THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLE AND COURAGEOUS

FOLLOWERSHIP BEHAVIOR AMONG UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

SENIOR NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS

by

Jeffrey A. Williams

GREGORY GULL, PhD, Faculty Mentor and Chair

GEOFFREY VANDERPAL, DBA, Committee Member

BRIAN SLOBODA, PhD, Committee Member

Barbara Butts Williams, PhD, Dean, School of Business and Technology

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Abstract

Followers are important to the organization's success but seldom viewed as responsible for the organization's outcomes. In the leadership literature, the leader is the driver of organizational performance and often gets the credit for its success and blamed for its failures. The same view is held in military cultures where everything rises and falls on leadership. Since followership is an emerging area of study, a quantitative correlational design was used to examine the relationship between the leaders' leadership style (transformational and transactional) and the followers' courageous followership behavior from the followers' perspective. The followers in this study were United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (SNCOs; pay grades E7- E8). The theoretical framework for this study was the Courageous Followership Model. Data from a random sample of 83 respondents was collected through use of the 20-item Followership Profile (TFP) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Short Form 5X. The TFP measured the courageous followership behaviors and the MLQ measured the transformational and transactional leadership behaviors. Correlation analysis was used to examine the data. The findings revealed that there was significant positive correlation between the leaders' leadership style (transformational and transactional) and the followers' courageous followership behavior at the 0.05 level of significance.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to all the wonderful young people God has allowed me to mentor. My love for these children is great and I want to use this gift to provide opportunities for all of you to succeed. To my wonderful grandsons Joziah and Brian. I pray that as you get older you will be proud to know that Pops is a doctor. While I cannot name all of my special children, I want them all to know that all things are possible. I love you all!

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation in memory of my father James A. Williams and my sister Rhonda D. Williams. Only God knows how much I miss you both. I wish you could be here to see me walk across the stage. However, I know you are in a better place.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTON

Introduction to the Problem

The value of followers cannot be overstated. Studies have shown that followers are more than just passive reactors to the leader's commands. Followers demonstrate courage to confront bad leadership, are self-directing, innovative, loyal, vision-minded, competent, and capable of leading (Agho, 2009; Chaleff, 2003; Dixon & Westbrook, 2003; Kelley, 1992). The studies by these researchers counter the long held negative stereotypes associated with the term follower such as lazy, non-thinking, and needing constant direction. In addition, they reveal followers as active participants in the leader-follower relationship. This newly found respect for followers should garner better appreciation for their role in organizational outcomes. However, this is not always the case.

Followers are important to the organization's success but seldom viewed as responsible for the organization's outcomes. In the leadership literature, the leader is the driver of organizational performance and often gets the credit for its success and blamed for its failures (Kelley, 1988; Meindl, 1995). The same view is held in military cultures where everything rises and falls on leadership. For example, military commanders are responsible for whether or not their units pass or fail inspections. If the unit passes inspection, the commander may receive a promotion. If the unit fails, the commander may lose their position or receive a demotion. The view of leaders as the drivers of

1

organizational performance needs to change especially since the emerging literature on followership have shown followers as major contributors (Oc & Bashshur, 2013).

Since followership is an emerging area of study, the current study sought to examine the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and their supervisor's leadership style from the follower's perspective. Meindl (1995), Oc and Bashshur (2013), and Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, and Carsten (2014) argued that over the years, leadership studies have been biased towards the thoughts and actions of leaders and overlooked the significance of followers. This study provided a follower-centric perspective on the leader-follower relationships. Followers play a significant role in defining the leader-follower relationship through their behavior, traits, and attitudes. Therefore, further examination into how these behaviors relate to or influence leaders may be of interest to scholars and management practitioners.

Followers deserve recognition for their contributions to the organization. As noted in the followership literature, organizational success is a result of great leadership and followership (Agho, 2009). In other words, it takes more than just leadership it takes followership as well. As such, this study may help military and management practitioners in the creation of cultures that develop effective followers and encourage leaders to develop styles that enhance leader-follower relationships.

