THE EFFECTS OF POSITIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS AND

ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

by

Felicia Long

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Increasing employee engagement has been a challenge for many organizations in recent years, especially in America. Most research has focused on organizational factors related to engagement; few have explored interactional issues from a positive leadership perspective. This study sought to contribute to research on engagement by exploring its relationship with fairness and trust This study viewed fairness from the perspective interactional justice, as defined by the interactional justice scale of Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (OJS). This study also viewed trust from the perspective of leader trustworthiness, a positive leadership attribute. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the effects of interactional justice and leader trustworthiness on employee engagement. This study was comprised of a 34-item survey adapted from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-short form), the Behavioral Trust Inventory (BTI), and the Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (OJS). A multiple regression analysis was conducted on the data provided by 244 survey participants. The results supported that leader trustworthiness and interactional justice relate to an increase in employee engagement. The results also demonstrated a very strong relationship between interactional justice and trust. From a practical perspective, this study provided support for positive leadership behaviors that leaders could use to increase employee engagement. From a theoretical perspective, this study provided implication for additional research on employee engagement and positive leadership frameworks.

Keywords: Employee engagement, positive leadership, interactional justice, leader trustworthiness, fairness theory, social exchange theory.

Dedication

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate my study to my Heavenly Father, my God Almighty, who has stood by me in times of despair, grief, frustration, and lack of will. I would not have made it through this process without his grace and provisions God, may I use this study according to your will, Amen!

I also dedicate this work to my mother, who has always encouraged me to finish. Although she is no longer with me, I thank her for standing by me when others did not, and for seeing the potential in me even when I could not. I love you Mom and miss you tremendously.

Finally, I dedicate this work to my family for the sacrifices you made in allowing me the space to go back to school to pursue this doctorate. I thank you for the words of encouragement, the late-night reminders, and simply being available when I needed a listening ear. I would not have made it through this journey without you.

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Thank you to my friends, colleagues, and acquaintances who have supported me in this journey. I am grateful for those who offered peer support and words of encouragement as I made this journey, and the patience you have shown as I focused my attention on pursuing this degree. I am also very thankful to everyone who participated in this study.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

To remain competitive, organizations must continuously strive to attract, retain, and engage highly skilled employees. However, recent studies have indicated that engagement has been one of the greatest challenges facing organizations (Carasco-Saul et al., 2014; Harter, 2020; Sahu et al., 2017) where engagement has been measured as simply one's dedication and enthusiasm about their work. The challenges were amplified in 2020, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many individuals to reconsider their relationships with their employers and their work. Micklethwait (2022) stated that the pandemic "laid bare for businesses globally that employees' emotional connection and engagement are inextricably linked to the overall health and function of a company's workforce, its ability to retain talent and, ultimately, to the company's success". While employee engagement has been a topic in organizational research for many years, the recent changes experienced in many organizations has heightened the focus on exploring engagement from different and inventive perspectives.

Variables like leadership and engagement have traditionally been studied independently; however, theorists have more recently been interested in examining these variables and other organizational variables as a medley of factors whose interactions may affect one another. This lens has provided an opportunity to view organizational research differently, especially as it relates to employee engagement. If employee engagement refers to a person's dedication to their work, then this lens has allowed researchers to explore the links to other organizational constructs such as job satisfaction, leadership, and innovation (Li et al., 2018).

Leadership offers an innovative focus on employee engagement, specifically from the perspective of positive leadership. Positive leadership is a conceptual framework that focuses on leadership behaviors that foster a positive and ideal human condition in the workplace (Zbierowski, 2016). According to positive psychologists, when relationships in the workplace are characterized by trustworthiness, and fairness, employees are inclined to have respect and confidence in each other and inspire better performance (Houston, 2022). Leader trustworthiness is a positive leadership behavior consistent and common across all positive leadership theories. Measurement of leader trustworthiness can further inform behaviors related to the positive leadership framework. Fairness is a positive leadership behavior, often measured by organizational justice. Organizational justice refers to an employee's perceptions of fairness in the workplace and is believed to have a positive influence on organizational outcomes (Sutanto et al., 2018). Recent research has found organizational justice to be a useful framework for uncovering issues such as biases and prejudices related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accountability (DEIA), in a sensitive manner (Zwahlen & Li, 2021). Both trustworthiness and fairness will be individually explored in Chapter Two.

Organizational variables have often been viewed from practical perspectives; however, it is crucial to consider that other perspectives can and should inform the theoretical presuppositions of research. Given that employee engagement has also been linked to well-being for which there is a spiritual component, considering the theological perspectives closely aligns with the study of organizational behavior, especially as it relates to the relationship between employees and their leaders and leader behaviors.

Therefore, theology could also be a valuable perspective as it may aid as guide for the emphasis placed on certain organizational behavior (Miller, 2014).

Background

From a theological perspective, work enables fulfillment for people (McGhee, 2019). God designed work to be relational and to establish stronger faith and trust in Him. The Bible provides several scriptural references to the relational nature of work, starting in Genesis, where God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to work and live in communion with Him (*English Standard Version,* 2001). Likewise, Revelation 2-3 presents how work represents relationship with God in the letters to the seven churches (*English Standard Version,* 2001). Within each letter John talks about the work of the church, and how they fail to establish faith and trust in God because they no longer demonstrate the principles of God's love. From a theological perspective, work has intrinsic value; therefore, individuals are responsible for the quality and character of their work. This is particularly true for leaders. Hebrews 13:7 suggests that leaders serve as role models of living in accordance with God (*English Standard Version,* 2001). Paul further details in Ephesians that leaders should relate to their employees and promote employee engagement by leading with truth, authenticity, and integrity (*English Standard Version,* 2001).

Employee engagement is a popular organizational construct used to describe the relationship between the organization and its employees. Although studies have defined employee engagement differently, they often agree that an engaged employee has a positive attitude toward their organization and is willing to actively support the

organization's activities, interests, and reputation (Deepika, 2019). Based on this

definition, employee engagement can have significant implications for the performance

of an organization – making it a key variable of interest for organizational theorists and

practitioners (Bailey et al, 2015). From a theoretical perspective, engagement research

draws from the theory of social influence, which suggests that shared perceptions of

leadership reflect employees' perception of the organization (Bae & Shin, 2017; Bailey et

al., 2015; Balwant et al., 2019; Sahu et al., 2017). This perspective implies that quality

leader behavior is a strong predictor of employee engagement. Harter (2018) states that

the leader's quality accounts for at least 70% of the variance in engagement. He further

explains that disengaged employees are emotionally disconnected, cognitively

uninvested, or socially mistreated. Employee engagement is thought to be influenced by

job resources (Albrecht et al., 2018; Bailey et al, 2015; Bakker & Albrecht, 2018).

Employees look to their leadership to provide job resources that reduce job demands

while increasing fairness in the organization and assisting in achieving goals (Bakker &

Albrecht, 2018). They fill the employee's physical, psychological, social, and

organizational needs (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Although various factors interact to

develop a work environment where employees feel engaged, leadership behavior and

organizational justice are two factors that have separately been prominent in the

organizational science literature.

    Leadership is an organizational variable found in scripture and organizational

science, providing an opportunity to discuss business and beliefs. From a biblical

perspective, leadership provides ethical, moral, restorative, and spiritual support. Isaiah 1:

17 instructs one to "learn to do right; seek justice, defend the oppressed" (*English Standard Version,* 2001). Furthermore, Micah 6:8 states "He has shown you, O mortal what is good, and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with your God" (*English Standard Version,* 2001).

Morality and ethics play a central role in guiding a leader's activity. Peters et al. (2017) suggested that leadership guided by ethics influences employee attitudes related to the accountability of standards within the organization. Leadership, specifically positive leadership, provides structure, guidance, and empowerment from an organizational science perspective, the key to maintaining employee engagement. Positive leadership is a process for improving leadership capabilities and outcomes to improve organizational performance (Misha & Jha, 2017). In this context, leadership has been found to have a significant effect on employee engagement (Obuobisa-Darko & Domfeh, 2019; Zwaan et al., 2019). Studies already support the link between leadership behavior and employee engagement (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018; Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2019). Studies have also found that leadership can affect organizational justice (Armağan & Erzen, 2015; Tatum et al., 2003; Yilmaz & Altinkurt, 2012). Most recent research suggests that ethically driven leadership can influence employee behavior when paired with organizational justice (Al Halbusi et al., 2019). Additional research is needed to understand better how positive leadership behaviors relate to organizational cultures such as organizational justice and organizational outcomes such as employee engagement (Malinga et al., 2019).

"To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" (Proverbs 21:3, *English Standard Version*, 2001). Organizational justice focuses on

employees' perception of how fair the workplace is toward the employee (Armağan & Erzen, 2015), and affects employees' attitudes and behaviors toward the organization and perceptions of trust in leadership. This construct has been categorized into three dimensions: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interpersonal justice (Nwokolo et al., 2017).

Distributive justice has been associated with positive organizational behaviors such as job investment, initiative, and innovation behavior (Pan et al., 2018). Comparatively, procedural justice generally refers to the degree to which the procedures are allocated fairly. Both distributive justice and procedural justice have been the focus of several studies, often with a focus on the organization (Adeel et al., 2018; Batool & Shah, 2017; Colquitt et al., 2001; Halbusi et al., 2017; Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; Scandura, 1999). Studies have included the association of distributive and procedural justice with employee engagement, specifically related to employees' perceptions of the procedures used when making organizational decisions (Armağan & Erzen, 2015). In the workplace this often translates to whether employees feel that procedures and decisions made in the organization do not create unfair disparities especially as it relates to pay, promotions, and other benefits.

Interactional justice was not introduced until 1986 and referred to the organization's quality of interpersonal behaviors (Armağan & Erzen, 2015). Interactional justice focuses on leaders and how an employee perceives the fairness of interpersonal treatment. It consists of two dimensions: interpersonal and informational justice (Ghasi et al., 2020) where interpersonal justice refers to how leaders treat their employees and

informational justice refers to how they share information with their employee (Ghasi et al., 2020). Both aspects of interactional justice influence the implementation of procedures and policies, and the communication of procedures (Colquitt et al., 2001). Where distributive and procedural justice focuses on the way procedures and policies are determined and influence decisions, interactional justice looks at the way those policies and procedures are shared and implemented, such that even when the policies are not favorable, they are still perceived to be fair and ethical because the leaders was transparent and trustworthy in their communication. Research suggests that employee engagement can be influenced by how employees are being treated and leader behaviors; however further research is needed (Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; He et al., 2016).

Problem Statement

The world of work continues to be transformed by new technologies, new services and methods of production, new national economies, and fluctuating consumer demand. As organizations try to navigate these rapid shifts in the world of work, organizations must prioritize their greatest commodity – their people. As the world of work changes, so do the expectations of people at work. People are more driven by the explicit values and ethics of an organization to align with organizations that reflect social and cultural justice and fairness. Employee engagement studies have been used to understand the relational context of work and issues related to inequity and trust (Haynie et al., 2014).

Engagement has been defined by how a person's attitude and attentiveness to performance are based on meaningfulness, safety at work, and availability of resources

(Saks, 2006). Prior research has presented engagement as it relates to other organizational behaviors such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee wellness (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2016; Kumar, 2013; Sessa & Bowling, 2021). Bailey et al. (2015) encourages organizational researchers to explore the antecedents to employee engagement to understand better how organizations can improve.

Leadership is one probable antecedent to employee engagement (Bailey et al., 2015). Recent leadership studies have suggested that leaders and their behaviors have a significant role to play in engaging employees (Nwokolo et al., 2017; Obuobisa-Darko & Domfeh, 2019). More specifically, research on positive leadership has provided empirical evidence that leadership behaviors can positively affect variables such as employee engagement (Blanch et al., 2016). Positive leadership is a conceptual framework from positive psychology. This framework includes more commonly known leadership approaches such as transformational, servant, spiritual, authentic, and ethical leadership, providing core leadership attributes found in all these approaches (Blanch et al., 2016; Malinga et al., 2019; Zbierowski, 2017). According to Blanch et al. (2016), these core leadership attributes include a positive moral outlook, self-awareness, positive modeling, personal and social identification, and positive social exchanges. Zbierowski (2017) refers to four broader core positive leadership attributes, which include positive climate, positive relationships, positive communication, and positive meaning. Additional research suggests that these leadership attributes can be associated with specific leadership traits and behavior (Malinga et al., 2019). One leadership trait is ethical orientation, which is linked to positive relationships. A leader with an ethical orientation

will behave in a trustworthy manner and act fairly toward employees, contributing to improved social well-being and organizational engagement (Malinga et al., 2019).

Further evidence for the role of leadership behaviors and ethical orientation can be found in organizational justice research. Recent studies have found that leadership behaviors such as those mentioned above are highly correlated with employees' perception of justice (Armağan & Erzen, 2015). Studies of leadership behaviors and justice suggest that the level of fairness in a leader's procedures can influence employee perceptions (Strom et al., 2013). Piccolo et al. (2008) conducted a study that found procedural justice related to employee's perceptions of a leader's ability to make fair decisions. They also found interpersonal justice related to the employee's perceptions of the level of dignity and respect one received from the leader. This study provides some evidence regarding the relationships between leadership behaviors and organizational justice. Park et al. (2016) also conducted a study on organizational justice focused on the relationship between organizational justice and employee engagement. They examined the three dimensions of organizational justice related to fairness, trust, and various work-related outcomes, and suggested that employee engagement is generated through employee treatment at the workplace based on a mutual contract between the employer and the employee. Consistent with Saks (2006), they found a positive relationship between procedural justice and employee engagement. This finding also supports that fair treatment by leaders can influence perceptions of organizational justice and consequently promotes employee engagement.

