

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS THAT INFLUENCE ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP
BEHAVIOR AMONG EMPLOYEES IN THE TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY

by

Samira Abdalla

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Strategic Leadership and Administrative Studies

Marywood University

May 2026

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Abstract

Despite the extensive research on transformational leadership and OCB, there remains a gap in the literature, particularly concerning employees' perceptions of the specific leadership behaviors that foster organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to describe how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior among employees in the technology industry in the Southeast United States. The central research question that guided the study is: How do transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior within technology-based organizations in the Southeast United States? This study was guided by transformational leadership theory, introduced by Bernard Bass and James Burns. The theory provided a framework for understanding how leadership behaviors influence employee engagement and motivation in ways that extend beyond routine job performance. This study employed a qualitative descriptive design. A sample size of 15 participants was used. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection tool. The data analysis process for this study followed Braun and Clarke's (2012) thematic analysis approach. The findings of the study indicated that the specific transformational leader behaviors that encouraged OCB include tailoring communication to employees' learning styles, recognizing employees for achievements, and fostering employee growth. The participants indicated that transformational leadership influenced their willingness to engage in OCB through three transformational leader behaviors. More future studies should be conducted to examine transformational leadership and OCB in a variety of industries and cultures to improve the relevance of results to other sectors.

Key words: Employee Perceptions, Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, and Intellectual Stimulation.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my children, David, Kayla, and Aya, who have been the inspiration for all my accomplishments and the wind beneath my wings.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my mamma and papà for all the love, support, kindness, words of wisdom, and for *always* believing in me. To my partner, Dustin, for taking on the emotional load of this journey so I could stay grounded, and for the many walks we took with our dogs, Oreo and Meka, on the days that it was the only joy I could feel. I am thankful to Marywood University for the immense support throughout my doctoral journey. My rockstar dissertation chair, Dr. Levine, for his guidance, advice, and words of encouragement, as well as my committee members, Dr. Brunner and Dr. Washo.

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Chapter 1

The Problem and Its Setting

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational behavior, with transformational leadership emerging as one of the most influential leadership styles in recent decades. Transformational leadership involves motivating employees to exceed expectations by fostering a shared vision, promoting innovation, and focusing on employee development (Antonakis & Day, 2017). This leadership style is characterized by its ability to inspire and engage followers, leading them to higher levels of performance by aligning their goals with the organization's broader objectives. Transformational leaders achieve this through behaviors such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These leaders focus on cultivating a sense of commitment and loyalty among their employees, enhancing overall organizational effectiveness (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

One of the key outcomes associated with transformational leadership is organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). This concept refers to voluntary, extra-role behaviors that employees engage in, which are not part of their formal job descriptions but are essential for the smooth functioning of the organization (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023). OCB includes helping colleagues, showing initiative, and maintaining a positive attitude. The literature consistently shows a positive correlation between transformational leadership and OCB, indicating that when employees feel supported and inspired by their leaders, they are more likely to engage in these discretionary behaviors (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2020). This strong relationship underscores the benefits of transformational leadership for organizations that foster environments where employees are proactive, cooperative, and committed to organizational success.

Despite the extensive research on transformational leadership and OCB, there remains a gap in the literature, particularly concerning employees' perceptions of the specific leadership behaviors that foster OCB (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2020). Much of the existing research has focused on quantitative analyses demonstrating the correlation between transformational leadership and OCB, but has not explored how employees perceive these leadership behaviors and the impact on their willingness to engage in OCB (Hoch et al., 2018). Furthermore, previous studies have primarily been conducted in specific industries or cultural contexts, leaving a need for broader, qualitative research that examines this dynamic across a

wider range of settings. Addressing this gap was essential for understanding the mechanisms through which transformational leadership can effectively enhance OCB, providing actionable insights for organizations aiming to foster leadership that drives employee engagement and discretionary effort. The potential impact of this research was significant, and the findings could reshape our understanding of leadership and organizational behavior.

This study aimed to fill this gap by exploring how employees perceive the behaviors and characteristics of transformational leaders that encourage OCB. By focusing on employee perceptions, this research offered a deeper understanding of the leadership behaviors that inspire employees to go above and beyond their formal roles. This qualitative approach contributed to the leadership literature by offering a nuanced view of the transformational leadership-OCB relationship and providing practical implications for leadership development in diverse organizational settings.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by transformational leadership theory, introduced by Bernard Bass and James Burns (Bass & Avolio, 1990). This theory helped explain how transformational leaders inspire and motivate followers by appealing to higher-level needs and values, encouraging them to transcend self-interest for the organization's good (Bass & Avolio, 1990). See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Transformational Leadership



Note. Image added by the researcher

There are four key components of transformational leadership theory: Idealized influence, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation. Idealized influence refers to leaders serving as role models, earning admiration, trust, and respect from followers, and encouraging them to emulate the leader’s behaviors. Leaders demonstrating idealized influence behave in ways that align with their values and the organization’s mission, acting with integrity and fairness in all their decisions and interactions. Leaders who display idealized influence not only lead by example but also create an emotional and moral connection with their followers, making them a source of inspiration and guidance. This component is fundamental in fostering a culture of loyalty, respect, and alignment within teams (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Inspirational motivation involves articulating a clear and compelling vision and motivating followers by fostering enthusiasm and commitment to the organization’s goals. Leaders who demonstrate this characteristic are able to rally their team around a shared mission or set of goals by igniting enthusiasm and fostering a sense of purpose. However, inspirational motivation is about more than just setting goals; it involves creating a vision that followers find meaningful and inspiring, encouraging them to commit fully to the organization’s mission.

Leaders who exhibit this trait can energize their teams, instill a sense of optimism, and cultivate dedication, which ultimately drives higher levels of performance and engagement (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Intellectual stimulation challenges employees to think critically and creatively, encouraging innovation and problem-solving by questioning assumptions and exploring new solutions. Intellectual Stimulation pushes employees to step outside their habitual ways of thinking, encouraging them to challenge the status quo and consider alternative perspectives. Leaders who foster intellectual stimulation create an environment where questioning assumptions is valued, and mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities rather than failures. This approach promotes a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, where employees feel empowered to explore new solutions, take calculated risks, and engage in creative problem-solving to address complex challenges (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Finally, individualized consideration involves leaders offering personalized support and attention to the needs and development of each follower, helping them grow and feel valued (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Individualized Consideration involves leaders actively listening to each follower's unique needs, concerns, and aspirations, tailoring their approach to offer personalized mentorship and guidance. Leaders practicing this dimension provide opportunities for individual growth, recognizing each follower's strengths and potential while offering constructive feedback to support their development. By demonstrating genuine care and attention, these leaders foster a supportive environment where followers feel valued, understood, and motivated to reach their personal and professional goals.

Conceptual Framework

Transformational leadership theory guided this study as it provided a framework for understanding how leadership behaviors influence employee engagement and motivation in ways that extend beyond routine job performance. The theory's emphasis on leaders as role models, visionaries, and supporters aligned closely with the study's focus on how specific behaviors or characteristics of transformational leaders impact employees' perceptions and actions. This study examined the components of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) to describe how these behaviors foster an environment where employees feel encouraged to go beyond basic expectations and contribute meaningfully to the organization. Transformational

leadership theory helped guide this effort by defining each of these terms and providing a framework to understand them.

Transformational leadership theory also helped explore the relational dynamics between leaders and followers, offering insights into how leaders can inspire loyalty, creativity, and a sense of ownership in their teams. Understanding this influence is critical for examining how employees perceive the leadership behaviors that encourage them to take initiative, collaborate, and invest more deeply in their work. The theory's focus on empowering and motivating employees resonated with the central aim of the study: to describe how transformational leadership influences these enhanced efforts in organizational settings. The components of transformational leadership (intellectual stimulations, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration) and other components that may influence OCB (willingness to engage in OCB, organizational context, employee perceptions) were examined in this study to better understand how they work together to inspire employees to go beyond their formal responsibilities, contributing to OCB by promoting commitment, loyalty, and extra-role efforts (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Organizational Citizenship



Note: Image added by the researcher.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to describe how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior among employees in the technology industry in the Southeast United States. At this research stage, transformational leadership behaviors are understood to mean how leaders inspire and motivate followers by appealing to higher-level needs and values, encouraging them to transcend self-interest for the organization's good (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Central Question

How do transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior within technology-based organizations in the Southeast United States?

Sub Questions

1. How do employees perceive transformational leaders' specific behaviors or characteristics, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, that encourage or foster organizational citizenship behavior?
2. In what ways do employees feel that transformational leadership influences their willingness to engage in OCB?
3. How do organizational factors, such as culture and communication practices, influence employees' perceptions of transformational leadership and its impact on OCB?
4. What role does trust in leadership play in enhancing or limiting employees' engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors?

Definitions

Employee Perceptions: Employee perceptions are defined as how employees view and interpret the actions, behaviors, and characteristics of their leaders, as well as their overall experience in the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In this study, employee perceptions were defined as participants' subjective interpretations of their leaders' transformational behaviors, including how they perceive idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, and how these perceptions impact their engagement in OCB.

Idealized Influence: Idealized influence refers to leaders serving as role models, earning admiration, trust, and respect from followers, and encouraging them to emulate the leader's behaviors (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In this study, idealized influence was defined as leaders who behave in ways that align with their values and the organization's mission, acting with integrity and fairness in all their decisions and interactions.

Inspirational Motivation: Inspirational motivation involves articulating a clear and compelling vision and motivating followers by fostering enthusiasm and commitment to the organization's goals (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In this study, inspirational motivation was defined as the result of leaders being able to rally their team around a shared mission or set of goals by igniting enthusiasm and fostering a sense of purpose.

Intellectual Stimulation: Intellectual stimulation challenges employees to think critically and creatively, encouraging innovation and problem-solving by questioning assumptions and exploring new solutions (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In this study, Intellectual Stimulation was defined as employees who are pushed to step outside their habitual ways of thinking, encouraging them to challenge the status quo and consider alternative perspectives.

Individualized Consideration: Individualized consideration involves leaders offering personalized support and attention to each follower's needs and development, helping them grow and feel valued. It also involves leaders actively listening to each follower's unique needs, concerns, and aspirations, tailoring their approach to offer personalized mentorship and guidance (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In this study, Individualized Consideration was defined as the result of a leader offering personalized support and attention to each follower's needs and development, helping them grow and feel valued.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB): OCB refers to voluntary discretionary behaviors by employees that are not formally recognized by the reward system but contribute to the organization's overall functioning. Examples include helping others, being punctual, and showing initiative (Organ, 1988). In this study, OCB was self-reported by participants and defined as behaviors they engage in that exceed their formal job requirements and contribute to organizational success.

Organizational Context: Organizational Context refers to the internal and external environment of the organization, including its culture, communication practices, structure, and policies that influence employee behavior and attitudes (Bass & Avolio, 1990). For this study, organizational

context was defined by participants' descriptions of the organizational culture, support systems, and workplace environment that shape their perceptions of leadership and their engagement in OCB.

Southeast United States: Typically refers to the geographical region in the U.S. that includes states such as Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Arkansas. For this study, the Southeast United States was defined as the region covering these states, where the organizations involved in this study are located.

Transformational Leadership Behaviors: Transformational leadership is a style in which leaders inspire and motivate followers by appealing to their higher-order needs and fostering an environment of trust, innovation, and ethical behavior (Bass, 1985). In this study, transformational leadership behaviors were defined as leaders' self-reported actions that include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Willingness to Engage in OCB: Willingness to engage in OCB is conceptually defined as an employee's motivation and readiness to perform discretionary behaviors that are not part of their formal job description but contribute positively to the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1990). In this study, willingness to engage in OCB was defined as participants' self-reported intentions or motivations to perform extra-role behaviors, such as helping colleagues or showing initiative, as influenced by transformational leadership behaviors.

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study are several purposeful boundaries set to ensure the focus and applicability of the study findings (Simon, 2011). Since the study aimed to explore how transformational leadership influences OCB, participants must work in environments where hierarchical leadership structures exist, and a supervisor can enact transformational behaviors. Self-employed individuals or those without supervisors would not experience leadership in the same context, making their input less relevant to the core research questions. Delimiting the study to individuals with supervisors ensured consistency in the work environment, providing more reliable data on the impact of leadership dynamics.

Additionally, the study was delimited to individuals who speak English and work within the United States. Focusing on English-speaking participants simplified data collection and analysis

by removing the potential for language barriers that could impact communication and interpretation of leadership behaviors. Restricting the study to participants within the U.S. was necessary to control for cultural and organizational differences that could otherwise confound the results. Transformational leadership may be perceived and enacted differently in various cultural contexts, making it essential to narrow the scope to one country to maintain consistency in the work environment and organizational norms. Employees must be employed by their company for at least a year to ensure they can accurately speak about their experiences with the company.