This study can also be beneficial for military and management practitioners in the development of professional development curriculums that include followership. Research has shown that all military schools and academies focus on leadership with very little mention of followership (Latour & Rast, 2004; Shepherd & Horner, 2010). This lack of attention prevents organizations from considering the true nature of followership

2

and its importance to organizational effectiveness. By its inclusion in military educational curriculums, management can realize that teaching followership skills such as decision-making, communication, commitment, problem solving, integrity, and courage are foundational to leadership.

This study adds to the body of knowledge by adopting the follower as the primary focus and their view regarding leader-follower relationships. The study provided a follower-centric approach to leadership and a follower-centric approach to followership. Specifically, it analyzed the followers' view of the leaders and their leaders' behaviors, and the followers view of their own behaviors.

Followership research is still in its infancy and ongoing. Baker (2007) observed that many of the followership models such as Chaleff's (2003) courageous followership model, lacked empirical examination. To address this concern, Ricketson (2008) sampled 21 leaders and 80 followers from various nationally known quick-service restaurants and found a correlation between transformational leadership and courageous followership behavior. The current quantitative study also addressed that concern and provided additional data regarding the correlation between leadership styles and courageous followership behavior among military personnel.

The remainder of this chapter will provide a background of the study, statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. Additionally, it will provide the rationale for the study, the research questions, significance of the study, definition of key terms, limitations and assumptions, and the theoretical framework.

3

Background of the Study

For years, researchers have utilized a leader-centric research agenda to understand the nature of leaders and their influence on follower behaviors (Crossman & Crossman, 2011; Meindl, 1995). However, modern researchers have recommended a change in this agenda. Followership is a growing body of literature that focuses on the follower and how their behaviors and characteristics influence organizational outcomes. Oc and Bashshur (2013) argued for inclusion of followers in the leadership process as important sources of influence. This supports Howell and Shamir's (2005) suggestion that scholarly research be aimed at the relational aspects between leaders and followers using follower-centric models.

Agho (2009) and Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera and McGregor (2010) also recommended that additional research was needed regarding the reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers. Agho (2009) found that effective leaders and effective followers share similar characteristics that can influence work performance, satisfaction and morale, and cohesiveness of work groups; however, researchers have not dedicated enough attention to reciprocal or interdependent nature of the leader-follower relationship. Carsten et al. (2010) observed that cultures that are high in power distance, such as the military, have a tendency to have more autocratic styles of leadership where followers are expected to adhere to established patterns of communication and behavior. Such cultures may socialize followers into a more passive role of followership that emphasizes obedience and deference. They recommend future followership research be conducted in various organizational cultures. The current study answers these calls by

4

taking a follower-centric approach to analyzing the correlation between the follower's courageous followership behavior and their leader's leadership style in a military setting.

Existing research utilizing follower-centric models relating to the follower in the leader-follower relationship is limited. Colangelo (2000) and Ricketson (2008) used followership models to examine the relationship between leadership styles and follower behavior and achieved similar findings. Colangelo (2000) surveyed 567 United States Air Force senior airmen and found a significant relationship between Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) situational leadership model (telling, selling, participating, and delegating) and Kelley's (1992) followership dimensions of active engagement, passion, and team mindedness. The findings influenced the approach taken in this study that examined the perspective of Air Force senior noncommissioned officers who serve as followers and leaders and possess higher rank and greater responsibility.

Ricketson (2008) sampled 21 leaders and 80 followers from various nationally known quick service restaurants and found a correlation between transformational leadership and Chaleff's (2003) five dimensions of courageous followership: courage to serve, courage to assume responsibility, courage to participate in transformation, courage to challenge, and courage to take moral action. The use of the courageous follower model to examine the behavior of military members who demonstrate courage during a time of war was of great interest. The findings were instrumental in the current study's assumption that a correlation between leadership style and follower behavior may exist among senior enlisted military personnel.

