with employee job satisfaction. Although the general aim of job satisfaction is in terms of the work role, the outcome of affective commitment is to benefit the entire organization. Affective commitment is an overall way of looking at job satisfaction on a broader scale and represents a general individual attitude that is a fundamental assessment of one's job experience (Harrison et al., 2006). While some studies examine job satisfaction in terms of job characteristics and organizational culture and climate,

affective commitment research investigates the relationship of job satisfaction to individual job facets, relational variables such as employee and supervisor, and job performance. Investigating these studies in detail helps demonstrate several determinants of job satisfaction for employees (Harrison et al., 2006).

Springer (2014) detailed a research study by Sekaran (1989) that examined job satisfaction in the workplace by observing the quality of life factors, sense of competence, and job involvement. The researcher in this study used job characteristics theory concerning organizational culture and climate and theorized that workers must first have the right job and position, organizational climate fitting to the individual, and work ethic necessary to achieve job satisfaction. Once these factors are satisfied for an employee, the next matters of importance to attain job satisfaction are job involvement and a sense of competence for an individual. The study proposes that having successful, positive experiences on the job and developing a sense of competence in the job leads to further job involvement and satisfaction. Sekaran (1989) developed assumptions on both job involvement and employee sense of competence strengthen each other and concludes that even though job involvement and employee competence mutually influence each other, it was a sense of competence within the job role that leads to job satisfaction. Sekaran (1989) tested this theory in a study that examined the following variables: job involvement, sense of competence, task identity, task feedback, skill variety, participation in decision-making autonomy, communication, stress, and work ethic. Sekaran (1989) found that a sense of job competence and job satisfaction correlates with all variables in the study. The sense of competence showed the strongest correlation to job satisfaction in employees (Springer, 2014).

Al-Sada, Al-Esmaelcand, and Faisal (2017) demonstrated higher levels of employee satisfaction generally contribute to the success of an organization, while lower levels of job satisfaction may damage organizational performance. Multiple factors influence job satisfaction like demographics, such as educational levels, gender, and age; intrinsic factors such as responsibility, advancement, achievement, reorganization, and growth; and extrinsic factors, such as the relationship with supervisors, salary, company policies, work environment and the relationship with peers (Al-Sada et al., 2017). Intrinsically-oriented employees are more likely to be satisfied than the extrinsically-oriented employees, thus, leaders need to develop organizational practices that employees' value to intrinsically motivate employees and enhance job satisfaction in the organization (Al-Sada et al., 2017).

Empowerment interventions and practices have appeared in recent years as important approaches to promoting constructive attitudes and behaviors among employees and are associated with higher levels of employee satisfaction. Organizational and job designs that come from such approaches are self-leadership, autonomy, the delegation of responsibility, and decision-making authority (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015). This employee empowerment movement represents a fundamental shift of power from top leaders down the hierarchy chain to subordinates with elevated levels of appropriate knowledge and skills associated with individual jobs. Research findings and practical organizational implementation have demonstrated promising results that support the relevance of employee empowerment as it contributes to positive outcomes for both organizations and individuals such as higher levels of job satisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015).

Employee empowerment discussions have recently come about in reviews of psychological and team empowerment in organization research. Employee empowerment is an

effective method for improving employee attitudes and work behaviors in a comprehensive array of contexts such as occupations, industries, and geographic regions (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015). Organizational leaders have a significant role in implementing the empowerment process of employees, but this role is different compared with those in more traditional organization designs that have a greater degree of top-down management and control. To empower someone is more about giving influence on another rather than having influence over another, and an essential characteristic that describes empowering leadership is supporting employees' autonomy, which can lead to great levels of satisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015).

The current complex working environment has come about by economic, technological, and demographic changes affecting the degree of employee job satisfaction in organizations. There is a large body of literature that highlights highly satisfied employees who are more likely to be committed to their organization, have higher levels of job performance, and lower levels of turnover (Aydogmus, Camgoz, Ergeneli, & Ekmekci, 2018). The accruing evidence about the role of job satisfaction on several organizational outcomes is causing many studies to investigate the predictors of job satisfaction. While research shows that things that affect job satisfaction are situational factors, individual factors such as dispositions and feelings of the job also affect job satisfaction. Among these individual factors, employees' perceptions of transformational leadership, and followers' personality traits have arisen as important predictors (Aydogmus et al., 2018).

Transformational leadership focuses on the premise that this type of leadership encourages employee development and increases employee motivation levels, satisfaction, and morale. The research on transformational leadership largely focuses on leaders, yet scholars and practitioners have realized that employees and followers remain an unexplored source of

variance in the leadership process (Aydogmus et al., 2018). A growing body of research and evidence confirms the direct relationship between employees' transformational leadership perceptions regarding their supervisors and job satisfaction. Because of this, researchers have begun to take a more employee-centered perspective, stressing the role of employees in an interactive leadership process. In contrast to the leader-centered perspective, researchers and practitioners of the follower-centered perspective argue that becoming and remaining an effective leader does not only depend on the leader's actual behavior, but also followers' perceptions and characteristics (Aydogmus et al., 2018).

Employee motivation. The effort on the part of managers and leaders to enhance and maintain employee motivation is one of the most complex and challenging parts of leadership's job, because of its potential impact on the organization in terms of productivity and workplace environment (Kanat-Maymon, Yaakobi, & Roth, 2018). Haroon and Akbar (2016) discussed how leaders motivate employees by the way they communicate and interact with employees and that positive communication and relationships with employees can enhance employee outcomes like job satisfaction and job performance. Conrad, Ghosh, and Isaacson (2015) added to historical theories of motivation by discussing the dimension of management control as a factor of employee morale by asserting that worker morale will be low when management exercises excessive control. They go on to say that disproportionate control causes employees to feel pressured to perform and can increase frustration by hindering individual freedom, which decreases motivation.

Research has noted three non-monetary motivators that relate to the role of leadership, praise from immediate supervisors, leadership attention such as one-on-one conversations, and a chance to lead projects or assignments (Conrad et al., 2015). The top three non-monetary

motivators play a vital role in making employees feel that their organizations take their well-being seriously, value them, and strive to create opportunities for career growth. These themes constantly recur in many studies on ways to motivate and engage employees in other ways than compensation and monetary benefits (Conrad et al., 2015). For motivation efforts to be effective, managers need to understand what motivates individuals within the context of the roles they perform in the organization. A motivated staff is a major asset in the highly, competitive business world (Conrad et al., 2015).

Organizations use a mix of different management practices to attempt to get the desired behaviors from employees that increase organizational performance. Although it is evident that management efforts provide a vital role in motivating employees to perform well, relatively little is known about how employees respond to these specific types of management efforts and controls (van der Kolk, van Veen-Dirks, & ter Bogt, 2018). Managers continually strive to draw a better return on capital investments for an organization, and when the capital investment is human capital it is a matter of motivation that a manager is striving for (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). All organizations are concerned with achieving and sustaining high levels of performance through their human capital, so many organizations face challenges of motivating employee through incentives, rewards, and the work they do. Because without increased motivation and employee morale, the organization risks losing valuable employees and can be at a disadvantage in recruiting and attracting good workers (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016).

Huang, Su, Lin, and Lu (2019) discussed how previous researchers have regularly investigated how leaders' behaviors increase employee motivation and positive workplace behaviors. However, Huang et al. (2019) stated that it is also vital to understand what kind of

leadership behaviors, such as abusive or micro-managing, might hinder motivation and positive employee behaviors. Abusive supervision is pervasive in an organization and researches have shown that abusive management has detrimental effects on employee attitudes and motivation and performance (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Therefore, due to its occurrence in industries and resulting negative effects on an organization, it is imperative to examine how abusive management hinders employee motivation and behaviors (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

Several motivation theories try to explain the influences that motivate employees, including the seminal Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, job characteristics theory, and equity theory (Springer, 2014). The well-known and cited in research articles, Maslow's (1987) theory bases motivation pertains to five levels of needs which include physiological, safety, social, ego, and self-actualization. Maslow suggests that lower-order needs on the list must be satisfied before higher-level needs and considered. The job characteristics theory focuses on the historical work of Hackman and Oldham (1975). High motivation happens when an individual experiences three psychological states while working, which are meaningfulness of work, responsibility, and knowledge of job outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Lastly, equity theory focuses on the principle of social comparison in the workplace and this theory suggests that an employee is motivated based on a perception of compensation and how good rewards for their efforts are in comparison to others in the organization (Springer, 2014).

In more recent research, from the previously mentioned motivation theories, Latham and Pinder (2005) suggested that three different motivation theories dominate current motivation literature, which are goal-setting theory, social cognitive theory, and organizational justice theory. Goal-setting theory is the idea that for a goal to increase individual performance, the goal

must be challenging to achieve and be extremely specific because vague or unclear goals do not motivate individuals as well as those that are specific (Latham & Pinder, 2005).

The social cognitive view of motivation discusses a shared relationship between an individual's goals and their work environment. One of the social cognitive perspectives, attribution theory, describes how an individual's perceived explanations for past success and failure contribute to current and future motivation and desire for achievement (Wang, 2016). This theory focuses on four fundamental attributions, which are ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. All of these elements are stable or unstable, internal or external, and controllable or uncontrollable. When an individual employee has a self-enhancing attribution style, accrediting success to one's hard work and failure to one's lack of effort, the individual may tend to be more motivated and succeed (Wang, 2016).

Organizational justice, as a motivational concept, examines the idea that when individuals feel management and co-workers are treating them fairly and the treatment is significant to the organization, the expectation that positive work behaviors will be associated with desirable work outcomes increases (Latham & Pinder, 2005). Job motivation is the desire to reach job-related goals that are difficult and socially approved. However, researchers offer different definitions of motivation including the will to accomplish goals, a tendency to behave intentionally to achieve specific, unmet goals or needs, and the psychological process that gives behavior purpose and direction (Springer, 2014).

Although the exact understanding of motivation continues to evolve, most of the theories have described motivation as either intrinsic or extrinsic and then proceed to explore the effects each has on work performance and employee motivation (Zhang et al., 2016). According to the existing theories in the literature, extrinsically motivated behaviors start by an external factor

such as gaining incentives or avoiding punishment, whereas personal interest engages intrinsically motivated behaviors. However, the existing literature has suggested that occasionally individuals' behavior cannot explain all motivational factors by either intrinsic interest or extrinsic incentives (Zhang et al., 2016). As an example, employees might engage in work activities because they feel responsible for accomplishing the task or because they understand and identify with the importance of the work. If employees feel interested in their work, this is intrinsic motivation, but if they feel pressured to accomplish the work task it is extrinsic motivation. The sense of identifying the work or job as imperative is also a type of motivation within self-determination theory and could accordingly also promote various positive work outcomes such as employee motivation (Zhang et al., 2016).

Drawing on self-determination theory, Strauss, Parker, and O'Shea (2017) proposed a study that when employees' controlled motivation at work is high, proactive behavior will result in resource loss, thus, turn into job tension and possible turnover intention. Controlled motivation means employees who have the motivation to do their job through a feeling of pressure or obligation, and there is no autonomous motivation such as intrinsic interest in or identification with the job itself, turnover intentions can be higher. Although recent emerging theory proposes that controlled and autonomous motivation simultaneously exist and interact with each other in meaningful ways, only a few of these studies have investigated the relationship between these two factors, and their conclusions are inconsistent (Strauss et al., 2017). Relevant to this study, because of the focus on the individual initiative or work behavior that is self-starting, self-motivating, and proactive, the interaction of controlled and autonomous motivation factors at work formed the effect of individual initiative on performance outcomes. Self-determination theory proposes that controlled motivation within an individual's work is likely to contribute to

resource-intensive behaviors depleting the organization's available resources, whereas when autonomous motivation is high, resource-intensive behaviors are likely to be less depleting (Strauss et al., 2017).

Controlled motivation, like extrinsic motivation, involves external factors, such as gaining rewards or avoiding punishments, as well as internal pressures, like intrinsic motivation, such as gaining approval and recognition or avoiding feelings of guilt and shame (Strauss et al., 2017). Exerting effort under controlled motivation rather than autonomous motivation is resource-depleting because it involves more self-control from the individual. In contrast to controlled motivation, autonomous motivation represents intrinsic motivation as well as forms of motivation in which people have linked with an activity's value and preferably will have integrated it into their sense of self in the workplace. When people are autonomously motivated, employees' can experience volition, or in other words, a self-endorsement of their actions which generates a positive kind of motivation (Strauss et al., 2017). Exerting effort in the workplace under these conditions is related to increased feelings of energy in the job. Consequently, scholarly literature argues that when employees experience autonomous motivation in the job, their efforts will lead to less resource-depleting behavior. This theory of motivation has the support of research studies discussing that resource-intensive activities, such as decision making, deplete individuals' resources when they happen under high controlled motivation, but do not result in resource depletion when autonomous motivation is high (Strauss et al., 2017).

In research on leadership, ethical leadership has received increasing attention since its introduction into the business ethics field and can have a direct correlation to employee motivation. Ethical leadership is the demonstration of appropriate leadership conduct through individuals' actions and interpersonal relationships with followers. Ethical leadership is a

leadership behavior that seeks to promote, communicate, and reinforce the ethical behaviors of the employees and followers. Furthermore, it is to enhance a wide range of crucial employee attitudes and behaviors, including motivation, job satisfaction, affective commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, innovative work behavior, ethical conduct, and organizational performance (Feng, Zhang, Liu, Zhang, & Han, 2018). Research continually finds that leadership is one of the most significant organizational factors influencing creativity and job motivation. This line of research advances the literature on ethical leadership and employee creativity by exploring ethical leadership's impact on employee creativity through influencing employee's intrinsic motivational factors. Ethical leadership could increase employees' intrinsic motivation factors that can help to achieve a higher level of employee creativity and organizational performance (Feng et al., 2018).

However, other research suggests that the positive effects of ethical leadership on employee motivation and creativity become weak when ethical leadership reaches a level that diminishes its effects. When ethical leadership exceeds a certain level, it becomes controlling and these aspects become more noticeable to employees, and this can result in suppression on the improvement of employees' intrinsic motivation of being creative (Feng et al., 2018). In this case, leaders tend to overstate the stability of work processes and outputs to satisfy ethical values. As a result of this, leaders lack the ability to respond to followers' creative thinking and actions and may hinder followers' intrinsic motivation to be creative in their job. When employees find creativity and their work meaningful, they can be more focused to help others create ideas and creativity. Inspired by a creative mindset, employees are able to enhance their job learning and proactive work behaviors, and in doing these employees can become more creative and intrinsically motivated (Feng et al., 2018).

Of the many factors that affect employee performance in their job, one significant factor is work motivation. Even if an employee has excellent job competence and ability if he or she has no motivation at their job, the result of the job is not satisfying and often turnover will occur. Understanding the importance of employees in the organization, employees need more thoughtful attention to their tasks so that employees achieve higher levels of performance and organizational goals. With a high level of work motivation, employees will normally work harder in performing their work (Razak, Sarpan, & Ramlan, 2018). Equally, with low work motivation employees do not have the will to accomplish the work whole-heartedly, easily give up, and have difficulties in completing their work. Motivation is personal energy that moves an employee to achieve their tasks and the company's organizational goals (Razak et al., 2018).

The mental attitude of the employees who are positive about the work situation they are in strengthens their motivation to achieve higher levels of organizational performance. For leaders, employee work motivation is to direct the power and potential of followers to be willing to work together productively and effectively achieving and realizing the goals that set for the organization. Leaders can motivate a person by encouraging an individual's desire to carry out certain activities that lead to achieving company goals (Razak et al., 2018). The intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that exists in someone is a major driving force that will help an employee realize a behavior that achieves the goals of the organization and lead to job satisfaction. Motivation is an effort that is in a person that strives to meet their needs and to achieve organizational goals (Razak et al., 2018).