Limitations

As with any research, this study was subject to several limitations that might have impacted the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. Recognizing and acknowledging these limitations was essential to maintaining transparency and rigor in the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). One of the primary limitations of this study was its limited generalizability due to the sampling criteria and context. The study exclusively included English-speaking participants from the United States who work within a formal organizational structure under a supervisor. While these delimitations helped focus the study on a specific population, they inherently limited the applicability of the findings to a broader range of employees. For example, the influence of transformational leadership on OCB in other cultural or linguistic contexts may vary significantly, as different cultural norms and leadership styles can affect how employees perceive and respond to leadership (House et al., 2004). Additionally, employees in countries with different organizational structures may exhibit different relationships between leadership behaviors and OCB. Consequently, the study's results may not fully apply to international contexts or non-English-speaking workforces.

Excluding self-employed individuals or those without supervisors also limited the findings to a particular type of work environment. Many modern employment settings, such as freelance work, start-ups with flat hierarchies, or gig economy roles, lack traditional leadership structures. This exclusion might prevent the findings from being relevant to employees in these settings, where leadership interactions may be less formal or more decentralized. These factors ultimately narrowed the scope of applicability and meant that the results should be interpreted cautiously when attempting to generalize beyond the defined population.

Another limitation of the study was the reliance on self-reported data, a common concern in qualitative research (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Participants were asked to share their perceptions of how transformational leadership behaviors influence their willingness to engage in OCB. However, self-reports are susceptible to biases such as social desirability bias, where participants may provide responses that they believe are expected or desirable rather than their authentic experiences (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This could lead to over-reporting positive experiences with leadership and OCB or under-reporting negative experiences, skewing the findings towards more favorable interpretations.

Participants' memories and subjective interpretations might have impacted their responses. How employees recall leadership interactions or interpret transformational leadership behaviors can vary widely based on personal factors such as mood, recent experiences, or even individual differences in communication styles (Tempelaar et al., 2020). Since the study aimed to capture perceptions, this subjectivity was a natural and expected aspect of the research. However, it remained a limitation because the data may not fully capture the objective impact of transformational leadership on OCB.

Assumptions

Several assumptions underlined this study. First, it was assumed that participants responded truthfully and accurately during the semi-structured interviews. As the study relied heavily on self-reported data, the accuracy of the findings was contingent on participants providing honest reflections on their experiences with transformational leadership and its impact on their OCB. While self-report bias is a well-recognized issue in qualitative research, measures such as ensuring anonymity and confidentiality are in place to mitigate these risks. These steps help minimize biases like social desirability and acquiescence, which can influence participants' responses (Hays & McKibben, 2021).

Another assumption was that participants had a clear understanding of leadership in their workplace, particularly transformational leadership, and accurately reflected on how specific leadership behaviors influence their actions. Given the qualitative nature of the study, it was further assumed that semi-structured interviews were an appropriate method for eliciting detailed and nuanced insights from participants. The method is well-suited for exploring subjective experiences and perceptions, which are central to understanding how transformational leadership behaviors manifest and influence employees (Braun & Clarke,

2021). Lastly, it was assumed that the selected participants, who are employees working under formal supervisors in the U.S., represented a population relevant to the study's objectives, though the scope might limit generalizability to broader populations (Hays & McKibben, 2021).

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant importance as it sought to enhance understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB, a critical area for improving employee engagement and organizational performance. Transformational leadership, which inspires and motivates employees by fostering a positive and empowering environment, is a key driver in promoting behaviors that go beyond formal job descriptions, thereby improving organizational effectiveness (Bass & Riggio, 2006). However, despite the growing body of research on leadership styles, there is a gap in understanding how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence employees' willingness to engage in OCB, particularly from the employees' perspective (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2020). By focusing on employees' perceptions, this study addressed an essential gap in the leadership literature and offered insights that can help organizations cultivate leadership strategies that foster higher employee commitment and cooperation.

This research was timely given the increasing emphasis on leadership's role in creating supportive and innovative work environments, especially in light of recent disruptions in the workplace caused by global changes such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023). Leaders who demonstrate transformational qualities are more likely to adapt and support employees during times of uncertainty, encouraging extra-role behaviors that contribute to organizational resilience (Antonakis & Day, 2017; Hoch et al., 2018). Understanding how employees perceive these leadership behaviors could inform leadership development programs and help organizations tailor their approaches to meet the evolving needs of their workforce. Additionally, organizations seeking to enhance employee retention, job satisfaction, and overall productivity can benefit from the insights generated by this study, as transformational leadership has been linked to improved employee well-being and performance (Hoch et al., 2018).

Summary

Despite the extensive research on transformational leadership and OCB, there remains a gap in the literature, particularly concerning employees' perceptions of the specific leadership

behaviors that foster OCB (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2020). This study was guided by transformational leadership theory. The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe how specific behaviors of transformational leadership influence organizational citizenship behavior. The delimitations of the study included focusing only on employees in the U.S. who work under formal supervisors, excluding self-employed individuals and non-English speakers, to maintain consistency in leadership dynamics. Limitations included the reliance on self-reported data, which might introduce biases, and the study's cross-sectional nature, which limited understanding of long-term effects. The assumptions underlying the study included participants' honesty in responses and their ability to recognize and articulate transformational leadership behaviors accurately. This study holds significant importance as it sought to enhance understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB, a critical area for improving employee engagement and organizational performance.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

By examining the literature on transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), this section highlights the current understanding of this relationship while identifying key areas that require further exploration. Such an examination is critical not only for advancing academic understanding but also for equipping leaders with strategies to inspire meaningful and sustained employee contributions. This review provides a foundation for understanding how transformational leadership behaviors can inspire employees to go beyond their formal roles, contributing to enhanced organizational effectiveness and success. The insights gained from this review can inform future research and practical applications aimed at maximizing both employee potential and organizational outcomes.

This literature review is organized into four major sections, which address research related to the study topic. The first major section addresses what transformational leadership is and how it relates to employee behavior. This section includes a review of the critical behaviors demonstrated by transformational leaders, as well as their impact on employees. The next section is a discussion of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). This section describes and defines OCB and discusses the key dimensions that are meaningful to organizational success. The section also includes a discussion of how OCB influences organizational effectiveness and why they are important to foster. The next chapter connects transformational leadership and OCB, discussing past research on how transformational leadership practices influence OCB in a variety of organizational settings.

The next section discusses the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB. This section reviews existing literature on that connection, including a discussion of both quantitative and qualitative studies available. Reviewing this literature is useful for crafting the present study and ensuring that it both addresses a gap in the literature and is developed in a way that builds on existing understanding of the topic.

Search Strategy

Articles were identified for inclusion in this study primarily through searches of online databases. The studies included in this literature review are largely current and were therefore published between 2024 and 2020. The currency of the studies included ensures that the

findings presented are still relevant to existing organizations with existing staff and leadership. A small number of older studies were included for a foundational understanding of the topic, particularly as it relates to the theoretical framework. The databases used to identify studies were Google Scholar and JSTOR.

The studies were identified using a set of keywords related to the topic. The keywords used to find relevant articles include transformational leadership, employee perceptions, leaders, and organizational citizenship behavior. Other terms include initiative, helping colleagues, and positive attitude to focus on aspects of organizational citizenship behavior that might be referred to by researchers in different terms.

Evolution of Leadership Theories

As previously mentioned in Chapter One, transformational leadership is defined as a leadership style that involves motivating employees to exceed expectations by fostering a shared vision, promoting innovation, and focusing on employee development (Antonakis & Day, 2017). This leadership style is mainly recognizable by the leaders' ability to inspire and engage employees to wish to emulate them. Transformational leaders motivate higher levels of performance and encourage an alignment between employee, leader, and organizational goals. Transformational leaders are characterized by their idealized influence on followers, the ability to inspire motivation, the prompting of intellectual stimulation, and their ability to consider the needs and skills of followers as individuals. (Bass & Riggio, 2006). These and other main benefits and qualities have driven a high interest in transformational leadership in both past and recent literature.

Transformational leadership has been studied extensively and has had a great influence on understanding organizational efficacy, but it continues to prompt new and modern research. The continued research on transformational leadership may be influenced by the complexity of the topic and its broad applicability (Benmira, 2020). Benmira (2020) argues that a critical question of transformational leadership and the study of organizational leadership generally is the differentiation between organizational management and organizational leadership. A critical point of differentiation is that leaders are involved with visionary exercises and strategy, while managers are exclusively involved with monitoring and controlling employee performance with the goal of maintaining order and stability (Purwanto et al., 2020). While both functions are

important to an organization and can sometimes be undertaken by a single individual, the roles are distinct.

Focused on Inherent Traits

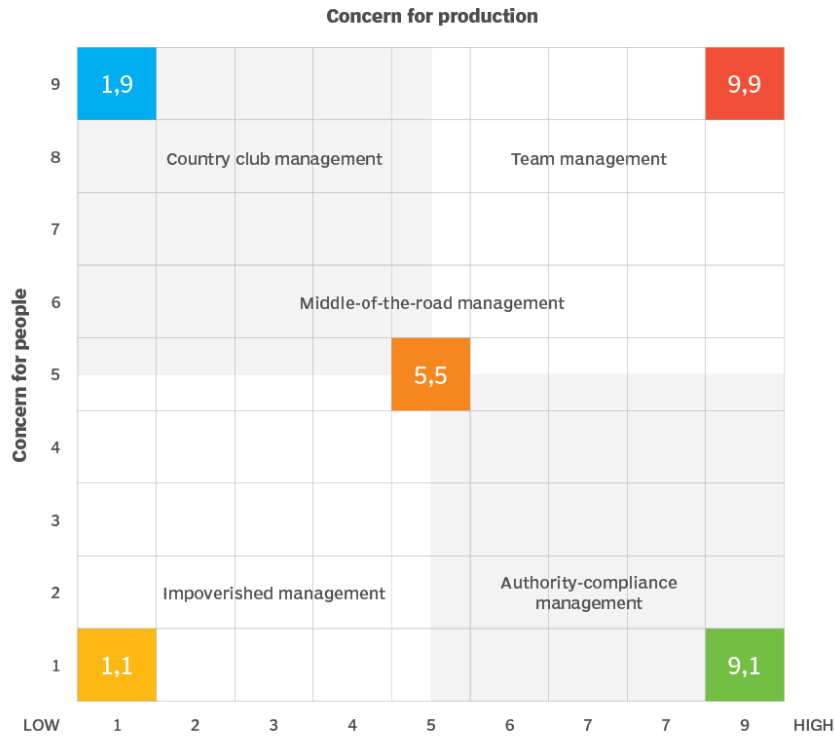
As a developed and researched leadership style, the understanding of transformational leadership has undergone significant evolution since its early inception. At a high level, research on leadership began in the 19th century with discussions of what made people and leaders “great” or effective. An early example was the Great Man theory, which stated that leaders are born rather than trained or developed over time. The theory posited that there were only a few individuals who had a combination of special characteristics that made them truly great leaders. At the time, examples were often pulled from history and included very influential figures such as Abraham Lincoln or Mahatma Gandhi (Benmira, 2020). This early theory, while not particularly useful for organizational leaders wishing to hone their skills, evolved into a broader understanding of how individual traits in a leader influenced the success of their followers. The set of traits that were seen as critical for a leader evolved over time, and it became clear that there would be no academic consensus on what traits were essential for great leaders. Around the 1950s, the conversation around leadership changed to focus on other topics (Benmira, 2020).

Focused on Behavior

From there, interest grew in behavioral theories rather than a focus on inherent traits. These theories were exciting for researchers and leaders because they offered hope to those individuals who were not born to be “great men” and encouraged leaders to focus on honing their own behaviors to successfully influence others. These theories largely focused on what leaders did and how they behaved, without a great focus on who they were as people or the organizational context in which they operated. An example of these theories is represented by Blake and Mouton’s Managerial Grid, which was produced by Blake and Mouton in 1980 (See Figure 3 below). The grid showed concern for production on the x-axis and concern for people on the y-axis. The grid was then broken into four sections, including: team management, country club management, impoverished management, and authority-compliance management. The center of the grid showed a style they referred to as “middle-of-the-road management”.