While there was empirical evidence that positive leadership can positively affect employee engagement, more research is needed to fully understand what specific leadership behaviors can fully influence employee engagement (Rahmadani et al., 2020). More research is also needed to explore the relationship between leadership behavior and organizational justice related to employee engagement, which has received some empirical support (Nwokolo et al., 2017). This study addresses the gap in the literature by exploring the impact leadership behaviors and interactional justice have on employee engagement and the nature of this relationship

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the effects of interactional justice and positive leadership behaviors on employee engagement. Specifically, this study sought to determine the impact of positive leadership behaviors such as fairness and trustworthiness on interactional justice in organizations with high levels of employee engagement. Interactional justice involved the quality of the treatment employees received when interacting with leaders, based on positive leadership behaviors that include respect, truthfulness, lack of bias, and justness (Dayan & Di Benedetto, 2008; Ghasi et al., 2020). The current literature does not address the extent to which these positive leadership behaviors and interactional justice can explain high levels of employee engagement. This study expected a positive relationship between employee engagement, positive leadership behaviors, and interactional justice exists.

Research Question(s) and Hypotheses

Figure 1

Research Model

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the relationship between interactional justice, as measured by

Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, and employee engagement, as measured

by UWES - short version?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by

Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by the

UWES?

RQ 3: Does interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice

Scales, moderate the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by

Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by UWES -

short version?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: An increase in interactional justice relates to an increase in

employee engagement.

Hypothesis 2: An increase in leader trustworthiness relates to an increase in

employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Interactional justice moderates the effect of leadership behaviors on

employee engagement.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

Various assumptions supported the foundation of this study. The theoretical

foundation of this study was based on the social exchange theory and the fairness theory

(Chernyak-Hai &Rabenu, 2018; Mohammed et al., 2019). From a practical perspective,

this study was based on the assumption that companies with high levels of engagement

would have some variance to investigate the extent to which positive leadership

behaviors and interactional justice was related to this high level of engagement. Finally,

the ontology of this study was based the assumption that the use of quantitative methods

was appropriate for measuring the relationship between positive leadership behaviors,

interactional justice, and employee engagement using electronic surveys for data

collection.

Limitations

This study had some notable limitations that should be discussed. Given the

instruments used were self-report measuring reactions during a short set period, it is

possible that the context of the relationship between the individual and their supervisor

may not reflect the fluctuations that would occur over a longer period. A longitudinal study that captures reactions over time may reflect different results.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

Social exchange theory and fairness theory shaped the theoretical foundation for this study. Social exchange theory (SET) was chosen as one of the theoretical frameworks for this study because it is based on the premise that human interactions are relationship oriented (Chernyak-Hai, & Rabenu, 2018). According to SET, these interactions are often characterized by socio-emotional benefits such as trust, goodwill, and commitment (Chernyak-Hai, & Rabenu, 2018). The theory further explained that social exchange relationships influence the degree to which the employee identifies and engages with the leader or organization, such that high quality exchange relationship result in a feeling of relational obligation that leads to higher identification and engagement (Chernyak-Hai, & Rabenu, 2018). SET offers support to the relational orientation of organizational justice; however, it does not explain how employees form their perceptions of justice. This study uses fairness theory to explain and understand how employees form their perceptions. In 1987, Greenberg suggested that justice perceptions were explained by social accounts that invoke the ideological goals employees possess and determines their reaction to injustice in the workplace. Of the three organizational justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, and interactional), interactional justice closely relates to the interpersonal transactions and social accounts, specifically between the employee and their organizational leaders.

Like SET, fairness theory is relationship oriented. Fairness theory asserts that perceptions of fair treatment are influenced by the degree to which the employee feels they align with the organization and their leaders (Mohammed et al., 2019). Therefore, when an individual perceives unjust treatment or a lack of fairness, then they experience a shift in attitudes which often result in behaviors that seek to restore justice (Johnson et al., 2020).

Collectively, SET and fairness theory provided theoretical support for the importance of exploring the relationship between interactional justice and positive leadership behaviors on levels of engagement. Based on both theories, this study investigated this relationship using the variables of leader trustworthiness and interactional justice to assess employee engagement with assumption that positive leadership behaviors such as leader trustworthiness can stimulate perceptions of interactional justice in which followers are compelled to engage with leaders and organizations.

Definition of Terms

Key terms related to this quantitative study are listed below.

Employee Engagement was a positive, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Yang et al., 2018).

Organizational justice (fairness) was a general concept to refer to whether employees perceive they are treated in a just, fair, and ethical manner (Sessa & Bowling, 2021). Specifically, the fairness of organizational decisions and the fairness of the distribution of

outcomes from those decisions (Crawshaw, et al., 2013); Halbusi, et al., 2017;

Wirakusuma & Surya, 2018).

Leadership was a process for giving direction, ensuring alignment, and generating

commitment amongst individuals for them to work together productively toward

collective expected outcomes (Mishra & Jha, 2017).

Positive Leadership focused on the study of positive emotions, positive traits, and

positive institutions with a belief that living things are attracted to positive energy and

attempt to avoid negative energy (Cameron, 2012).

Leader Trustworthiness referred to a leader's ability to increase one's willingness to be

vulnerable to other persons in the workplace (Schoorman et al., 2007).

Interactional Justice referred to employee perceptions of fairness of interpersonal

treatment during decision-making procedures (Ghasi et al., 2020).

Significance of the Study

From a theoretical perspective, this study aimed to provide further evidence for

the importance of organizational justice in leadership development and organizational

development. While research has been conducted on leadership theories and the three

justice dimensions, limited attention has been given to the role interactional justice has on

employee engagement as it pertains to positive leadership behaviors (Dayan & Di

Benedetto, 2008). A better understanding of positive leadership outcomes could

contribute to the further development of a theoretical framework for positive leadership.

This study examined employee engagement as explained by leadership behaviors

and perceptions of organizational justice. Prior research had found that specific

organizational behavior, such as job satisfaction, was significantly affected by perceptions of organizational justice (Karam et al., 2018). Given the importance employee engagement has on organizational performance, understanding the influence justice has on employee engagement could contribute to understanding the antecedents to engagement. Furthermore, determining the moderating role of leadership could further develop conceptual models of interventions to improve engagement. From a practical perspective, these conceptual models could identify competencies related to positive leadership and justice that would be used to develop or enhance leadership development programs.

Summary

The business world has experienced complexities exacerbated by equity, ethics, and leadership concerns. To address these concerns, rigorous, systematic research is needed on the relationships between several organizational variables and their impact on organizational outcomes more than ever. This chapter provided the critical importance of providing new insight and research opportunities for understanding the relationship between positive leadership behaviors, organizational justice, and engagement. Based on social exchange theory and fairness theory, this study aimed to examine the effects of interactional justice and positive leadership behaviors on employee engagement to determine the impact of positive leadership behaviors such as fairness and trustworthiness on interactional justice in organizations with high levels of employee engagement. From a theoretical perspective this study hoped to provide evidence of the importance of organizational justice in leadership and organizational development. From

a practical perspective this study provided evidence for the importance of work and the role leaders play in creating a work environment that is ethical and fair.

The next chapter builds on the theoretical framework and definition of terms by providing a detailed review of the literature. Chapter Two explores previous research conducted on the three variables of this study: employee engagement, positive leadership behaviors, and interactional justice. This exploration includes support for the theoretical frameworks, instruments, and methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

"*The most productive and functional companies are composed of valuable employees who are entirely - physically, cognitively, and emotionally – engaged in their work*" (Strom et al., 2013, p. 71).

Employees are the lifeblood of an organization; therefore, employee engagement is a critical focus for many global organizations. Organizational researchers have clearly supported that work engagement is associated with several positive individual and organization outcomes including increased job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, increased retention, and increased job performance (Albrecht et al., 2018; Reijseger et al., 2016). Research on the importance of employee engagement has been on the rise for more than a decade. Despite the ongoing research thus far, work engagement continues to be one of the most pressing challenges global organizations face today (Harter, 2020). Over the years, organizations have witnessed reduced employee engagement costing companies $300 billion per year in lost productivity (Strom et al., 2013). In a recent Gallop poll, 53% of employees are considered "not engaged" or "disengaged" in their work (Harter, 2020). Not engaged employees was defined as people who work but lack the desire and interest to do their work and resign if presented with a new job opportunity. Comparatively, disengaged employees act on their discontent with work by expressing their negative attitudes in the workplace and/or leaving the job. Both non-engagement and disengagement reduced performance, causing ongoing concerns in

global organizations. To support organizational effectiveness and maintain a competitive advantage, researchers need to expand the study of work engagement to include the identification of tools and processes organizations and leader behaviors can build additional human resource interventions.

Description of Search Strategy

The collection of resources for the literature review involved the use of the university's accessible databases, including EBSCO Quick Search, ProQuest Central, ScienceDirect, ABI / INFORM, Business Source Complete, Emerald Insight, IBIS World, Academic Search Premier; publicly accessible databases, including Google Scholar; and subscription based databases offered by the Society of Industrial/Organizational Psychology, including Business Source Corporate, Psychology and Behavioral Science Collection, SocIndex, ResearchGate, and exclusively available content by SIOP members on a variety of science and practice topics. Peer-reviewed, full-text articles were collected via these databases. Keywords were used to filter the articles during the search for sources. The keywords used during the search included work engagement, employee engagement, transformational leadership, social exchange theory, positive psychology, positive leadership, ethical leadership, organizational justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, distributive justice, trust, fairness, and Job Demand Resources-Model. Biblical references were found using Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. Keywords were used to filter the references during the search for scriptures. The keywords used during the search included justice, engaged, leader, leaders, leadership, and trust.

Google Scholar databases were also used to search for the instruments used to measure the variables and test the study's hypotheses, including Utrecht Work Engagement Survey, and Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale, and Schoorman and Ballinger's Trust Scale. The principal constructs of this study were work engagement, positive leadership, trust, and organizational justice. I used the databases and sources listed to obtain the most current content relative to the topic described, within years ranging from 2016 to 2021. Some foundational articles older than five years were also included in the search.

Review of Literature

Evolution of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement first appeared as a concept in management theory in the 1990s. It was credited to William Kahn whose early research explored the psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement to better define employee engagement. To explore what it means to be psychologically present at work, Kahn (1990) proposed three psychological conditions that influence the importance of work to a person's identity and the degree to which work was central to their life. The three psychological conditions were meaningfulness, safety, and availability. According to Kahn (1990), psychological meaningfulness was associated with incentives for personal engagement; psychological safety referred to the risk and predictability of the social situation in which to engage, and psychological availability referred to the limited resources that make it challenging to engage. When a person feels these psychological conditions are met, they are more inclined to identify themselves in their work and

become more engaged. However, if they feel they must protect and defend these psychological conditions, then they withdraw from their work and become more disengaged. As and outcome of his study, Kahn (1990) offered an early definition of employee engagement – the harnessing of a person to their work role. Based on the foundational work of Kahn, other organizational scientists began to explore the concept of engagement from the perspective of what causes people to not be engaged.

Between 2000 and 2010, there was a sharp increase in the number of publications "work engagement" with "employee engagement" in the title, as these terms have been used interchangeably in the research. This was marked by the positive psychology movement. Positive psychology was attributed to Seligman (1999), which he defined as the study of human functioning that aimed to discover factors that allowed individuals and organizations to thrive. This movement motivated researchers to shift their focus from negative aspects of organizational behavior to positive aspects of organizational behavior. In regard to engagement, this was a shift from a focus on burnout to looking at engagement as a continuum with burnout on the negative end and engagement on the positive end.

Building on earlier research that resulted in the development of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leitner (2001) -also known as the Utrecht Group (Albrecht et al., 2018), studied engagement as the antithesis of burnout with an aim to identify interventions that would alleviate burnout. This research was prompted by the need to better understand the interaction between the person and the environment at work and identifying six areas of work life they believed were the antecedents of burnout. These six areas included workload, control, reward, community,

fairness, and values. They clarified that engagement was distinct from prior research or organizational commitment and job satisfaction, as it provides a more complex perspective of a person's relationship with work (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2016; Maslach et al., 2001). Furthermore, they saw engagement as "a persistent, positive affective-motivational state of fulfillment characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p.417) and characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure. Their work was later called the Burnout-Antithesis approach because it was built on the assumption that engagement was the opposite of burnout. Their research also resulted in the development of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES, Appendix A), which will be further discussed in Chapter 3. One limitation of the Utrecht group's research was that it assumed burnout and engagement could not mutually exist. However, this assumption lacked empirical evidence, so other researchers sought to expand this study by exploring the roles attitudes and emotions have on engagement (Demerouti, et el., 2001) which introduced the possibility that engagement could be a developed skilled.

In 2006, Saks introduced a multidimensional approach to conceptualize engagement. He suggested that work engagement reflected how a person felt about their job and their organization, distinguishing work engagement from organizational engagement. Based on social exchange theory, Saks proposed that an employee who felt that their organization fulfilled their behavioral, cognitive, and emotional conditions would choose to repay their organization through higher levels of engagement. He defined engagement as a person's attitude and attentiveness to job performance based on meaningfulness, safety, and availability of resources at work. Saks (2006) explored the antecedents and outcomes of work engagement to develop a theoretical framework that

combatted the "faddish" perceptions of work engagement research and added rigor by proposing a theoretical framework. Building from his research, other studies have been conducted on the outcomes of work engagement, with several studies supporting that turnover intention, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment are outcomes of engagement (Bailey et al., 2015).