Increasingly in the business environment, competition for and scarcity of resources, along with many other factors, calls for more strategic approaches by managers and leaders to find ways of satisfying their employees and increasing their commitment and work motivation. Job

satisfaction acts as a motivational factor for many employees. In particular, job satisfaction has a positive impact on the motivational level and performance of the employees. Congruently, motivational factors such as responsibility, recognition, and achievement lead to a high level of job satisfaction as well (Al-Sada et al., 2017).

Another way of looking at work motivation is that it is the power possessed by an individual who can increase their potential in doing and completing an activity. Work motivation comes either from within the individual or from outside the individual (Prabowo, Noermijati, & Irawanto, 2018). One significant aspect to contemplate in attempting to maximize employee performance is to look at the leadership style that a manager applies in the business context. Leadership has an imperative role in any organization, specifically in increasing the role or performance of the employees themselves and coordinating to work together to overcome the problems that come about in an organization (Prabowo et al., 2018). The research looks at the transformational leadership style and states how it can have a positive influence on employee performance. Leadership applied in an organization has the expectation to provide a good organizational culture and can improve employee output and performance. Leadership is a person's capacity to motivate, influence, and make others contribute to the effectiveness and success of an organization (Prabowo et al., 2018).

Table 1

Effects of Poor Leadership Table

Poor leadership results in:	Definition
Turnover	Employees' voluntarily leaving/quitting a job or organization
Dissatisfaction	Negative attitude towards the job, company, or leader
Lack of Motivation	General unwillingness to do more than the minimum required expectations of the job

Leadership. Research and studies of leadership styles and traits go back many years and there is a large body of empirical research on the topic of leadership and most of the research has focused on leader-centric aspects and less on the role of followers and context (Meuser et al., 2016). Many of the literature findings on leadership focus on effective leadership practices and implies the image of a leader, generally represents an effective leader (Schyns & Schilling, 2011). However, there are many negative aspects and implications of poor leadership on overall organizational health and employee relations (Schyns & Riggio, 2015). Leadership is key to organizational effectiveness because leadership develops the plan to effectively utilize the collective efforts of employees to achieve organizational goals (Mathieu et al., 2016).

In a study on the relationship between supervisor behavior and employees' mood, researchers found that employees rated interactions with their supervisor as 80% positive and 20% negative. However, the 20% negative interactions affected the employees' mood five times more than the positive interactions. It is clear that positive supervision is a fundamental component of a psychologically healthy work climate (Mathieu et al., 2016). Studies on the impact of leadership behavior on employee attitudes show to be rather conclusive. Abusive supervision, meaning hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors from a manager to the employee, is related to lower levels of job satisfaction, normative and affective commitment and increased psychological distress (Mathieu et al., 2016).

Mamun and Hasan (2017) stated that although turnover is known to be a costly organizational issue, top management does not concentrate on this major issue as much as maybe they should. Mamun and Hasan (2017) stated that maybe top management is not as capable of realizing the situations about why employees leave and how costly it is to organizational performance and productivity. While organizations continually try to develop and experiment

with innovative ways to improve employee retention, perhaps one of the most prominent aspects of a job that impacts worker satisfaction is the relationship that workers have with their immediate supervisor. What often differentiates a good manager from a bad one is leadership ability (Carter et al., 2019). From serving as a role model for employees, motivating and rewarding effort, establishing the work pace, organizing capital and labor, and setting the overall tone of an organization's work environment, a managers' leadership ability is apt to affect how employees view their job (Carter et al., 2019).

Leader-member exchange is a common concept in business literature, and its emphasis is on the perceived relationship between supervisor and subordinate (Kim, Poulston, & Sankaran, 2017). Effective workforce management is central for all industries, especially ones where employee attrition is generally high. Additionally, with the employee supervisor relationship being a considerable influence on organizational outcomes and workforce turnover, it is particularly important to comprehend this relationship in the context of frontline work (Kim et al., 2017). Employees who assume that their low leader-member exchange relationships with their supervisors and that their direct supervisors' may find their work and performance efforts are not of value to the organization. This may lead them to become disconnected from organizational goals and others in the company. This situation is likely to create low levels of self-efficacy, resulting in turnover intentions, reduced task performance, job satisfaction, and commitment (Kim et al., 2017).

Leadership traits and styles are one of the most crucial factors that can affect the performance of employees in an organization. Leadership traits and styles can affect the ability of a leader in influencing, encouraging, directing, and controlling subordinates to accomplish the work set for them and achieving certain goals for the organization (Razak et al., 2018).

Leadership effectiveness can determine the success or failure of an organization. An effective form of leadership will influence the progress of the company when it comes to facing the challenges and changes that occur in the complex business world (Razak et al., 2018). The nature of each leader is a very influential personal trait in the style of leadership that determines the achievement of being a successful leader and is determined by the personal abilities of the leader. A leader's ability is the quality of a person with various traits, temperaments, or characteristics. The consequences that might come from the existence of a bad leadership style are employee turnover, lack of motivation, low job satisfaction, and a decrease in employee performance which will have an impact on the decline in the company's total performance (Razak et al., 2018).

Researchers often study leadership from the leader's perspective only, while followers or employees' perspectives are few and far between. Follower-focused leadership research can demonstrate that the follower viewpoint adds significantly to the understanding of leadership and the development of leadership (Junker & van Dick, 2014). One line of follower-focused leadership research is the research of implicit followership theories and implicit leadership theories. Implicit leadership theories are the theory of how employees view leaders and implicit follower theories represent the respective views of followers. People associate potential leaders or followers to their implicit standards and act by the outcome of these judgments (Junker & van Dick, 2014).

Leadership and followership examples influence how individuals think and behave, even though people are unaware of these cognitive processes and cannot control their effects. Implicit theories bias the assessment of actual leadership behavior of managers. Instead of assessing observed leader behavior, employees rely on their impressions of leadership and followership

(Junker & van Dick, 2014). Employees state higher levels of job satisfaction if their manager fits their implicit theories of leaders. Job satisfaction, therefore, is positively related to follower performance. Employee evaluations often determine promotion decisions or compensation bonuses, but evaluations of the same individual's performance and the relationship between the leader and follower often vary substantially between evaluators. For example, research shows that up to 62% of the variation in leaders' assessments of employee performance is due to implicit theories the leader holds of the employee (Junker & van Dick, 2014).

Poor leadership. Historically in leadership literature and research into leadership styles and traits, investigations have commonly focused on the quest to find the most effective person or method to lead employees (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Popular leadership concepts such as transformational leadership and even more recent developments such as ethical and authentic leadership, focus on positive leader behavior and its effects on employees and organizations (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Sometimes in research the term 'leadership' is a display of personal influence resulting in enthusiastic commitment of followers. However, proponents of this view argue that a leader who uses authority and control over rewards, punishments, and information to coerce or manipulate followers is not really leading them (Yukl, Mahsud, Prussia, & Hassan, 2019). However, a recent stream of research acknowledges that there is also a dark side to leadership, regardless of what researchers and practitioners may consider being the ideal leadership; some leaders behave in ways that are detrimental to their followers and often the organization as a whole (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

The phenomenon of leadership incorporates an individual's ability to influence others, such as followers or employees, to help achieve organizational goals and objectives. Since the beginning of the study and research of leadership, the field of leadership focuses only on the

positive effects of leadership, emphasizing the beneficial effects of leaders on followers and organizations while largely overlooking the negative side of leadership (Naseer, Raja, Syed, Donia, & Darr, 2016). However, with the steady growth in the literature focusing on the potentially ugly side of leadership rising interest in the dysfunctional characteristics of leadership suggests a major paradigm shift that recognizes the adverse effects that leaders can have on their subordinates (Naseer et al., 2016).

Numerous authors have researched and proposed that abusive supervision, or the employees' perceptions of the extent to which their direct supervisors engage in continuous demonstrations of abrasive, hostile verbal, and nonverbal behaviors, is the main cause of negative organizational outcomes. Research of this nature can be significant because it advances theory and proposes leverage points for managers and other practitioners to influence employees and mitigate the harmful effects of abusive supervision (Lian, Ferris, & Brown, 2012). Along the same lines, recently research discusses that the satisfaction of basic human needs, or critical conditions for individual psychological growth and well-being, might be the main underlying psychological mechanism linking abusive supervision to outcomes such as negative organizational outcomes. Such a proposition is interesting in that it positions the abusive supervision research and literature within well-established needs-based motivational theories (Lian et al., 2012).

The effects of poor or even abusive supervision on subordinates' basic need satisfaction can explain why negative and abusive supervision ultimately results in negative organizational performance and outcomes such as turnover, dissatisfaction, and low motivation. When poor or abusive supervisors hinder employees' basic needs satisfaction, subordinates may develop the desire to retaliate against the manager (Lian et al., 2012). Employee retaliation denotes a

behavior to get back at another person who has offended or upset them, because of the perceived harm caused by the offender. Notably, experiencing threats to basic psychological needs is inherently harmful in the workplace and decreased need satisfaction is painful and frustrating, causing anxiety, depression, and other negative effects to individuals (Lian et al., 2012).

Many research studies discuss how positive leadership, whether that is transformational, implicit, charismatic, revolutionary, ethical, or any of the other major leadership models, can effectively encourage subordinates' behavior. Other research and literature use social exchange theory or learning theory to describe how subordinates' rewards can generate effective employee behavior as well as maintain leaders' organizational support or safety perception for subordinates can promote positive employee behavior (Hou, Li, & Yuan, 2018). However, there is less attention to the influence of passive leadership on employee's behavior. Predominantly, very few studies have existed about how employees react to passive leadership behaviors. These types of leadership behaviors may result in emotionally unstable and less effective employee reactions to the workplace and negatively affect behaviors of the frontline leaders who manage the most resources and human capital in industries (Hou et al., 2018).

Many of the leaders and frontline supervisors in the manufacturing and service industries lack the knowledge and managerial experience. Influenced by labor intensity, job complexities, and several other factors, frontline leaders often display poor leadership ability and lack effective management skills (Hou et al., 2018). For example, these frontline leaders may verbally abuse their subordinates publicly in the work environment and unfairly distribute rewards to employees based on their determination of who should receive rewards and not by employee performance. However, employees in blue-collar workplaces can be relatively unrestrained, emotionally sensitive, and lack self-control, so managers may respond harshly, while a positive reaction from

employees requires positive emotion, supportive atmosphere, and inclusive leadership, which some supervisors who do not have the leadership skill needed struggle in this area (Hou et al., 2018).

Positive leadership. Stollberger, Las Heras, Rofcanin, and Bosch (2019) noted that servant leadership style in mid-level supervisors can enhance employee motivation in the workplace. This is because the values of certain servant leader behaviors such as helping subordinates grow and succeed or behaving ethically, enhance the nature of positive employee motivation, such as influencing a drive to benefit oneself and others, in individual behaviors. The research discussed that certain servant leader behaviors could facilitate positive employee motives because such behaviors reinforce values and norms that are in line with greater social and organizational impact. For example, when servant leaders help employees' grow and succeed or put subordinates above one's self, they should empower employees to shape their career paths, allowing them to obtain conceptual skills and practical experience in the process (Stollberger et al., 2019).

Furthermore, additional servant leader behaviors such as empowering and behaving ethically are possible to motivate employees to make their own decisions at work to enhance their job or output while emphasizing the importance of interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with supervisors and colleagues (Stollberger et al., 2019). By demonstrating servant leadership behaviors, mid-level or frontline supervisors should be able to create positive organizational expectations for employees on how to successfully perform their work duties to their benefit and the benefit of colleagues around them. In support of this notion, the research suggested that servant leaders in particular help to shape and build their follower's social identity that extends beyond the confines of the workplace, which can influence their workplace motivation.

Similarly, past research demonstrated that leaders can increase the perceived impact of their subordinates (Stollberger et al., 2019).

The role of leadership is a crucial aspect of the workplace environment for all employees. Transformational leadership style is one that is often in research and sometimes known as charismatic leadership. Although there are several variances between transformational leadership and charismatic leadership, many scholars have concluded that such differences are rather insignificant (Sok, Sok, Snell, & Qiu, 2018). Transformational leadership is the degree to which leaders enhance the knowledge of subordinates in terms of the importance and value of their tasks, and additionally encourage and foster a shared purpose that brings employees together and exceeds their self-interest for the good of the organization or department (Sok et al., 2018).

Research about transformational leadership often encourages employees to comprehend the importance of their work contributions to the organization are more motivated to work harder and more creatively to achieve the vision of the leader or organization (Sok et al., 2018). Transformational leadership brings about these properties in employees by acting as a role model, showing individualized consideration, such as supporting subordinates, mentoring them, and developing them as individuals. Additionally, transformational leadership provides inspirational motivation such as energizing employees by articulating a compelling vision in a way subordinates will understand. Transformational leaders can intellectually stimulate employees by challenging the status quo and trying novel approaches to solve problems (Sok et al., 2018). Transformational leadership plays a role in facilitating employees in which the leader offers contextual support to employees as subordinates attempt to accomplish a challenging task set by the organization. Transformational leader behaviors can often define the work context for

employees and their supportive behaviors have a significant positive effect on employee job outcomes such as turnover intention, satisfaction, and motivation (Sok et al., 2018).

Recent research in the contexts of frontline workers reports that work design based on effective job resource allocation by management yields motivated and productive workers. Work design is the degree the job tasks and activities that employees must perform for their organization daily (Qi, Ellinger, & Franke, 2018). Research suggests that effective work and job design favorably influence employee engagement when management helps design work tasks in a manner that benefits the employee. In blue-collar workplaces, job resources are physical, social, psychological, or organizational aspects of the job that are purposeful in accomplishing work goals, reduce the associated physiological and psychological costs and job demands or inspire individual growth, learning, and development of employees (Qi et al., 2018).

When managers effectively allocate job resources it can improve employees' work-related attitudes and behaviors in a positive manner and research has consistently verified the beneficial effects of effective job resource allocation on employee engagement (Karatepe & Ağa, 2016). Not only management, but also other psychological and social aspects of work design such as organizational support, can influence employee engagement. Organizational support refers to employees' perceptions in the context of the extent that the company values their work contributions and cares about their well-being (Qi et al., 2018). These perceptions come from an organization's willingness to recognize employees' work efforts and satisfy individual socio-emotional needs. Organizations with elevated levels of organizational support tend to have employees with strong levels of personal motivation to care about the organization's well-being (Karatepe & Ağa, 2016). The positive influence of a leader and organizational support result in higher levels of affective commitment to the organization, stronger relational bonds between

employees and leaders as well as the organization (Karatepe & Aga, 2016). The positive influence of leaders further suggests that when organizational and individual goals are consistent and meaningful to employees, levels of employee engagement are higher (Qi et al., 2018).

Potential themes and perceptions. The potential themes in this literature review are that poor leadership can have a major effect on employee's turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and motivation as well as other organizational aspects. The perception that leaders and managers have a profound influence on employees is prevalent. Because poor and ineffective leadership leads to turnover, dissatisfaction and lack of motivation should have organizations looking at why there are issues with effective management practices and how they can improve leadership skill and ability in the workplace.

Summary of the literature review. The effects of poor leadership can result in employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and unmotivated employees, all of which have negative consequences on organizations as a whole. When managers cannot lead effectively, it can result in low worker morale and job dissatisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Immediate supervisors are the number one predictor of employee turnover in the United States and many employees report that they were leaving their organization because their manager's expectations were unclear or because their manager provided inadequate equipment, materials, or resources. The leadership style used by immediate managers may have a major influence on employees' turnover intention, as well as overall job satisfaction and motivation (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). Employees are particularly significant for all organizations and are assets to companies, but when employees quit or do not perform well because of dissatisfaction or lack of motivation as a result of a poor leader or manager, it can cost the company in many ways (Elçi, Şener, Aksoy, & Alpan, 2012). Using an appropriate leadership style for a certain business

context and culture could result in decreased turnover intention, increased employee satisfaction and increased employee motivation (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). Leadership can affect the morale and job satisfaction, turnover, motivation, security, job quality and the achievement of an organization (Listianti & Hamali, 2015).