Figure 3

Blake and Mouton Grid



Note: Retrieved from: <https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/managerial-grid-model-The-Blake-and-Mouton-Managerial-Grid-model>

The 1-1 square represented impoverished management, where the manager shows a low concern for both people and production, making them an ineffective and inattentive leader. On the flip side of the grid is the 9-9 square, where leaders care deeply about both production and the people who work for them. The leaders who operate in this square are committed to creating a positive work environment but are also driven by production and performance results. The leaders in this square must motivate and inspire people to generate their best possible results. Though the term “transformational leadership” was not yet commonly used in the 1980s when the Blake and Mouton Grid was developed, this is the square where transformational leadership would largely exist, in its ideal form. The other two portions of the grid represent either extreme interest in results at the cost of people, or care for people at the cost of results. Though the grid is represented in quadrants, the real-life execution suggests that

most individuals would operate in degrees, somewhere in the middle, rather than at the extreme ends of the spectrum.

Holistic Workplace Experiences

After the behavioral era of leadership theory, researchers grew interested in how workplace situations more generally impacted the dynamic between leaders and their followers. This era suggested, as a relatively new theory, that there were characteristics of an organization that influenced employee behavior that were beyond the control of the individual leader (Benmira, 2020). This phase of leadership theory suggested that, to be effective, leaders needed to influence the actual environment rather than just the people in it. This includes considering ways to maximize employee success, such as reasonable working hours and a culture that encourages downtime and leave-taking. The understanding grew that not all individuals will work at their highest capacity in all environments, despite encouragement from engaged leaders (Benmira, 2020).

The 1990s and 2000s were a time of great growth for leadership theories. Theories such as transactional or transformational leadership were discussed, with an understanding that there was no one leadership style that would work ideally in all situations, for all purposes (Widodo, 2022). Rather than thinking about leadership as either “top down” or “bottom up” theories, in this era, it is focused on the dynamic between the leader, follower, and environment. Since public interest in both transformational and transactional leadership has grown, both theories have undergone development, evolution, and changing popularity.

Characteristics and Behaviors of Transformational Leadership

Despite its evolution, there are several behaviors and characteristics which are consistently associated with transformational leaders. Some of the critical characteristics include recognition and anticipation of future needs and issues, the ability to handle long-term challenges and opportunities, holistic consideration of organizational factors, and the elevation and individualization of employees (Saad Alessa, 2021). Transformational leaders demonstrate a unique ability to balance immediate organizational concerns with a forward-looking perspective, ensuring long-term stability and success. Other key abilities of transformational leaders include their ability to motivate employees to focus on team interest above self-interest and the ability to encourage people to prioritize “higher order” concerns (Tengi et al., 2017).

This emphasis on collective well-being fosters a sense of unity among employees, reducing conflicts and encouraging collaboration.

Taken holistically, transformational leadership is the process where leaders and followers commit to a shared set of goals through the utilization of a shared vision, value set, and trust. This process is deeply relational, requiring leaders to actively engage with employees to cultivate mutual understanding and respect. Tengi et al. (2017) emphasize that transformational leadership has a changing effect on both the leaders and the followers. While the leaders may be setting the vision for which the group must work towards and highlighting the qualities that should be represented, they must also make changes and personal growth to achieve those objectives. This dynamic creates a feedback loop, where leaders inspire employees, and employees, in turn, challenge leaders to continuously refine their strategies and approaches.

Therefore, a critical component of transformational leadership is increasing the participation and presence of both leaders and followers. Transformational leaders increase motivation and value representation, while also creating an awareness in followers of what the values are and what the shared vision must be (Wood, 2019). This awareness translates into intentional efforts by employees to align their daily tasks with the larger organizational mission, fostering deeper engagement and accountability. Due to the emphasis on shared vision and organizational goals, there is a significant body of literature on transformational leadership that focuses on how transformational leadership influences communication (Mastur et al., 2022). Effective communication under transformational leadership often includes not only conveying information but also fostering dialogue that builds trust and clarity among team members.

Additionally, research often focuses on how transformational leadership can drive organizational performance benefits, so long as the organizational performance is associated with the values represented by the leaders (Alshihabat & Atan, 2020). This highlights the importance of value congruence between leaders and employees in achieving sustainable performance gains. The process by which leaders and followers create a shared vision and drive towards it can increase creativity and innovation, thus making space for competitive advantage (Widodo, 2022). Through this shared vision, transformational leaders empower employees to challenge traditional ways of thinking, which is particularly beneficial in rapidly changing industries.

There is also a common narrative in leadership research that transformational leadership drives higher employee performance. Buil et al. (2019) considered employee performance dimensions

like organizational identification, engagement with work products, overall job performance, and the demonstration of a “proactive personality.” These dimensions represent critical markers of an employee's capacity to contribute effectively within complex organizational settings. Buil et al. (2019) demonstrated that there was a connection between transformational leadership and employee job performance. The main mechanism that Buil et al. (2019) highlighted that transformational leaders use to drive employee performance was building a connection between employees and organizational goals. This connection helps employees view their roles not as isolated tasks but as integral contributions to the organization’s larger success. By encouraging employees to care about the goals of the organization, they were more likely to be motivated, focused, and engaged, which improved their work performance overall. This mechanism emphasizes the importance of creating a sense of purpose within the workplace, a hallmark of transformational leadership.

Task Completion and Leadership Skill

In comparing other leadership theories like transactional leadership and situational leadership, transformational leadership is often shown to be the most conducive to a creative and flexible business environment (Purwanto et al., 2020). This is because transformational leadership inherently supports adaptability, which is critical in responding to unpredictable challenges and opportunities (Ridwan et al., 2020). Overall, research suggests that transformational leaders are the most successful of the three types in improving the performance of an organization through the overall empowerment of employees (Khan et al., 2020). This empowerment creates a culture of continuous improvement, where employees feel supported to innovate and take calculated risks. While there is a body of literature that suggests the benefits of other leadership styles as well, there is an overwhelming volume of literature that suggests that transformational leadership styles can have positive organizational benefits. This trend in the literature reinforces the growing recognition of transformational leadership as a key driver of sustainable success across industries.

Even when considering the measured skill of employees at task completion, there is evidence that transformational leadership is beneficial. This suggests that the benefits of transformational leadership extend beyond qualitative elements such as shared vision and motivation and actually help to encourage employees to demonstrate and grow their skills and task completion abilities (Nugroho et al., 2020). By fostering a learning-oriented environment, transformational leaders create opportunities for employees to refine their competencies. Tegor

et al. (2023) considered the relationship between the individual skills of employees and the competitiveness of companies. Unsurprisingly, Tegor et al. (2023) found a connection between organizational competitiveness and the skill of the organization's employees. Interestingly, employee skills also have an effect on transformational leadership. Employees with higher skills are often more receptive to the intellectual stimulation that transformational leaders provide, creating a mutually reinforcing dynamic. Leaders who are highly skilled themselves and are able to recognize a high level of skill in employees are better able to drive organizational change and support organizational effectiveness.

Additionally, to demonstrate effective and high-level transformational leadership, leaders need to be well versed in topics which are important to their organization. Followers were more likely to support and admire leaders who were highly skilled themselves, even if they were not often engaged in day-to-day tasks which required specific skills to execute (Asbari et al., 2020). This admiration fosters deeper trust and creates a stronger leader-follower connection, which is crucial for achieving shared goals. To some degree, this finding suggests possible flaws in the separate business tracks that are often seen between productive individual contributors and managers. While managers cannot directly complete all the tasks of individual contributors, there is evidence to suggest that they also shouldn't be completely divorced from the ability to do so, if needed (Manu, 2022). Additionally, while it is likely acceptable for individual contributors or teams to have an advanced skillset in certain areas that were not acquired by the organizational leader, the organizational leader should be seen as a skilled and capable individual at completing the work, even if they are largely engaged in a high-level managerial role (Widodo, 2021). This capability enhances the leader's credibility, reinforcing their ability to guide and mentor their teams effectively.

Intellectual Stimulation and Individual Consideration

Two key aspects of transformational leadership are intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. These are behaviors that transformational leaders can demonstrate to encourage their employees to think creatively and proactively. Individual consideration is when transformational leaders consider the individual needs of employees. Bakker et al. (2023) considered how transformational leadership impacted the personal initiative in a group of naval cadets. Personal initiative in employees, they hypothesized, is spurred by individual consideration and encouragement of intellectual stimulation, so this workplace dimension was hypothesized to be supported particularly by transformational leadership strategies. This

hypothesis underscores the role of transformational leaders in fostering environments that prioritize both individual growth and collective achievement.

Bakker et al. (2023) found that, on days when the studied leaders engaged in activities associated with transformational leadership, like intellectual stimulation and individual consideration, the cadets were more likely to use their personal strengths and take initiative in their work. This finding highlights the practical impact of leadership behaviors on daily workplace outcomes, reinforcing the tangible benefits of transformational strategies. When employees demonstrated behaviors associated with the utilization of personal strength and the taking of initiative, their next-day performance was also positively impacted. Finally, cadets showed a higher degree of workplace initiative when their strength utilization was high, rather than low. This suggests that individuals are more likely to take initiative on days when they are able to use their personal strengths, rather than on days when they feel underutilized or when they feel like the tasks they were assigned were poorly matched with their abilities.

This finding is useful for managers because it highlights that employees are likely to put in their best efforts when they feel like they can be uniquely successful. It highlights the importance of a good match between employee abilities and strengths (Widodo, 2022). This alignment not only enhances productivity but also boosts morale, as employees feel more valued and competent in their roles. Put another way, even high-performing employees may lose motivation and engagement when they are regularly asked to perform functions that they feel are outside their skillset.

For example, a high-performing employee with a keen analytical skillset may begin to demonstrate low initiative and low motivation if they are regularly asked to conduct project management tasks, even if they are capable of completing those tasks successfully, if they feel like the tasks are outside their personal strengths. This underscores the need for leaders to understand and leverage individual employee strengths to optimize team dynamics. Perceptions of personal strengths are not necessarily relative, meaning an employee may feel like they personally struggle with a task, even if their relative performance in that task is higher than that of many other employees who see that task as one of their strengths. Leaders who can effectively identify and address these perceptions are better positioned to foster a motivated and engaged workforce.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is an employee behavior dimension that includes behaviors and tasks that are beyond official job performance requirements but are, nonetheless, important to organizational efficacy. OCBs go above and beyond what employees are formally required to do (Khan et al., 2020). They are voluntary, extra-role behaviors that contribute greatly to the effectiveness of an organization. Although they are not part of the job description, they coexist with the jobs important to organizations and define how employees work well together. That makes OCBs as vital in organizations as they are difficult to measure. In the workplace, altruism means helping others or helping colleagues who are struggling with their work. Doing so enhances team dynamics and contributes to feelings of camaraderie among a group of people who work closely with one another (Purwanto et al., 2020).

OCB and Work Performance

Beyond simply meaning that employees are friendly or helpful, OCBs are shown to correlate with better performance among teams (Nugroho et al., 2020). Another correlation with better team performance is conscientiousness, which involves being diligent and responsible across a range of work-related tasks. Both of these traits help ensure that a team is working well together. Another common dimension of OCBs is the ability to keep a good attitude in challenging situations. That's what sportsmanship comes down to. When employees have it, they create less negativity at work because they sure aren't complaining or criticizing. As a culture, organizations are better off when they are resilient and able to bounce back from setbacks and challenges (Nugroho et al., 2020). When employees are courteous, they generate less conflict with fellow employees.

The significance of OCBs lies in their capacity to fortify an organization's social connections and cohesiveness. They build trust, boost morale, and enable a level of cooperation that formal systems and roles are not always able to achieve (Manoppo, 2020). An early description of OCB was offered by Organ (1998). Organ (1998) stated that OCB is critical to organizational efficacy, but is often not included in official job requirements due to the challenges in quantifying or measuring OCB. OCBs can increase the effectiveness of an organization quickly, but are outside of the official work structure. Sair and Ali (2022) state that the factors that relate to OCB include the general character of the individual, work culture, and workload. Some individuals may have a character which is well suited for specific organizational cultures, but less suited for others.

There is no single character that thrives in all workplaces or workplaces which are conducive to maximum productivity for all individuals. In reviewing literature on OCB and how it impacts human behavior and character, Sari and Ali (2022) developed the following high-level findings: 1) the characteristics of an individual impact the behavior of that individual, 2) workplace cultures can influence individual behavior overtime, 3) workload has an effect on individual behavior, regardless of the initial suitability of the individual to the work, 4) behavior and characteristics of individuals impact their OCB, and 5) work culture and workload both impact OCB. In summary, Sari and Ali (2022) emphasize the iterative system between employee characteristics, workplace norms, and organizational culture.