In reviewing the research, one challenge with conceptualizing engagement has been identifying a common definition of the construct. Engagement has become an umbrella term used indiscriminately both in research and practice. After conducting a narrative review of the research, Bailey et al. (2015) found the Maslach et al.'s (2001) definition to be the most used, which states "a persistent, positive affective-motivational state of fulfillment where an employee feels energetic (vigor), committed and enthusiastic (dedication), and are completely immersed in their work activities" (p. 34). The disagreement among scholars and practitioners about how best to define work engagement has resulted in some critical consequences that have limited the ability to find a common theoretical framework and measurement of engagement. In terms of theoretical frameworks, one of the more frequently studied models explores the role of job resources such as role fit, task identity, supervisor support and peer feedback on work engagement. This model is known as the Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) framework 'proposes' that job demands require employee effort, which can cause fatigue and other negative outcomes over time (Albrecht et al., 2018; Demerouti et al., 2001). Furthermore, the framework supports the notion that job-related and/or personal resources can reduce the pressure of these demands and lead to positive motivational and organizational outcomes (Albrecht et al., 2018; Bailey et al., 2015; Demerouti et al., 2001). Demerouti

et al. (2001) further explained that resources can include physical, psychological, social, or organizational resources that facilitate achieving work goals. This broad range of resources suggests that organizations, leaders, and fellow coworkers can contribute to building an engaging work environment by fostering the resources employees value to include leadership and supervisory support, fairness and trustworthiness, and team or peer support. Although studies have explored the effect of leadership support on engagement, most of those studies have only focused on one primary style of research. The JD-R model has also been criticized for being descriptive and less theoretical in nature and often relies on other psychological theories to explain underlying processes (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018; Rahmadani et al., 2020).

Social exchange theory (SET) is another framework commonly referenced in engagement studies. As mentioned earlier, Saks (2006) references SET in developing his multidimensional approach. SET focuses on the relationships between employers and employees. SET suggests that those relationships are based on reciprocity in which employees expect their employers to provide resources in the organization in exchange for their work (Albrecht et al., 2018). When employees feel valued and well-resourced then they are likely to have higher levels of engagement. The SET suggests that the relationship between employer and employee can be viewed as a resource, and therefore pairs well with the JD-R framework for research exploring the antecedents and outcomes or work engagement.

While JD-R and SET have been the most used theoretical framework, other theories have been referenced in work engagement studies. Sahu et al. (2017) references social identity theory (SIT) and attachment theory in their study on the role of

transformational leadership in mediating employee engagement. They explain that SIT fosters increased belongingness between the person and the organization, and attachment theory emphasizes the need for the person to develop positive emotional bonds at work. Haynie et al. (2019) referenced the group engagement model which suggests that people are more engaged at work when they are being treated justly and identify with the organization. The group engagement model and the social exchange theory have been used in organizational justice studies.

Engaging employees has been one of the greatest challenges organizations have faced. However, most research thus far has concentrated on the incentives to engage and not the social situation that create an environment for engagement. Research that explores the role of leadership behaviors can support the understanding of the effect employer and employee relationships have on work engagement. Additionally, research that considers issues of equity and fairness could expand awareness of employee engagement to organizational settings, including more multi-method, qualitative, or ethnographic research that enables deep insights to be generated into the contextual aspects of engagement, would be welcome. Empirical research from a theoretical and biblical perspective could have a critical impact on the advancement of understanding the antecedents and outcomes of work engagement and further the theoretical development.

Leadership Behaviors: A Positive Perspective

Leadership is one of the most studied concepts in social and applied sciences (Yuan & Lee, 2011), and is considered an important management function in attaining organizational goals. Leadership research is vast, covering many disciplines and decades. Over the years, perspectives of leadership have changes which has resulted in the

development of several leadership theories. Table 1 highlights a few of the theories that have emerged over time.

Table 1

Summary of Leadership Theories

Leadership Theory	Assumption
Trait Theory	People are born with traits that are particularly suited to leadership; however, these traits are more commonly based on personality such as courage, charisma, ambition, achievement-orientation, and decisiveness (Stogdill, 1974).
Behavioral Theory	Good leaders are made, not born, through a process of self-study, education, training, and experience (Davis and Luthans, 1980; Jago, 1982).).
Transactional Theory	Leadership is based on a system of rewards and reprimand to direct staff behavior focused on the hierarchical role of the leader (Northouse, 2019).
Transformational Theory	Leaders need to be people-oriented and have a deep commitment to the progress and personal development of their followers. Leaders have high ethical and moral standards, and ways to bring staff together to achieve a higher purpose (Bass, 1988).
Participative Theory	Effective leaders empower and encourage contributions from their staff and involve them in the decision-making processes (Lewin et al., 1939)
Contingency Theory	No one leadership style fits all situations. Leaders adjust their leadership style according to the needs of a situation (Northouse, 2019).
Positive Leadership Theory	Positive leaders enable extraordinary performance by fostering a positive work climate (Cameron, 2012).

As organizational researchers try to understand leadership, organizations continue to invest significant time, money, and resources in leadership development hoping to nurture characteristics in individuals that will make them effective leaders with a significant impact on the organization (Biro, 2014). Bass (1988) suggested there are three

views of leadership: (a) leadership as a group process, (b) leadership as a personality perspective, and (c) leadership as a behavior. These views of leadership have been the gateway to several leadership theories including transformational leadership and transactional leadership. These views have also helped shift the paradigm from leadership as a trait to leadership as a process. Looking at leadership as a process allows the exploration of the acts of leaders and how they influence employees and the process (Heimann et al., 2020; Mishra & Jha, 2017; Zbierowski, 2016).

Yukl et al. (2002) suggested that leadership behaviors can be clustered into three broad meta-categories: (a) task-oriented leadership which involves explaining responsibilities, planning, and prioritizing activities, (b) relations-oriented leadership which involves individual support and encouragement, and (c) change-oriented leadership which involves communicating a vision of what can be accomplished and fostering change. To understand the impact leader behaviors, have on organizations, it is important to focus on the social interactions and relationships between leaders and employees, leaders and the organization, and the influence these relationships have on the workplace. However, the array of leadership behaviors that are influencing is unlimited, and it is important to focus on the dynamic nature of leadership rather than focus on a specific leadership theory (Suganthi & Divya, 2018; Zuniga & Afrianty 2018).

Positive Leadership

Recent studies of leadership have explored a framework, namely positive leadership framework, that unifies and integrates several leadership theories to broaden the role of leader behaviors (Blanch et al., 2016). According to these studies, positive leadership is premised on the presumption that, when placed on a continuum, positive

leaders show leader behaviors that tend to be oriented on the extreme end. They suggest these leader behaviors can be conceptualized into three categories which include (a) finding and working within an employee's strengths, which often results in (b) facilitating above average performance of the individual and the organization, and (c) promote the virtues of the human condition (Blanch et al., 2016).

Positive leadership is based on positive psychology (Seligman et al., 2005), which is focused on the study of positive emotions, positive traits, and positive institutions. Positive psychology studies the conditions and process that contribute to the optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions (Malinga et al., 2019). Initially, this framework primarily focused on human behavior, but additional studies began to explore the application of positive psychology in organizations (Cameron, 2012). Positive organizational psychology is based on the belief that positive outcomes in the workplace do not simply occur because one has eliminated negative factors; attention must also be given to positive factors that promote positive attitudes and positive organizational impact (Zbierowski, 2016).

Similarly, positive leadership is heliotropic, based on the belief that living things are attracted to positive energy and attempt to avoid negative energy (Cameron, 2012). To cultivate more positive energy, positive leaders typically follow four action strategies which include positive climate, positive relationship, positive communication, and positive meaning. Positive climate refers to emphasizing the flourishing side of the organization by building an environment of compassion, gratitude, and forgiveness to moving past negative events and focusing on the positive opportunities of the future through collection feeling and responding (Cameron, 2012; Mishra & Jha, 2017). In

comparison, positive relationship refers to leaders' ability to develop cohesion and team orientation within the organization by emphasizing the contributions employees make to one another (Cameron, 2012; Mishra & Jha, 2017). Positive communication refers to the language used in an organization, focusing mostly on authentic and supportive communication that utilizes skills such as active listening, probing, and reflecting appropriately (Cameron, 2012). Finally, positive meaning is based on the intrinsic motivation and personal purpose employees find in performing their work (Cameron, 2012). From a practical perspective, these four action strategies may be best exemplified in an organization that is more human centered and focuses creating a climate that centers on the needs of their employees. This type of organization may intentionally recruit and attract leaders who try to build high quality relationships with their employees build on open and authentic communication and enabling employees to express their interest in work that aligns with their personal values and purpose (Mishra & Jha, 2017). Generally, these four action strategies encompass behaviors that maintain optimal organizational performance through the promotion of positive behaviors in employees.

Aspects of these action strategies can be seen in leadership theories said to be included under the positive leadership framework. These theories include transformational, authentic, servant, spiritual and ethical leadership. Acknowledging that these are all different leadership models, researchers suggests that they all share some common characteristics that contribute to positive social exchanges between the leader and the followers (Blanch et al., 2016). Blanch et al. (2016) suggested that future research should take a consolidation view of these models, hypothetically unifying then into a theory of positive leadership. In doing so, this study reviewed the literature for the

leadership behaviors used to describe each model to find commonalities. Table 2

highlights the unique leadership behaviors that characterize each model of leadership, and

some of the common positive leadership behaviors they share to include trustworthiness

and fairness. Malinga et al. (2019) suggests that leaders who behave in a trustworthy and

fair manner will elicit positive attitudes from their employees, as a leader who is able to

elicit trust can also cultivate trust among their employees therefore fostering engagement.

Table 2

Positive Leadership Theories

Leadership Theory	Description	Behaviors
Transformational Leadership	Capable of motivating their followers to transcend their own individual interests towards achieving collective goals (Malinga et al., 2019)	Altruism, **trustworthiness**, ethical decision-making, innovative, influence and intellectual stimulation
Authentic Leadership	Own one's personal experiences (thoughts, emotions, beliefs) and act in accord with the true self Zbierowski, 2016).	Self-awareness, openness, t**rustworthiness**, and mutual care
Servant Leadership	Places the needs and interests of their followers over their own; making the deliberate choice is to serve others to achieve their development and the success of the organization (Blanch et al., 2016)	**Fairness, trustworthiness**, loyalty, and mutual care
Spiritual Leadership	Leadership is a vehicle for intrinsically motivated, organizational transformation and continuous learning (Blanch et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2019)	**Fairness,** mutual care, respect and producing a sense of being understood
Ethical Leadership	Morally fit decision-makers who hold the interest of people and	Honesty, **fairness**, altruism, and t**rustworthiness**

society at the core of ethics in their
lives (Bahar and Minga, 2019).

To further advance the study of positive leadership, Cameron (2012) encourages researchers to choose two to three positive leadership behaviors and explore their impact on improving leadership. This study contributes to expanding the study of positive leadership behaviors by looking at leader trustworthiness and leader fairness and the impact it has on improving engagement.

Trust

Definitions of trust date back to 1967 in which trust was largely based in the relationships formed between people; however, in a 1995 study conducted by Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman expanded the definition to include an individual's ability, benevolence, and integrity as antecedents to trust proposing that perceptions of these factors influence the level of trust one has in an individual (Schoorman et al., 2007). The importance of this trust relationship is highlighted in the social exchange theory that frames this study and the high-quality relationships associated with increased employee engagement (Kurian & Nafulho, 2020). The social exchange theory suggests that employees who feel they are in a trusted and fair work environment are more motivated and more likely to develop higher levels of engagement (Halbushi et al., 2019). It has also been linked to creating a psychologically safe work environment that allows employees to form stronger interpersonal relations, especially with their leaders (Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2019).

A study conducted by Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman (2007) was the impetus for developing measurements for trust, which resulted in a four-item trust scale developed by Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis in 1996. This scale was used in a study of veterinarians and

in a study of restaurant employees and was found to have good internal consistency reliability for both populations ($\alpha = .82$; Schoorman et al., 2007). The scale was subsequently revised to increase its reliability. The revisions of the Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman scale led to the development of the Behavioral Trust Inventory in 2003 (Gillespie, 2003).

The Behavioral Trust Inventory (BTI, see Appendix B) measures an individual's willingness to be vulnerable and their sensitivity to trust in their exchange with leaders and peers (Gillespie, 2003). The scale is based on two domains of trust behavior: relying on another's skills, knowledge, judgments, or actions, including delegating, and giving autonomy (reliance), and sharing work-related or personal information of a sensitive nature (disclosure), which are believed to relate to trustworthiness, and satisfaction with performance in leader-member relations. Positive leaders who demonstrate trustworthiness are more likely to elicit positive organizational outcomes such as increased positive organizational citizenship and enhanced organizational performance (Malinga et al., 2019). They are also able to cultivate trust among employees. For this study, I have adopted the general definition that trust is one's willingness to be vulnerable to another person, as this highlights the assumption that trust is based on relationships (Schoorman et al., 2007). Because trust has been positively and significantly associated with organizational justice dimensions, including interactional justice (Adeel et al., 2018), I would like to understand the relation trust has with interactional justice, and the impact trust has on improving employee engagement and implication for improving leadership.

Organizational Justice

In addition to leader trustworthiness, leader fairness is another important leadership behavior related to employee engagement. Nwokolo et al., (2016) and Wirakusuma & Surya, (2018) suggests that leader fairness is as important as leader trustworthiness, as it can shape how individuals emotionally respond to workplace events and overall organizational judgements. According to fairness theory, leaders' fairness will influence employee's attention toward organizational justice matters (Kurian & Nafukho, (2020). Accordingly, a large portion of fairness research are contained in studies focused on organizational justice. Organizational justice is a subjective concept because it captures what the employee believes to be right (Nwokolo et al., 2016). Nyoman & Ketut (2018) define organizational justice as a concept that refers to the perception of fairness of the past treatment of the employees within an organization and focuses on the feelings, they hold regarding leadership decisions. Organizational justice may be categorized into three dimensions with differing perspectives on fairness: distributive justice refers to the fairness of one's outcomes from a decision-making system; procedural justice refers to the fairness of the processes used to decide those outcomes; interactional justice which pertains to the dignity and respect that one receives from others and the fairness that is experienced by employees during interpersonal exchanges between leaders and their subordinates (Crawshaw et al., 2013; Halbusi, et al., 2017; Nyoman & Ketut, 2018). When considering these dimensions wholistically, organizational justice can be defined as the fairness of organizational decisions and the fairness of the distribution of outcomes from those decision. For example, if the contracts department has one system for allowing remote work and the IT department has another

which result in fewer contract employees can work remotely, then contract employees may have low perceptions or distributive and procedural justice. If the Vice President of the Contracts department says that this is the new organizational policy for remote work without explaining how other departments have a different approach, then that would contribute to low perceptions of interactional justice resulting in the overall perception of organizational justice low. This study looks at how a leader's fairness contributes to perceptions of organizational justice.