Transition and Summary of Section 1

In the first section of this research study, the research problem and background of the study is clear using existing literature. The effects of poor leadership of blue-collar workers in manufacturing facilities are relevant to the businesses in these industries and there is a need to understand how poor leadership affects organizations and how leaders can address the issues of employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and lack of motivation. In the next section, the specific research method, design, and procedures will be the focus. The populations and data collection methods will also be a focus in the next section as well as the validity and reliability of the study.

Section 2: The Project

In this qualitative research study, the aim was to investigate the effects of leadership practices on blue-collar workers in manufacturing facilities in the Southeastern United States. Poor leadership practices can lead to employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and lack of employee motivation. This section presents the methods used to conduct the research. The design and approach undertaken to conduct the research are in this section. The focus of this section will be on the data collection and data analysis process as well as the methods used to protect the identities and preserve the rights of all participants.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case research study was to add to the body of knowledge by expanding on the understanding of reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of employee motivation. The specific demographic for this study was frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States. This study sought to draw attention to employee dissatisfaction, turnover, and lack of motivation that may be the result of poor managers and leadership. This research investigation explored the problem through an in-depth study of employee dissatisfaction, turnover, and lack of motivation caused by poor management practices, lack of management skills, or lack of leadership training in manufacturing organizations in the Southeastern United States.

The leadership style of managers or leaders and the job satisfaction of employees have noticeable effects on employee work outcomes (Babalola, 2016). Therefore, adopting a leadership style that works best for an organization and its employees remains one of the most effective and efficient means by which organizations achieve their objectives and that of employees' satisfaction (Babalola, 2016). Employee turnover costs are a significant challenge for

many firms. Studies show that employee turnover can cost around twenty percent of salary in terms of recruiting, training, and lost productivity, although some estimates are much higher (Carter et al., 2019).

While organizations continue to experiment with innovative ways to improve employee retention, one of the most enduring aspects of a job that affects worker satisfaction may be the relationship that workers have with their manager or leader. What often differentiates a good boss from a bad one is leadership ability (Carter et al., 2019). From motivating and rewarding effort, organizing capital and labor, establishing the work pace, serving as a role model for employees, and setting the overall tone of an organization's work environment, the leadership ability of a boss is apt to impact how employees view their job (Carter et al., 2019).

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's role in qualitative research is imperative, as he or she collects information, gathers data, and implements analysis (Creswell et al., 2007); therefore, the researcher's role in this study is that of an observer and non-participant. I selected participants by using purposeful, convenience, and snowball sampling methods where appropriate and gathered data by administering questionnaires, conducting interviews, and personal observations to investigate differences in manufacturing settings. I was the primary instrument of data collection, analysis, and reporting results of the information that the researcher collects, codes, and analyzes from surveys, interviews, questionnaires, and observations to uncover the emerging patterns and concepts. In a qualitative research study, where the researcher is the primary source of data analysis, there is the potential for bias on the researcher's part, which can impact the outcome of the study, making this a particularly challenging balance of being objective and nonjudgmental in the researcher's observations, thoughts, and actions. The bias could come from the

researcher's knowledge and experience in a factory setting and the knowledge of complex leader-subordinate relationships. I used the triangulation method for collecting and analyzing data to mitigate personal bias.

I began by contacting executive managers from the facilities selected as part of this multiple case study to get signed approval (See Appendix A) to conduct research at each location. I respected all proprietary information provided by the research subjects, screening and removing any communication that is not relevant to the study. Interviews were scheduled with subjects at their convenience in an attempt to protect the privacy of the participant, while minimizing any inconveniences caused by the researcher. All rules were obeyed in safeguarding all human subjects by removing all identifying data and ensuring all participation was at-will and made the participant aware that they could withdrawal from the study at any point in time with no recourse. I recorded all interviews and transcribed them into files located on a single laptop computer as well as all data from surveys and questionnaires will be kept safe in a secure file for three years and then destroyed by shredding all documentation.

Participants

Several manufacturing facilities were available in the Southeastern United States with a large number of managers and front-line employees that allowed for a large sample of participants. Appropriate measures were taken to get organizational signatures of approval to contact managers and employees to gain willing participants in the research study. Once approved to study a specific location, I reached out to managers and employees to gain written approval for participation in the research study. I required all participants in the study to sign an informed consent document before they participated in the study (See Appendix B). Research

data were collected through surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and observations from willing participants.

Participants were recruited using purposeful, convenience, and snowball sampling methods. Following acceptable recruitment methods as outlined by the Internal Review Board (IRB), I began to recruit participants by convenience sampling by posting advertisements, flyers, information sheets, notices, or internal postings within the individual organizations to gather possible participants. Purposeful sampling was used by recruiting possible participants by directly contacting potential study participants within the organizations, either by face-to-face contact, by giving a presentation to a group, by phone calls to participants or by email. I took considerable care as to not put undue pressure on any potential participants. Snowball sampling was used by getting referrals from other participants or by appropriate organizational members. Following human subjects research practice, participants signed an informed consent and had the option to exit participation at any time. I ensured privacy and anonymity by removing any identifying information.

Research Method and Design

Qualitative methodology was used for this research study. Qualitative research seeks to gather information about individual experiences in particular circumstances (Stake, 2010). Qualitative research in the business and leadership field can produce many insightful studies that can further the understanding of how dynamics such as influence, power, management, leadership, communication, collaboration, and abuse work in organizations and similar contexts (Brooks & Normore, 2015). Qualitative research methods gather information from varying population sizes, and they can explore a phenomenon or issue in smaller populations sizes

(Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative researched methods gather data from personal, individual experiences that shed light on the research problem (Stake, 2010).

A multiple-case, case study research design was used for this research study. Case studies allow researchers to investigate and examine the meanings of the phenomenon, detailing for others the complexities described in the research (Stake, 2010). I chose multiple cases because there are many manufacturing facilities in the Southeast that will allow for cross-case examination analysis, and will help to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of leadership in different cultures and factories in the similar industries. Case studies usually involve several variables of interest, not just some specific data points, additionally case studies use several sources of information, requiring the data to come together into a unique discovery (Tsang, 2014).

Discussion of method. Qualitative methodology was used for this research because qualitative research methods are effective in gaining an understanding of underlying reasons and motives for human behavior in complex environments (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because this research sought to understand how leadership behaviors affect employee turnover, satisfaction and motivations in a manufacturing setting, and qualitative methodology seeks to gain contextual understanding within human behavioral settings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is the best methodology for the research in this study. Qualitative research methods are effective for researching a central phenomenon or topic, like leadership or management in an organization. Qualitative research involves detailing how individuals see the world, how they talk about things, and how they describe things (Creswell, 2016). A feature of qualitative research methods is the development of detailed information and personal accounts of an organization's management and leadership from employees' unique experiences (Cornelissen, 2016).

Qualitative research methods may involve the researcher going out and studying the problem firsthand and the researcher is therefore not only studying the problem, but also observing the setting in which the problem is situated and attempting to understand the contexts that may shape the problem that a researcher studies (Creswell, 2016).

Qualitative research can be an effective way to gain understanding in contexts of human behavior by observation and interviewing individuals (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Qualitative was the best methodology for this study because I interviewed individuals and observed human behaviors and interactions between workers and their managers within the workplace that may lead to dissatisfied or unmotivated workers. The qualitative method provides a means for developing an understanding of complex phenomena from the perspectives of those who are living it (Shah & Corley, 2006). Human behaviors and employee reactions to their managers are complex issues that to understand them it may take a flexible method of research such as qualitative research methodology that studies the phenomenon within its environment. The primary benefits of qualitative methods are that they allow the researcher to discover new variables and relationships, to reveal and understand complex processes, and to illustrate the influence of the social context (Shah & Corley, 2006). Qualitative was the best research methodology for this research study because of the human behavioral aspect of this research that numbers, and tests like in a quantitative research methodology cannot explain adequately.

Discussion of design. The purpose of this study was to understand how leadership practices affect employee behaviors such as turnover intentions, low satisfaction, and lack of motivation. The multiple-case study design is the appropriate research design to analyze multiple manufacturing facilities to gain a deeper understanding of this research problem. Multiple-case study design can have distinct advantages in comparison to a single-case research study design.

The findings from multiple cases are often more convincing, and the overall study can be more robust (Yin, 2014). The multiple-case study design is often better than single-case studies because a researcher can compile more and deeper information. There are also more analytical benefits to having two or more cases to analyze, which can result in substantial differences in research (Yin, 2014). Case studies can provide reliable valid evidence for the direction of where future research can focus (Boddy, 2016). Leadership and management studies often employ a case study research design because a case study research design supports the comprehensive analysis of a case and the real-life context contained within an organizational phenomenon (Leoni, 2015).

Multiple-case studies can be more rigorous because it can use cross-case analysis to discover themes and outcomes as well as differences in multiple organizational settings and that is the reason a multiple-case study design was used to study several manufacturing plants. Case study research design focuses on scientific explorations that go in-depth and into the environmental context of a phenomenon that is happening in real-life, such as a manufacturing setting with many blue-collar employees. Case study research design also focuses on a problem, an organization, an individual, a group, an event, or an anomaly (Yin, 2014).

A multiple-case study research design can provide a more in-depth understanding of a phenomenon regarding a complex environment (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018) such as in manufacturing factory organizations where blue-collar workers account for a large number of employees. Because of this capability in multiple-case study design, it allowed for researching and comparing the outcomes and effects of multiple factories with the outcomes of multiple leadership styles and the effects on blue-collar, frontline employees, located in different, but similar organizational settings or with different managers and employee participants.

The evidence from multiple cases can often be more compelling and the study as a whole is more reliable than a single-case study (Yin, 2014). Two or more cases in a case study design can provide a greater degree of data and result in a greater level of reliability in the conclusion of the research study (Yin, 2014). For this qualitative research method, the multiple-case study allowed for the study of workers from multiple manufacturing factories along with the effects that different managers have on the individual employee's turnover intention, job satisfaction, and motivation.

Summary of research method and design. A qualitative research method with a multi-case study design was the best fit for this research study because I was allowed to conduct research and gather information in the context of manufacturing facilities where I observed and studied leadership and employee dynamics first-hand. Qualitative research can provide a complex understanding of a problem or situation (Creswell, 2016). Multiple-case design is more powerful than a single-case study because it allows the researcher the opportunity to compare and contrast research results in multiple locations with different people and draw a conclusion with more in-depth information (Yin, 2014).

Population and Sampling

The population for this research study included current frontline employees, managers, foremen, and leaders in the manufacturing facilities selected in the Southeastern United States. These manufacturing facilities all have similar operations and manufacture comparable products. There are over 400 current frontline or blue-collar employees and over 30 managers, supervisors, foreman or similar leadership roles at these locations combined. The purposeful sampling of these employees and leaders came from those individuals that responded to the recruitment letter submitted by the researcher during the onsite recruitment meeting.

Discussion of population. An important part of the research process is finding participants, gaining access to them, and establishing rapport with individuals so they will provide quality data for the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The population in a research study is a large enough group of research subjects from which the researcher can draw a sample of the population to study (Mathews, 2018). The population is the total of available information resources that may be relevant to addressing the research questions (Thacker, 2018). The total population for this research study included several hundred, frontline employees and numerous managers and supervisors from manufacturing firms in the Southeastern United States who had the opportunity to participate in the study by responding to the recruitment letter (See Appendix C) and accepting the opportunity.

A case study participant is an individual participating in the research study that can provide crucial information and interpretations of the phenomenon the researcher is studying (Yin, 2014). It is important to select appropriate participants for this study, as the participants can affect the reliability and validity of the data (Mathews, 2018). Participants for this research study had to be a current employee within the organization where I conducted the research and had to sign an informed consent form (See Appendix B). I selected managers and frontline employees from the population in each location. I held a meeting to explain the research study and eligibility criteria to workers and managers to gather participants.

Discussion of sampling. To be eligible for this research study, participants had to be at least 18 years of age, employed by the organization where the research is taking place in a frontline worker or laboring role or a manager, supervisor, or leader in the organization. Because of the eligibility requirements, I was able to compare the perceived leadership effectiveness of the individuals in managerial roles in the particular organization to how the workforce perceives

the leaders of that organization. Additionally, the frontline workers had to have previous experience in another organization to be able to discuss the current management effectiveness compared to previous experiences. Workers who had previous experience with other managers were allowed for comparing and contrasting of leadership effectiveness on employee turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation. I explained this in a meeting with all interested participants and then again in the recruitment letter (See Appendix C). I selected eligible participants for this study who met the requirements, responded to the recruitment letter, and signed the informed consent document.

Purposeful sampling was used for this research study because it is a technique used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of effective sources of information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Purposeful sampling is the concept used in qualitative studies where the researcher selects individuals and locations for the study based on their potential to purposefully inform the understanding of the research problem and phenomenon (Creswell & Poth 2018). Snowball sampling was also used by asking participants or leaders in the organizations to recommend participants to sample that may provide deeper insight into the research study. Using interview questions (See Appendix D and E) with participants, the saturation point may be between six and 12 participant interviews; though, it could be more or less (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Interviews were conducted with participants until I achieved saturation. Once the researcher reached the saturation point within coding and data themes, the data were able to produce generalization of information (Boddy, 2016). The saturation point within qualitative research studies is usually determined by the researcher and is the point where participants do not provide any new information. The researcher must use his or her judgment in drawing this

conclusion of information (van Rijnsoever, 2017). Qualitative research measures the appropriateness of sample size by the complexity of data, requiring samples large enough to contain participants offering the best information and insight on the research topic, however, not large enough to become repetitious and oversaturated (O'Reilly & Parker, 2012).

Summary of population and sampling. I generated the population for this research study with frontline workers, managers, supervisors, and foremen who responded to a recruitment letter (See Appendix C) and signed the informed consent form (See Appendix B). Samples of the population were taken at each manufacturing facility and analyzed individually for cross-case analysis. I took a sample from the population of employees who were employed full-time at each location. Once I reached the saturation point within the sample, the study was concluded. The information and data from this research study may help decision-makers in organizations make changes to policies and systems that impact the strategic human resource decisions in manufacturing facilities. This study may also provide a broader impact for organizations with similar organizational commitment, motivation, and turnover challenges.

Data Collection

Qualitative research and interpretive research are sometimes interchangeable explanations of a research investigation (Stake, 2010). All research inquiry requires interpretations, however, interpretive research relies on observers defining the meanings and understanding of what they see or hear (Stake, 2010). Case study research design is a qualitative method of research where the researcher examines a case or multiple-cases through in-depth data collection involving several sources and types of information (Creswell, 2016).

Data were collected through multiple forms, such as interviews, questionnaires, and researcher observations. I conducted interviews for this research study using a list of several

open-ended, semi-structured questions. When a participant's response to a question provided an opportunity for follow-up questions, I then asked a more in-depth question that built upon the initial response from the participant to the original open-ended question. There was a list of questions specific to the frontline, blue-collar workers (See Appendix D), and a separate set of questions for managers, supervisors, and leaders in the organization (See Appendix E).

Instruments. I was the primary instrument for this research study. Human researchers in qualitative studies are often the main research instrument (Stake, 2010). Qualitative researchers often prefer gathering data and information by directly hearing it through interviews or seeing it through observations as compared to other data collection techniques (Stake, 2010). I conducted interviews with participants to collect data. Interview questions can be the sub-questions within a research study, asked and explained in a way that participants can easily comprehend (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative researchers use interviews for several purposes, including acquiring unique information that the participant brings to light, gathering a combination of information from various sources, and uncovering characteristics that previous researchers may not have exposed (Stake, 2010). I developed interview guides for both subgroups of the population and I interviewed and developed an interview guide that was specific for frontline, blue-collar workers (See Appendix D) to address the overall research questions and problem statement. I asked questions about their experience with managers and leaders at their organization and how their supervisors affect their turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation. Likewise, I developed an interview guide that was specific to managers and supervisors (See Appendix E) to gauge leaders' perceptions of their impact on employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation.