Chaleff's (2003) courageous followership model was the underlying theory used for the current study. Chaleff (2003) argued that it takes courage for followers to actively

5

participate in the leader-follower relationship. Courage involves risk and challenging leaders or taking a moral stand against unethical leadership practices could result in negative outcomes. This type of courageous follower behavior may have interesting implications for future research. Specifically, what is the relationship between courageous followership behavior, gender, tenure, and leadership styles in regards to leader-follower relationships?

Statement of the Problem

The infatuation with leaders over followers continues to be the norm in academia and organizations. Studies on leader-follower relationships have been historically examined using leader-centric models that focus on the leader's behavior, attributes, or leadership styles and how they impact follower behaviors and outcomes (Crossman & Crossman, 2011; Meindl, 1995). This approach overlooks the value of followers and their role as influencers in the leader-follower relationship and other organizational outcomes. However, recent studies in the area of followership have begun recognizing followers as having influence over leader behaviors and attitudes (Oc & Bashshur, 2013).

Chaleff's (2003) model of courageous followership is a model that suggests how follower behaviors may influence leadership behavior. For instance, the follower who courageously challenges the leader's actions could influence the leader's behavior for the better. The testing of Chaleff's model in regards to leader-follower relationships remains limited. Ricketon's (2008) study of leaders and followers in the quick service restaurant industry is the only known study to examine the correlation between the leader's leadership style and the follower's self-assessed courageous followership behavior. This

study fills a gap in the followership literature and extends Ricketson's investigation by examining the same variables but in a military setting.

Scholars may find this research beneficial because it is one of few studies to empirically test Chaleff's (2003) theory of courageous followership as it pertains to leader-follower relationships. It is also the first study to examine courageous followership in a military culture where insistence on obedience and authority is the norm. The practitioner may find this research beneficial in the development of professional development programs geared toward followership. In addition, the research may be beneficial to developing organizational cultures that embrace and expect effective followership and effective leadership.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this correlational study was to test the theory of courageous followership (Chaleff, 2003) by examining the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and their supervisor's leadership style as measured by the follower. Since followers are typically the majority in organizations, examination into follower traits, behaviors, and styles is warranted. This study filled a gap in the literature by providing the follower's perspective regarding the correlation between their courageous followership behavior and their leader's leadership style. This research is timely because it reintroduces followers as active members in the leadership process and builds upon the emerging followership literature.   If research on followers was not taken, knowledge regarding organizational factors that influence courageous followership behavior may have been overlooked. However, followership is a topic of repeated

7

interest for scholars and practitioners (Agho, 2009; Chaleff, 2003; Kelley, 1995; Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Today's practitioners may find this research timely and relevant in the development of professional development courses that focus on followership and leadership development. Programs intentionally geared toward followership can possibly help change the negative view of followers into a positive view. This research may also be helpful to hierarchical organizations or teams where individuals have to transition effortlessly between leader and follower roles and remain effective in both roles.

Rationale

The study addressed the gap in the followership literature by providing empirical data on the follower's perspective of the relationship between courageous follower behavior and leadership style. The only known study to examine the relational aspect of the leader-follower dyad using the courageous follower model was Ricketson (2008). Ricketson (2008) found no correlation between transformational leadership and courageous followership behavior among employees working in the fast-food service industry. In addition, there was no support for a correlation between transactional leadership and courageous followership.

Ricketson (2008) recommended extending the investigation into leadership styles and courageous follower behaviors in other populations. The current study followed Ricketson's recommendation and extended the investigation to a military population. The discussion of leadership and followership among civilian and military organizations will differ. Within the hierarchical structure, power delineation, and caste system of the

8

military, there are deeply entrenched codes of behavioral order that could influence how leaders and followers interact (Wong, Bliese, & McGurk, 2003). When members enlist in the military, they swear to obey the orders of the leaders appointed over them. The leader plays an active role in ensuring members comply with their directions. As such, it may appear that followers are passive in their relation with leaders. Therefore, this study was built upon Ricketson's recommendation and examined the correlation between courageous follower behavior and leadership style among senior enlisted members in the United States Air Force.