The role of employee engagement and positive leadership behaviors have been examined in organizational justice studies with promising results. Sharma & Yadav (2017) conducted a study examining the relationship between organizational justice and work engagement. They found that organizational justice has positive and significant correlation with employee engagement. Ohiorenoya and Equavoen (2019) also conducted a study that revealed organizational justice has significant influence on employee engagement in institutions with organizational justice (OJ) as a whole and each OJ dimension positively and significantly influenced employee engagement in institutions More specifically, employees feel obligated to engage in performing well in their roles when they perceive justice in an organization. Martínez-Tur, et al. (2020). found leaders to be the main source of justice in organizations, and that leader behaviors inform employees about the leader's justice and the organization's justice.

There is a relationship between leadership behavior and organizational justice (Adeel et al., 2018). Most studies that have looked at this relationship between leadership behavior and organizational justice have focused on procedural and distributive justice (Adeel et al., 2018; Batool & Shah, 2017; Colquitt et al., 2001; Hassanzadeh et al., 2016;

Scandura, 1999). According to Armağan and Erzen (2015) procedural justice has been associated with employees' perceptions of the procedures adopted when making organizational decisions. Likewise, distributive justice has been associated with employees' perceptions of how policies and changes in procedures are communicated (Hassanzadeh et al., 2016).

Interactional justice was not introduced in the literature until 1986 and was referred to as the organization's quality of interpersonal behaviors (Bies & Moag, 1986). Interactional justice is further classified into two subdimensions: interpersonal justice and informational justice. Interpersonal justice refers to the degree to which employees feel they are being treated respectfully; while information justice refers to how honestly and transparently processes are implemented (Adeel et al., 2019; Armağan & Erzen, 2015; Ghasi et al., 2020). Unlike procedural and distributive justice, interactional justice has been less researched. Some studies have resulted in finding significant and between interactional justice and engagement (Nwokolo et al., 2017). Interactional justice has also been shown to have a positive effect on perceptions of leadership behavior (Halbusi et al., 2017). Therefore, interactional justice serves as the lens through which this study will explore positive leadership behavior and the effects on employee engagement.

Biblical Foundations of the Study

The organizational value that theorists and scholars have placed on organizational behavior should complement the value theology provides for workplace behavior (Miller, 2014). In scientific research, work is organized around efficiency and performance in workplaces; however, from a biblical perspective, work enables fulfillment for people

(McGhee, 2019). The first call to work heard from God was the call to be a steward of Earth (*English Standard Version*, 2001).

From a biblical perspective, Colossians 3: 23-24 references the need to do work with one's full heart (*English Standard Version*, 2001). The verse states, "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" (*English Standard Version*, 2001). Other scriptural references, including Proverbs 12:24; Psalms 107:12; Lamentations 1:3, suggest that for work to be a form of worship it should be done in an engaged and willing manner (*English Standard Version*, 2001). Studies that explore ways to make work more engaged and meaningful for employees and reduce feelings of inequity and mistreatment, are vital to understand the relational context of work.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

This chapter presents the support organizational research has provided for the role employee engagement plays on positive organizational outcomes and explores positive leadership behaviors from the perspective of leader trustworthiness. Fairness is addressed as a term synonymous with organizational justice, with a particular focus on interactional justice. The review of literature reveals that despite the breadth of research that has been conducted on each variable, few studies have looked at the interaction of employee engagement, positive leadership behaviors, and interactional justice. The review of literature also reveals opportunities for further study of related theoretical and practical implications. The next chapter will review the research questions and related hypotheses

informed by the evidence of the current research. The chapter will also further explain the

quantitative methodology, instruments used for measurement, and the data analysis used

in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Overview

The failure to retain and engage employees can have adverse effects on an organization's productivity and effectiveness. Several factors influence employee engagement; however, recent studies suggest that the leader's quality accounts for at least 70% of the variance in engagement (Harter; 2018). Researchers have presented empirical evidence that supports the notion that positive leadership behaviors such as leadership trustworthiness and fairness, as measured by interactional justice, may promote employee engagement, but additional research is needed (Adeel et al., 2018; Decuypere & Schaufeli, 2019; Malinga et al., 2019; Nwokolo et al., 2017; Wirakusuma & Surya, 2018). This study contributed to the research by exploring the relationship positive leadership behaviors and interactional justice has in influencing employee engagement.

Chapter Three presents information on the study's methodology, leveraging previous research explained in the literature review to support and describe the research design of this non-experimental study. Starting with the purpose of the study, this chapter reviews the research questions. This chapter also provides an introduction of the hypotheses proposed to answer the research questions and discusses the research design in detail. The target sample, study procedures and instrumentation and measurement used in the data collection are then identified in separate sections, as are the operationalization of the variables and methods of data analysis. Chapter Three closes with a section reviewing the delimitations, assumptions and limitations of the study and a content summary.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the relationship between interactional justice, as measured by

Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, and employee engagement, as measured

by UWES - short version?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by

Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by the

UWES - short version?

RQ 3: Does interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice

Scales, moderate the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by

Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by UWES -

short version?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: An increase in interactional justice relates to an increase in

employee engagement.

Hypothesis 2: An increase in leader trustworthiness relates to an increase in

employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Interactional justice moderates the effect of leadership behaviors on

employee engagement.

Figure 2

Research Model

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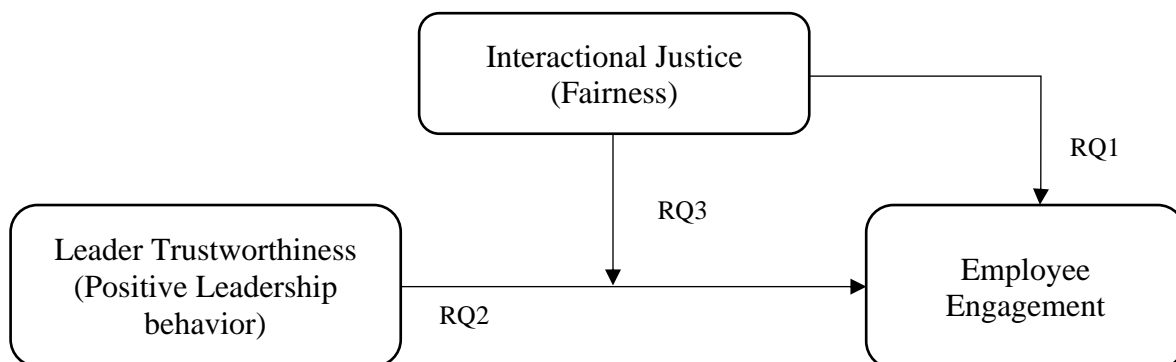
Research Design

According to Price et al. (2017), non-experimental designs, also known as descriptive designs, are appropriate when the research questions pertain to the relationship between variables, are exploratory in nature, and participants are not assigned to certain conditions. Therefore, this study was conducted as a descriptive study that utilized a correlational design to explore the relationship between leadership trustworthiness, leadership fairness (interactional justice) and employee engagement. This was achieved through statistical data collecting of the non-experimental behaviors of the samples. Based on the research questions listed above, this study used quantitative, complex correlational approaches to answer each research question, where leader trustworthiness and interactional justice (fairness) functioned as the independent variables and employee engagement served as the dependent variable. This approach also allowed the researcher to describe the strength and direction of the relationship between

the variables, using the score of one variable to predict the scores on the other variables using a regression analysis (Price et al., 2017).

Participants

To be eligible to participate in the study, interested individuals were required to be 18 years old or older, full-time employees of their organization for a minimum of one year, currently under the supervision of the same supervisor. They also must have been with that supervisor for minimum of one year. These demographic variables were used to ensure participants met minimal participation criteria. Individuals were determined to be ineligible if they were (a) unwilling to provide consent to participate in the study, (b) unable to provide consent due to being a minor or possessing a cognitive impairment, and (c) unable to communicate in English. Additional demographics included age, job tenure, employment status, supervisory status, and supervisory tenure. No additional permissions were required to recruit participants.

Originally, the study was designed to target participants employed by organizations awarded the Gallup Exceptional Workplace Awarded (GEWA). Annually, Gallup has recognized organizations who connect employee engagement to all aspects of their organizational culture by presenting them with the GEWA. In 2021, Gallup awarded 38 companies (see Appendix D) with the GEWA denoting their high employee engagement (Harter et al., 2021). GEWA award organizations were required to apply, and interview with Gallup detailing how their organization has linked engagement to business outcomes. They were also required to submit their Q12 engagement data which must have a threshold of 50 or more employees at a participation rate of 80% or more,

and a grand mean of 4.20 or greater. The Q12 survey was based on a hierarchy of four

employee development needs: basic needs, individual contribution, teamwork, and

growth, with a belief that meeting the needs in the first three foundational levels creates

an environment of trust and support that enables growth and engagement. Therefore, each

of the 12 employee engagement survey questions are aligned with one of the four levels

within the hierarchy to measure engagement. Due to insufficient participation from

individuals in GEWA organizations (n=13), the study was adjusted to be more

generalized in organizational participation.

The participant sample size was determined using an a priori analysis (G*Power;

Appendix E) for a medium effect size $f^2 = 0.15$, an alpha (α) level of .05, a power of .95,

and a total of three predictor variables were selected as input parameters. Based on these

parameters, the G*Power software (version 3.1.9.6) indicated that a minimum sample

size of N = 119 was necessary (see Appendix E). A total of 782 participants accessed the

survey of which 538 did not meet the minimum criteria or had missing responses

resulting in a final sample of 244 participants. As part of the data cleaning process,

listwise deletion was used to remove participants who had one or more missing value

across all variables. As a result, the majority of the 538 participants not included in the

final sample had one or more missing values. This final number, 244 participants, still

met the required number of participants for the desired power level.

Study Procedures

Gelinas et al. (2017), suggests researchers are exploring ways to identify and

recruit potential participants for human subjects' research using social media and other

forms of technology, as it permits reaching a broader segment of the population. The participants in this study were drawn from a convenience sample recruited via professional research sites (Survey Circle, Psychology Research on the Net), academic social boards (Liberty University Jammer), and public social media networks (primarily LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter) to complete the online survey. The survey consisted of 33 questions and participants spent approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey, including demographics, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES, Likert), Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (OJS, Likert) and the Behavioral Trust Inventory (BTI, Likert). Appendix F includes the recruitment notice that was used to invite participation in the study.

Qualtrics was used to facilitate the participant survey distribution and data collection. Qualtrics is a Liberty University's approved web-based survey software tool that allows researchers to create and send surveys to a specific sample and provides data for analysis based on the responses. The survey was self-administered, and participants read and acknowledged the statement of informed consent, and a demographic screening which preceded the survey (see Appendix G). Instructions to the survey asked participants to answer demographic questions which gathered their age, gender, tenure, race, and Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award organization experience, and questions on each scale using the specified Likert scale (see Appendix G). The first section assessed employee engagement consisting of nine items from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (short version; Schaufeli et al., 2002). The second section used the Behavioral Trust Inventory (Gillespie, 2003) consisting of 10 items to measure leader trustworthiness. The third section assessed leader fairness using the nine-item,

interactional justice scales of Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (Colquitt et al., 2001). Further information for each scale will be provided in the next section. Participants who did not meet the necessary study criteria were informed that they did not meet the criteria and thanked for their interest.

All the participants were treated in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB), and several methods were implemented to ensure participants were protected. First, the use of Qualtrics, an online survey company allowed the researcher to remain removed from the data collection process, protecting the participants' anonymity. Although participants received a link via their social media account, their names, personal email addresses, and IP addresses were not collected, preventing the possibility of linking the media accounts to the survey data. Second, participants were not asked to provide any personally identifiable information, further maintaining anonymity and confidentiality. Finally, the use of an informed consent statement (see Appendix D) served as a measure to safeguard participants' rights and confirm that their participation was voluntary and without coercion.

Instrumentation and Measurement

The instruments used in this quantitative study were the Utrecht Work Engagement scale (UWES - short version) developed by Schaufelli et al. (2002), The Behavioral Trust Inventory developed by Gillespie (2003), Organizational Justice Scale (OJS) developed by Colquitt et al. (2001). Validated instruments were used in lieu of developing a new survey for increased validity (Thompson and Panacek, 2007). All the scales mentioned use a Likert scale, which is commonly considered to be interval

variables based on some research which suggests that Likert scales using five or more categories can be considered continuous variables without any effect to the analysis (Johnson & Creech, 1983; Norman, 2010; Sullivan & Artino, 2013; Zumbo & Zimmerman, 1993).

Utrecht Work Engagement scale (UWES - short version)

Schaufelli et al. (2002) developed the adapted version of the UWES used in the present study to measure three dimensions of engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption. The short version reduces the original 17 item scale to 9 items with three questions dedicated to measuring each dimension (see Appendix A). The UWES, a self-report engagement scale, used a seven-point frequency rating from zero (never) to 6 (always). Higher levels of engagement were indicated by higher aggregate scores on the assessment. The short version of the UWES was obtained from the public domain, allowing it to be reproduced for noncommercial research and educational purposes without seeking written permission. The UWES was a popular unidimensional measure of employee engagement which used three subscales (vigor, dedication, and absorption) to aid in explaining variance in scoring. The UWES-short version has been found to have good internal validity based on confirmatory factor analysis of its three internal scales for vigor, dedication, and absorption, with a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of .93 and an internal consistency reliability of .70 for the total score of all three scales (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The UWES-short version was in the public domain and can be reproduced for noncommercial research and educational purposes without seeking written permission.