Differing from quantitative research, where the instruments for collecting data are traditionally well-designed tests, surveys or questionnaires, the instrument for collecting data in qualitative research is the actual researcher (Creswell, 2016). For this study, I was the principal investigator and the primary instrument used for data collection. The sources of data used included participant interviews, questionnaires, and direct observation. Additionally, being a multiple-case study, I examined these data sources from multiple different cases which increased the amount of data collected as well as provided cross-case analysis. I used a questionnaire (See Appendix F) to gather information about employees' turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation using a 5-point Likert scale to utilize another source of data collection.

Data collection techniques. I began by contacting manufacturing locations in the Southeastern United States and getting permission to use the premises (See Appendix A) by an executive of the organization. I then contacted the plant and location managers to set up an introductory meeting with managers and plant workers who were eligible for the research study to explain to the purpose of the study and who was eligible for participation. Recruitment letters were passed out (See Appendix C) and I gathered responses from the population. After gathering potential participants, I used purposeful sampling to obtain the research sample and then got an informed consent form signed (See Appendix B) by each participant before conducting research. I administered a questionnaire (See Appendix F) addressing employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. I then conducted an interview with open-ended, semi-structured questions followed by probing questions to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem. Personal observations were also conducted in the plants and manufacturing locations, making note of leader-subordinate interactions.

While I was the principal instrument in collecting data, multiple techniques for collecting data were utilized. Researchers must take appropriate measures addressing ethical issues that may be involved with gaining access to participants, conducting good qualitative sampling strategies, and developing means for recording and storing data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first data collection technique that I used was semi-structured interviews with participants that contain open-ended questions for frontline workers (See Appendix D) and managers (See Appendix E) designed to provoke in-depth answers about the lived experiences of frontline workers and plant managers and gave an opportunity for the researcher to ask follow-up questions to gain even deeper understanding into the research problem. Before I began the research process with a participant, the participant was given an informed consent form (See Appendix B) to sign before participating in the research study.

The second technique for collecting data was site visits and observations where I observed employees' and supervisors' interactions in the organizational setting. Observations and interviews are traditional data collection techniques for qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Direct observations are useful in qualitative research for providing additional information about the research topic (Yin, 2014). The benefit of the direct observations of evidence is the organizational contextual background insights that a researcher can gain as observations of behaviors happen in the actual setting of the case and in real-time (Yin, 2014). The principal investigator traveled to the site for each of the participating companies for one to two days to meet participants in-person and to observe relevant processes and behaviors in addition to conducting interviews.

Lastly, I collected data by utilizing surveys to measure perceptions of leadership as it relates to employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. Surveys are useful in qualitative

research to gather information about the research topic in addition to interviews and observations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I gave participants a survey (See Appendix F) on paper that they filled out in private and returned to the researcher. There was no identifying information asked of the participant that can identify the individual. I reviewed the survey responses and compiled data from all data sources to triangulate the results and confirm emerging themes and findings.

Data organization techniques. A researcher must develop a system for organizing and managing data throughout the research study process and the organization of data should allow the researcher to access any piece of data at any given time (Merriam, 2009). Case study data may come in several forms, such as case study notes, case study documents, and recorded audio from interviews for researcher observations (Yin, 2014). I collected data for this multiple-case study that consisted of participant interviews, surveys, and observation with field notes. Therefore, a detailed data organization technique was used. Creating a case study database increases a researcher's reliability of the study when the investigator organizes multiple forms of data into a detailed database (Yin, 2014).

For this research case study, the database contained the case study notes. For case studies, a researcher's notes can be the most common database component (Yin, 2014). I asked for permission to record all interviews and got written permission on the informed consent form document (See Appendix B). I made transcripts of the participants' recorded interviews which included the notes taken during the interview as they made up the largest portion of this data organization component. Additionally, as I reviewed the interview transcripts, I also highlighted notes written about emerging themes and color-coordinated into sections and the colors correspond to certain study themes. The principal investigator kept general notes in a journal. I transcribed all data from interviews notes, recordings, surveys, and observations into Microsoft

Word and broke out themes into sections under headings for each research point. For example, the investigator transcribed emergent themes about employee turnover into one file, then I noted themes about employee satisfaction in a separate document file and then noted themes about employee motivation and transcribed into another document file. This separated research themes into sections for the principal investigator to reflect on individually and it made it easier to keep the different data points separated.

Yin (2014) suggested making electronic copies of all case study documents so it will be easier to store and retrieve data throughout the research process. I scanned copies of interview documents and surveys and saved them to my laptop, which is password protected. The investigator saved interview recordings to the previous mentioned laptop in audio files so that all documents and recordings were secure on a password-protected computer.

A key element of data organization is the maintenance of security and confidentiality for all participants and research documentation. For this research study, I secured data through multiple precautions. First, the investigator maintained all electronic files on the previously mentioned, personal laptop computer which is password-protected. I was the only individual who had access to this password, which preserves the confidentiality of electronic data. Second, the investigator kept all documents on paper in a locked file during the research process and then transported them to a locked drawer in the desk of the researcher. I was the only one with a key to this drawer. I will keep all notes, digital recordings, informed consent forms, and all paperwork secure and then destroyed after three years. I shredded paper documents and electronic files were deleted and removed from deleted files on the previously mentioned laptop computer to ensure permanent deletion.

Summary of data collection. The research population consisted of frontline workers and managers, supervisors, or leaders in the various manufacturing companies where this research took place. The investigator took a sample from the available participants that responded to the recruitment letter (See Appendix C) and signed the consent form (See Appendix B). I gathered data from the sample population in the form of interviews, surveys, and observations. The data that I collected were transcribed into electronic files on my personal laptop computer, which was password protected for safekeeping of the documents and to maintain confidentiality. I will keep data for three years and then permanently deleted the data by shredding paper documents and deleting electronic documents off of my laptop.

Data Analysis

The investigator used data analysis software, NVivo qualitative data software, to gather all data and information into to assist with data analysis and coding. NVivo is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis tool that helps in converting text and other records into codable data and assists the researcher with searching for themes, patterns, and relationships in the data (Yin, 2014). Data analysis is a systematic process of sorting and classifying the data collected from the research study. Four key steps of data analysis are immersion in the data, coding, creating categories, and the identification of themes (Green et al., 2007). Yin (2014) stated that a researcher needs to search for patterns, insights, or concepts that seem important when beginning to analyze data. A researcher can do this by putting data in different arrays, creating a display such as a flow chart or graph, by putting information in chronological order or using some other ordering process (Yin, 2014). Data analysis starts and occurs throughout the interviews, observations, and other research methods that generate the data. Data analysis is very time

consuming and requires constant movement between immersion, categorization, coding, and creation of themes (Green et al., 2007).

Yin (2014) described four general strategies for data analysis for case studies. These strategies are relying on theoretical propositions, working data from the ground up, developing a case description and exploring plausible rival explanations. For this study, I used the theoretical propositions strategy to guide the overall study, the literature review, the interview questions, and the analysis of data. For example, the theoretical proposition indicated in literature is that leadership behaviors can have a direct effect on employee behaviors and outcomes such as turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation and thus this will be a key focus area in the data analysis.

Yin (2014) also discussed five case study techniques used in data analysis that can accompany the theoretical proposition strategy. The five data analysis techniques are listed below:

1. Pattern matching, which involves the comparison of patterns that are predictions made before data collection and those that develop during data collection.
2. Explanation building, which is a special type of pattern matching that consists of the determination of causal links that explain why or how a phenomenon happens.
3. Time-series analysis, which compares a theoretically significant trend that the researcher specifies before the research investigation compared to the observed trend that comes about during the research.
4. Logic models, which details a complex chain of events that the researcher stages in a cause and effect sequence and then compared to the theoretically predicted events.

5. Cross-case analysis, which applies specifically to the analysis of multiple cases and involves investigating findings across multiple cases by using one of the other four techniques to analysis the different cases together.

For this multiple-case study, I used explanation building, explaining how leadership behaviors affect employee outcomes, such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation and cross-case synthesis, comparing findings from all cases and information gathered from the different manufacturing locations.

Coding process. A qualitative researcher codes data to assist in understanding the information gathered through interviews, observations, and field notes. Coding refers to the identification of themes, issues, similarities, and differences that the researcher exposes through the participants' interviews, researcher observations, and other collected data and interpreted by the researcher (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This process permits the researcher to start to comprehend the lived experience from each participant's perspective. Coding happens in several ways, by hand on a hard copy of the transcript, by making notes in the margin of researcher notes or by highlighting and naming sections of text (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Fundamental to the coding process is ensuring that coding procedures are clear, rigorous, and consistently applied to conform with validity and reliability standards related to qualitative research (Williams & Moser, 2019).

This study distinguished the interdependent relationship between data analysis, organization, categorization, and theory development constructing the meaning of information, coding plays an essential role in enabling the investigator's ability to advance the research process effectively. Notably, the open, axial, and selective coding strategy allows for a cyclical and evolving information loop where the investigator can interact with the data, constantly

comparing data and applying data reduction, and consolidation techniques to the information (Williams & Moser, 2019). As the coding process develops, the dynamic, nonlinear function recognizes, codifies, and helps to understand vital themes in a research study and can contribute to the associated literature. This cyclical process is both an art and science, requiring the researcher to deeply understand and be highly familiar with the data by continuously reading and rereading the collected information for theory to evolve (Williams & Moser, 2019).

Open coding is the first level of the coding process. In open coding, the investigator is identifying different themes and concepts for the categorization process (Creswell, 2016). In the open coding process, I organized the first level of data by creating initial broad thematic areas for data assembling. The first step, in open coding, sought to express data, information, and phenomena in the form of broad concepts. Open coding classifies expressions such as single words, short sequences of words, or similar statements to attach annotations and concepts in a large and broad array (Creswell, 2016). The ongoing coding of themes as an indicator of a concept is a task a researcher must continue to do, always comparing it to previous concepts that have similar codes assigned to them (Williams & Moser, 2019).

The second level of coding is axial coding. In contrast to open coding, which concentrates on identifying developing themes, axial coding further refines and categorizes the themes. When the researcher completes the task of open coding, the researcher can then transition to axial coding, where the researcher begins sifting through, categorizing, and refining data to creating distinct thematic categories in preparation for the next step, selective coding (Williams & Moser, 2019). Axial coding helps identify relationships between open codes which further develops core codes. Core codes develop as collections of the most closely interrelated or overlapping open codes for which supporting evidence is robust. To accomplish this organizing

objective, the researcher needs to continuously analyze, cross reference, and refine themes and categories created from this step in the coding process (Williams & Moser, 2019).

Selective coding is the third level of the coding process. Selective coding enables the investigator to select and integrate categories of data from the axial coding process in cohesive and meaningful terms. Selective coding continues the axial coding process at a deeper level of classifications that lead to elaboration or formulation of the case study (Williams & Moser, 2019). Essential to allow the story or case to emerge from the data categories is the development and enhancement of the data, selecting the key thematic category, selectively coding, and then in a systematic method linking the main theme to other categories. This approach to information framing permits the researcher to work constantly toward thematic specificity and, in turn, theory creation (Williams & Moser, 2019). In selective coding, degrees of interconnection and predictability can arise from the thematic refining process, allowing the investigator to identify sets of conditions in which certain responses will provoke certain reactions. With the work of selective coding complete, the investigator can move toward developing theory and ultimately constructing meaning from all the data (Williams & Moser, 2019).

Once the researcher codes the data. The researcher will begin to identify themes, patterns, and relationships within the dataset (Yin, 2014). The investigator for this study looked for repetition of words and commonly used phrases by participants. I also compared findings from interviews and observations to the literature review and discussed the differences between them. I searched for missing information. This is information that participants did not mention in interviews or that came up in data collection that I expected participants to mention. I used this information to identify themes, patterns, and relationships in the data that assisted in building a compelling case study analysis (Yin, 2014).

Summary of data analysis. Once data collection concluded, the investigator analyzed all data by using the theoretical propositions strategy to guide the overall study to understand how leadership behaviors affect employee behaviors and outcomes such as turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation. Additionally, for this multiple-case study, I used the data analysis techniques of explanation building. Explaining how leadership behaviors affect employee outcomes, such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation and cross-case synthesis, comparing findings from all cases and information gathered from the different manufacturing locations. The coding process assisted in outlining themes from the data by utilizing the open, axial, and selective coding approach. Once the coding process concluded, I identified themes, patterns, and relationships and was able to look at the data, develop theory, and began to construct the meaning of all the information for this case study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are significant aspects of all qualitative research studies. Paying exhaustive attention to these two aspects can make the distinction between good research and weak research and can help to assure that readers of the research accept findings as credible, consistent, transferable, dependable, and trustworthy. This is predominantly critical in qualitative research studies, where the investigators' subjectivity can have a personal bias and cloud the interpretation of the data, and where the scientific community questions or is skeptical with qualitative research findings (Brink, 1993). The main focus of reliability is repeatability, consistency, and stability of the participants' accounts of the phenomenon as well as the researchers' ability to accumulate and record information accurately (Brink, 1993). Reliability is the ability of a research method to produce the same results consistently over repeated tests. This means it requires that an investigator using the same or similar methods will gather the same or

comparable results every time the researcher uses the methods in the same or similar investigation (Brink, 1993). The idea of validity in research studies is the accuracy and truthfulness of research findings. A valid research study should demonstrate what occurs and a valid data collection instrument should measure what a research study intends to measure (Brink, 1993).

Reliability. Reliability is the details of the operations within the research study, which includes the data collection procedures, ensuring that duplication of results and drawing the same conclusions is possible (Yin, 2014). Reliability also uses the process of coding and is customary in research studies and qualitative analysis, sorting data sets by topic, issues, and unique themes critical to the study (Stake, 2010). Reliability in qualitative research focuses on the consistency of analytical procedures and accounting for researcher and research method biases (Noble & Smith, 2015). For this research study, I controlled reliability by consistently applying the data collection, data organization, and data analysis techniques described previously. The process for selecting participants was consistent with all potential participants in each case location and it required that each individual met the same criteria to be eligible. The participants that were a part of this study had no relationship to the researcher, thus no personal bias due to such a relationship existed. Once I selected an individual, the participants followed the same process for the collection of data that consisted of the same recruitment forms, consent forms, questionnaires, and personal interviews. Once data collection was complete, I used the same systematic approach for data organization, analysis, and the maintenance of data security and confidentiality in the same way for each participant to maintain consistent reliability.

The investigator, to help further certify reliability within the research study, created an interview guide. Interview guides for qualitative research studies use several open-ended

questions to ask and collect responses from the research participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The investigator used the existing literature and research questions to develop interview guides that sought to gain insight from participants about the research topic. I also consistently used field notes made during the interview. Field notes are the most commonly used tool of a researcher, used for interviews, observations, or documentation throughout a research study (Yin, 2014). For reliability and consistency, the investigator asked all of the participants of the study the same questions from the interview guide in the same order and manner and recorded the results into qualitative data analysis software, NVivo. With the main instrument of data collection being personnel interviews, the reliability of the interview questions plays a crucial role in the maintenance of the overall study reliability. Each interview consisted of the same open-ended questions for frontline workers from the frontline workers interview guide (See Appendix D) and the investigator asked open-ended questions to leaders and supervisors from their respective interview guide (See Appendix E) and I read these questions verbatim to the participants. The investigator transcribed the completed interviews and the participants' answers verbatim for additional review for all interviews conducted.