Research Questions

Followership is an area of study that examines the various dimensions of followers to include their attributes, attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives as they relate to leaders and leadership. This study focused on the perspectives of followers in regards to their self-reported courageous followership behaviors in relation to their supervisor's leadership style. The Follower Profile (Dixon, 2006) was used to measure courageous followership behavior. The supervisor's leadership style was measured by the followers using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X-Short) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004). The MLQ was used to measure to what extent the supervisor displayed transformational or transactional leadership behaviors. The research questions guiding this study are as follow:

R1: What is the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and the leader's leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

R1a. What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transformational leadership style as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

R1b. What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transactional leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

Significance of the Study

The current study is significant on a theoretical and practical level. On a theoretical level, the study provides empirical data to contribute a greater understanding of the courageous followership theory as it relates to military followers. It adds to the body of knowledge by providing a follower-centric view of the leader-follower relationship and a greater understanding of the relationship between follower behavior and leadership styles.

Researchers have called for a renewed focus on followership and the perspective of followers (Chaleff, 2003; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Kelley, 1992; Oc & Bashshur, 2013). This study is significant because it answers their call and examines the perspectives of followers who serve in both leader and follower roles. On a practical level, this study provides value to management practitioners as a useful tool to enhance organizational members' leadership and followership skills. The study can also encourage management practitioners in the creation of followership curriculums that are complementary to existing leadership curriculums.

10

Definition of Terms

Courage refers to "the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or external" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 30).

Courageous followership behaviors refer to behaviors that demonstrate the courage to assume responsibility, courage to serve, courage to participate in transformation, courage to challenge, and courage to take morale action (Chaleff, 2003).

Transactional leadership refers to a form leadership that implies an exchange relationship between leaders and their followers to satisfy agreed upon goals (Bass, 1985).

Transformational leadership refers to a form a leadership characterized by mutual trust and respect between leaders and followers (Bass, 1985).

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

The current study was conducted with several assumptions. First, the number of 82 or more respondents in this study was sufficient for the results to be meaningful and valid. Second, the respondents represented the military population of SNCOs in the United States Air Force. Third, the respondents were fair and honest in their assessment of themselves and their supervisors. Fourth, the respondents clearly understood the survey instructions, statements, and terms.

Limitations

The current study had several limitations. First, self-reporting was a limitation. As noted by Kets de Vries, Vrignaud and Florent-Treacy (2004), responses can be influenced by the social desirability factor and result in the respondent developing cognitive bias. As can be expected, the results may not be a true indicator of the supervisor's leadership styles as perceived by the follower and followership behaviors as perceived by the follower. The same could be said for any other type of data collection method such as interviews. Second, correlations may only be limited or specific to the sample population or the military in general. Third, coverage errors, sampling error, and measurement error are introduced by the internet mode of delivery and are potential limitations (Swanson & Holton, 2009).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study is the courageous followership theory (Chaleff, 2003). According to Chaleff (2003), courageous followership is based upon the concept of courageous relationships between leaders and followers and in order for followers to be effective and perform at optimal levels, they must demonstrate the following behaviors:

a. Courage to assume responsibility – followers who do not hold a paternalistic image of the leader but instead assumes responsibility for themselves and the organization;

b. Courage to serve – followers who are willing to work hard and are as passionate as the leader in pursuing the common purpose;

12

c. Courage to participate in transformation – followers who champion the need for organizational change, recognize their personal need for transformation, and become full participants in the change process;

d. Courage to challenge – followers who are not afraid to challenge behaviors or policies of the leader or the group;

e. Courage to take moral action – followers who know when to take a stand for what is right even when taking a stand is different from the leader.