Behavioral Trust Inventory

The Behavioral Trust Inventory is a ten-item scale developed by Gillespie in 2003 (see Appendix B). The inventory was intended for the measurement of trust between leaders and peers with generalizability across a range of organizational contexts (Gillespie, 2003). The BTI measures an employee's willingness to be vulnerable in work relationships based on two domains: reliance and disclosure. The scale has undergone extensive validation studies. Gillespie (2003) conducted validation studies using qualitative, cross-sectional, longitudinal, and matched-dyad quantitative data drawn from four samples. Other researchers using the BTI have obtained a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.90 to 0.92 and internal consistency reliability ranging from .90 to .93 (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011; Van der Werff, & Buckley, 2017). The Behavioral Trust Inventory was in the public domain and can be reproduced for noncommercial research and educational purposes without seeking written permission.

Colquitt's Interactional Justice Scale

For the assessment of organizational justice, participants were asked to complete the Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (OJS) developed by Colquitt et al. (2001) (see Appendix C). This scale assesses the three dimensions of justice perceptions with four items measuring the distributive justice, seven items measuring procedural justice, and a total of nine items measuring interactional justice The interactional justice was a considered unidimensional with two subscales (interpersonal and informational justice) that emerged to further explain variance (Bosselut et al., 2018; Whiteside & Barclay, 2014). All items use a 5-point scale with anchors of 1 (*to a small extent*) and 5 (*to a large extent*). Based on the precedent of prior studies, this study used an abbreviated version of

the OJS consisting of nine interpersonal justice scale items. Multiple validations of the OJS have been performed around the world and has consistently been shown to have inter-factor correlations. When looking at the OJS, researchers obtained the reliability coefficients of .94, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging between .70 and .89 (Dergisi, 2009). Colquitt's OJS was in the public domain and can be reproduced for noncommercial research and educational purposes without seeking written permission.

Operationalization of Variables

Employee Engagement was the dependent variable. This interval variable measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement scale (UWES - short version; Schaufeli et al., 2002) by taking the sum of all the scores of each item and dividing by the number of items.

Leader Trustworthiness was an independent variable. This interval variable measured by the Behavioral Trust Inventory (Gillespie, 2003) by taking the sum of all the scores of each item and dividing by the number of items.

Organizational Justice was an independent variable. This interval variable measured by the Organizational Justice Scale (OJS; Colquitt ,2001) by taking the sum of all the scores of each item and dividing by the number of items.

The study also included several demographic variables that were used for descriptive statistics. Table 3 provides a list and description of the demographic variables collected during the study.

Table 3

Description of demographic variables

Variable	Measured	Type
Gender	Male (1), Female (2), Something Else (3), Prefer not to say (4)	Categorical
Age	under 18 (1) 18-24 (2) 25-34 (3) 35-44 (4) 45-54 (5) 55 or older (6)	Categorical
Race	White (1), Black or African American (2), American Indian or Alaska Native (3), Asian (4), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5), or Other (6)	Categorical
Employment Status	Full Time (1), Part Time (2), Other (3)	Categorical
Tenure	Under 12 months (1), 1-3 years (2), 4-7 years (3), 8-11 years (4), 12-15 years (5), 15+ years (6)	Categorical
Supervised	Yes (1), No (2)	Categorical
Years with supervisor	Under 12 months (1), 1-3 years (2), 4-7 years (3), 8-11 years (4), 12-15 years (5), 15+ years (6)	Categorical
Organizational Industry	Forestry, fishing, hunting, or agricultural support (1) Real estate or rental and leasing (2) Mining (3) Professional, scientific, or technical services (4) Utilities (5) Management of companies or enterprises (6) Construction (7) Admin, support, waste management or remediation services (8) Manufacturing (9) Educational Services (10) Wholesale trade (11) Health care and social assistance (12) Retail trade (13) Arts, entertainment, or recreation (14) Transportation or warehousing (15) Hospitality and food Services (16) Information (17)	Categorical

| Other services (except public administration) (18) |
| Finance or insurance (19) |

Data Analysis

Description of the Nature of the Study

Qualtrics was used to collect participant responses. Response data in Qualtrics was then inputted into IBM's SPSS statistical software version 28 to clean for incomplete and incorrectly formatted data (Pallant, 2020) and to conduct the multiple regression analysis. Descriptive statistics were run on the participant demographic data and survey responses. The analysis of the demographic data involved calculating the frequencies and percentages of the sample based on participants' responses to questions about gender, tenure, race, and industry. Descriptive statistics were run on the three scales: UWES (short version; Schaufeli et al., 2002), BTI (Gillespie, 2003), and OJS (Colquitt, 2001).

The research was originally designed to utilize a quantitative, descriptive, regression model to test the relationship between the independent variables, leader trustworthiness and interactional justice, and the dependent variable, employee engagement. Descriptive research was chosen because the study is designed to study variables in a natural setting without any manipulation of the variables with the intent to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics (Nassaji, 2015). Nassaji indicated that survey tools are often used in descriptive research to gather data, and often analyzed quantitatively using various statistical analyses.

Rationale for Multiple Regression Analysis

The method selected to analyze the data was correlational using a multiple regression analysis to test for a relationship between the variables. The multiple

regression analysis was chosen because the design of the study met the following criteria (Martin and Bridgmon, 2012): (a) the purpose of the analysis is to analyze two or more independent variables related to a dependent variable; (b) there are two continuously scaled independent variables; (c) the dependent variable is continuously scaled; and (d) relationships of participants' scores across groups are being compared. To use this parametric test, the sample data must use interval scaling and be normally distributed.

Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations

There were several delimitations, assumptions, and limitations in this study that should be considered in the interpretation of results. In this study, the research was delimited to focus on positive leadership as its theoretical framework but acknowledges that the variables used are also factors of other leadership frameworks (see Table 2). Furthermore, the study only focused on two positive leadership behaviors: leader trustworthiness and fairness. Leader trustworthiness was selected as the main positive leadership behaviors because it was found most among the leadership theories that form the positive leadership framework. The study was delimited by several of the eligibility requirements. The study was designed for working adults who were over the age of 18. Additionally, the individuals had to have at least one year of full-time working experience. However, this study acknowledges that many organizations are often consists of a diverse workforce in which age and years of experience extended to individuals outside of the eligibility range. Third, this study delimited to participants with a supervisor for whom they have been with for at least a year with the assumption that shorter timeframes with the supervisor may limit the opportunities to fully observed the

supervisors' behaviors and build relationships. Although not a delimitation, the study intentionally included participants who work for organizations that received the 2021 Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award.

Assumptions

Besides these delimitations, there are several assumptions that influenced the design of the study. First, this study assumed that companies with high levels of engagement were relevant to the study. The focus of the study was to investigate the extent to which positive leadership behaviors and interactional justice relate to employee engagement. Focusing on organizations with high levels of engagement fostered homogeneity that allows for better comparisons between variables. A study that compares organizations with low employee engagement to organization with high levels of employee engagement may yield different results.

The second assumption of this study was that participants would be more likely to respond to electronic surveys in which they maintain their anonymity and confidentiality. Electronic surveys also reduced the bias in the self-report surveys as their responses were not shared with anyone in their organization. Other methods of data collection may be used but may compromise the anonymity of the feedback which could lead to different results.

In terms of ontology, this study assumed a quantitative approach to measuring positive leadership behaviors, interactional justice, and to explain employee engagement is appropriate. As highlighted in the literature review, positive leadership and interactional justice were both individually linked to employee engagement. However, few studies have analyzed the medley of variables, which creates challenges in defining

reliable relationships. Using a quantitative correlational approach allowed a better understanding of the degree and direction the relationship between variables have on one another. Alternatively, qualitative research could have been conducted to identity and validated the positive leadership behaviors, but the dearth of literature on positive leadership behaviors suggests this was not necessary.

Limitations

Delimitations and assumptions often do not account for other limitations inherent to research design; therefore, it is important to review the limitations inherent to this study. First, this study was based on a descriptive design which allowed the introduction of extraneous variables and limited the ability to draw cause and effect relationships (Martin and Bridgmon, 2012). Additionally, this study focused largely focused on private, corporate industry; therefore, the results were not generalizable to other professional settings.

One of the foremost limitations is that the sampling was largely an American, English-speaking workforce. Halbusi et al. (2019) suggest that future studies related to leadership would benefit from context sensitivity and analyzing diverse cultures. Participants from the sample were also asked to select into the study versus being randomly assigned. Martin and Bridgmon, (2012) suggests that random sampling is preferred in research to reduce sampling error and bias in the study; therefore, random sampling should be considered for future research.

Another limitation of the study was the use of convenience sampling including using the researcher's social, academic, and professional network for participants. Although the pool included persons from the researcher's military career, a career in

corporate companies, three graduate programs, church community, sorority, and other networks, the pool largely represented African American, women from American organizations which influences the generalizability of the data and results. Also, offering the survey online introduced may have limited participation to only those with computer access and comfortable with the survey platform.

Finally, this study used survey methodology for collecting data on the independent variables and dependent variables. This approach introduced a limitation known as common method bias in which using the same method for all variables could result in the artificial inflation of relationships and bias the reliability and validity of measures (Jordan & Troth, 2019). While other studies have also used the same data collection tools with the same population to assess several variables, this is noted as a common limitation (Strom et al, 2014; Sharma &Yadav, 2017).

Summary

Chapter Three reviewed the research design, sample, methods, and procedures used to conduct the present study. The chapter discussed the background and purpose of the study including the research questions and corresponding hypotheses and provided a detailed description of the research design along with inclusion criteria for the target sample. Next, this chapter described the procedures used to conduct the study outlining how participants were selected and protected during the study, and the steps for data collection and analysis. The three survey instruments used to collect the survey data were described with reference to their psychometric properties. Finally, the chapter concluded with the delimitations, assumptions, and limitations of the present study.

Chapter Three provided an overview of the methodology supporting the results presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Four details the results of the study including the descriptive analysis and the multiple regression analysis described in this chapter. Chapter Four also describes the relevant statistics and statistical comparisons using tables and figures. Finally, the next chapter describes the significance of the results of the present study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Overview

Chapter Four details the findings of the study which was designed to examine the effects of interactional justice and positive leadership behaviors on employee engagement. The data of 244 participants were analyzed based on their responses to a survey that consisted of 33 questions, including demographics, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES, Likert), Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (OJS, Likert) and the Behavioral Trust Inventory (BTI, Likert). The analysis of the demographic data involved calculating the frequencies and percentages of the sample based on participants' responses to questions about gender, tenure, race, and industry. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the interactions between interactional justice, leader trustworthiness and employee engagement. This chapter briefly reviews the descriptive results of the data analysis based on the following research questions:

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the relationship between interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, and employee engagement, as measured by UWES - short version?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by the UWES-short version?

RQ 3: Does interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, moderate the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by

Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by UWES-

short version?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: An increase in interactional justice relates to an increase in

employee engagement.

Hypothesis 2: An increase in leader trustworthiness relates to an increase in

employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Interactional justice moderates the effect of leadership behaviors on

employee engagement.

Descriptive Results

Protocol

The participants in this study were drawn from a convenience sample recruited

via professional research sites (Survey Circle, Psychology Research on the Net),

academic social boards (Liberty University Jammer), and public social media networks

(primarily LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter) to complete the online survey. Study

participants were recruited via professional, academic, and social networks to complete

the online survey. Participants were asked to read the informed consent statement, and

complete screening questions before completing the 10-minute survey. The survey

included demographic questions, nine questions from UWES - short version (Likert,

Schaufeli et al., 2002), ten questions from OJS (Likert, Colquitt et al., 2001), and six

questions from BTI (Likert, Gillespie, 2003). The demographics included age, gender,

job tenure, and industry. Participants were also asked to indicate whether they worked for a GEWA organization.

Over the course of three months, individuals were invited to participate in the study by clicking on a link to the online survey, which resulted in 785 responses. Of the responses received, 357 responses did not meet the survey criteria or did not complete the screening questions. Of the remaining 428 responses, 184 were dropped because they did not complete the entire survey. At the conclusion of the data collection, the final acceptable sample consisted of 244 participants. The study was structured to have a moderate effect size of Cohen's f^2 (effect size) $=0.15$, an alpha (œ) level of .05, and a power of .95 which required a minimal sample size (n) of 119, based on G*Power software (version 3.1.9.6) (see Appendix E).

Qualtrics was used to collect participant responses. Response data collected in Qualtrics was then inputted into IBM's SPSS statistical software version 28 to clean the data by screening for missing values. IBM SPSS Version 28 was also used for analyzing the data, conducting a multiple regression analysis and to generate graphs for the collected data. Table 4 shows the demographic data for the sample population by gender, which shows that over 92% of the participants were female. Over 13% were Caucasian, 77.5% were African American, and the remaining 9.5% represented other minority groups (Figure 3). Most participants were 45 years old or older (63.7%) (see Figure 4).