Validity. Validity for qualitative research studies is the precision with which the research findings accurately reflect the data from the research study and consists of an external and internal component (Yin, 2014). Internal validity for qualitative case studies is the extent to which the research findings are an accurate reflection of reality (Creswell, 2016). Transferability or external validity will encompass the creation of thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973). I made detailed accounts of experiences in the field study and put the social relationship patterns between leaders and followers into context, which helped to provide detailed descriptions of the data. For this study, maintaining internal validity happened by limiting personal biases,

meticulously keeping interview transcripts, and consistently applying the same method to each interview and observation. Also, to assure credibility and internal validity, achieving triangulation from multiple sources of data, further enhanced the internal validity of the study as well as applying other strategies like member checking and saturation.

The purpose of using triangulation is to show validity in qualitative research, and it uses two or more data sources, methods, theoretical perspectives, approaches to analysis or researchers in the study of a single phenomenon and then validating the equivalence between them (Brink, 1993). The main goal of triangulation is to remove any personal biases of the researcher and overcome the insufficiencies intrinsic to a single-theory, single-investigator, or single-method study, therefore, increasing the validity of the study (Brink, 1993). For this study, the investigator used multiple data sources, data collection methods and approaches to analysis for validating research findings. I conducted interviews with participants until saturation of participant answers occurred. Saturation is the point in which the researcher addresses all categories of the research study with participants and new participants provide no new information as to the understanding within the group (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After I transcribed the interviews, copies of the transcripts were provided to the interview participants to verify that the answers provided accurately described what the participants intended. Providing a copy of the transcripts to the interview participant is the process of member checking (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Part of the reliability and validity process is creating a continuous member checking loop through the research process (Harvey, 2014). Once no new themes emerged from the data, I compiled the interviews and concluded the interview process and began to present the findings of the research.

Summary of reliability and validity. Reliability and validity are two critical aspects of qualitative research. These two facets of a research study are key to demonstrate the research findings are trustworthy and another researcher could replicate the study. Reliability is the consistency and repeatability of the research procedures and data collection measures in a case study (Yin, 2014) and validity is the underlying measure that represents a good sample of possibilities that meaning can draw from in the research study (Creswell, 2016). I utilized the triangulation technique to ensure data were valid and conducted interviews with participants until data saturation occurred to ensure all data were collected for proper analysis.

Transition and Summary of Section 2

This qualitative research study investigated how leaders and managers in manufacturing locations in the Southeastern United States directly affect employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. A qualitative multiple-case study sought to address the research question in multiple factories where a leader employs blue-collar, frontline employees. Section 2 of this report outlines how research for the multiple-case study took place and describes the research project in detail by providing information about the overall purpose and the role of the researcher and participants. Section 2 discussed the method and design of the study, and why a qualitative method with a multiple-case study design is the most appropriate research design for this research study. I detailed data collection techniques and included the sampling practices, data collection tools, and the use of data analysis software in this research study and discussed the reliability and validity tests to reinforce the credibility of the study to maintain consistency and replication. I presented the findings from the data collection and analysis in the following section.

In the following section, an overview of the study, anticipated themes and patterns, presentation of the findings, application for professional practice, recommendations for action, and recommendation for further study are presented. Section 3 will provide a comprehensive presentation of the findings from the research study and data analysis. The findings of management and leadership practices and their effects on employee outcomes within manufacturing organizational settings are explained in the next section.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

This section is a culmination of the overall research study and findings from this qualitative, multiple case study that sought to identify effective leadership practices for blue-collar, frontline employees of manufacturing organizations in the Southeastern United States. This section will begin with a brief overview of the study that will introduce and address the focal points of this research study. The overview will discuss why and how this study addresses effective leadership practices for blue-collar, manufacturing organizations and the importance of effective leadership in businesses such as these. This section will also discuss the presentation of findings and the interpretation of these findings and will include a conclusion that addresses the research questions found in section one.

In Section 3, the investigator details the applicability of the findings as they pertain to professional practices in business and leadership. The investigator also presents a biblical worldview, connecting the research findings to principles the bible discusses. Recommendations for action in the business field based on the findings in this research as well recommendations for further research and the researcher's reflections of the overall study are in this section. This section concludes with a summary of the study and restates the most significant findings of the research.

Overview of the Study

This qualitative, multiple case study explored a unique demographic of organizational leadership and sought to understand the leadership practices in blue-collar, manufacturing organizations located in the Southeastern United States. This study addressed the effects of leadership in manufacturing companies on their frontline, blue-collar workers as it relates to employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. The purpose of this multiple case research study

was to understand the reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover, and lack of employee motivation from the frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States that may be the result of poor managers and leadership. The leadership style and behaviors of managers or leaders and the job satisfaction of employees have noticeable effects on employee work outcomes (Babalola, 2016). It is significantly more efficient to keep good employees than to hire and train new employees to achieve the same quality (Mertel & Brill, 2015).

I began by identifying several manufacturing facilities in the Southeastern United States and compiled a list to contact. The multiple-identified manufacturing facilities all manufacture and fabricate industrial equipment. Frontline jobs at each manufacturing plant consisted of welding, fabricating, painting, hydraulic installation, electrical wiring and finishing as well as other manual labor, blue-collar jobs. Through investigation, executive leadership personnel were identified from each location and I began contacting executive leaders to ask for permission (See Appendix G) to contact each locations' senior managers. The investigator then contacted senior managers and asked for permission to use their facility and recruit participants (See Appendix G). A meeting held at the case study locations included all employees, supervisors, and upper managers at each location to explain the research study, procedures, and qualifications for participation. The investigator passed out recruitment letters as well for additional information and then worked with senior management to identify possible eligible participants, utilizing the purposeful sampling technique. I selected participants from the eligible and willing participants and each individual received and signed an informed consent form (See Appendix B).

The data collection began with conducting semi-structured interviews with frontline workers. These interviews consisted of four sections, leadership evaluation questions, employee

turnover questions, employee satisfaction questions, and employee motivation questions (See Appendix D). Each section of questions specifically related leadership of frontline workers to frontline workers lived experiences and perceptions of turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation. The leadership evaluation sections consisted of thirteen open-ended questions, the turnover sections consisted of 10 open-ended questions, the satisfaction section consisted of 11 open-ended questions, and the motivation section consisted of 11 open-ended questions. Frontline workers also filled out a questionnaire that consisted of a total of 24 questions, eight questions each about turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. The investigator also interviewed supervisors, upper managers, and leaders in each organization with open-ended, semi-structured questions (See Appendix E). There were a similar number of questions asked to supervisors, managers, and leaders, the researcher adjusted the questions for leadership and managers to discuss how their management of their employees affected employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. I also spent time in the factories making observations of frontline supervisors, managers, and leader's interactions and frequency of communication with frontline workers.

The research questions that guided this study were:

RQ1. Why do leaders in factories lack leadership skills?

RQ1a. What can managers do to improve their leadership skills to enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction?

RQ1b. How do poor leadership practices affect employee satisfaction?

RQ2. How does poor leadership practices affect employee turnover?

RQ2a. What leadership skills can reduce turnover rates in factory workers?

The results of the research found that leaders and managers have a strong positive or negative effect on employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction, and turnover by the way they

lead and communicate with the individual worker. The relationship that a leader has with their subordinate is a strong indicator of the leader's effectiveness in regard to employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. This study sought to identify what impact leaders truly have on employees and what types of leadership styles and qualities positively and negatively affect overall employee satisfaction in a blue-collar manufacturing industry. The reason supervisors and managers lack leadership skill are because in the cases studied, there is no leadership training and development programs offered at any level of management. Lower-level supervisors, in general, worked their way up from the frontlines but received no training or support in gaining critical leadership skills to increase their impact as a leader.

The responses from frontline workers were consistent in that they acknowledge that their leaders and supervisors affect their overall turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivations in many ways. Responses from supervisors and managers also agreed that they believe they have an impact on frontline workers turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation to some extent, but thought more of what made employees stay at a company and work hard was related to compensation and benefits. While many frontline workers mentioned compensation and benefits help and of course are necessary, many frontline workers acknowledged that they cared more about working for supervisors and upper managers they liked and that respected them personally. In all cases studied for this research, senior managers did not have any leadership training programs in place or proactively taught frontline supervisors and foreman about leadership behaviors and the implication of positive and negative leadership and management practices.

Anticipated Themes/Perceptions

It is clear in the literature that leadership has a significant positive or negative impact on employee outcomes such as turnover intentions, satisfaction, and motivation. However, I

anticipated that leaders and managers in a blue-collar, manufacturing setting, may acknowledge the idea that leaders have a personal impact on employees outcomes, leaders and managers might not put much thought, effort, or resources towards developing their lower-level supervisors and foremen who have the most daily contact and involvement with frontline workers. The investigator anticipated that upper managers might be of the thought that if they paid their employees enough that would keep them satisfied and motivated to work hard. Also, upper managers do not care much about leadership development and helping supervisors and foreman grow their leadership abilities in order to have a higher positive impact or minimize negative impact on frontline workers.

I expected confirmation of these perceptions by interviewing participants in different roles within each organization (e.g., frontline workers, supervisors, foremen, and upper managers). Interviewing upper managers and leaders would reveal a disconnect in the perceived notion of the impact of leaders on frontline workers and the lack of action taken to improve frontline managers, supervisors, and foreman. The perception that upper leaders and managers do not put much or any effort into leadership training is that their belief and understanding of employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation falls more so into the realm of compensation and benefits and less into employer-employee relationships.

Presentation of the Findings

The presentation of findings for this qualitative, multiple case study analysis includes interpretations of the research findings that relate to the research questions and the current literature. Exploring the findings through the lens of the conceptual framework described in Section 1, the investigator built this framework on the idea that leadership can positively or negatively affect employees' outcomes. Specifically, the turnover intentions, satisfactions, and

motivation in blue-collar, manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States are non-union organizations. Managers or supervisors in authority positions in factory settings have not consistently treated subordinates equally (Downing, 2016) and because of this inconsistency, managers can create a dissatisfied workforce and negative culture.

When managers cannot lead effectively, it can result in low worker morale and job dissatisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Research results indicated that an appropriate leadership style for a certain business context and culture could result in decreased turnover intention, increased employee satisfaction, and increased employee motivation (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). The data for this study came from three case study companies through interviews with frontline workers, frontline supervisors, and upper managers. Frontline workers also completed a questionnaire (See Appendix F). Personal observations of frontline workers and supervisors' interactions within the factories provided additional data.

Interviews at each case study location continued until I achieved saturation and no new information was coming from the interviews. I also triangulated information through data gathered during interviews, existing literature, questionnaires, and personal observations at case study location.

I discovered several themes from the interviews and questionnaires. These themes were that frontline employees wanted to feel valued and feel appreciated by their supervisors and upper managers. Frontline workers also wanted to have a more personal connection and communication with their supervisors and upper managers. I found that effective leaders in the cases studied had a stronger personal connection with their subordinates and those leaders worked harder to acknowledge and show appreciation to their workers. Contrastingly, leaders perceived as weak or a poor manager in the eyes of their employees did not have a strong

personal connection with their subordinates and did not work to recognize or make employees feel valued. These themes correlated with employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. The study found that when leaders value employees and make them feel appreciated, employees are more likely to stay with an organization and have a higher level of satisfaction and motivation.

Turnover. Immediate managers and supervisors are the number one predictor of employee turnover in the United States and many employees reported that they were leaving their organization because their manager's expectations were unclear or because their manager provided inadequate equipment, materials, or resources (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). The data collected found this to be highly accurate in the three case study facilities where this investigation took place. The leadership style used by immediate managers can have a major influence on employees' turnover intention. The survey results showed that 14% of frontline workers consider leaving their job 'very often' and 14% also responded that they consider leaving their job due to their direct supervisor 'very often.' Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents said it was 'accurate' that they stay at their company because their boss treats them well and 14% said that statement was 'highly accurate,' so a combined 57% stay at their company because of their boss. This shows that a strong relationship between a positive leader-follower relationships can reduce employee turnover. One frontline worker said in the interview when asked if their manager influences their thoughts about staying with the company and the participant stated, "Oh yes, I would stay for my supervisor." Another participant stated, "Yes, I would stay for my manager. They are not on your back and make it as easy as possible to understand your job and give you everything you need to do your job."

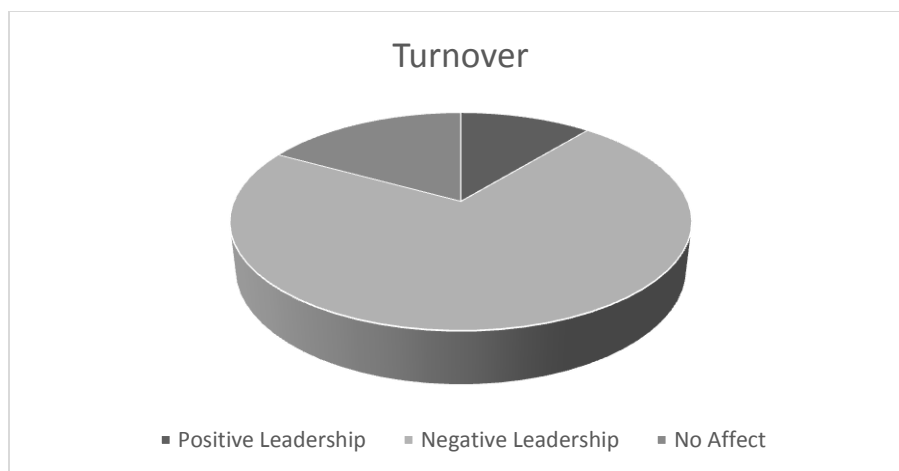


Figure 3. Leadership effects on turnover.

A result of ongoing poor leadership may lead to high employee turnover. When workers are unmotivated because of poor organizational culture, coming from poor leadership, employees often leave the organization (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). The effects of negative leadership have a greater effect on turnover than positive leadership. One interview participant noted a particularly poor relationship with their supervisor as well as the manager and explained that they had no desire to stay with the company and this person felt used by the leaders. This participant also noted that communication was weak and that if communication was better it might lead to a stronger relationship, but at the present time this frontline worker had no intentions to stay with the company much longer. When the investigator asked managers about employee turnover, one upper manager from one of the case site locations stated:

The turnover rate here is way too high, 60% or so. This may be comparable with similar organizations in the area, but it is extremely high compared to other, similar companies I have worked for in the past. At companies I worked for where turnover was lower, they had more formalized training and required a higher level of education or training to get into supervisory positions to start with. There was structured ongoing training that was an annual event and process done each year. Annual leadership, safety training and

awareness programs seemed to make a long-term difference when it came to training supervisors to be more effective and retaining employees, from my previous experience.