Since the theory implies a relationship between leaders and followers, the current study examined whether leadership styles would have some type of relationship to courageous followership behavior of followers (Figure 1). The two leadership models used in this study were transformational leadership and transactional leadership. According to Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), transformational leaders influence followers by heightening followers' self-awareness and sense of purpose to where followers subordinate their self-interest for the sake of the organization's needs. On the other hand, transactional leaders focus on the exchange of resources where the followers' material and psychological needs are met in return for expected work performance (Burns, 1978; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Research by Ricketson (2008) suggested minimal relationship between leadership style and courageous followership behavior among those in the quick-service restaurant industry. The results of the current study provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between leadership styles and courageous followership behaviors.
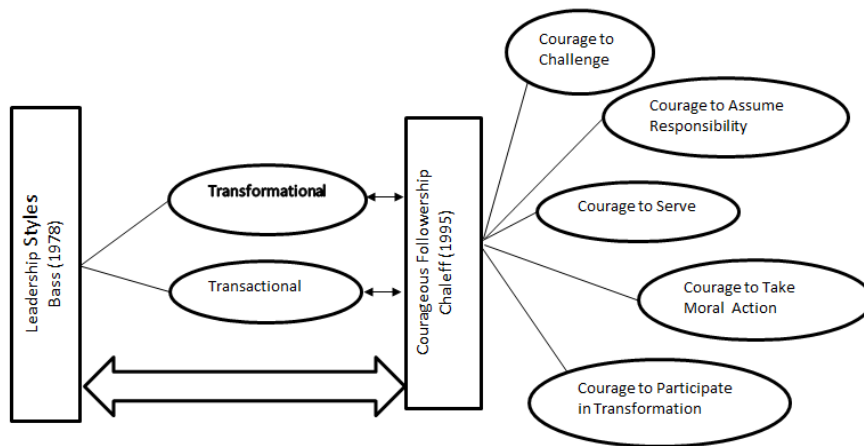
Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of the study consists of the Chapter 2 literature review that provides a historical overview of followership, transformational and transactional leadership styles, followership, and relevant studies. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 provides the results of the testing in this study; and Chapter 5 presents keys findings, study limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The present study seeks to examine the relationship between courageous followership behavior and the supervisor's leadership style (transformational and transactional) from the follower's perspective. The theoretical framework for the study is Chaleff's (2003) courageous followership model. The literature review will unfold by providing a brief historical overview of how followership was introduced as a field of study along with a discussion on the terms follower and followership. The seminal authors are introduced along with a discussion of several followership models with special emphasis on the courageous followership model and related studies. The next section will focus on transformational and transactional leadership styles and related studies. Finally, a summary of the literature review.

Followership

For many people, the topic of followership often solicits a look of bewilderment or confusion when presented (Kelley, 1992). This should not come as surprise especially since the topic of leadership has and continues to dominate the minds of scholars and practitioners. However, over the past several decades followers and followership have received widespread attention for their importance in leader-follower relationships and organizational success (Agho, 2009; Avolio & Bass, 2004; Baker, 2007; Carsten et al., 2010; Chaleff, 2008; Follett, 1949; Kelley, 1988). What follows is a brief historical

15

overview of modern followership, the seminal authors, and a discussion on the terms follower and followership.

Historical Overview of Modern Followership

Followership, like leadership, dates back to the beginning of time (Van Vugt, 2006). However, it was not until the 20th century that the topic of followership received the attention of management scholars (Baker, 2007). During a lecture at the London School of Economics in 1933, Mary Follett (1949), a pioneer in the fields of organizational theory and organizational behavior, challenged its members to focus on followership since followers play a critical role in their support of leaders and organizational outcomes. Her views were basically ignored because they came during a time when society embraced hierarchical organizational structures where leadership was idolized (Baker, 2007; Rost, 2008). However, in his book the *Processes of Leadership Emergence*, Hollander (1974) advanced the thought of active followership by arguing that leader and follower were roles that people fill and that the behaviors associated with the leader's role could be associated with the follower's role. In addition, he highlighted that influence was a two-way process between the leader and follower and how the situation influences leader-follower relationships (Hollander, 1974). Subsequent empirical research by Agho (2009) supported Hollander's work. Herold (1977) also examined the leader-follower relational component of active followership. In a laboratory study, Herold (1977) found that partners in a dyad, regardless of their leader or follower role, affect their partner's behavior and/or attitudes. As such, Herold (1977) suggested that leadership research needed to expound its focus to include the effect

16

followers have on leader behavior. Scholars such as Kelley (1992) and Chaleff (2003) were among the few to pursue Herold's recommendations.