Table 4

Gender of Participants

Gender	Count of participants
Male	11
Female	226

Figure 3

Ethnic Dispersion of Participants
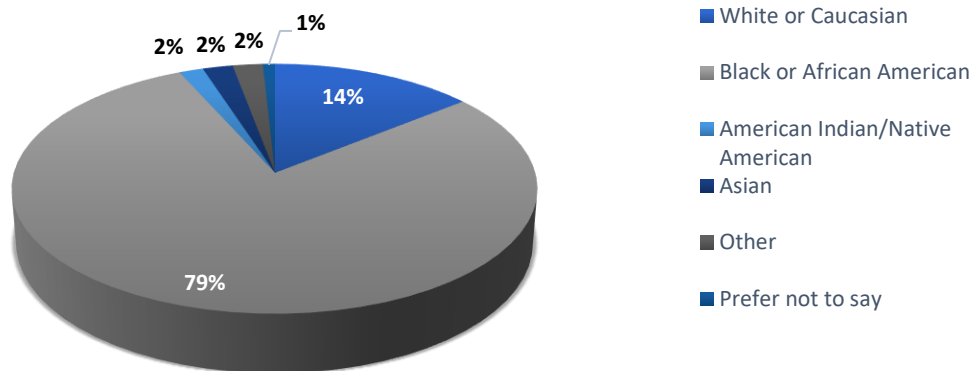
Figure 4

Age Dispersion of Participants
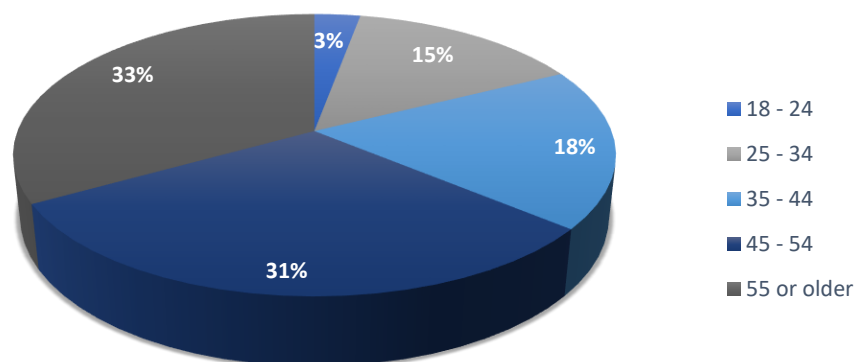
Figures 5 and 6 indicates that most participants had been under the leadership of their current supervisor for 1-3 years, and over 20% had been with their supervisor for 4-7 years. Educational services, health care and social assistance and professional services were the three most frequently represented industries.

Figure 5

Tenure Dispersion of Participants
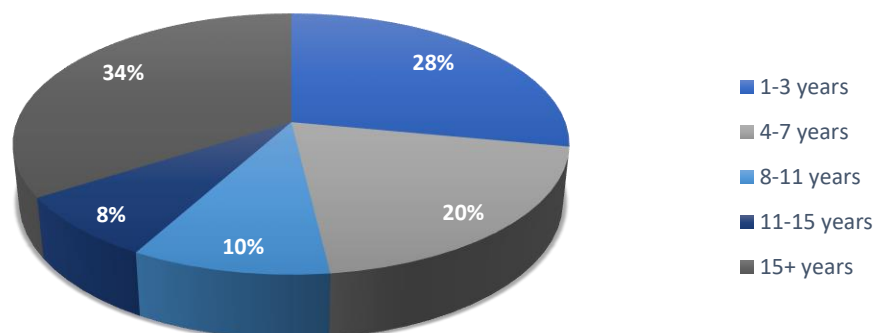
Figure 6

Supervisory Dispersion of Participants
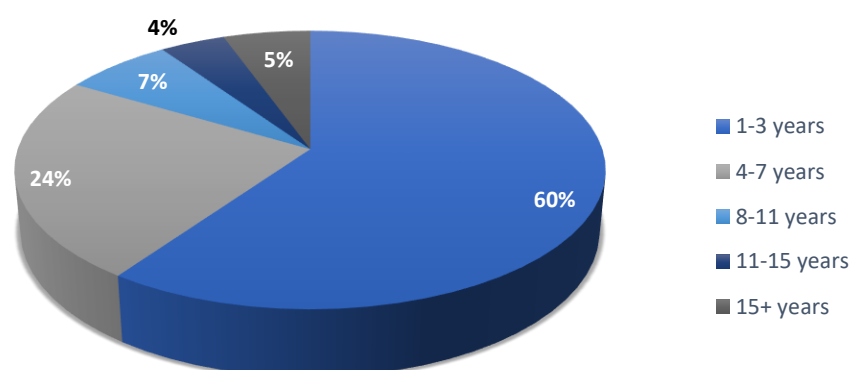
The study remained open to participant employed in any industry. Figure 7 indicates that

educational services (28%) and healthcare or social assistance (21%) were the most

highly represented industries, and food service and real estate (both 0.4%) among the

lowest represented industries. Likewise, only 13 of the responses were from individuals

working in GEWA organizations with the American Eagle Supply having the highest

level of participation. Therefore, the research questions were updated to remove this variable.

Figure 7

Industry Dispersion of Participants
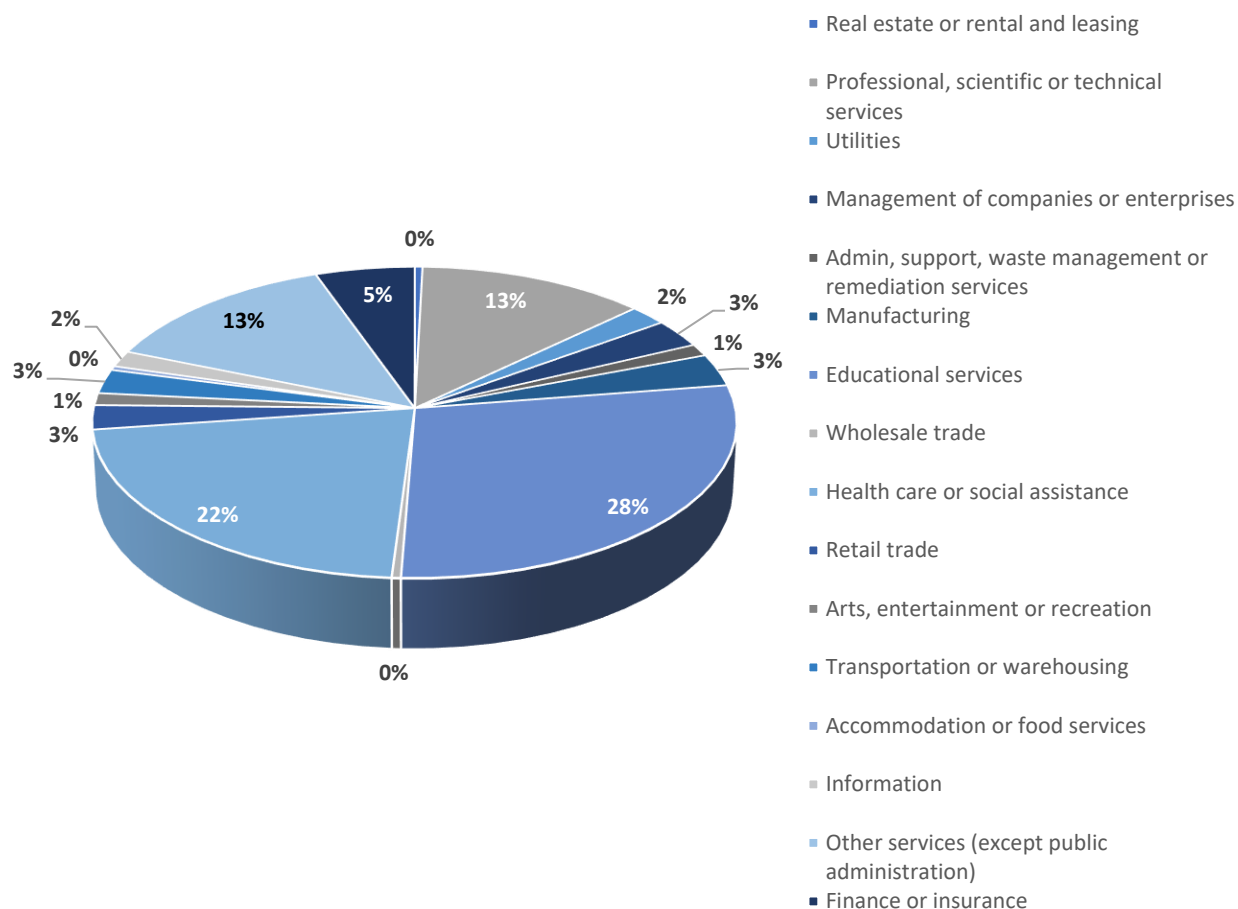
Study Findings

After completion of the descriptive analysis, the researchers conducted an analysis of the internal consistency of the variables to ensure their reliability. Coefficient alphas were determined for each of the scales used in the survey to measure employee, engagement, leader trustworthiness, and interactional justice. All scales were found to

have high internal consistency supporting that the scales reliably measure what it is designed to measure.

After confirming internal consistency reliability, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the independent variables, leader trustworthiness and interactional justice, and the dependent variable, employee engagement. Descriptive research was chosen because the study is designed to study variables in a natural setting without any manipulation of the variables with the intent to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics (Nassaji, 2015). To address each of the research questions and hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify any correlations and examine the strength of the correlations between employee engagement, leader trustworthiness, and fairness (interactional justice). Prior to running the regression analysis, the assumptions of relationships between the variables were tested to ensure its appropriateness of multiple regression analysis to the study design which include (a) there was a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables, the values for the dependent variable were normally distributed, and the variables are not highly correlated. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov (K-S) test and the Shapiro–Wilk test are commonly used to test the normality of the data. Because the Shapiro-Wilk test is usually used with sample sizes with an $N > 50$, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov was used to determine if these variables are normally distributed. Both assumptions for the appropriateness of the multiple regression analysis were met. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests was used to determine the normality of distribution, also known as goodness of fit; the results of which can determine whether the values of the participant sample are representative of predicted values of the general population. In the

case of this study, the K-S values are greater than .05 (see Table 5) suggests that the fit is good. Figure 8 represents normal distribution of employee engagement (dependent variable).

Table 5

Tests of Normality and Scale Reliability

	Condition	K-S	df	α	M	Kurtosis	Skewness	SD
DV	Engagement (UWES)	.083	244	.94	35.9	.097	- 0.61	10.56
IV	Leader Trustworthiness (BTI)	.168	243	.94	31.1	- 0.26	- 0.94	10.33
	Fairness (OJS)	.186	244	.97	36.2	0.44	- 1.18	9.30

Note. N = 244. $p < .001$. K - S - Kolmogorov-Smirnov α = coefficient alpha. *M* - mean.

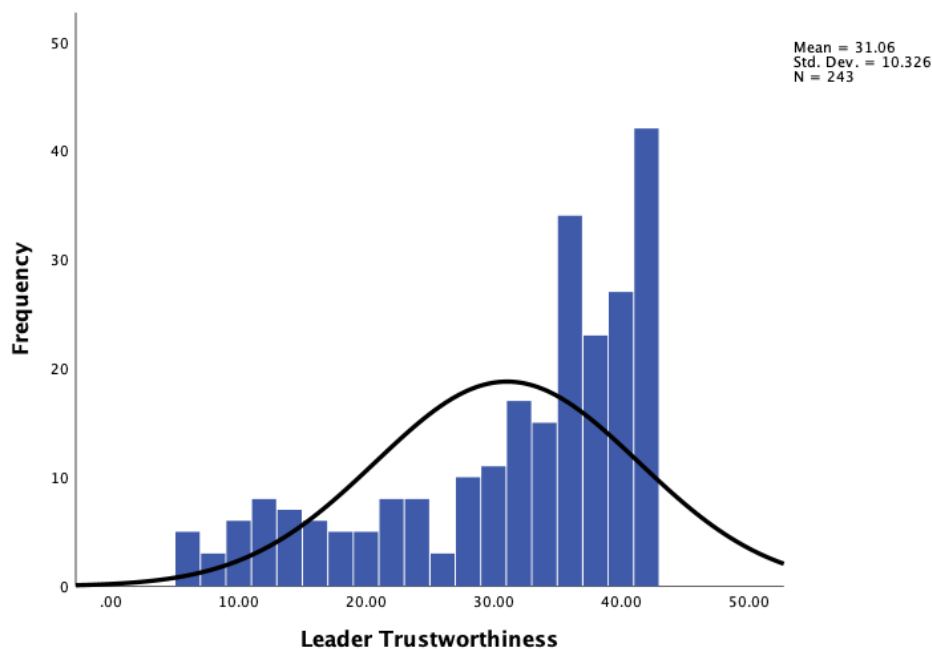*SD* - standard deviation

Figure 8

Employee Engagement Scores
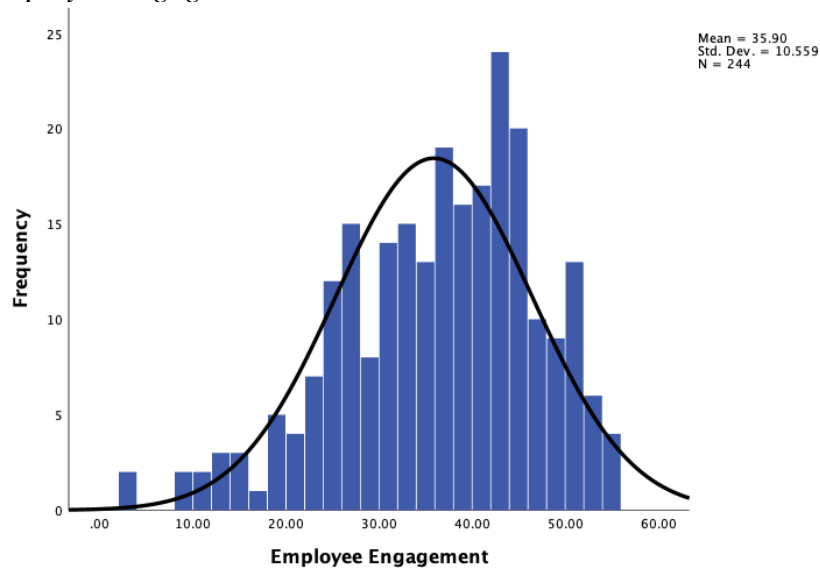
Leader trustworthiness was measured with the 10-items BTI (Gillespie, 2003) using a 7-point ordinal scale. Scores ranged broadly from 6 to 41, with a mean score was 31.06 and a standard deviation of 10.33. The coefficient alpha for leader trustworthiness indicated excellent reliability ($\alpha = .94$). The histogram of the scores represented in Figure 9 presents a ceiling effect where most of the participants reached the highest possible score (Taylor, 2010).