OCB and Workplace Culture

Some of the organizational policies that impact OCB relate to the work-life balance of the individual, rather than the practices in place during the workday. Soelton (2023a) discusses how work-life balance, organizational commitment, and OCBs interact in an educational environment. Overall, Soelton (2023a) found that both organizational commitment and positive assessments of work-life balance positively influenced demonstrated OCB in educators. These findings suggest that individuals who were highly committed to their organization and had positive work-life balances were more likely to exhibit the beneficial qualities associated with OCB, like proactivity and sociability.

There were mediating factors which related to the dynamic between work life balance, organizational commitment, and OCBs. One such mediating factor was the learning orientation of the organization. This dimension applies to organizations that readily reconsidered processes and adopted new processes as evidence suggested that the organization would benefit from them. Additionally, this dimension suggested that the organization prioritized personal development in employees and provided opportunities for professional and personal development among the staff. Soelton (2023a) found that organizations which could be categorized as learning organizations had a positive impact on OCBs. However, learning organizations did not mediate the relationship between OCBs and organizational commitment and work-life balance.

Soelton (2023b) continued to dig into the work on learning organization and OCBs. Continuing the work, Soelton (2023b) considered the impact of transformational leadership and work engagement on OCBs and how that relates to the development of learning organizations. Unlike the first study, which focused specifically on educators, the second study considered employees

from the labor sector. Soelton (2023b) found that work engagement greatly impacted OCBs, meaning that employees who were more engaged were more likely to demonstrate the behaviors associated with OCBs. However, Soelton (2023b) found that transformational leadership had a negative relationship with OCBs, which greatly differs from the norms established in similar literature. The findings were also contradictory to what was discovered in Soelton's (2023a) earlier work, as it relates to the influence of OCBs and learning organizations.

The studies both had small sample sizes of under 100 employees, which might impact the overall reliability of the findings. Assuming finding legitimacy, another aspect of the studies which might contribute to different results is the sector. The original study, which found a connection between learning organizations and OCBs, focused specifically on educators. Meanwhile, the second study, which found a negative relationship, related to individuals in the labor sector. It is possible that the sectoral differences impacted the study findings due to norms within both industries. Additionally, it is possible that the small sample size was clustered in a small number of organizations in the second study, leading to anomalous results.

The results in Soelton (2023b) are further refuted by other researchers who considered the relationship between learning organizations and OCBs. In a similar format with a sample size of 200 employees, Siswadi et al (2023) considered how learning orientations impacted OCBs in employees. Like Soelton (2023a) Siswadi et al (2023) focused on educational institutions and their employees. Overall, the results showed that organizational commitment, learning orientation, and organizational commitment had a significant impact on OCBs in employees. However, a difference in the result is that Siswadi et al (2023) did find that learning organizations mediated the impact of organizational culture and OCBs.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The leadership styles adopted by individuals in controlling positions of organizations have the capacity to influence employees and, in turn, influence the demonstration of OCB. Leadership style plays a pivotal role in creating an organizational culture that either encourages or stifles discretionary behaviors such as OCB (Afuan et al., 2020). For organizations wishing to foster OCB in employees, considering what leadership styles are most likely to encourage these behaviors can be beneficial for directing hiring decisions and overall management practices. By prioritizing leadership approaches that align with desired outcomes, organizations can better position themselves to meet strategic objectives while fostering employee engagement (Bastari & Ali,

2020). Previous sections established that many factors influence OCB in employees, including aspects like workplace culture, work-life balance, and characteristics inherent to the employee (Siswadi, et al., 2023). These factors interact dynamically, meaning that changes in one area—such as leadership style—can have far-reaching effects on others. Despite the impossibility of completely controlling the demonstration of OCB in employees, considering the role that leaders play in encouraging these behaviors is critical. This section discusses how management styles can influence OCB, focusing specifically on the relationship between OCB and transformational leadership.

Encouraging Social Behaviors

As previously discussed, there is no one leadership style that best manages all workplace environments and best achieves all organizational directives. However, transformational leadership, in particular, is strongly associated with desirable workplace outcomes (Harini et al., 2020). This is due to its ability to align employee efforts with organizational goals through inspiration, intellectual engagement, and individualized attention. For example, there is a long-established connection in literature between transformational leadership and employee task performance (Qalati et al., 2022). Task performance, which involves fulfilling core job responsibilities effectively, is critical to an organization's operational success. While employee task performance is important for organizational success, high task performance does not necessarily mean that employees are eager to engage in OCBs at the rate that is optimal for organizational success (Aziz et al., 2021). The distinction between task performance and OCB underscores the need for leaders who can motivate employees beyond their formal job roles.

However, the relationship between transformational leadership and social behaviors like active listening, cooperation, and individualization creates an environment where employees are more likely to feel valued and heard (Widodo, 2022). These social behaviors foster trust and emotional connections between leaders and employees, making it easier to establish shared goals and encourage discretionary efforts. Qalati et al. (2022) argue that transformational leadership is ripe for research on its effect on OCBs because of social bond theory. Social bond theory holds that mutual respect and social bonding have positive impacts on both parties involved in the social connection and have an overall energizing effect. This theory highlights the importance of strong interpersonal relationships in driving both individual and collective success in the workplace. Social bonds and mutual respect increase productivity, engagement, and the achievement of organizational goals. All of these factors influence organizational

success. Therefore, Qalati et al. (2022) argue that social bond theory is a relevant justification for exploring the connection between transformational leadership and OCB.

Qalati et al. (2022) considered a broad sample of 405 employees and examined whether transformational leadership behaviors influenced OCB demonstration in the sample. To determine the leadership style of the sample's management, Qalati et al. (2022) administered the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, which examines the leadership styles of managers from the perspectives of their employees. This widely used instrument provides a robust framework for evaluating key dimensions of transformational leadership, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Qalati et al. (2022) administered a five-point scale to assess OCBs in the sample. The findings suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between OCB and transformational leadership, meaning individuals who suggested their managers used behaviors associated with transformational leadership were more likely to demonstrate OCB themselves. These findings provide strong evidence for the hypothesis that leadership style has a measurable impact on employee behaviors beyond their core responsibilities. Qalati et al. (2022), while arguing that these findings were important for understanding the connection between transformational leadership, stated that an interview approach would allow for greater exploration of the employee's perspective. This qualitative approach, which was utilized in the present study, could provide an in-depth analysis of the employee behaviors and a clearer connection between how managerial style impacted OCB, from the employees' perspective. Such qualitative insights can offer richer and more actionable recommendations for leadership development programs.

Literature on the relationship between OCB and transformational leadership is largely in agreement with Qalati et al.'s (2022) findings. In a similar study, Asbari (2021) examined how transformational leadership impacted OCB and found that individuals with managers who used transformational leadership were more likely to demonstrate OCBs. Additionally, there was a mediating relationship found between OCBs and employee performance. This mediating relationship underscores the complex interplay between leadership style, employee behaviors, and overall organizational outcomes. This shows that, while high-performing employees do not necessarily engage in OCBs at the rate most desirable by management, there is a connection between OCBs and high performance. Abinugroho (2020) had similar findings in their study, arguing that there was a close relationship between OCB and employee performance. These findings suggest that OCB is not merely an ancillary behavior but a critical driver of sustained

organizational success. These findings suggest that it's important to encourage OCB in employees, both to spur smooth organizational operation and to keep employee performance at its maximum level.

Organizational leaders who demonstrate OCBs may successfully encourage their employees to do the same. Leaders who model desired behaviors create a cultural ripple effect, making such behaviors more likely to be adopted by their teams. There is an overlap between behaviors that are considered OCBs and behaviors that are often seen in transformational leaders. Concepts like sociability and individual consideration are closely tied together, for leaders who show individual consideration to their employees are more likely to be seen as sociable and collaborative (Sidargini, 2020). This alignment between leadership style and desired employee behaviors reinforces the reciprocal nature of workplace relationships. When organizations demonstrate a value for these traits through the promotion of people who have them, it is more likely that employees will prioritize similar behaviors and feel that they are an expected part of their job functions, regardless of the nature of their role or the organizational expectations formalized in writing. Sopa's (2020) findings are in keeping with both Sidargini (2020) and Abinugroho (2020) in finding a significant relationship between OCBs and transformational leadership.

Job Satisfaction

Other studies considered the impact of transformational leadership on OCB with other mediating variables. One variable commonly considered in the literature, along with OCB and transformational leadership, was job satisfaction. Saifuddin (2020) considered the impact of these three variables on teacher performance in the setting of Islamic schools. Though there are many dimensions to job satisfaction, one definition commonly used in literature is that of George and Jones (2004). George and Jones (2004) state that job satisfaction is a combination of individual beliefs and feelings that people hold about their current job. Other researchers take a similar approach, referring to job satisfaction as ultimately an emotional response to collected work functions (Kreitner & Kinick , 2007).

There are many studies that connect job satisfaction to the performance of teachers, as well as job satisfaction to OCB and transformational leadership. Al-Mamary (2021) found that job satisfaction influenced OCB in teachers, specifically. Meanwhile, transformational leadership was associated with both aspects. Sugito and Harjanto (2022) had similar findings, stating that

OCB and teacher job satisfaction were linked together. Ultimately, these findings support Saifuddin's (2020) ultimate conclusion, which is that transformational leadership was positively associated with both OCB demonstration and teacher satisfaction. The new contribution of Saifuddin's (2020) study is the specific application to teachers in Islamic schools, in addition to adding to an already growing body of literature through a study with a reliable methodology. Saifuddin (2020) conducted the study with a sample of 270 teachers at Islamic schools and used a validated questionnaire to assess the study variables.

Summary

This literature review considered existing literature on the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB. Most of the articles included in the review were published between 2020 and 2024, though some older studies were included as they provided important context or definitions. Leadership theories have evolved over time, beginning with theories on leaders having inherent qualities which make them effective and moving towards theories which factored in leadership behaviors and organizational settings. Transformational leadership is a commonly researched theory which has positive impacts both on employee dimensions and organizational effectiveness. Transformational leadership is associated with positive employee qualities such as job satisfaction and demonstration of OCBs. While many studies included in this review looked quantitatively at the impact of transformational leadership on OCBs, and found a positive relationship, there is a gap in understanding in a detailed way how the qualities demonstrated of transformational leadership influence employee behavior, from the perspective of the employees.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to describe how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior among employees in the technology industry in the Southeast United States. Despite the extensive research on transformational leadership and OCB, there remains a gap in the literature, particularly concerning employees' perceptions of the specific leadership behaviors that foster OCB (Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2020). Chapter 3 described the methodology used to explore how transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior among employees. This chapter includes sections on research design, participant sampling, data collection through interviews, procedures for conducting the study, data analysis techniques, and considerations for achieving data saturation.

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to examine how transformational leadership behaviors influence OCB among employees in the technology industry within the Southeast United States. The primary research question guiding this study was: How do transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior within technology-based organizations in the Southeast United States? Transformational leadership, defined by behaviors such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, has been shown to inspire employees to exceed expectations and engage in extra-role behaviors that contribute to organizational success (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Subhaktiyasa et al., 2023). These behaviors create an environment where employees feel motivated to go beyond their formal job requirements, demonstrating loyalty, commitment, and proactive engagement in the workplace (Antonakis & Day, 2017; Bass & Avolio, 1990). Using a qualitative approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions, enabling a richer understanding of how specific leadership behaviors foster OCB, which has been primarily examined through quantitative studies (Hoch et al., 2018).