(personal communication, January 29, 2020)

Cross-analyzing the data from each case location, I noted that in almost every instance, the frontline supervisors or foremen had worked their way up from a frontline job to a supervisory role but had not received any leadership or job management training, and in every case, these supervisors had no formal education higher than a high school degree. This was confirmed by asking upper managers at each case site location and noting that none of the lower-level supervisors and foreman had received any management or leadership training on the job or in a previous role. An upper manager at a different case-study site said:

Providing training to lower-level supervisors would certainly benefit our company as far as job satisfaction and turnover and motivation. Supervisors tend to work their way up through the ranks and if they did not have a strong supervisor they may have never been exposed to a good supervisor. As well as they may not have strong leadership skills themselves and how can we expect them to be a good supervisor when they have not had any training. (personal communication, February 3, 2020)

To answer the first research question, RQ1 “Why do leaders in factories lack leadership skills?” From the interviews conducted the leading cause of why companies in this study lack leadership skill was because they did not offer any leadership training. In the manufacturing organizations that took part of this case study, none of them currently offer any type of leadership or management training to their lower-level supervisors. Additionally, they did not require any previous leadership or management experience in order to attain a supervisory role within the organization. Research question RQ2, “How does poor leadership practices affect employee

turnover?” The data answers this question through the employee interviews and questionnaire answers. The investigator asked frontline workers if their supervisor or manager affected their desire to stay with the company and several said: “Here, I am most likely to stay because of the supervisor because the way they treat me,” and another said “I stay here because I work well with my supervisor. In previous jobs I have wanted to leave because of a manager.” Another frontline worker said:

I would be more likely to leave the company if I did not like the managers, if there is friction there it makes the job that much harder. In a previous job I had, supervisors were on your back. Most places I have worked for it is like ‘this is your job, you do it and that is it’, that is why I left that job, but here they work with you, not just tell you what to do and that makes me want to stay here. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

One upper manager in one of the factories said:

I think most workers leaves a job because of the relationship they have with their immediate supervisor, I believe that because if their supervisor is inspiring and provided an atmosphere where people would grow they would want to stay, I would want to work for that person and I think others would too. That is the believe that I have, yet I am realistic that not everyone has that desire to grow and consequently, even if you had the best of supervisors, I do not know that would limit or reduce the turnover for those individuals. However, there may be a weakness with a supervisor that could be improved with training, therefore improving leadership skills, and we might be able to reduce turnover and increase satisfaction in some cases with stronger supervisors. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

When the researcher asked upper managers about the leadership of lower-level supervisors, one manager stated: “The supervisors and lower-level foreman are very weak.” Another upper manager said:

That is something I am wanting to develop, a more structured leadership program, because I think the leaders here that I have, the supervisors here, there are some gaps with how they view the operations and how they communicate with their subordinates. The more that I grow as a leader, I see the need for those underneath me, the need to have that growth trajectory, and we don't offer anything to help facility that at the moment and in light of that, I perceive that I have not given enough formal training, and the training has only been more situational or problem specific. I need to provide something more formal in place to have a structure so that these supervisors know what to do or how to handle situations instead of going from one crisis to the next. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

One of the main reasons' employees leave a company or change jobs is because of their boss and when the job market is faring well employees do not have to settle for poor leaders (Stark & Kelly, 2016). Managers can correct this issue and help retain and motive employees with training and coaching (Stark & Kelly, 2016), but leaders may need to improve on their leadership skills, become more self-aware and emotionally intelligent to change their effects on blue-collar employees (Downing, 2016). This is where upper managers and organizations have the opportunity to recognize the lack of training and implement and invest in lower-level leadership training for their supervisors.

When poor leadership leads to higher turnover, dissatisfaction, and unmotivated workers, upper managers need to develop ways to improve supervisors' abilities (Amundsen & Martinsen,

2014). Downing (2016) noted that transformational leadership and emotional intelligence in leaders improved employee motivation and job satisfaction which also led to reduced employee turnover in blue-collar industries. The conceptual framework of this research is to understand why leaders in blue-collar organizations lack these leadership qualities and how can they obtain them and understand the effects of leaders not obtaining stronger leadership qualities. Leader effectiveness has a major impact on organizational performance and employee commitment and leaders need to understand how to have a positive impact on their employees (Van Kleef et al., 2009). The conceptual framework of this research is also seeking to understand that poor leadership can affect turnover intentions as well as other employee outcomes. The data from this research study helps to highlight the importance of changing poor leadership and promoting positive and effect leadership methods to improve turnover intentions.

Satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a key employee outcome that leaders and organizations seek that lead not only to satisfied employees, but also to the retention of employees (Rottinghaus et al., 2009). While most job satisfaction research has linked employee's attitudes towards the job and commitment to the organization, research has shown a strong relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment when employees have a positive view of their leader (Alvinus et al., 2017). Job dissatisfaction theory notes that individuals are likely to leave a company if they perceive the relationship with the leader as being unbeneficial to them. Job dissatisfaction theory implies that dissatisfied employees are likely to have an intention to leave the company and therefore a threat to terminate employment because of their dissatisfaction (Chinomona & Mofokeng, 2016).

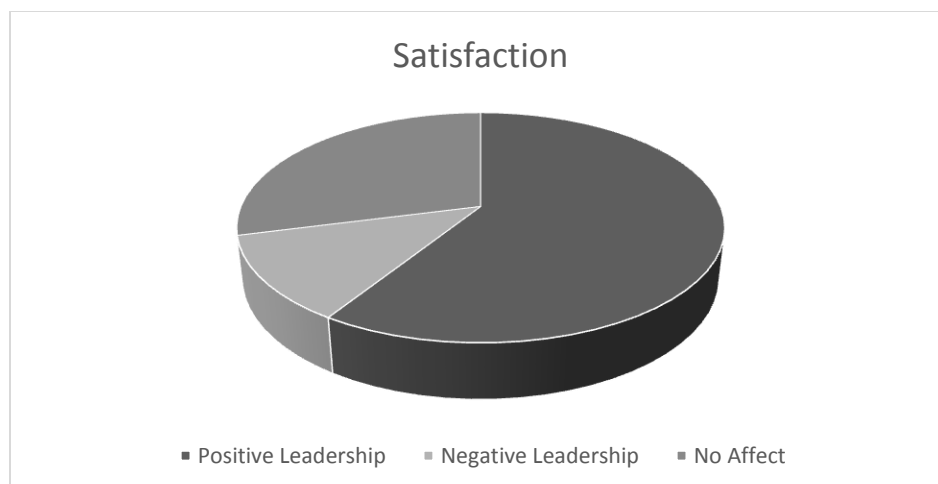


Figure 4. Leadership effects on satisfaction.

The data collected identified that frontline workers who said they were satisfied at work also noted having a positive working relationship with their supervisor or upper management within their organization. Consequently, workers who expressed dissatisfaction also noted a negative relationship or view of their direct supervisor and sometimes with upper management. One frontline worker stated: “I would be satisfied if my leader was not here,” and another frontline worker said: “I do not think my supervisor is concerned with my satisfaction, my supervisor says ‘this is what you are supposed to do and you need to do it’ and that is it, there is no other communication or appreciation.” Another employee said: “I would not say employees at all levels are satisfied, I think it is lack of training of lower-level supervisors that they do not really value the frontline workers under them.” This employee went on to say:

It takes a certain type of individual to do this kind of work and these people can be rougher individuals and supervisors that do not have a lot of training on how to deal with different types of people often struggle to manage these types of workers and the morale can suffer. There could certainly be a morale boost at the lower-level in the factory. Supervisors do not often care about frontline workers; they definitely could use some

training. At another company I worked for they had a great training program and would take a lower-level supervisor and help grow them into a more effective manager and that made a huge difference. There was always something in place to continually grow managers, there is not that here. (personal communication, February 3, 2020)

One upper manager said this about the satisfaction of the frontline workers at his factory:

I am going to struggle to say yes to them being satisfied, because I am not sure if the frontline workers know what will satisfy them. What I mean by that is most of the frontline workers are here for financial reason, not necessary about fulfilling a deeper desire in their lives or a desire to grow or become the best worker they can be. It tends to be more of meeting a financial need they have. When it comes to being satisfied, I think a lot of satisfaction is based on their current opportunities or lack thereof. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

However, many frontline workers talked about wanting a supervisor they liked, who appreciated them for the job they did, and frontline workers wanted to feel valued. One frontline worker said: “On my evaluation my manager let me know what I was doing well, and I felt valued by that and that means a lot to me.” Another frontline worker said one of the biggest reasons he stays at the company is:

When I had personal issues in the past the leadership helped me get through it, they supported me and gave me the chance to get through the issues. It was because of the personal relationship I have with the managers and the fact they value employees here. It is like a family here. They gave me a chance to work through it instead of firing me when other companies would have let me go during that time. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

The data shows if a personal, professional relationship with managers exists it can lead to satisfaction and a desire to continue working for a company. The data correlates a positive leader-follower relationship leads to higher levels of satisfaction. Interview responses from frontline workers show this as well, such as:

The management here will take the time to sit and listen to you. I have been at other jobs when I asked to speak with the supervisor, and it might take a couple of days to get to talk to them. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

As well as:

Compensation and benefits are important, but this is the first place I have received so much recognition from a company, other places I was just a number. A lot of times the boss did not even know your name, here it is different which I find very nice. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

From the questionnaire results, only 36% of frontline workers said they are 'often satisfied' with their direct supervisor. One worker said in their interview that: "There is a disconnect, we have good upper managers who have good relationships with the supervisors, but the supervisors do not always have a great relationship with their subordinates. I believe that is in most blue collar jobs." One upper manager acknowledged that:

There has been an improvement in leadership here, but some supervisors still believe that 'I pay you to do this, you need to get it done.' What supervisors need to do is understand more of what these frontline guys need in their life and can find a way to communicate with them better. I think with some training it could improve the leadership here, they are hard workers, but these supervisors could get so much better. The long-term goal for the company is to grow and we need people to achieve the growth but I believe an

improvement in training for supervisors would greatly benefit that, we would retain a lot more frontline workers and they would be more satisfied if we had better supervisors.

(personal communication, February 3, 2020)

Job dissatisfaction can occur from a dislike of job tasks, working conditions or a negative relationship with leaders or managers in an organization and can have a direct correlation to employees leaving an organization (Hom & Kinicki, 2001). Chan (2019) linked employee satisfaction directly with a participatory relationship with management where the employee is a part of the decision making regarding an employee's specific job duties. The relationship between participative leadership and employees' work performance affects employees' work engagement. Participative leadership behaviors also affect employee job satisfaction, with work engagement again acting as the mediator (Chan, 2019).

Research question RQ1b, "How do poor leadership practices affect employee satisfaction?" The data shows that poor leadership practices and a negative leader-follower relationship negatively affects employee satisfaction and can lead to turnover intentions. Training and leadership development can be a strong factor to improve weaker lower-level supervisors and most upper managers recognize the need for this in the organizations that participated in this research study. Building a personal, professional relationship with frontline workers and valuing employees can positively affect the culture and organizational morale which many frontline workers desire.

Motivation. Employees that have a higher degree of workplace engagement are more likely motivated by role modeling from their supervisor. Employees observe and imitate their leaders and they are more likely to perform effectively at work if their direct supervisor is engaging them (Chan, 2019). Leadership is a central driving force for worker motivation and job

satisfaction and leaders directly affect worker performance positively or negatively (Ugwu et al., 2016). Leaders play a vital role in the formation of such an organizational culture. Leaders have the responsibility of influencing individuals and directing them to achieve strategic objectives (Tortorella & Fogliatto, 2017).

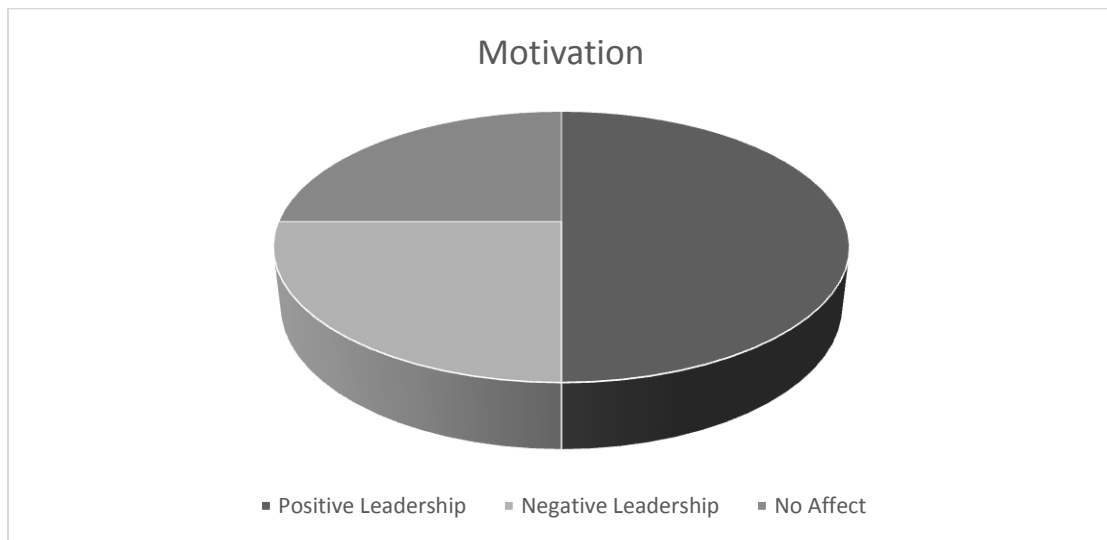


Figure 5. Leadership effects on motivation.

Employee motivation strongly correlates to a positive leader-follower relationship. The investigator found that on the surface level, when frontline workers were discussing what motivates them, the vast majority mentioned compensation, benefits, and bonuses. Each case study facility gave out bonuses when workers meet certain productions goals or end of year bonuses that are available. However, upon further probing, the majority of the frontline workers would discuss that compensation only went so far for when it came to lasting motivation. One frontline worker said:

Compensation does not really matter when it comes to my satisfaction and motivation to do my job. I want a better relationship with my bosses. I want to know what they want me to do and to get the job done right. (personal communication, January 24, 2020)

Other frontline workers echoed similar statements: “I am motivated just in how my boss treats me, they talk to me as friend and not just an employee and that motivates me.” Another worker said: “When the manager speaks to me and asks how my weekend was or something like that, it is nice and motivates me because it shows they care.” These examples highlight that having a good relationship with management can improve motivation with frontline workers.

Furthermore, another worker said:

I have had many jobs in the past and I know there are good managers here. I took a pay cut to come here and I am happy to be here and satisfied because I am treated well, and I like the leadership here and who I work with. So that helps keep me motivated. (personal communication, February 3, 2020)

However, while frontline workers seem to respond well when there is a positive relationship with their supervisors and managers, other frontline workers note negative feelings of motivation when supervisors and managers are not contributing to the motivation within the organization.

One frontline worker said: “Leadership does not really motivate anyone; they are weak at communication. If that was better, it could benefit me and everyone else.” Another said: “That is hard to say that management motivates me, we have to motivate ourselves to get the job done, so I would say that is more on the employee himself not the management.” Leaders at all three case sites admitted that other than monetary incentives there was nothing else formally in place, or training of supervisors to help lower-level managers develop skills to more effectively motivate frontline workers to do their jobs.

One upper manager said: “There are no programs in place to better our supervisor’s motivation ability.” The upper managers however, as the researcher observed, did personally try to motivate workers with their actions, encouraging words, communication, involving employees

in decision making as well going out of their way to check in with frontline workers on a regular basis, and many frontline workers said that went a long way and meant a lot to them. However, supervisors did not often exemplify these same sentiments which could be where the disconnect with upper managers' ability to motivate frontline workers and where supervisors cannot, even though supervisors spend more time on the factory floor with the frontline workers.

One upper manager said:

I like to think that I motivate the workers on the factory floor. I often communicate with them on the floor level, I am out in the factory a lot and I talk to the workers a lot. I try to give daily feedback to everyone. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

Another upper manager said:

Yes, I try to personally motivate employees that has always been a goal of mine. Motivation helps with the process of getting the job done. We try to set up rewards to motivate employees to accomplish the production goals. Rewards are a big part of motivation but rewards without good management does not work for very long. (personal communication, February 24, 2020)

Another upper manager said:

I want to say I think I motivate the workers, but when I think about it now, I do not do it as much as I want to. I try to project the image of 'we can do this, we can make it happen or we can get you some help to make this happen, what do you need to make this happen?' That is how I try to motivate people and that is the way I have noticed a change in motivational behaviors of the frontline workers. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

Bruce and Pepitone (2012) stated that praise and encouraging words can go a long way to motivate employees at all levels and in all industries. Humans have a deep desire for appreciation and receiving praise from an employer can be a long lasting motivational factor for employees (Bruce & Pepitone, 2012). This point highly correlates to responses from participating frontline workers. “When my manager came to me and thanked me for what I was doing and recognized me I liked that.” “When my managers praise us when we do a good job or meet production goals that motivates me.”