**Figure 9**

Leader Trustworthiness Scores

Fairness was measured with the 9-items OJS-Interactional Scale (Colquitt et al., 2001) with a 5-point ordinal scale. Scores ranged broadly from 9 to 45, with a mean score was 36.24 and standard deviation of 9.30. The coefficient alpha for interactional justice

indicated excellent reliability ($\alpha = .97$). Table 5 presents the summary statistics for the

interactional justice scale scores, and Figure 10 presents a histogram for the scores.

Figure 10

Fairness Scores
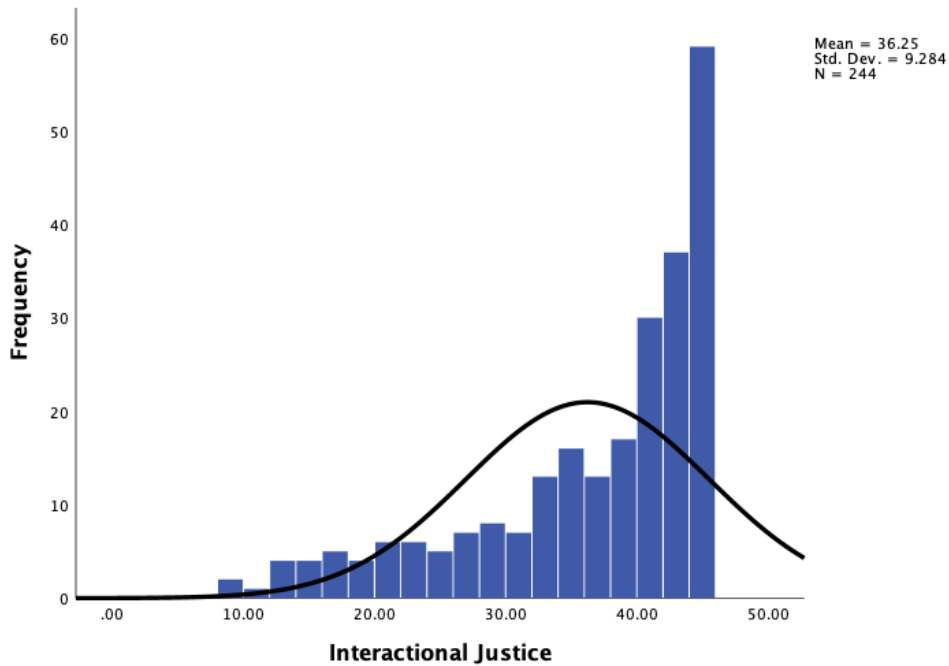
Both Leader trustworthiness and interactional justice were negatively skewed (see

Table 5). The central limit theorem says that normality increases as the size of *n*

increases, in which case regression models are robust to violations of normality (Ernst &

Albers, 2017). Therefore, given a sample size greater than 50 (*N* = 244) variables were

considered normally distributed.

An analysis of the interaction between interactional justice and engagement,

leaders' trustworthiness and engagement, and leader trustworthiness moderated by

interactional justice was completed using multiple regression analysis. To determine if

interactional justice was a moderating variable, a linear regression analysis was

conducted after an interaction effect was added to the interaction between leader

trustworthiness and fairness to determine if there is a significant effect. Table 6 depicts a

summary of the results, which is followed by a detailed description of the results relevant

to each research question.

Table 6

Correlation Matrix of Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	VIF
Employee Engagement	-				-
Interactional Justice	0.49	-			8.5
Leader Trustworthiness	0.42	0.84	-		20.1
Interactional Justice as a modifier	0.46	0.97	0.92	-	38.3

Note. $p < .001$. $n = 243$

Research Question #1(RQ1)

The first research question referred to examining the relationship between

interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, and

employee engagement, as measured by UWES - short version.

- H_a1: An increase in interactional justice relates to an increase in employee

  engagement.

- H_01: Interactional justice does not relate to an increase in employee

  engagement.

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between

employee engagement and interactional justice. The findings of the Pearson correlation

for RQ1 indicated a positive relationship between employee engagement and interactional justice, $r(241) = .49$, $p < .001$. The null hypothesis for research question one (H_02) was rejected. Table 6 presents the findings of the Pearson correlation. Furthermore, a simple linear regression was used to test if interactional justice had a significant relationship with employee engagement. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = .24$, $F(1, 241) = 74.44$, $p < .001$). It was found that there is a statistically significant and positive relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement ($b = .55$, $p < .001$), such that when interactional justice increases by 1 employee engagement increases by .55 points.

Research Question# 2 (RQ2)

The second research question referred to examining the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by the UWES-short version?

- H_a2: An increase in leader trustworthiness relates to an increase in employee engagement.

- H_02: Leader trustworthiness does not relate to an increase in employee engagement.

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between employee engagement and leader trustworthiness. The findings of the Pearson correlation for RQ2 indicated a positive relationship between employee engagement and leader trustworthiness, $r(242) = .42$, $p < .001$. The null hypothesis for research question one (H_01) was rejected. Table 6 presents the findings of the Pearson correlation. Furthermore, a simple linear regression was used to test if leader trustworthiness had a

significant relationship with employee engagement. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = .18$, F (1, 242) = 51.18, $p < .001$). It was found that there is a statistically significant and positive relationship between leader trustworthiness and employee engagement ($b = .43$, $p < .001$), such that when leader trustworthiness increases by 1 point employee engagement also increases by .43 points.

Research Question #3 (RQ3)

The third research question referred to examining the moderating effect of interactional justice on leader trustworthiness in relation to employee engagement.

- H_a3: Interactional justice moderates the effect of leadership behaviors on employee engagement.

- $H_0 3$: Interactional justice does not moderate the effect of leadership behaviors on employee engagement.

Baron and Kenny (1986) state that a moderator is a third variable that affects the correlation between two other variables. To determine if interactional justice was a moderating variable, I ran two additional regression models. The first included leader trustworthiness and interactional justice as independent variables to explain variability in employee engagement. The overall model explained 23.5% of the variance in employee engagement ($R^2 = .235$). When interactional justice was added to the model, leader trustworthiness become a non-significant predictor of employee engagement ($b = .04$, $p = .704$) while interactional justice was a significant predictor ($b = .514$, $p < .001$).

Then I ran a linear regression analysis with an interaction effect between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice added to the model. This model explained essentially the same amount of variance in employee engagement ($R^2 = .236$). The

interaction effect between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice was non-significant ($b = .002$, $p = .773$). The results showed there was still not a significant effect between leader trustworthiness and employee engagement ($b = -.03$, $p = .91$) and the effect between interactional justice and employee engagement remained significant ($b = .472$, $p = .012$).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice. The findings of the Pearson correlation indicated a positive relationship between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice, $r (242) = .84$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, a simple linear regression was used to test if interactional justice had a significant relationship with leader trustworthiness. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = .71$, $F (1, 241) = 574.73$, $p < .001$). There was a statistically significant relationship between interactional justice and leader trustworthiness ($b = .76$, $p < .001$), such that and increase in interactional justice by 1 point could result in an increase in leader trustworthiness by .76 points.

Given the high correlation between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice, the *variance inflation factor (VIF)* was calculated to determine the magnitude of multicollinearity that existed between the two variables. Multicollinearity refers to when the independent variables are intercorrelated; such that the higher the VIF the more the variables are essentially measuring the same construct (Crowson, 2021). A *VIF* $\geq$ 10, typically indicates high multicollinearity. As shown above in Table 6, the *VIF* for interactional justice is 8.5; leader trustworthiness 20.1, and interactional justice as moderating variable 38.3. This high *VIF* for leader trustworthiness and interactional

justice as a moderating makes it difficult to confirm a moderating relationship between the two variables.

Summary

Chapter four reviewed the methodology used to analyze the data and results of this analysis. An analysis of descriptive statistics was conducted first, which provided a comprehensive review of the study participants. Next, the chapter reviewed the reliability of the instruments used to measure the variables to ensure the items of the survey assessed what they were intended to assess. The Cronbach alpha for employee engagement, leader trustworthiness and interactional justice indicated excellent reliability (.94, .94, and .97 respectively). Finally, the chapter reviewed the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted for each research question. The results of the multiple regression analysis rejected the null hypothesis for each research question. Specifically, a specific and positive relationship was found between interactional justice and employee engagement, and leader trustworthiness and employee engagement. Also, a significant moderating effect was found between interactional justice and leader trustworthiness.

The results of this study presented in this chapter enable a greater understanding of the interaction between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice on employee engagement. I present further interpretation of the results in Chapter Five, and I discuss the implications for improving employee engagement. Chapter Five also provides a review of the limitations of the study and opportunities for further research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative survey study was to explore the relationship

positive leadership behaviors has with employee engagement, with positive leadership

behaviors defined by leadership trustworthiness and leadership fairness (interactional

justice). Chapter Five provides an overview of the study's findings. This chapter begins

with an interpretation of the study's findings based on the literature and theory. The

chapter closes with a review of the implications of the study, as well as limitations and

recommendations for future research.

As a review, this study used a 10-minute, online survey which consisted of three

instruments to examine three research questions focused on exploring the effects of

interactional justice and positive leadership behaviors on employee engagement: UWES -

short version, (Schaufeli et al., 2002), BTI (Gillespie, 2003) and OJS (Colquitt et al.,

2001). A multiple regression analysis was used to determine the nature of the

relationship between interactional justice, leader trustworthiness and employee

engagement, and determine the moderating effect of interactional justice on leader

trustworthiness.

Summary of Findings

The online survey used for data collection consisted of 33 questions which

include questions designed to collect some demographic information about the

participants. This information was collected anonymously to ensure the confidentiality of

participant data. The entire survey was administered using Qualtrics, and the data

collected was imported into SPSS to conduct the data analysis. Although 782 participants responded, only 244 met the eligibility and fully completed the surveys.

In terms of data analysis, a multiple regression analysis was used to examine the following research questions:

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the relationship between interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, and employee engagement, as measured by UWES - short version?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by the UWES?

RQ 3: Does interactional justice, as measured by Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scales, moderate the relationship between leader trustworthiness, as measured by Behavioral Trust Inventory, and employee engagement, as measured by UWES - short version?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: An increase in interactional justice relates to an increase in employee engagement.

Hypothesis 2: An increase in leader trustworthiness relates to an increase in employee engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Interactional justice moderates the effect of leadership behaviors on employee engagement.

The results of the study provided support for a positive relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement such that when interactional justice scores increased employee engagement scores also increased. Likewise, there was support for a positive relationship between leader trustworthiness and employee engagement. Finally, the results presented a moderating effect of interactional justice on the relationship between leader trustworthiness and employee engagement, such scores for interactional justice related to leader trustworthiness which would impact employee engagement.

Discussion of Findings

Engagement is not a characteristic of employees, but rather an experience

created by organizations, managers, and team members (Pendell, 2022).

According to Gallup's State of the Global Workplace: 2022 Report, employee engagement costs the world $7.8 billion in lost productivity, which demonstrates the importance employee engagement has on driving organizational performance. At the heart of employee engagement is the relationship employees have with their organizations, coworkers, and leaders based on trust (Pendell, 2022). This study found that employee engagement is strongly impacted by trust, specifically leader trustworthiness. Furthermore, the study found that interactional justice significantly impacts trust and employee engagement, supporting the results found by Sharma and Yadav (2017). The results suggest that the employee-leader relationship is important, and it is important for the employee to feel they are being treat fairly by the leader. The more the employee feels they are being treated fairly, the more they trust and the more they are engaged (Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; He et al., 2016).

This study supports prior studies which found a strong relationship between positive leader behaviors and organizational justice (Adeel et al., 2018). However, other studies found support for links to procedural justice or distributive justice (Adeel et al., 2018; Batool & Shah, 2017; Colquitt et al., 2001; Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; Scandura, 1999). Based on the significant relationship between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice, this study provided evidence of a strong relationship with interactional justice as well. While this study did not find support for a moderating effect of interactional justice, it does provide strong support for the interdependence between the two variables.

The Bible calls Christians to work with a full heart (*Colossians 3: 23-24*, *English Standard Version*, 2001). This study showed the importance of fully engaging in work and how engagement can be improved by working in environments where leaders create a just and trusting environment. Future research should explore how employees conceptualize these leader trustworthiness and interactional justice. Given trustworthiness and interactional justice are highly correlated, future research should further explore what moderates perceptions of justice versus trust. Secondly, future research could conduct a qualitative study to further understand why these two variables have an impact on employee engagement, and how they are enacted by leaders in those organizations. Moreover, additional research could compare the Gallup scale to the UWES-short version to further assess engagement rates and the variables that seem to affect those rates. Finally, future research should consider adding other positive leadership behavior to the

medley of variables as a way of ruling out leadership behaviors that do not contribute to increasing employee engagement.

Implications

Prior research has shown independent links between trust and employee engagement as well as organizational justice and employee engagement. However, few have explored how the three variables interact with one another. The results also support research that notes the high correlation between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice (Yangin & Elma, 2017). A multivariate approach to researching employee engagement could also further enhance how we define employee engagement and reveal more methods for improving engagement in organizations.

From a theoretical perspective, the results of this study supported the notion that positive leadership behaviors relate to organizational outcomes such as organizational justice and employee engagement (Malinga et al., 2019). Furthermore, this study contributes to the literature that highlights the role employee attitudes and perceptions of trust have on their level of engagement (Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; He et al., 2016). Although interactional justice did not moderate the relationship between leader trustworthiness and employee engagement, it did have a high correlation with leader trustworthiness. For leaders, this emphasizes the importance of understanding what behaviors can impact the trust between them and their employees, especially from a fairness perspective. If leaders are the main source of justice in organizations, then leaders play a significant role in creating a work environment that is conducive to increasing employee engagement.