Bias

In qualitative research, the researcher's perspective and prior experiences can significantly influence data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Acknowledging these biases is essential

for maintaining transparency and enhancing the credibility of the study, allowing readers to understand the lens through which the data were examined (Hays & McKibben, 2021). As the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the researcher recognized that their background in organizational behavior and leadership can shape their interest in exploring the dynamics of transformational leadership and its influence on OCB. This background brought a valuable foundation of knowledge to the study, but also introduced a lens through which the researcher might perceive transformational leadership behaviors as inherently positive. Such preconceptions might have led to emphasizing favorable interpretations or underrepresenting negative aspects of participants' experiences (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

To address these potential biases, the researcher implemented several strategies throughout the research process. First, the researcher practiced reflexivity by keeping a reflective journal where the researcher documents their thoughts, assumptions, and reactions during data collection and analysis. This journal allowed the researcher to critically examine their perspectives and ensure that the researcher remained aware of any influence these might have on the study's findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Reflexivity, as noted in qualitative research literature, is a valuable tool for managing subjectivity, as it encourages researchers to continuously question and reflect upon how their positionality affects the research process (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

The researcher also used member checking as a method to validate the accuracy of their interpretations with participants. After preliminary data analysis, the researcher shared summarized findings or interpretations with participants to confirm that their representations align with their intended meanings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This process allowed participants to provide feedback on their interpretations, offering them the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings or add nuance to their experiences. Member checking not only enhances the study's credibility but also helps mitigate potential bias by grounding the findings in the participants' authentic voices (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Finally, the researcher was mindful of potential confirmation bias, which is the tendency to search for or interpret information in a way that confirms pre-existing beliefs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To counteract this, the researcher approached each interview with openness, remaining receptive to diverse perspectives and experiences, even if they challenged their assumptions about transformational leadership. By actively seeking out and highlighting any negative or neutral responses regarding transformational leadership's impact on OCB, the

researcher aimed to provide a balanced and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. This approach aligned with qualitative research standards that emphasize the importance of rigor and balanced representation (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Sample

This section describes the participant sample for the study, including the sampling method, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and recruitment process. A non-probability sampling approach, specifically purposive sampling, was used to identify individuals who met specific criteria relevant to the study. Purposive sampling allows the intentional selection of individuals who can provide rich, detailed information on the phenomenon of interest, making it especially useful for qualitative studies where in-depth insights are sought (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach ensures that participants possess the experiences and perspectives necessary to provide meaningful insights into how transformational leadership influences OCB (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Participants included employees in the technology industry within the Southeast United States who report to supervisors practicing transformational leadership behaviors. By focusing on individuals in these roles, the study explored the specific characteristics and perceptions of employees affected by transformational leadership in this industry. The target sample size was 15 participants. According to qualitative research standards, sample sizes in this range are generally sufficient for achieving data saturation, where no new information or themes emerge from additional data (Hays & McKibben, 2021). This sample size provided a balance between depth and manageability, allowing for the collection of rich data without excessive redundancy.

Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria ensured that the sample aligned with the study's research objectives and delimitations. To be eligible for the study, participants must:

1. Be employed in a technology-based organization within the Southeast United States,
2. Report directly to a supervisor who demonstrates transformational leadership behaviors (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration),
3. Have worked under this supervisor for at least one year, allowing them sufficient experience to reflect on leadership behaviors and their impact on OCB,
4. Speak English fluently, as interviews and data collection will be conducted in English.

These criteria were designed to ensure that participants have relevant experience with transformational leadership and OCB within the defined geographical and organizational context (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Exclusion Criteria

Exclusion criteria were applied to refine the sample further by excluding individuals who may meet the inclusion criteria but could introduce challenges to data collection (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Participants were excluded if:

1. They were unable to participate in interviews due to scheduling constraints, as availability for data collection is essential for in-depth interviews.
2. They lacked access to a quiet, private space for virtual interviews if conducted remotely, to ensure the quality and confidentiality of data collection.
3. They did not feel comfortable discussing leadership behaviors openly, as this might limit the depth and authenticity of responses.

These exclusion criteria helped maintain a sample that can provide detailed, reflective responses while supporting the research's logistical requirements (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Recruitment Process

The recruitment process involved reaching out to potential participants through professional networks, industry contacts, and social media platforms commonly used in the technology industry. To initiate recruitment, the researcher distributed a recruitment flyer through LinkedIn groups (See Appendix A). The flyer included an overview of the study, inclusion criteria, and contact information for interested individuals to reach out for more information. The researcher got permission from the moderators of all private groups to share the flyer before posting it in the group (See Appendix B). No permission was sought for public groups, as they are not moderated.

Once potential participants expressed interest by contacting me via the email provided on the flyer, the researcher performed an initial screening via email to confirm their eligibility based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria (See Appendix C). Informed consent was then obtained from eligible participants, explaining the study's purpose, confidentiality measures, and their rights as participants (See Appendix D). Participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Consent

forms were documented following institutional guidelines, with a template provided by Marywood University's ERC (Ethics Review Committee) serving as the basis for the final consent form. The form was emailed to all eligible participants.

Instrumentation

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection tool in this study, allowing for a deep exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions related to transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Semi-structured interviews offered flexibility to adapt questions based on participants' responses, fostering a conversational environment where participants can share detailed insights (Braun & Clarke, 2021). However, a limitation was the potential for interviewer bias, where the researcher's reactions or phrasing might influence participants' responses (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To mitigate this, the researcher used a consistent interview protocol and remained conscious of their reactions throughout each interview (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The interview protocol included open-ended questions designed to elicit rich descriptions of participants' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors and their impact on OCB (See Appendix E). Key areas covered in the interviews included participants' experiences with transformational leadership behaviors—such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—and how these behaviors influence their willingness to engage in discretionary, positive actions within the organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

To contextualize participants' responses, a brief demographic questionnaire was administered prior to the interview (See Appendix F). This questionnaire gathered information on participants' age, gender, years of experience, and current job role. Demographic data aided in understanding the backgrounds of participants and examining any trends or patterns related to specific demographics.

Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was first sought from Marywood University's ERC to ensure that all ethical guidelines were adhered to in data collection and participant interaction. Once approval was granted, recruitment began by reaching out to potential participants through professional networks, technology industry contacts, and social media platforms. Interested

participants underwent an initial screening based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, and those eligible were invited to participate in the study.

Each participant was provided with an informed consent form before data collection began. The consent form, based on the template provided by Marywood University, outlined the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality protections, and the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Participants were encouraged to ask questions about the study to ensure they fully understood their involvement before signing the consent form. The researcher then scheduled a Zoom interview with participants who met the study criteria and returned the consent form via email.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom. Participants were informed they could turn their cameras on or leave them off, based on their preferences. Interviews were scheduled at a time convenient for each participant and took place in a quiet, private setting to ensure confidentiality and minimize distractions. Each interview lasted for 45 minutes, allowing sufficient time for in-depth discussion while respecting participants' time. During the interviews, I followed the interview protocol to guide the conversation, beginning with general questions and moving towards more specific topics related to transformational leadership behaviors and organizational citizenship behavior. All interviews were recorded with participants' consent using digital audio recording equipment or a secure online platform for remote interviews. Recorded data were transcribed verbatim, allowing for accurate analysis of participants' words and expressions. To protect confidentiality, participants' names and any identifiable details were anonymized during transcription and analysis. Only the researcher had access to the raw data, which was stored securely in password-protected files, following institutional guidelines for data security (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While the researcher adhered to the protocol, the researcher remained flexible to explore unexpected themes or insights shared by participants, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their experiences. Each interview was recorded, with participants' permission, to ensure an accurate record of their responses. Following each interview, the researcher took notes on any immediate observations or reflections that could be relevant to data analysis.

Once all interviews were completed, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim to capture participants' exact words. Transcriptions were stored in password-protected files, and participants' identifying information was removed to maintain confidentiality. The data then underwent thematic analysis, as outlined in the subsequent section. Data was reviewed

continuously during the collection process to assess whether data saturation has been reached. If additional interviews continued to yield no new themes or insights, data collection was concluded (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This iterative process ensured that the study captured the depth and breadth of participants' perspectives without unnecessary redundancy.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study followed Braun and Clarke's (2012) thematic analysis approach, which provided a structured yet flexible method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. This approach was well-suited to the study's objectives, allowing for an in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions and experiences regarding transformational leadership and OCB. Thematic analysis is effective for studies aiming to capture nuanced insights, as it enables the development of themes that represent participants' experiences in an organized and systematic manner (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The first phase was data familiarization, where the researcher immersed themselves in the data by reading each transcript multiple times to develop a comprehensive understanding of the content. During this phase, the researcher took notes on any initial thoughts, ideas, or recurring patterns that emerged, which served as a preliminary guide for coding. This initial engagement with the data was essential for recognizing meaningful elements within participants' responses and forming an intuitive grasp of the content.

The second phase involved generating initial codes from the data. Using inductive coding methods, the researcher labelled significant segments of text with concise codes that summarized their meaning. This approach allowed codes to emerge naturally from participants' language and experiences, while also incorporating codes related to the study's theoretical framework on transformational leadership and OCB (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This coding process created an organized set of labels representing various aspects of participants' perceptions of leadership behaviors and their engagement in OCB.

The next phase involved identifying potential themes by grouping similar codes. Following Braun and Clarke's guidelines, the researcher reviewed the initial codes and organized them into broader, overarching themes that capture the key patterns in the data. For instance, codes associated with specific leadership behaviors—such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—may be grouped under a theme related to “transformational leadership behaviors.” Similarly, codes that reflect

participants' willingness to support colleagues or engage in extra-role activities could be organized under a theme of "engagement in OCB." This process helped structure the data in a way that provided a coherent understanding of the study's focus areas.

After identifying the themes, the researcher reviewed and refined them to ensure they accurately capture the essence of the data. Braun and Clarke emphasized the importance of evaluating the internal coherence and distinctiveness of each theme, ensuring that themes are both internally consistent and clearly differentiated from one another (2012). The researcher revisited the coded data to confirm that each theme was supported by substantial evidence and adjusted any themes as needed to enhance clarity and relevance.

The final phase of thematic analysis involved defining and naming the themes. In this step, the researcher articulated the specific meaning and scope of each theme, providing detailed descriptions that encapsulate the underlying ideas within participants' responses. This phase resulted in a set of well-defined themes that comprehensively represented the data, offering a structured framework for interpreting the ways in which transformational leadership behaviors influence OCB. Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher maintained a detailed audit trail, documenting each decision and step taken during coding and theme development. This record enhanced the study's transparency and rigor, ensuring that the findings are grounded in a thorough and systematic analytic process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher ensured reliability and validity. As described in greater detail in the bias section, the researcher practiced reflexivity by keeping a reflective journal where the researcher documented their thoughts, assumptions, and reactions during data collection and analysis. The researcher also performed member checking. Once the interview transcripts were finalized, the researcher emailed a copy of the transcript to the participant for their review. The participants were able to adjust the transcript to ensure it reflected their true thoughts.

Summary

The methodology for this study was outlined in this chapter, detailing the research design, sample, instrumentation, procedure, and data analysis plan. This qualitative study employs a descriptive design to explore how transformational leadership behaviors influence OCB among employees in the technology industry within the Southeast United States. A purposive sampling

approach was used to select participants who report directly to transformational leaders, with inclusion and exclusion criteria ensuring a relevant and focused sample.

Semi-structured interviews, guided by an interview protocol, served as the primary data collection tool, allowing participants to share in-depth perspectives on their experiences with leadership behaviors. A brief demographic questionnaire provided contextual information on participants' backgrounds. The study's procedure included obtaining institutional ethical approval, recruiting participants, conducting interviews, and transcribing data for analysis.

Data was analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis approach, a structured method for identifying patterns and themes within qualitative data. This analysis involved familiarizing with the data, coding, developing themes, reviewing and refining themes, and defining them for clarity. Through these rigorous methodological steps, this study aimed to provide valuable insights into the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB, contributing to the broader understanding of leadership's role in fostering employee engagement and discretionary effort.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to describe how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among employees in the technology industry in the Southeast United States. Transformational leadership behaviors were understood to mean how leaders inspire and motivate followers by appealing to higher-level needs and values, encouraging them to transcend self-interest for the organization's good (Bass & Avolio, 1990). One central research question and four sub-questions were used to guide this study, as follows: How do transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior within technology-based organizations in the Southeast United States?

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings that emerged from conducting the data collection and data analysis procedures described in Chapter 3. The findings presented are the basis for the discussion, interpretations, and recommendations presented in Chapter 5. The following section of this chapter is a description of the demographic characteristics of participants, followed by the analysis procedure applied to the data. This chapter then includes a more detailed presentation of the findings, which are organized by research question and by theme. A summary of the findings concludes this chapter.

Demographic Information

Eight of the participants were male, and seven of the participants were female. Ten participants were white, three were black, one was Hispanic, and one was Asian. The participants had an average of eight years of experience. Table 3 indicates the demographic characteristics of the individual participants.

Table 3

Participant Demographics

	Gender	Ethnicity	Years of experience
P1	Female	White	5
P2	Male	Black	13

P3	Male	White	6
P4	Male	White	8
P5	Female	White	2
P6	Female	White	16
P7	Male	White	22
P8	Male	Black	3
P9	Female	Asian	7
P10	Male	White	14
P11	Female	Hispanic	12
P12	Female	Black	2
P13	Female	White	4
P14	Male	White	5
P15	Male	White	2

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study followed Braun and Clarke’s (2012) inductive, thematic analysis approach, which provided a structured yet flexible method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. This approach was well suited to the study’s objectives, allowing for an in-depth exploration of participants’ perceptions and experiences regarding transformational leadership and OCB. Thematic analysis is effective for studies aiming to capture nuanced insights, as it enables the development of themes that represent participants' experiences in an organized and systematic manner (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The analysis began with a familiarization phase, where the researcher immersed themselves in the data by reading each transcript multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content. During this phase, the researcher took notes on any initial

thoughts, ideas, or recurring patterns that emerged, which served as a preliminary guide for coding. This initial engagement with the data was essential for recognizing meaningful elements within participants' responses and forming an intuitive grasp of the content.