Having a personal, professional relationship with employees also has a positive impact on employee motivation. This may be the biggest factor for employee engagement, satisfaction, and motivation. One upper manager summed it up by saying:

We as an organization could do better and benefit from being more attentive to these personal needs, such as higher purpose and intrinsic motivational factors outside of compensation. As a whole we do not give attention to these factors as we need to. We focus more on whatever it takes to produce goods as opposed to focusing on how we can grow employees and their capabilities, if we change our focus on that, it could have greater positive impact on our production and culture and atmosphere as a whole. In a sense, serving the frontline workers and providing the atmosphere where they can confidently do the work. (personal communication, January 29, 2020)

Another upper manager reflects on their relationship with frontline workers:

I believe it is important to have a good, positive relationship with my employees, if you have a good attitude and respect them, they are more likely to respect you and that turns to a more enjoyable work atmosphere and culture. I try to help them feel comfortable and able to get the job done. (personal communication, February 3, 2020)

Additionally, an upper manager said:

The professional relationship is something I have worked on for a long time and it is positive with some and others it is not. I try to recognize who values the personal connection with leadership and I believe that is incredibly important for a leader to do this and for others they do not care, and that is ok too. But it is important for a manager to try to understand each person's individual needs in the workplace. When I only cared about the job and getting the job done it was counterproductive, I have learned that just talking to an employee and asking them how they are doing goes a long way to show you care, it must stay professional and be appropriate for the workplace but not showing any concern for an employee outside of getting their job done, does not make an employee want to stay and be loyal to the leadership in a company. (personal communication, February 3, 2020)

As stated earlier in the literature review, managers seek effective ways to support, increase, or sustain the motivation of employee which has a direct effect on organizational performance (Zhang et al., 2016). Haroon and Akbar (2016) discussed how leaders motivate employees by the way they communicate and interact with employees and that positive communication and relationships with employees can enhance employee outcomes like job satisfaction and job performance. Research has noted three non-monetary motivators that relate to the role of leadership, praise from immediate supervisors, leadership attention such as one-on-one conversations, and a chance to lead projects or assignments (Conrad et al., 2015). The top three non-monetary motivators play a vital role in making employees feel that their organizations take their well-being seriously, values them, and strives to create opportunities for career growth.

These themes constantly recur in many studies on ways to motivate and engage employees in other ways than compensation and monetary benefits (Conrad et al., 2015).

These factors help to answer research question RQ1a “What can managers do to improve their leadership skills to enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction?” Upper managers recognized the need for personal connections with subordinates, but the lower-level supervisors have more daily interaction with the frontline workers and supervisors did not recognize that a personal connection, or genially taking a personal interest in their subordinate’s work needs and desires can have a positive impact. Upper managers can offer leadership and motivation training to lower-level supervisors in order to enhance and grow lower-level supervisor’s management ability.

Relationship of themes to research questions. Haroon and Akbar (2016) detailed how leadership affects employee motivation from how leaders communicate and interact with subordinates. Effective communication between managers and employees can enhance employee motivation and performance which reduces job dissatisfaction (Haroon & Akbar, 2016) and can consequently reduce employee turnover. Leaders have a profound influence on organizational performance and their members, leaders’ emotional display have a strong potential influence on employee’s motivation, the way they think, feel, and act while working on the job (Van Kleef et al., 2009). For motivation efforts to be effective, managers need to understand what motivates individuals within the context of the roles they perform in the organization. The leadership style of managers or leaders and the job satisfaction of employees have noticeable effects on employee work outcomes (Babalola, 2016). Therefore, adopting a leadership style that works best for an organization and its employees remains one of the most effective and efficient means by which organizations achieve their objectives and that of employees’ satisfaction (Babalola, 2016).

RQ1 “Why do leaders in factories lack leadership skills?” The interviews conducted found the leading cause of why companies in this study lack leadership skill is because these organizations do not offer any leadership training. In the manufacturing companies that took part of this case study, none of them currently offer any type of leadership or management training to their lower-level supervisors. Additionally, they do not require any previous leadership or management experience in order to attain a supervisory role within the organization. This can be the reason supervisors and managers do not have the skills and knowledge of a good leader. Learning emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills would help supervisors and managers recognize the emotional needs of employees to feel valued and a sense of recognition by the organization and its leaders. This relates to the literature as well. Stark and Kelly (2016) said that leaders can retain and motivate employees when leadership is engaged with their subordinates. However, leaders may need to improve on their leadership skills, become more self-aware and emotionally intelligent to change their effects on blue-collar employees (Downing, 2016).

RQ1a. “What can managers do to improve their leadership skills to enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction?” Organizations can implement leadership training with a focus on emotional intelligence. Organizations and managers can also adopt recognition initiatives to acknowledge employees who go above and beyond in their job duties. Employees want to feel valued, appreciated, and have a personal connection with their supervisors and leaders, so managers need to work on developing a stronger personal, professional relationship with their subordinates. Downing (2016) said that supervisors do not treat subordinates consistently in blue-collar industries and this is something managers can improve upon that might correlate to higher levels of satisfaction and motivation. Haroon and Akbar (2016) discussed how leadership affects employee motivation from how leaders communicate and interact with subordinates.

Effective communication between managers and employees can enhance employee motivation and performance which reduces job dissatisfaction (Haroon & Akbar, 2016) and can thus reduce employee turnover.

RQ1b. “How do poor leadership practices affect employee satisfaction?” Poor leadership creates employee dissatisfaction. I found that employees who felt valued by their manager were generally more satisfied in their job. Workers who did not have a strong relationship with their supervisor reported greater degrees of job dissatisfaction. Literature acknowledges that there is a dark side to leadership, some leaders behave in ways that are detrimental to their followers and often the organization as a whole (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Literature discusses that the satisfaction of basic human needs, or critical conditions for individual psychological growth and well-being, might be the main underlying psychological mechanism linking poor leadership to outcomes such as employee dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction is a key employee outcome that leaders and organizations seek that lead not only to satisfied employees but also to the retention of employees (Rottinghaus et al., 2009). While most job satisfaction research has linked employee’s attitudes towards the job and commitment to the organization, research has shown a strong relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment when employees have a positive view of their leader (Alvinus et al., 2017).

RQ2, “How does poor leadership practices affect employee turnover?” Poor leadership ultimately can result in increased rates of employee turnover. I found that poor leadership has a greater impact on employee turnover than positive leadership has on employee retention. Meaning, that if leaders do not have a strong relationship with their subordinates it can greatly increase employee turnover intentions. A result of ongoing poor leadership may lead to high employee turnover. When workers are unmotivated because of poor organizational culture,

coming from poor leadership, employees often leave the organization (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). The effects of poor or even abusive supervision on subordinates' basic needs can explain why negative supervision ultimately results in negative organizational performance and outcomes such as turnover, dissatisfaction, and low motivation. When poor or negative supervisors hinder employees' basic needs satisfaction, subordinates may develop the desire to retaliate against the manager and leave the organization (Lian et al., 2012).

RQ2a. "What leadership skills can reduce turnover rates in factory workers?" I found that what most workers want from their supervisors and managers is to feel valued and appreciated. Managers who had strong personal, professional relationships with their subordinates showed lower levels of turnover intentions from frontline workers. Leadership development that focused on improving emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills could benefit supervisors in factories with higher turnover rates. Mamun and Hasan (2017) stated that although turnover is known to be a costly organizational issue, top management does not focus on this major issue as much as maybe they should. Mamun and Hasan (2017) stated that top management is not as capable of realizing the situations about why employees leave and how costly it is to organizational performance and productivity. While organizations continually try to develop and experiment with innovative ways to improve employee retention, perhaps one of the most prominent aspects of a job that impacts worker satisfaction is the relationship that workers have with their immediate supervisor. What often differentiates a good manager from a bad one is leadership ability (Carter et al., 2019). Literature discusses the importance of leader-follower relationships and how this relationship can have a major impact on employee retention. I found the relationship between a supervisor and employee, whether positive or negative, has the greatest impact on employee outcomes. Leadership can improve interpersonal skills and

emotional intelligence regarding their subordinates, and these skills can help reduce employee turnover.

Leadership affects each theme and employee outcomes such as turnover, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation either positively or negatively. These themes share similar outcomes that correlate positively or negatively with a personal connection and workplace relationship with a worker's direct supervisor or upper manager. The major research questions addressing why supervisors in manufacturing industries lack leadership skill is because in the factories that participated in this study did not offer any leadership training to lower-level supervisors. Since frontline supervisors tend to come up through the ranks as a frontline worker first, the need for on the job training to improve their leadership skills can make a boundless impact. It is also clear that a large factor that affects employees' turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and job motivation is the quality of leadership. Strong leaders who build a positive, personal, and professional relationship with their subordinates generate higher levels of job commitment, loyalty, satisfaction, and motivation. Consequently, poor or weak leaders and supervisors negatively affect employees, creating turnover, dissatisfaction, and an unmotivated workforce.

Summary of the findings. I found that when frontline workers felt valued and appreciated by their supervisors and managers, they were more satisfied and motivated at work. Frontline workers also felt more committed to organizations where they had better communication and a personal, professional relationship with their supervisors and managers. Compensation and benefits are a strong driver of satisfaction, motivation, and turnover for frontline workers, but they do not provide for long-term motivation and satisfaction. This study found that leaders who have a strong and authentic personal, professional relationship with their

subordinates create an employee centric culture and atmosphere that inspires employees to want to stay with the organization and continue to work hard. Leadership can affect an organizations' morale, job satisfaction, turnover, motivation, security, job quality, and the performance of an organization (Listianti & Hamali, 2015). Because of the strong influence of leadership on followers and organizational developments, leadership can play a critical role not only in relating to goal achievement and efficiency but also regarding employee motivation, job satisfaction, and employee turnover (Nielsen et al., 2016).

Most organizations invest a lot of time and money into developing the job skills of the frontline workers and little or no time or resources given to character or leadership development (Story, 2016). In the cases presented in this research, upper managers and leaders generally had more formal training or education and tend to portray a higher level of emotional intelligence, cognitive ability and higher degrees of emotional regulation allowing them to think and understand not only their own leadership skills and abilities, but the upper management also showed the ability to recognize and understand the frontlines workers needs and emotions better in most instances. However, lower-level supervisors and foremen did not show the same capabilities. This is because the frontline supervisors in these cases, worked their way up from the frontlines and have not received any leadership or management training.

If organizations invest time and resources into educating frontline supervisors these skills through leadership training, lower-level supervisors can benefit and become better able to lead, relate to, and build a stronger personal, professional relationship with their subordinates. This can create a stronger bond and a sense of job commitment, satisfaction, and motivation. This is not meant to overstate the value of fair and competitive compensation, benefits, or other job factors, however, considering all other factors relative or equal, effective leader-follower

relationships can retain employees and inspire satisfaction and motivation within the organization's workforce. When leaders seek first to understand their employees, they are on their way to becoming a better leader (Story, 2016).

Applications to Professional Practice

This research study provides additional data and literature regarding leadership as a factor of employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation that adds to the existing body of literature. This research also focuses on a specific demographic of leader-follower relationships, which is the relationship of managers and frontline, blue-collar workers. This demographic of blue-collar, frontline, non-union worker has gained little attention from researchers seeking to find and understand what motivates and satisfies individuals at this level in a manufacturing setting. The findings from the research provides details on how leadership can build and maintain a stronger rapport with frontline factory workers in a blue-collar setting that can lead to greater employee engagement and better employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation.

This study is applicable in business and leadership fields, specifically in the business setting of manufacturing and blue-collar industries. This study relates to the authors' field of study which is Doctor of Business Administration in Leadership. This research study narrowed in on business leadership in manufacturing organizations and identified weak areas of leadership training and development. Organizations can implement training and development for their lower-level supervisors which may help improve overall leadership capabilities and improve employee turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. Effective leadership is vital for all companies and needed at all levels in organizations. The findings of this research show a particular need for leadership development of lower-level supervisors in manufacturing industries.

Organizations can apply the findings of this research to the development of leaders and lower-level supervisors in blue-collar industries who offer little or no leadership development of training to supervisors. The research is also applicable to upper managers who may not take into consideration the needs of their frontline workers. Upper managers can benefit from realizing frontline workers are more than just a number in the plant and they can bring more value to a company when they themselves feel valued by their leadership team. Training and development of employees and emerging leaders is significant for all organizations and includes personable skills and job specific task and responsibilities. Providing training and leadership development to rising supervisors and leaders may improve overall leadership capabilities in organizations such as in the manufacturing industry where the majority of frontline workers do not have high levels of education.

The findings of this study have significant implications for organizations with a biblical framework. Jesus was a leader who believed in training and empowering followers to spread His words and teachings. He taught the disciples His word and then gave them instructions to go out and teach the Gospel to others. The bible states in Matthew (10:1) “Jesus called his twelve disciples to Him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.” Good leaders teach their followers and then empower them to accomplish their tasks. The findings of this study show the need for teaching and improving leadership capabilities within the organizational setting.

The Bible talks about teaching frequently, in Luke (6:40) the Bible says, “the student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.” This verse agrees with one of the main points of this research and that is by training lower-level supervisors, their followers may become more like them. Proverbs (9:9) says “instruct the wise and they will

be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.” There is a strong correlation from biblical teachings to the field of study of business leadership. Jesus believed in teaching His disciples in the way they should live and sets an example for how business leaders should teach their followers and train them to be better versions of themselves in business and in life.

Duzer (2010) discussed how an employee’s job is set in the context of relationship, relationship with the organization as well as the leaders in that organization. God created the universe and this entire world and everything in it belongs to God, but God created men and women to be His stewards and to tend to His creation and take care of the world. God is a worker, a creator, and work matters to God (Duzer, 2010). Employees should be seen as an investment for organizations. If employees are seen as an investment, then a company can understand the benefits of investing in better training and development of their leaders who manage frontline workers. Organizations should invest in their employees just as God invests in His children on earth. By investing in employees, companies can ensure that human resource practices and principles are benefiting an organizations’ overall strategy (Mello, 2015).

Recommendations for Action

The purpose for this research study was to examine the relationship and effects of leadership practices on frontline workers in a blue-collar, manufacturing setting. Specifically, this study highlights how leadership affects turnover, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation positively or negatively for this specific demographic of blue-collar workers. The results of this study indicate there is a significant relationship between a positive leader-follower relationship to lower turnover, higher satisfaction, and higher degrees of motivation. Mello

(2015) pointed out that a satisfied workforce adds value to the organizational culture and can benefit profitability of any organization.

Organizations in the manufacturing industry need to develop or invest in leadership and management training for all levels of management, but specifically lower-level supervisors. The supervisors have the most daily contact with frontline workers and can have the most impact on frontline workers satisfaction, motivation, and therefore turnover intentions. The supervisors in this research study all worked their way up from a frontline position and received no leadership or management training. This means that if their previous supervisor had no leadership training, then a lack of leadership is perpetual within the organization and the frontline workers have no hope of change unless leadership implements some form of training.

To implement these recommendations, senior leadership in organizations need to develop a training program appropriate for the needs of the specific areas of improvement or invest in leadership development that focuses on teaching and improving leadership capabilities and interpersonal relationship building between lower-level supervisors and subordinates. Leadership coaching can be appropriate in some instances to instruct supervisor how to improve leadership capabilities. Senior leadership can hold training and development sessions on a regular basis to discuss topics of improvement and address issues regarding implementation of the leadership training for ongoing improvement. The findings of this study may impact leaders and supervisors in blue-collar, manufacturing organizations as well as impact frontline workers in these organizations. To disseminate the results of this study to supervisors and frontline workers, senior leaders and upper managers need to implement leadership training and development in these companies.

The leadership development needs to have a focus on understanding emotional intelligence and building an authentic, personal, professional relationship with their subordinates. Companies must provide a fair compensation and benefits package for their geographic area, but training leaders and supervisors to value employees and treat them as individuals and not just another as a number will have a stronger positive effect on employee outcomes. It is up to managers and supervisors to bring about a sound impetus in employees by encouraging workers to innovate and change (Lazaroiu, 2015). In this case the managers must be active in creating a culture that values, respects, and motivates and satisfies employees.