From a practical perspective, the support for leader trustworthiness and interactional justice as leader behaviors linked to employee engagement provides the basis for conceptual models and competencies that can be used to develop or enhance leadership development programs or human resource interventions designed to improve engagement in organizations. Given the low rates of engagement across the globe, this development could have an incremental yet important impact on organizations and the economy. The results of this study supports opportunities for organizational practitioners to further develop of models that align engagement strategically with leadership behavior (Carasco-Saul et al., 2014; Harter, 2020; Sahu et al., 2017). Organizational practitioners can be instrumental in aligning the strategic vision and values of the organization to positive leadership behaviors that can improve perceptions of trust and fairness as a metric for monitoring employee engagement.

From a biblical perspective, the results of this study supported the spiritual roles of leaders as role models of living in accordance with God (*English Standard Version,* 2001), specifically as it relates to acting with fairness and maintaining trusting relationships with employees. Chapter One presents several scriptural references that discuss how work can be a form of worship if it is conducted in an engaged manner (*English Standard Version*, 2001). By leading with truth, authenticity, and integrity, leaders can promote higher employee engagement. Christian organizational practitioners can leverage the results of this study to foster a connection between work and spirituality by promoting a just workplace environment through enhancing interactional justice in leaders and creating a trusting environment for employees. Spirituality can be defined as an individual's relationship with God (Hodge, 2003), and is connected to one's purpose

and what they are willing to put their heart into. Colossians 3: 23-24 states, "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" (*English Standard Version*, 2001). This study provided support for broader factors involved in increasing engagement at work, and greater possibilities for Christian organizational practitioners to make work more meaningful.

Limitations

One of the foremost limitations is that the sampling was largely an American, English-speaking workforce. Halbusi et al. (2019) suggest that future studies related to leadership would benefit from context sensitivity and analyzing diverse cultures. Participants from the sample were also asked to select into the study versus being randomly assigned. Martin and Bridgmon (2012) suggest that random sampling is preferred in research to reduce sampling error and bias in the study; therefore, random sampling should be considered for future research.

Additionally, the sampling method used was convenience sampling, using the researcher's social, academic, and professional network for participants. Although the pool included persons from the researcher's military career, a career in corporate companies, three graduate programs, church community, sorority, and other networks, the pool largely represented African American women from American organizations which limits the generalizability of the data and results. Also, offering the survey online may have limited participation to only those with computer access and comfortable with the survey platform.

Finally, this study used survey methodology for collecting data on the independent variables and dependent variables of the study. This approach introduced a limitation known as common method bias in which using the same method for all variables could result in the artificial inflation of relationships and bias the reliability and validity of measures (Jordan & Troth, 2019). Although other studies have also used the same data collection tools with the same population to assess several variables, this is noted as a common limitation (Strom et al., 2014; Sharma &Yadav, 2017).

While the study did determine interactional justice had a significant and positive relationship with leader trustworthiness, the high multicollinearity between the two variables suggest that they could be measuring the same construct reducing their predictive power (Crowson, 2021). The interdependence between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice as a moderating variable needs to be further explored as well as the measurement of these two, possibly distinct, constructs. Another measurement point includes the ceiling effect noted for the interactional justice scale suggests that the scale is not spread out enough to determine participants' true level of functioning as it relates to perceptions of fairness (Taylor, 2010).

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study open many opportunities for future research. First, this study did not explore diversity factors as it relates to the interaction between employee engagement, leader trustworthiness, and interactional justice. Nor was it intentional in ensuring equal representation across demographic variables. Future research should

explore the effect demographic variables such as gender, ethnicity, and age have on the interplay between these three variables. Researchers may even consider conducting the study within an age group that is more controlled, such as student employees, to determine if results can be replicated.

This study also provides support for conducting organizational research as a medley of variables. Although this study considered linear and moderating relationships between variables, it did not explore the interdependent relationships. Future research should dive deeper into the interdependencies that may exist between employee engagement, leader trustworthiness, and interactional justice.

This study attempted to explore how leader trustworthiness and interactional justice were rated by participants in organizations with high levels of engagement as determined by Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award. Annually, Gallup recognizes organizations who connect employee engagement to all aspects of their organizational culture by presenting them with the GEWA. In 2021, Gallup awarded 38 companies (see Appendix D) with the GEWA denoting their high employee engagement (Harter et al., 2021). To be considered for this award, Gallup requires organizations to apply, share a PowerPoint presentation or participate in a video conference interview detailing how the organization has linked engagement to business outcomes, and submit their Q12 engagement data which must have a threshold of 50 or more employees at a participation rate of 80% or more, and a grand mean of 4.20 or greater. Although the survey was broadly shared with employees in all 38 organizations, participation from these organizations was too low to perform an appropriate analysis. Future research should explore how the results for engagement on the Gallup scale compares to the engagement

rates in this study and the variables that seem to affect those rates levels of leader trustworthiness and interactional justice in the GEWA organizations. Based on the results, researchers may also consider conducting a qualitative study to further understand why these two variables have an impact on employee engagement, and how they are enacted by leaders in those organizations.

Given the limitations noted previously regarding ceiling effects and multicollinearity, further analysis should be conducted on Interactional Justice as a standalone scale. Future researchers could consider using a different fairness scale to determine if similar results are obtained. Finally, research has found trust and fairness, particularly justice, to be distinct but closely related variables such that they can reciprocally influence each other (Neville & Brodt, 2010). Given the multicollinearity that may exist between these two variables, future researchers should explore other variables that could moderate the relationship between trust and fairness to better understand the relationship between these two variables and how they influence employee engagement.

Finally, this study presented a strong relationship between fairness and trust that should be further explored. The high correlation presented in this study could offer the basis for further understanding how the two variables are perceived using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Further exploring the unique aspects of fairness that lead to higher levels of trust in leaders would provide a significant contribution to organizational research.

Summary

Low engagement has been a chronic challenge facing organizations around the globe (Carasco-Saul et al., 2014; Harter, 2020; Sahu et al., 2017). Addressing this challenge requires researchers to remain open to opportunities for a deeper understanding of the antecedents to employee engagement. Contrary to other engagement research, this study used a medley of variables to explore the effects of positive leadership behaviors on employee engagement. The results supported direct relationships between employee engagement, leader trustworthiness, and interactional justice, with a very strong correlation between leader trustworthiness and interactional justice. Leaders within organizations should consider how they foster trust and justice in their organizations to improve or maintain higher employee engagement.

Opportunities exist to impact organizations in a major way by addressing one of its most chronic challenges. Organizational researchers and leaders can apply the results of this study in the formation of models and approaches that can be used to foster trust and fairness in organizations. In addition to this practical application, the results support further theoretical research to explore other positive leadership behaviors that may influence employee engagement. Although employee engagement is broadly defined, this study provides support for antecedents that can be used to better define engagement. Given the global reach of the challenges with employee engagement, research should also be conducted to explore the current variables from a more diverse demographics, and/or expand the study to include additional positive leadership variables.

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APPENDIX A: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES, Schaufelli et al, 2002)

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Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006). The measurement of work

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APPENDIX B: Behavioral Trust Inventory (BTI, Gillespie, 2003)

Removed to comply with copyright

Gillespie, N. (2003). *Measuring trust in working relationships: The behavioral trust inventory* ([Elektronische Ressource].). Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne Business School. https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20040916012254/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pa37069/20031216-0000/www.mbs.unimelb.edu.au/downloads/wp/WP_2003_14.pdf

APPENDIX C: Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (OJS, Colquitt, 2001)
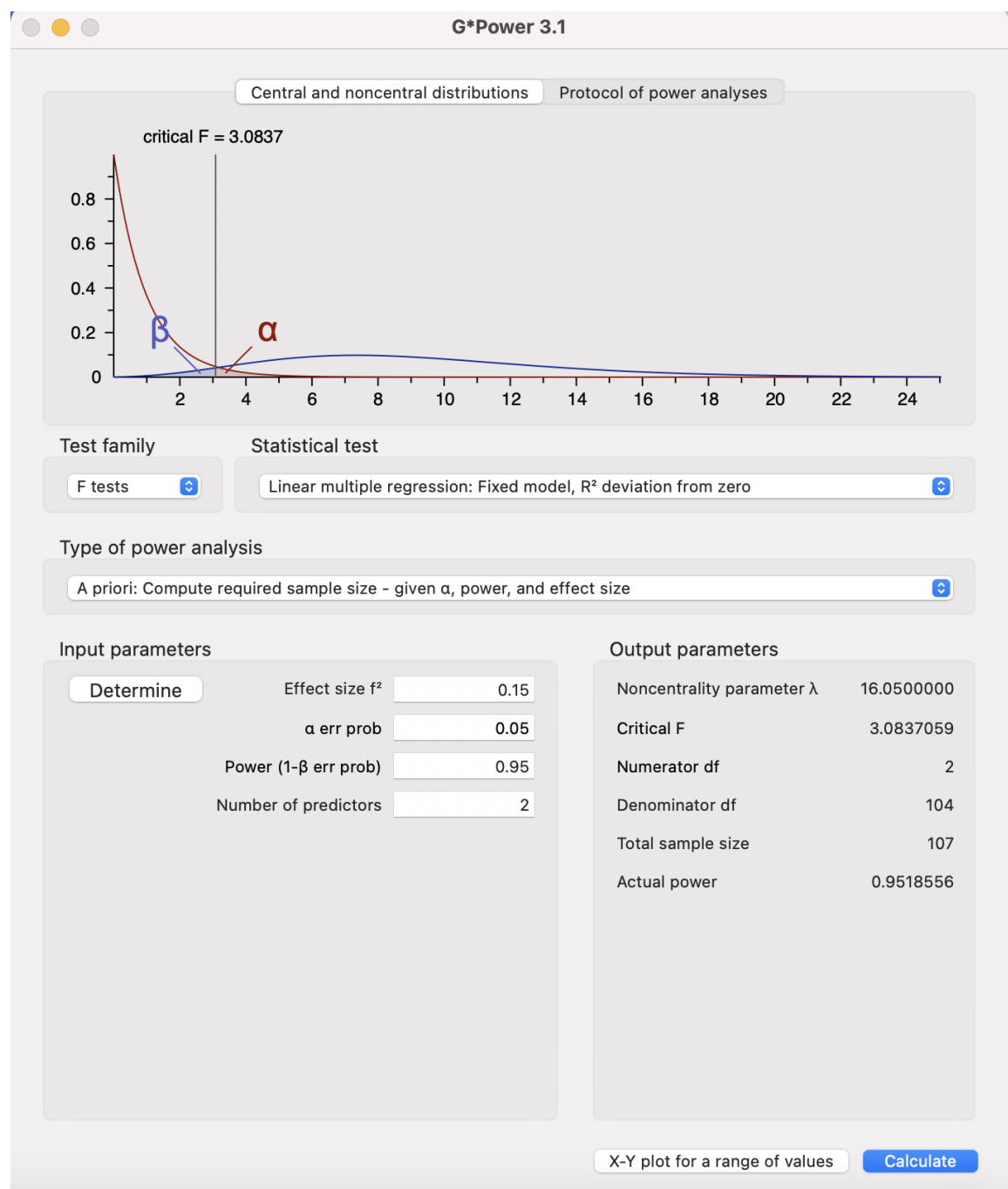
Removed to comply with copyright

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APPENDIX D: 2021 GEWA RECIPIENTS

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https://www.gallup.com/workplace/287672/gallup-exceptional-workplace-award-winners.aspx

APPENDIX E: G-POWER

G Power 3.1.9.6 A Priori Analysis

APPENDIX F: RECRUITMENT TEMPLATE: SOCIAL MEDIA

Linked In

ATTENTION LINKED IN FRIENDS: I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Psychology at Liberty University. The purpose of my research is to examine the effects of positive leadership behaviors such as trustworthiness on interactional justice in organizations with high levels of employee engagement. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, employed by your organization for a minimum of one year, and have been under the supervision of your current manager for a minimum of one year. Participants will be asked to complete a survey, which should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. Please review this page, and if you agree to participate, click "OK" to proceed to the survey.

To take the survey, click here: [LINK]

Facebook

ATTENTION FACEBOOK FRIENDS: I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Psychology at Liberty University. The purpose of my research is to examine the effects of positive leadership behaviors such as trustworthiness on interactional justice in organizations with high levels of employee engagement. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, employed by your organization for a minimum of one year, and have been under the supervision of your current manager for a minimum of one year. Participants will be asked to complete a survey, which should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. Please review this page, and if you agree to participate, click "OK" to proceed to the survey.

To take the survey, click here: [LINK]

Twitter

Are you 18 years of age or older with at least one years of experience with your current organization? Click here for information about a research study on engagement: [insert link to anonymous survey]

Instagram

Are you 18 years of age or older with at least one years of experience with your current organization? Click here for information about a research study on engagement: [insert link to anonymous survey]

APPENDIX G: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

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APPENDIX H: CONSENT

Title of the Project: The Effects of Positive Leadership Behaviors and Organizational Justice on Employee Engagement
Principal Investigator: Felicia Long, Doctoral Student, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, employed by one of the organizations awarded the Gallup Exceptional Workplace Award (GEWA), employed by that organization for a minimum of one year, currently has a supervisor, and has been under his/her supervision for a minimum of one year. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of interactional justice and positive leadership behaviors on employee engagement. This study is specifically interested in understanding the impact of positive leadership behaviors such as trustworthiness on interactional justice in organizations with high levels of employee engagement.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Complete a XX question survey that measurers demographic information, engagement, interactional justice, and positive leadership trustworthiness. It should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete the survey.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.
- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is ███████. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ███████████████ You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor ███████ ██████████████████.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

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, ███ ████████████████.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.