In the second phase, the researcher generated initial codes from the data. Using inductive coding methods, the researcher labeled significant segments of text with concise codes that summarized their meaning. This approach allowed codes to emerge inductively from participants' language and experiences, while also incorporating codes related to the study's theoretical framework on transformational leadership and OCB (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This coding process created an organized set of labels representing various aspects of participants' perceptions of leadership behaviors and their engagement in OCB. Overall, 201 significant text segments were identified across all the transcripts, and those text segments were clustered into 16 inductive codes. Table 1 indicates the initial codes and the number of text segments assigned to each of them.

Table 1

Data Analysis Initial Codes

Initial code (alphabetized)	<i>n</i> of text segments assigned
Communicating a vision	17
Connecting tasks to a larger mission	13
Employee recognition	16
Employee recognition increases willingness to help	8
Fostering employee growth	18
Fostering experimentation	13
Lack of trust discourages citizenship	11
Leading by example	15
Open communication culture	15
Seeking out diverse perspectives	5

Initial code (alphabetized)	<i>n</i> of text segments assigned
Showing interest in employee development	5
Tailoring communication to employee learning style	15
Transparency	12
Trust enhances engagement	17
Trusting employees to problem-solve	13
Trusting employees to problem-solve increases OCB	8

The third phase involved identifying potential themes by grouping similar codes. Following Braun and Clarke’s guidelines, the researcher reviewed the initial codes and organized them into broader, overarching themes that captured the key patterns in the data. For instance, codes associated with specific leadership behaviors—such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—were grouped under a theme related to “transformational leadership behaviors.” Similarly, codes that reflected participants’ willingness to support colleagues or engage in extra-role activities were organized under a theme of willingness to engage in OCB. This process helped structure the data in a way that provided a coherent understanding of the study’s focus areas.

After identifying the themes, the researcher reviewed and refined them to ensure they accurately captured the essence of the data. Braun and Clarke emphasized the importance of evaluating the internal coherence and distinctiveness of each theme, ensuring that themes are both internally consistent and clearly differentiated from one another (2012). The researcher revisited the coded data to confirm that each theme was supported by substantial evidence and adjusted any themes as needed to enhance clarity and relevance.

The final phase of thematic analysis involved defining and naming the themes. In this step, the researcher articulated the specific meaning and scope of each theme, providing detailed descriptions that encapsulated the underlying ideas within participants’ responses. This phase resulted in a set of well-defined themes that comprehensively represented the data, offering a structured framework for interpreting the ways in which transformational leadership

behaviors influenced OCB. Overall, the 16 initial codes were grouped to form four finalized themes. Table 2 indicates how related codes were grouped to form the themes.

Table 2*Grouping of Initial Codes to Form Finalized Themes*

Theme	<i>n</i> of text segments assigned
Code grouped to form theme	
Theme 1: Specific transformational leader behaviors encouraged OCB	125
Communicating a vision	
Connecting tasks to larger mission	
Employee recognition	
Fostering employee growth	
Fostering experimentation	
Leading by example	
Seeking out diverse perspectives	
Tailoring communication to employee learning style	
Trusting employees to problem-solve	
Theme 2: Influencing willingness to engage in OCB	21
Employee recognition increases willingness to help	
Showing interest in employee development	
Trusting employees to problem-solve increases OCB	
Theme 3: Open communication and transparency positively influenced employees' perceptions of leadership	27
Open communication culture	
Transparency	
Theme 4: Trust promoted employees' engagement in OCB	28
Lack of trust discourages citizenship	

Theme	<i>n</i> of text segments assigned
Code grouped to form theme	
Trust enhances engagement	

Presentation of Findings

This presentation of findings is organized by research question. The central research question used to guide this study was: How do transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior within technology-based organizations in the Southeast United States? The central research question was addressed by addressing the four sub-questions that were derived from it to add focus to the study. Table 3 indicates how the themes that were formed during data analysis have been presented to address the research sub-questions.

Table 3

Alignment of Themes with Research Sub-questions

Research sub-question	Theme presented to address question
<p>1. How do employees perceive transformational leaders' specific behaviors or characteristics, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, that encourage or foster organizational citizenship behavior?</p>	<p>Theme 1: Specific transformational leader behaviors encouraged OCB</p>
<p>2. In what ways do employees feel that transformational leadership influences their willingness to engage in OCB?</p>	<p>Theme 2: Influencing willingness to engage in OCB</p>

<p>3. How do organizational factors, such as culture and communication practices, influence employees' perceptions of transformational leadership and its impact on OCB?</p>	<p>Theme 3: Open communication and transparency positively influenced employees' perceptions of leadership</p>
<p>4. What role does trust in leadership play in enhancing or limiting employees' engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors?</p>	<p>Theme 4: Trust promoted employees' engagement in OCB</p>

Table 4 indicates the themes and their associated subthemes.

Table 4
Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subthemes
<p>Theme 1: Specific transformational leader behaviors encouraged OCB</p>	<p>Sub-theme 1: Individualized Consideration Sub-theme 2: Intellectual Stimulation Sub-theme 3: Idealized Influence Sub-theme 4: Inspirational Motivation</p>
<p>Theme 2: Influencing willingness to engage in OCB</p>	

Theme 3: Open communication and transparency positively influenced employees' perceptions of leadership

Theme 4: Trust promoted employees' engagement in OCB

Theme 1: Specific Transformational Leader Behaviors Encouraged OCB.

The participants reported that they perceived nine specific transformational leader behaviors that encouraged or fostered OCB. In descending order by number of participants attesting to them, the specific behaviors were tailoring communication to employees' learning styles, recognizing employees for achievements, fostering employee growth, leading by example, communicating a vision, connecting tasks to a larger mission, trusting employees to problem-solve, fostering experimentation, and seeking out diverse perspectives. In this presentation, the reported leader behaviors are sorted into the four transformational leadership domains of individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Sub-theme 1: Individualized Consideration. Individualized consideration involves leaders offering personalized support and attention to the needs and development of each follower, helping them grow and feel valued (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The individualized consideration behaviors that participants in this study reported were tailoring communication to employees' learning styles, recognizing employees for achievements, and fostering employee growth. Fourteen participants reported that their supervisors tailored communications to employees' learning styles. P1, for example, said of their supervisor's engagement in this behavior, "My manager is really good at this. She knows I am more of a visual learner, so she will draw out system architectures when explaining complex concepts rather than just talking through them," indicating that the manager adapted her communication style to P1's visual learning style. P11 also described supervisors' engagement in individualized consideration as motivating employees to engage in OCB:

I remember when I was struggling with time management, my manager suggested tools and even checked in weekly to keep me accountable. For someone else, they might

focus more on mentoring or skill development. It is about understanding us as individuals. That attention really builds trust and makes me want to invest more energy in my work. When leaders make that effort, I feel like I owe it to the team to go beyond what is expected.

P11 noted that the manager tailored communications to meet employees' individual needs, such as by helping P11 with time management while helping other employees develop different skills. Like P5, P11 indicated that individualized consideration in the form of tailored communications promoted OCB ("I feel like I owe it to the team to go beyond what is expected").

Eleven participants reported that their supervisors engaged in the individualized consideration behavior of recognizing employees' achievements. P2 stated, "My manager is really good at celebrating small wins along the way. Like, when we achieve a milestone, or when someone learns a new skill, he will mention it in our team meetings." P2's manager provided employees and teams of employees with informal recognition at meetings. P6 observed that managers' recognizing employees' achievements translated into employees' engagement in OCB. P10 described managers as distributing personalized notes: "They also encourage us with personal notes of appreciation, which, you know, feels very genuine. That combination of vision and encouragement creates a strong sense of purpose, and it really makes me want to contribute beyond my formal responsibilities." P10 observed that the personalization of the notes "felt very genuine," with the result that P10 felt a sense of purpose and engaged in OCB.

Eleven participants indicated that their supervisors engaged in the individualized consideration behavior of fostering employees' professional growth. P8 described managers as facilitating training opportunities and offering mentorship to help employees reach career goals: "They also encourage personal growth, like suggesting training opportunities or mentoring us one-on-one. For me, that encouragement makes me want to exceed expectations, whether it is mentoring newer staff myself or offering to take on extra responsibilities." P8 described managers' investment in employees' growth as promoting OCB. Managers' investment in employees' growth could promote employees' engagement in OCB. P14 drew a distinction between professional growth that was needed to complete tasks and professional growth that would promote career growth and indicated that supervisors offered both: "My supervisor offers coaching and mentorship to us, in terms of not only ensuring tasks are completed effectively, but also ensures every staff member has a clear channel for professional and career

growth in the company.” P14 benefited from both professional growth related to short-term work tasks and professional growth related to long-term career advancement through managers’ individualized consideration, and this approach encouraged P14 to engage in OCB.

Sub-theme 2: Intellectual Stimulation. Intellectual stimulation challenges employees to think critically and creatively, encouraging innovation and problem-solving by questioning assumptions and exploring new solutions (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The participants reported that their managers engaged in three intellectual stimulation behaviors that promoted employees’ OCB, including trusting employees to problem-solve, fostering experimentation, and seeking out diverse perspectives. Ten participants reported that their supervisors engaged in the intellectual stimulation behavior of trusting employees to problem-solve. P5 explained what employees’ engagement in problem-solving looked like and how it connected to employees’ OCB:

Our leaders really encourage us to, like, step outside of our usual routines. They often pose open-ended questions during team meetings, asking us how we might approach a project differently or improve an existing process. Sometimes they even hold brainstorming sessions where everyone is expected to pitch ideas, no matter how unconventional. It is not just lip service, as they actually follow up on suggestions and implement the ones that make sense. So, I would say their encouragement really pushes us to think creatively and problem-solve in ways we would not normally consider.

P5 described leaders’ encouragement as pushing employees to problem-solve more creatively. P1 also described managers as promoting creative problem-solving. P1 indicated that managers would give direction (figuring out the “what” and “why”) while trusting employees to creatively determine the means to the ends they directed. P13 also reported being encouraged to think creatively: “Our supervisor usually asks us for other options to solve problems rather than telling us what to do. She encourages us to come up with new ideas to solve problems.” P8 reported that trusting employees to problem-solve promoted employees’ OCB because employees were more likely to approach new problems in creative ways.

Nine participants reported that their supervisors engaged in the intellectual stimulation behavior of fostering experimentation. P2 explained what fostering experimentation looked like:

Our team lead is always asking, what if we completely reimagined our processes? Like, he will challenge assumptions that we have never questioned before. He also gives us time during sprints to experiment with new technologies or work on passion projects

that might benefit the company. He always tells us that failure is just expensive education, which makes it safe to try ideas that might not work out.

P2's supervisor encouraged experimentation both explicitly, by asking employees to rethink assumptions and innovate, and implicitly, by not punishing failures (calling failures "expensive education"). These two practices, working together, created a climate in which experimentation was encouraged and safe. P4 described a manager who normalized failure as part of the process of experimentation so that employees would feel safe taking reasonable risks. P9 also described managers as making experimentation feel safe. The participants observed that managers who fostered experimentation promoted the OCB of creative problem-solving by normalizing creative approaches and making failure in the name of experimentation feel safe.

Five participants reported that their managers engaged in the intellectual stimulation behavior of seeking out diverse perspectives. P2 said of a manager, "He actively seeks out diverse perspectives and brings in people from other departments to challenge our thinking patterns." Bringing in diverse perspectives encouraged creative problem-solving. P11 also described managers as bringing in diverse voices to stimulate creative problem-solving: "Sometimes they will even pair people from different teams to spark fresh ideas. It is not always easy, but it definitely forces me to think differently," with the result that problem-solving became more creative.

Sub-theme 3: Idealized Influence. Idealized influence refers to leaders serving as role models, earning admiration, trust, and respect from followers, and encouraging them to emulate the leader's behaviors (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Eleven participants described their supervisors as engaging in the idealized influence behavior of leading by example. P4 stated of supervisors, "I think leadership in our workplace is about being a role model, honestly. Our leaders do not just talk about company values. They actually live them." The consequence of leaders' living by or modeling company values was that employees were encouraged to live by those values, too. P5 felt inspirationally led rather than coerced into following actions that supervisors modeled. P7 valued leaders who would join employees in work tasks instead of merely delegating.