Recommendations for Further Study

There are several recommendations for further study of this research. First, the geographic region of this research study was solely in the Southeastern United States. A recommendation for further study of this research would be to investigate other geographic regions of the United States, such as the Midwestern United States, South Central United States, or Northwestern United States. Also, this study took place in non-union organizations. Another recommendation for further study would be to investigate in union organizations where employees have many protections and often higher compensation and more benefits, and a study could reveal a different outcome of the importance and impact of leader-follower relations. This study focused on the specific employee outcomes of turnover, satisfaction, and motivation. Further studies could investigate other outcomes such as organizational performance, productivity, and profitability as a result of poor leadership in blue-collar, manufacturing industries.

A qualitative study examining other blue-collar industries would also provide validity to a need for this research. Commercial construction, landscaping, plumbing, electrician, large

farming operations are other types of blue-collar work that frontline workers are employed. For these types of workers, many managers think are replaceable, however, a strong leadership and training program may be a missing factor in these industries that can create lasting employment and benefit the organization and the employees. The results of further research will contribute to improving business practices and leadership capabilities in blue-collar industries. Examining the effects of leaders on frontline workers in blue-collar industries through a qualitative lens would deliver a more in-depth perspective of successful leadership practices in these types of industries.

Reflections

I chose this specific topic of blue-collar leadership to research and focus on for this research study because I had spent many years working in and for manufacturing industries or labor-intensive jobs. Since I had previous work experience in related jobs and industries, there is a baseline knowledge of typical leadership styles in the blue-collar world. However, my goal with this research study was to shine a light on and prove the specific effects leaders have on frontline workers both positively and negatively.

There was a preconceived notion that in manufacturing industries that employ many frontline workers, managers and leaders often think of lower-level, frontline workers as replaceable and do not spend much time or effort in development of these workers. I changed his thinking when interviewing upper managers at each case study and found that most leaders do indeed value their frontline workers, however, they lacked training and development of their lower-level supervisors who did not always have the same feelings toward their subordinates. There is a clear distinction between the education, leadership training or experience of upper managers to that of lower-level supervisors. However, upper managers can provide leadership

and development training to lower-level supervisors if they see the need for it, which this research indicates.

There is a clear Biblical connection to this research study and that is leaders need to treat others with the love and respect of Jesus Christ. Leaders have a significant impact on their followers and a Christian leader must keep the word of God at the center of their actions when leading others. The Bible states “The King will reply, truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew, 25:40).

Organizations may view low level, frontline employees, as a replaceable part of the company, instead of a valuable asset of the organization and as a Christian leader, one should change the way they view these types of employees and by doing so, it can lead to greater employee satisfaction, motivation, and reduce employee turnover. When leaders are effective, they can motivate and help employees reach organizational goals positively. “Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns” (Deuteronomy 24:14). This is a clear call for leaders to treat employees as leaders would want for themselves and Christian leaders should implement Christ-like leadership within their organizations.

Summary and Study Conclusions

This qualitative, multiple case study focused on the effects leaders have on frontline workers in blue-collar, manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States. I found that when frontline workers felt valued and appreciated by their supervisors and managers. They were more satisfied and motivated at work. Compensation and benefits are a strong driver of satisfaction, motivation, and turnover for frontline workers, but they do not provide for long-term motivation and satisfaction. Leaders who have a strong and authentic personal, professional

relationship with their subordinates create an employee-centric culture and atmosphere that inspires employees to want to stay with the organization and continue to work hard.

Currently these companies are not offering any leadership training or development for managers of any level. In most cases, upper managers had some level of higher education however, no lower-level supervisor had any higher education or leadership training. In these cases, the lower-level supervisors and foreman worked their way up from frontline jobs, however, they did not receive any additional leadership training. Companies can improve leadership capabilities by creating or investing in leadership training and development for lower-level and upper managers. Better leaders, managers, and supervisors who develop and maintain a strong relationship with their subordinates that values individuals and is authentic, can reduce employee turnover, increase satisfaction, and motivate within organizations.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent – Business Executive

TITLE OF STUDY

Effective Leadership Practices of Blue-Collar Workers in Manufacturing Organizations

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Graham W. Howard

Liberty University, School of Business



PURPOSE OF STUDY

You are being asked for permission to use your business location and reach out to your managers and frontline employees in your manufacturing facility to take part in a research study. Before you decide to allow participation in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to understand the reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of employee motivation from the frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States that may be the result of poor or weak managers and leadership. This is a study of employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of motivation because of poor management practices or lack of management or leadership training at industrial manufactories in the Southeastern United States.

STUDY PROCEDURES

The study procedures will involve participants filling out questionnaires or surveys, being interviewed by the researcher as well as allowing the researcher to observe interactions with managers, supervisors, and leadership in the organization.

The time required to fill out questionnaires or surveys will be approximately 20 minutes, interviews may take up to 30 minutes. Observations may be brief, only 3-5 minutes per interaction is expected.

Voice recording will be used for interviews, if the participant agrees to be recorded. These recordings will be used only for the use of this study and kept on a secure, password locked laptop computer and deleted after three years.

RISKS

There is minimal risk involved for the participants in this study, however, the participant may feel a little discomfort answering questions about their direct supervisor or manager.

Participants may decline to answer any or all questions and they may terminate their involvement at any time if they choose.

BENEFITS

There may be no direct benefit for participants in this study. However, the researcher hopes that the information obtained from this study may help leaders and managers understand how to improve employee satisfaction and motivation in workplaces such as this.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Participant responses to this research study will be anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve confidentiality of the participant including the following:

- Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse.

COMPENSATION

There is no compensation for participating in this research study.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, participants will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read, and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study by allowing employees at this facility to be contacted and recruited to participate in the research study.

Business Executive Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Informed Consent – Participant

TITLE OF STUDY

Effective Leadership Practices of Blue-Collar Workers in Manufacturing Organizations

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Graham W. Howard

Liberty University, School of Business



PURPOSE OF STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to understand the reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of employee motivation from the frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States that may be the result of poor or weak managers and leadership. This is a study of employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of motivation because of poor management practices or lack of management or leadership training at industrial manufactories in the Southeastern United States.

STUDY PROCEDURES

The study procedures will involve participants filling out questionnaires or surveys, being interviewed by the researcher as well as allowing the researcher to observe interactions with managers, supervisors, and leadership in the organization.

The time required to fill out questionnaires or surveys will be approximately 20 minutes, interviews may take up to 30 minutes. Observations may be brief, only 3-5 minutes per interaction is expected.

Voice recording will be used for interviews, if the participant agrees to be recorded. These recordings will be used only for the use of this study and kept on a secure, password locked laptop computer and deleted after three years.

RISKS

There is minimal risk involved for the participants in this study, however, the participant may feel a little discomfort answering questions about their direct supervisor or manager.

You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

BENEFITS

There may be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, the researcher hopes that the information obtained from this study may help leaders and managers understand how to improve employee satisfaction and motivation in workplaces such as this.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses to this research study will be anonymous. Please do not write any identifying information on your survey. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse.

COMPENSATION

There is no compensation for participating in this research study.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read, and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C: Recruitment Letter

10/1/2019

Dear employee:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Business Administration degree. The purpose of my research is to study and understand the reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of employee motivation from frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States that is the result of poor managers and leadership practices. The research seeks to answer the questions of how poor leadership affects employee behaviors and outcomes such as employee turnover, dissatisfaction, and lack of motivation and how can leaders improve this, and I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

If you are 18 years of age or older, employed by the above listed company as a frontline employee or in a managerial, supervisor or foreman role, have been employed by another company other than the company where this research is taking place, and are willing to participate, you will be asked to answer questions from a questionnaire or survey and answer interview questions from the researcher. It should take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire and approximately 25 minutes for the interview questions for you to complete the procedures listed. Your participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, complete and return the consent document to the researcher or contact me get a consent form and to set up an interview.

Graham Howard


An informed consent document is attached to this letter and will be given to you before an interview. The consent document contains additional information about my research, please sign the consent document and return it to me before or at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

Graham Howard
Doctoral Student at Liberty University

Appendix D: Frontline Employee Interview Questions

The main purpose of this research interview is to understand the influence leaders have on employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation.

Leadership Evaluation

- How do you perceive the leadership here at this company?
 - Do you interact with your supervisor regularly?
 - Do you enjoy working for your supervisor?
- Does the leadership team help you reach your goals?
 - Are the managers involved with ongoing training?
 - Do managers actively teach you ways to improve?
- How often does your manager communicate with you?
 - Do you receive feedback about your work often?
 - Do you feel you can talk to your supervisor about job related questions whenever you need to?
 - Do you receive recognition when you meet or exceed your goals?
 - Do you get reprimanded when you do not meet your goals?
- How does your current supervisor compare to your previous supervisor?
 - Are you more likely to stay with this company because of your manager or are you more likely to leave because of your manager?

Turnover Questions

- How likely are you to look for another job outside the company?
 - Does your manager influence these thoughts at all?
- Are you happy at work?
 - Does your manager affect your happiness at work all?
- Would you refer someone to work here?
 - Would other people like working for your boss?
- Hypothetically, if you were to quit tomorrow, what would your reason be?
- If you were given the chance, would you reapply to your current job?
- Does your leadership team contribute to a positive work culture?
- Do you foresee yourself working here one year from now?

Satisfaction Questions

- Do you feel satisfied at work?
 - Does your manager affect your job satisfaction at all?
- Do you feel valued at work?
 - Does your leadership team value employees?
 - Do you personally feel valued by your manager?
- How frequently do you receive recognition from your manager?

- Do you feel like the management team here is transparent?
- How would you describe the leadership team here?
- How meaningful is your work?
- How challenging is your work?
- In a typical week, how often do you feel stressed at work?

Motivation Questions

- Does your manager motivate you to accomplish your job?
 - What else motivates you to work hard?
- Does management try to regularly motivate employees?
- What type of incentives motivate you?
 - Do incentives work to motivate employees here?
- How do managers try to motivate employees at your company?
- Do you feel comfortable giving upward feedback to your supervisor?
 - Does your supervisor ask for your feedback on how to improve your job?
- The last time you surpassed your production goals, did you receive any recognition?
- How often do the tasks assigned to you by your supervisor help you grow professionally?
- Do you believe the leadership team takes your feedback seriously?

The answers provided will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this research study.

Appendix E: Leader, Manager & Supervisor Interview Questions

The main purpose of this research interview is to understand the influence leaders have on employee outcomes such as turnover, satisfaction, and motivation.

Leader Background

- How did you get to the position you are in at this organization? Worked your way up from within or hired from outside the company?
- Have you had previous management experience before the role you are currently in?
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- Have you received any leadership training at this company?
 - Have you received any leadership training at a previous company?

Leadership Evaluation

- How do you perceive the leadership here at this company?
 - Do you interact with your employees regularly?
 - Do you enjoy working with your subordinates?
- Does the leadership team help employees reach their goals?
 - Are you involved with ongoing training of your employees?
 - Do you actively teach your employees ways to improve?
- How often does you communicate with your employees?
 - Do you give feedback about your subordinates work often?
 - Do your employees feel they can talk to you about job related questions whenever they need to?
 - Do you give recognition when an employee meets or exceeds their goals?
 - Do you reprimanded your employees when they do not meet their goals?
 - What type of punishment is administered if employees do not meet their goals?

Turnover Questions

- What is the turnover rate at this company?
 - What are the leading causes of turnover?
 - Do you feel the leaders and managers have anything to do with turnover here?
- What does management do about employee turnover?
 - Does the current level of employee turnover concern you?
- Do you think supervisors and managers can affect employee turnover?
 - Do you think leadership can reduce employee turnover?

Satisfaction Questions

- Are your employees satisfied working here?
 - If so, why do you think they are satisfied?
 - If not, why not?
- Do you as a manager try to create a job atmosphere that is enjoyable to employees?
 - Do employees enjoy working here?
- How often do you communicate to your employees about their job satisfaction?
 - How often do you hold employee reviews?
 - How do you recognize good employee behaviors?
 - How do you reprimand bad employee behaviors?

Motivation Questions

- Do you motivate your employee to accomplish their jobs?
 - What does the organization do to motivate employees to work hard?
- What type of incentives do you think motivate employees?
 - Do incentives work to motivate employees here?
- How do managers try to motivate employees here?
- Do you feel comfortable giving feedback to your employees?
 - Do you ask for feedback from your employees on how to better motivate them?
- The last time your employees surpassed your production goals, did you give them any recognition?
- Do you believe the leadership team takes employees feedback seriously?

The answers provided will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this research study.

Appendix F: Employee Survey

This portion of the questionnaire measures turnover intention and uses a 5-point Likert Scale. The qualifiers for this scale are listed per question below.

1. How often have you considered leaving your job?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
2. Do you ever consider leaving your job because of your direct supervisor?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
3. How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
4. How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
5. How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?
 - a. (1 – Highly Unlikely; 2 – Unlikely; 3 – Possibly; 4 – Likely; 5 – Very Likely)

6. How often do you look forward to another day at work?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
7. I enjoy working with my boss.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
8. I stay at this company because my supervisor treats me well.

- a. (1 – Not Accurate; 2 – Somewhat Accurate; 3 – Neither Accurate nor Inaccurate; 4 – Accurate 5 – Highly Accurate) _____

This portion of the questionnaire measures employee satisfaction and uses a 5-point Likert Scale. The qualifiers for this scale are listed per question below.

1. I am satisfied at work.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
2. I am satisfied with my direct supervisor.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
3. How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs?
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
4. The leadership team here is helpful when I have questions about the job.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
5. The managers here help me accomplish my goals at work.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
6. I look forward to coming to work and meeting my goals.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
7. Because of my manager, I am better equipped to meet production goals.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
8. My manager is involved with my job growth and ability to continue to improve my job skills.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____

This portion of the questionnaire measures employee motivation and uses a 5-point Likert Scale. The qualifiers for this scale are listed per question below.

1. I am motivated to complete my job because of my manager.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
2. My manager works as hard as I do.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
3. The leadership team inspires me to meet my production goals.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
4. When at work, I am completely focused on my job duties.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
5. I am determined to give my best effort at work each day.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
6. I am often so involved in my work that the day goes by very quickly.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
7. I get excited about work.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____
8. I am inspired to meet my goals at work because of my supervisor's leadership.
 - a. (1 – Never; 2 – Rarely; 3 – Occasionally; 4 – Often; 5 – Very Often) _____

Appendix G: Permission Request Letter

1/24/2020

[Senior Manager]
[Title]
[Company Name]
[Company Address]
[Company Address]

Dear [Senior Manager]:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The title of my research project is Effective Leadership Practice of Blue-Collar Workers in Manufacturing Organizations, and the purpose of my research is to understand the reasons behind high employee dissatisfaction, turnover and lack of employee motivation from the frontline, blue-collar workers in manufacturing industries in the Southeastern United States.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at [company] and contact members of your organization to invite them to participate in my research study.

For an individual to be eligible to participate in this research study, the individual must be between 18 and 65 years of age. The individual must be employed by your company and must be a frontline worker or a manager, supervisor, or foreman for your organization with previous work experience in a similar position at a different company. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

The researcher would like to hold a meeting at your location that would include frontline workers and managers, supervisors, and foreman to explain the research study and pass out recruitment letters to provide information to all potential participants.

Procedures: If an individual agrees to be in this study, whether they are a frontline employee or in a leadership role I would ask them to do the following things:

1. Fill out a survey. This will take approximately 15 minutes. (Frontline workers only).
2. Participate in an interview with the researcher. This may take up to 45 minutes and will be voice recorded. (Frontline workers and managers).
3. Allow the researcher to observe you in your work setting during interactions with managers. This will be brief, approximated 15-25 minutes. (Frontline workers and managers).
4. Review interview transcript for accuracy, approximately 45 minutes. (Frontline workers and managers).

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email to gwhoward@liberty.edu. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Graham W. Howard
Student at Liberty University