Sub-theme 4: Inspirational Motivation. Inspirational motivation involves articulating a clear and compelling vision and motivating followers by fostering enthusiasm and commitment to the organization's goals (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Participants reported that their supervisors engaged in two inspirational motivation behaviors, including communicating a vision and

connecting tasks to the bigger picture. Ten participants reported that their supervisors engaged in communicating a vision. P6 said of communicating a vision and how it contributed to OCB:

It is kind of like setting a vision and then giving people the tools and encouragement they need to actually follow through with it . . . They talk a lot about the bigger picture, and that makes me feel like what I do matters.

By communicating a vision, P6's supervisors helped him feel that his work was consequential, thereby promoting his engagement in OCB. P8 noted that managers inspired employees by communicating a vision. By inspiring employees with a vision ("where the company is headed"), the manager promoted their engagement in OCB. P9's work felt meaningful when managers connected it to a larger vision, so OCB was encouraged.

Ten participants reported that their managers engaged in the inspirational motivation behavior of connecting smaller tasks to the bigger picture. P1 explained, "Our manager always connects every project to our bigger mission. Like when we were working on database migration, she explained how it would improve customer experience and reduce support tickets." P1 said of how this manager behavior contributed to employee OCB, "It makes you feel like what you are doing actually matters instead of just writing code." P7 referred to the sense of purpose employees received from their manager as inspiring, when the manager connected their short-term tasks to long-term, big-picture goals. P10 referred to two OCBs (data cleanup and mentoring interns) that were encouraged when managers connected short-term tasks to long-term, big-picture goals.

Theme 2: Influencing Willingness to Engage in OCB

The participants indicated that transformational leadership influenced their willingness to engage in OCB through three transformational leader behaviors. The behaviors included recognizing employees' achievements, trusting employees to problem-solve, and promoting employees' professional growth. Eight participants indicated that leaders positively influenced their willingness to engage in OCB by recognizing their achievements. For example, P2 stated, "Our team lead always acknowledges when we help each other out, and that has created this culture where we all pitch in during challenging times," indicating that receiving recognition for helping fellow employees encouraged employees to continue engaging in that OCB. P7 indicated that recognizing employees' achievements, even informally, had a positive effect on promoting OCB. P14 indicated that informal recognition such as praise or other simple

expressions of appreciation could make employees feel more valued and inspire them to engage in OCB.

Seven participants indicated that when leaders trusted their employees to problem-solve, they increased employees' willingness to engage in OCB. P7 explained how trusting employees to problem-solve contributed to their willingness to engage in OCB:

On numerous occasions, I can think of a time when our leader challenged us to think creatively about a recurring client issue. They did not just tell us to find a solution, but they facilitated brainstorming sessions and encouraged experimenting with different approaches. I ended up creating a new process that was not part of my standard responsibilities, and a few colleagues pitched in to help implement it.

P7's supervisor challenged the team to think creatively about a recurring problem, with the result that P7 developed a solution outside the scope of normal work responsibilities. P7's engagement in OCB stemmed from the supervisor's encouragement of creative thinking about a problem. P11 also described leaders' willingness to trust employees to problem-solve as promoting OCB. P11 indicated that leaders' encouraging employees to problem-solve promoted OCB because employees' creative engagement with the problem gave them a sense of empowerment and ownership.

Four participants indicated that when supervisors promoted employees' professional growth, they also promoted employees' OCB. P1 stated, "When our manager showed genuine interest in my career development, I started volunteering to help onboard new hires, even though that is not in my job description." P1's supervisor gave stretch assignments to help P1 develop in areas that would promote career growth. As a result, P1 engaged in OCB (helping onboard new hires). P14 reported that receiving mentorship and other forms of intellectual stimulation encouraged OCB. P14 indicated that intellectual stimulation, such as mentorship and seeking out diverse perspectives, promoted OCB in all members of the team.

Theme 3: Open Communication and Transparency Positively Influenced Employees' Perceptions of Leadership

Twelve participants indicated that a culture of open communication positively influenced their perceptions of leadership and their willingness to engage in OCB. The participants described a culture of open communication as one in which leaders solicited and acted on employee feedback. P3 offered the following examples:

We have this culture where feedback flows both ways. During our regular meetings, senior leaders actively ask for input on their management style and actually implement suggestions we give them. In addition to the feedback incorporation, we also have anonymous feedback channels that leadership takes seriously. When the communication practices encourage honest input, it changes how you view leaders because you see them as people who genuinely want to grow and improve based on employee feedback which is a win situation for the organization.

P3 reported that leaders sought candid employee feedback during meetings and that they also made available a channel for anonymous feedback. Leaders in P3's organization took seriously and acted on the feedback they received through both of these channels, a situation that improved P3's perceptions of the leaders and encouraged OCB. P4 indicated that observing leaders' willingness to hear and act on constructive criticism promoted more positive perceptions of leaders. P6 agreed that leaders sought candid feedback from employees in three ways, and that leaders' willingness to accept candid feedback increased employees' willingness to engage in OCB.

Ten participants indicated that a culture of transparency promoted positive perceptions of leaders. The participants described a culture of transparency as one in which leaders admitted shortcomings and mistakes. P1 cited an example of leadership transparency:

We have these transparent quarterly reviews where leadership admits mistakes and shares what they learned. When the culture supports honest dialogue, it makes you trust that leaders are genuinely trying to improve rather than just protecting their image and maintaining appearances.

P1 indicated that when leaders admitted mistakes and shared lessons learned, employees formed more positive perceptions of supervisors' honesty and readiness to learn. P12 described leaders as soliciting employee questions and giving candid answers in a culture of transparency:

I think communication practices here influence my perception a lot. Leaders regularly hold open forums where employees can ask questions directly, which, you know, shows me they are not hiding anything. That openness makes me perceive them as transparent and fair.

Like P1, P12 perceived leaders more positively when their transparent communications evidenced that they were not hiding relevant information from employees.

Theme 4: Trust Promoted Employees' Engagement in OCB

All 15 participants indicated that trust in leadership enhanced employees' engagement in OCB. P5 explained in a representative response what role trust in leadership played in eliciting OCB from employees:

When I trust leadership, I feel confident that my extra efforts will not go unnoticed or be misused. For example, I am more willing to take initiative on projects outside my job description or offer help to colleagues when needed.

Trust in leadership made P5 more likely to engage in OCB because trusted leaders appeared less likely to misuse employee efforts or to let those efforts go unrecognized. P8 agreed, saying in another representative response:

I think trust in leadership directly impacts how willing I am to engage in behaviors that support the organization beyond my formal duties. When leaders are transparent, reliable, and consistent, I feel safe taking initiative, volunteering to help teammates, or participating in cross-functional projects. That sense of trust fosters behaviors because I know my efforts are meaningful and appreciated, not taken for granted.

P8 noted that leaders appeared trustworthy when they were transparent, consistent, and reliable, and that trust in leaders fostered OCB by assuring employees that their OCB would not be misused or unrecognized. In a third example of a representative response, P9 agreed that trustworthy leaders appeared less likely to allow employees' extraordinary efforts to be exploited or misused. Trust in leaders persuaded P9 that OCB would be applied to a meaningful purpose rather than exploited for ends with which employees might not agree. The participants indicated that they trusted leaders who were transparent and consistent, and that trust in leaders positively influenced their willingness to engage in OCB by assuring them that their efforts would not be misused or taken for granted.

Summary

The participants reported that they perceived nine specific transformational leader behaviors that encouraged or fostered OCB. In descending order by number of participants attesting to them, the specific behaviors were tailoring communication to employees' learning styles, recognizing employees for achievements, fostering employee growth, leading by

example, communicating a vision, connecting tasks to a larger mission, trusting employees to problem-solve, fostering experimentation, and seeking out diverse perspectives.

The second theme identified during data analysis was influencing willingness to engage in OCB. Eight participants indicated that leaders positively influenced their willingness to engage in OCB by recognizing their achievements. Seven participants indicated that when leaders trusted their employees to problem-solve, they increased employees' willingness to engage in OCB. Four participants indicated that when supervisors promoted employees' professional growth, they also promoted employees' OCB.

The third theme identified during data analysis indicated that open communication and transparency positively influenced employees' perceptions of leadership. Twelve participants indicated that a culture of open communication positively influenced their perceptions of leadership and their willingness to engage in OCB. The participants described a culture of open communication as one in which leaders solicited and acted on employee feedback. Ten participants indicated that a culture of transparency promoted positive perceptions of leaders. The participants described a culture of transparency as one in which leaders admitted shortcomings and mistakes.

The fourth theme identified during data analysis indicated that trust promoted employees' engagement in OCB. All 15 participants indicated that trust in leadership enhanced employees' engagement in OCB. The participants trusted leaders who were transparent and consistent, and that trust in leaders positively influenced their willingness to engage in OCB by assuring them that their efforts would not be misused or taken for granted. Chapter 5 includes discussion, interpretation, and recommendations based on these findings.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to describe how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among employees in the technology industry in the Southeast United States. The study was guided by one central research question and four sub-questions that explored employees' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors, their willingness to engage in OCB, the role of organizational factors, and the influence of trust in leadership. Semi-structured interviews with 15 participants working in technology-based organizations were used to collect data, which was analyzed using the thematic analysis method proposed by Braun and Clarke (2012). The data analysis produced four major themes. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings, interpretations in relation to existing literature, implications for practice, study limitations, recommendations for future research, and conclusions.

Discussion of the Findings

The study revealed several important insights into how transformational leadership behaviors influence OCB among technology industry employees. Participants reported nine particular transformational leader behaviors that promoted OCB, categorized into four domains that encompass individualized consideration (tailoring communication, recognizing achievements, encouraging experimentation, seeking diverse views), intellectual stimulation (trusting employees to solve problems, encouraging experimentation, seeking alternative views), idealized influence (leading by example) and inspirational motivation (communicating vision, linking tasks to overall mission). Three key mechanisms emerged through which transformational leadership enhanced willingness to engage in OCB, including employee recognition, trust in problem-solving abilities, and investment in professional growth. The role of organizational culture was crucial, as open communication and transparency positively affected the perception of employees towards leadership. Trust was found to be a universal variable, as all 15 participants reported that trust in leadership positively contributed to their involvement in OCB by making them confident that their extra effort would be acknowledged and rewarded accordingly.

The discussion section provides a clear understanding of the findings and their connection to the research questions and literature. The data were analyzed and grouped into four major

themes that relate to employees' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors and their influence on organizational citizenship behavior. Each of the research questions is then discussed concerning the themes that emerged, in relation to previous literature.

Theme 1: Specific Transformational Leader Behaviors That Encouraged OCB

The individualized consideration behaviors, such as customizing communication to learning styles, acknowledging achievement, and encouraging professional development, became the most frequently mentioned category of participants. The high frequency signals that employees are deeply concerned with whether their leaders view them as individuals or as interchangeable resources. When P1 explained how the manager would pull out system architectures to the visual learners and offer alternative assistance to the rest, it was a conscious time investment that conveyed value. This one-on-one approach is a direct contrast to efficiency-oriented management practices of many technology companies, where standardization is frequently given a priority (Saad Alessa, 2021). However, participants emphasized that such personalization had a significant impact on their readiness to give back by putting in additional effort. The fact that P6 noted that recognition of effort enabled employees to feel safe to take risks indicates that individualized recognition produces the psychological safety needed to innovate. Thus, OCB comes naturally when employees feel truly observed and appreciated as individuals, as opposed to a coerced expectation.

The intellectual stimulation behaviors of trusting employees to solve problems, encourage experimentation, and seek different viewpoints demonstrate a critical tension in the management of knowledge workers. Ten participants reported having been entrusted with problem-solving. However, they emphasized that this practice indicates that it is not as prevalent as it ought to be. The manager of P1 requested the employees to come up with three distinct methods rather than giving them the solution, and that manager was effectively slow-tracking to allow employees to think, not to go straight to efficiency. Nine participants cited leaders who justified failure as a costly learning process, showing the actual impediment to intellectual stimulation since most organizations penalize failure even though they purport to prize innovation. The concern is that only five participants cited leaders who sought different views. This is concerning, given the diversity issues faced in the technology industry and the explicit relation between diverse views and innovation. The finding indicates that even transformational leaders who are strong in trusting people might still be unable to actively break groupthink by introducing a voice to challenge assumptions.

Idealized influence behavior of leading by example was cited among 11 participants, indicating the credibility in the technology industry. The value of this finding is especially remarkable in the sense that most technology managers received promotions out of technical positions, which implies that employees can promptly determine whether the leaders truly know the job. The focus of P7 that leaders should be ready to roll up their sleeves directly addresses this problem. What this means is that organizations can cause issues when they advance strong individual contributors into management and take them off technical work at once. Employees do not want managers to perform their work on their behalf, but they want them to have sufficient technical plausibility to empathize with the difficulties employees encounter. By modeling the conduct they want from others, leaders establish moral authority that causes employees to believe they are part of a shared mission instead of an impersonal boss.

The inspirational motivation behaviors that included communicating a vision and relating tasks to the greater mission were both identified by 10 participants. The significance of this finding is in what it teaches us about meaning-making in technical work. When P6 described how leaders who spoke of the bigger picture made work fulfilling, that participant shared a need that many technology organizations seem to ignore, and that is a sense of meaning beyond technical specifications. Technology work can be abstract and context-free and can seem unrelated to real human outcomes. P9 example of supervisors relating daily measures to making technology more user-friendly shows how leaders can fill this gap, but also how infrequently this relationship is explicitly expressed. Of great interest is the connection between inspirational motivation and other transformational behaviors. Participants want to hear a compelling vision from leaders they trust—leaders who not only articulate those values but clearly demonstrate them through their actions. This implies that inspirational motivation alone may not be effective when perceived by employees as rhetoric.

The study findings closely align with existing research on the four components of transformational leadership and their influence on employee behavior. In line with Bass and Avolio's (1990) framework, participants reported that their supervisors showed individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation. The focus on specific communication and appreciation is consistent with Bakker et al. (2023), who established that matching leadership strategies with employee strengths enhances their initiative and performance. The importance of career development reflects Widodo's (2022) findings, demonstrating that leaders who invest in the growth of employees encourage more

discretionary effort. The descriptions of trust, learning by errors, and multiplicity of perspectives are in line with Benmira (2020) and Qalati et al. (2022), who linked intellectual stimulation with creative activity. Leading by example reflects Antonakis and Day (2017), who linked integrity and competence with loyalty and admiration.

Theme 2: Influencing Willingness to Engage in OCB

The findings indicated that three specific transformational leadership behaviors directly influenced employees' willingness to engage in OCB, which included recognizing employees' achievements, trusting employees to problem-solve, and promoting employees' professional growth. Eight participants reported that when leaders were able to appreciate their accomplishments, they felt inspired to keep on doing their citizenship behaviors, like assisting their colleagues in difficult situations and taking the initiative in upcoming projects. What is important here is the two way dynamic of the relationship, where employees basically term a social exchange where leadership recognition generated a perceived duty to repay through OCB. Participants stressed the importance of basic recognition, including public recognition or informal appreciation, which could make them feel appreciated and motivate them to do more than expected to meet organizational targets. The participants also reported that the trust placed in them by leaders to be creative in problem-solving made them more willing to participate in OCB because it fostered feelings of empowerment and ownership. Participants reported having played roles beyond their job descriptions, coordinated with other teams, and volunteered on unrelated tasks, since they believed that being trusted with their problem-solving skills by the supervisors vested them with a personal stake in the success of the company. The implication is vital because when leaders entrust employees with autonomy, employees do not do things in different ways, but they actually alter the way they perceive themselves in relation to the organization's success, becoming hired workers rather than invested stakeholders. The participants reported that this motivated them to work harder than expected when their supervisors supported their professional development by allowing them to mentor others and making them feel more involved in teamwork.

The results of the study are consistent with existing research on how transformational leadership affects employees' willingness to participate in discretionary behaviors. The finding is consistent with Subhaktiyasa et al.'s (2023) conclusions that when employees feel their leaders' support and inspiration through recognition and acknowledgment, they are more willing to participate in voluntary and extra-role behaviors that benefit the company. The explanations

provided by the participants regarding how trust in problem-solving skills promotes OCB align with Qalati et al. (2022), who established that transformational leadership practices build social connections and the respect towards others that have energizing impacts on workers. The current study reported that promoting professional growth influences OCB willingness. Similarly, Asbari (2020) found a mediating relationship between transformational leadership, OCB, and employee performance. Participants' emphasis on empowerment and ownership created by supervisors' trust supports research by Hoch et al. (2018) that established transformational leaders as effective leaders who empower employees to take initiative and make decisions, creating environments where employees feel personally invested in the organizational success. What this stability of findings in the literature implies is that OCB is not primarily about employee personality traits or organizational culture, but rather about the particular, and learnable, leadership behaviors that establish the conditions that allow employees to feel psychologically safe, valued, and personally interested enough to voluntarily give beyond the job demands.

Theme 3: Open Communication and Transparency Positively Influenced Employees' Perceptions of Leadership

The results indicated that open communication and transparency played an influential role in employee perceptions of leadership and engagement in OCB. Participants described organizational cultures where communications between top managers and subordinates were two-way, where top managers were willing to receive feedback on their management practices by holding frequent meetings and by implementing changes when their employees offered feedback. Participants cited having anonymous feedback systems that management listened to and offered them a degree of psychological safety in which employees could voice their concerns without the fear of being punished. What stands out in these descriptions is that transparency is about disclosure of information and also the leaders showing their vulnerability by making admissions about their mistakes and establishing mechanisms within the organization where employees can question leadership decisions without career repercussions. Participants indicated that positive attitudes towards leaders were made possible by a culture of openness, where leaders were realistic about their failures and errors. The finding implies that employees in technology organizations do not expect their leaders to be perfect, but they do expect their leaders to be honest and when leaders lead by example to demonstrate the type of

transparency they want of employees, it results in a type of openness that makes OCB feel like a member of a partnership, not a member of a hierarchy who works in the background.

The positive effect of open communication and transparency on employee perception and behavior is supported in the literature. The observation that open communication cultures contribute to leadership perception is consistent with the study by Mastur et al. (2022), who concluded that, as a result of the emphasis on shared vision and organizational goals, transformational leadership places substantial emphasis on communication practices. The fact that the participants described psychological safety that had been created by open communication supports the results of Braun and Reiss (2019), who found that in organizational cultures where honest input is encouraged and the need to respect various opinions is important, employees tend to form more positive attitudes toward leadership and show more engagement and cooperation. Participants' focus on leaders taking action based on employee feedback instead of just receiving it is consistent with Alshihabat and Atan (2020), who concluded that being a transformational leader requires having both communication of values and showing alignment between stated and actual values.

Theme 4: Trust Promoted Employees' Engagement in OCB

The results showed that the 15 participants found trust in leadership to be a decisive element that improved their engagement in OCB. The participants stated that they could be assured that, in those instances when they trusted the leadership, their extra efforts would not be overlooked, abused, or assumed. When the employees believed in their leaders, they reported feeling more willing to take the initiative on projects that were not part of their job descriptions. Respondents emphasized that trust made them feel safe to engage in discretionary behaviors because they knew that their contributions would be considered and applied in the correct way. The most striking thing about this finding is the universality of trust as a requirement of OCB, with not a single participant willing to go beyond leaders they did not trust, which is an implication that all other transformational leadership behaviors would not work in the absence of this precondition. Conversely, respondents said that a lack of trust in leadership would discourage citizenship behaviors, since employees would be more likely to do the bare minimum than go out of their way in situations where they did not believe that their additional efforts would be valued or put to good use. This brings to light a sad truth about organizations, as OCB is essentially voluntary, and employees calculate whether their discretionary effort will

be exploited or rewarded, and trust is the process that pushes that initiative toward organizational citizenship instead of minimalism that seeks to protect the self.

The results of the study are consistent with existing literature on the importance of trust in the leadership-OCB relationship. The conclusion that OCB is boosted by trust in leadership upholds Sidargini's (2020) findings that transformational leaders exhibiting behaviors like sociability and individual consideration are seen as trustworthy by employees, thus prompting them to engage more in citizenship behaviors. The trust-building features of transparency, reliability, and consistency emphasized by the participants align with Sopa (2020), who determined that the relationship between OCB and transformational leadership is significant, and the critical mediating variable is trust that involves leadership behavior in relation to the willingness of employees to perform extra-role activities. Moreover, the current study found that the lack of trust discourages citizenship behaviors. Consistently, Abinugroho (2020) argued that a close relationship between OCB and employee performance that is moderated by trust in leadership, such that employees who do not trust their supervisors are significantly less likely to demonstrate the proactive, cooperative, and committed behaviors associated with organizational citizenship.

Implications

The results of this research showed that transformational leadership behaviors, especially recognition, trust, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, are central to the development of willingness among employees to participate in organizational citizenship behaviors. The findings support the significance of leadership strategies, which focus on empowerment, transparency, and professional development in technology-based organizations. The mediating factor of organizational culture and trust is also noted in the study, as employees will tend to surpass expectations of the role when they feel that leaders are ethical, supportive, and feedback-responsive. Similarly, the results indicate that transformational leadership affects performance outcomes and also psychological safety, motivation, and collaboration. The implications of this study are of value to leadership development, organizational policy, and human-resource strategy because the findings imply that OCB is an acquired behavior that is developed through relational leadership practices. The findings highlight the role of investing in transformational leadership capacity to enhance organizational commitment, teamwork, and long-term organizational effectiveness.

Recommendations for Practice

Leadership training programs should be prioritized by organizations to enhance the transformational leadership competencies, with particular focus on employee recognition, inclusive communication, and trust-building. Behavioral patterns that foster autonomy should also be encouraged. Discretionary behaviors that are beneficial to the organization should be supported by structured recognition systems. Growing open communication cultures with feedback, transparent decision-making, and psychological safety should also be developed in organizations where employees feel that they are respected and listened to. Organizations should also implement mentorship and professional-development programs to promote personalized attention and enhance the feeling of progress and identity in employees. Transformational leadership behaviors could be integrated into leadership-evaluation systems and succession-planning models by human-resource departments. Leadership expectations and cultural values should be congruent and emphasize collaboration and purpose. Institutionalizing such practices will enable organizations to create conditions in which OCB becomes instinctive, as a reaction to enabling leadership, instead of being a forced or compliance-driven norm.

Limitations

As with any research, this study was subject to several limitations that may impact the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. One of the primary limitations of this study was its limited generalizability due to the sampling criteria and context. The study exclusively included English-speaking participants from the United States who work within a formal organizational structure under a supervisor. While these delimitations helped focus the study on a specific population, they inherently limited the applicability of the findings to a broader range of employees. Additionally, employees in countries with different organizational structures may exhibit different relationships between leadership behaviors and OCB. Consequently, the study's results may not fully apply to international contexts or non-English-speaking workforces.

Another limitation of the study was the reliance on self-reported data, a common concern in qualitative research (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Participants were asked to share their perceptions of how transformational leadership behaviors influence their willingness to engage in OCB. However, self-reports are susceptible to biases such as social desirability bias, where participants may provide responses that they believe are expected or desirable rather than their

authentic experiences (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Participants' memories and subjective interpretations may impact their responses.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should be conducted to examine transformational leadership and OCB in a variety of industries and cultures to improve the relevance of results to other sectors, other than the technology sector in the Southeast United States. To investigate the effect of transformational leadership practices on OCB in the long run, especially during organizational change or crises, longitudinal studies are recommended. Future research can also adopt mixed-methods designs to strike a balance between the lived experience of the employees and quantitative measures of OCB and job performance. Future studies could examine moderating variables such as gender, telecommuting environment, and experience in leadership or personality in the workplace. A comparative study of transformational leadership as opposed to alternative leadership styles could also offer further understanding of which behaviors best foster OCB. This study employed a small sample size, limiting the transferability of the findings to the broader population and other research settings. Therefore, future studies should be conducted using a larger sample size to explore how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior among employees in the technology industry in the Southeast United States.

Conclusion

The current study explored employees' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors and how these behaviors influence organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in technology-based organizations in the Southeast United States. The results revealed that recognition, trust, support of professional growth, and open communication motivated employees to participate in discretionary behaviors that favored coworkers and the organization. The absence of transparency and insufficient trust in leadership constrained the readiness of employees to exceed the formal job requirements. The findings highlight the importance of leadership approaches that help in the creation of psychological safety, empowerment, and alignment of leader behaviors with organizational values. The research adds to the body of literature by providing employee-based information on the effects of transformational leadership in promoting OCB within actual workplace environments. The results support the necessity of leadership development programs, enhancing recognition, trust building, and communication

patterns. The research shows that transformational leadership practices have a significant impact on improving teamwork, participation, and favorable organizational performance.

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