Seminal Authors

The increased interest in followership in the modern era can be attributed to the seminal works of Robert E. Kelley (1988; 1992) and Ira Chaleff (2003). According to Baker (2007), the work of these seminal authors were instrumental in followership growing into a field of its own and have been cited by theorists who have proposed behaviors, styles, and characteristics of effective followers. Kelley (1988) drew the attention of many people with his article, "In Praise of Followers" that appeared in the Harvard Business Review. Kelley (1988) theoretically argued that followers had an active role in organizational success and were more than just passive subordinates. As such, followers can be classified based on whether they thinks for themselves and whether they are actively or passively engaged. Based on this continuum, a follower can be categorized as passive which is a person who needs to be led or lacks initiative, a conformist (yes-person), an alienated follower (very capable yet disgruntled), a pragmatist (non-committed; straddles both sides of the fence), or effective (exemplary) followers (Kelley, 1988).

Effective followers are individuals who demonstrate initiative, possess critical and analytical skills, supportive, and able to lead when required (Kelley, 1988). According to Kelley (1988), effective followers have the courage to provide necessary feedback to the leader and fellow followers to keep them informed and accountable. Kelley's (1988) line of thought challenged researchers and practitioners to consider the various types of follower attributes and behaviors instead of the negative stereotype commonly associated

17

with followers such as lazy, non-thinking, needing to be led, or yes people. The article resulted in the publication of Kelley's (1992) book, *"Power of Followership: How to Create Leaders People Want to Follow and Followers Who Lead Themselves."*

Chaleff (2003) along with Kelley (1992) placed followers in an active role in the leader-follower relationship and also drew the attention of academia and management. Chaleff's (2003) book, *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up to & For Our Leaders*, provided another theoretical model of followership based on courage. Chaleff (2003) cited personal and professional experience and argued that effective followership involves followers demonstrating courage to serve, assume responsibility, courage to challenge those in authority, courage to participate in transformation, and courage to act morally. Chaleff (2003) also believed followers should be respected as partners, participants, co-leaders and co-followers in the pursuit of organizational goals. Kelley (1992) and Chaleff (2003) both agreed that courageous followership enhances the leader-follower interpersonal relationship.

Followers and Followership Defined

Definition of followers. In the leadership literature, leaders were viewed as heroes and this often resulted in followers as a lesser role especially in terms of importance. Taylor (1911) propagated this perspective arguing that leaders (managers) are superiors and followers (subordinates) are inferior. As a result, followers were conceptually defined as a homogenous group of uncritical, unreflective, obedient people who follow their blindly follower their leader (Frisina, 2005). Followers were also defined as passive and submissive (Blackshere, 2003; Rost, 2008); weak and underachievers (Chaleff, 2003). Rost (2008) expressed his displeasure with the term

18

follower and argued that it is inconsistent with the postindustrial understanding of leadership.

Other scholars define follower as another name for subordinate (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982; Kellerman, 2008; Northouse, 2007). According to Kellerman (2008), followers are subordinates who have less power, influence, and authority than their leader and as a result, will typically fall in line with the leader. From Chaleff's (2003) perspective, follower is not synonymous with subordinate but views it as a condition and not a position. As such, other terms have been utilized such as partners, participants, and collaborators (Rost, 2008; Uhl-Bien, 2006), direct report (Yukl, 2006) or effective followers (Kelley, 1988). These terms were adopted to counter the long-held, negative stereotypes of followers such as passive, non-thinking, needing to be led, sheep and yes people (Kelley, 1988). The view of followers as other than passive subordinates was a paradigm shift that caused researchers to examine followers from a different perspective. As a result, followership emerged as a separate field of study.

Definition of followership. Like the term leadership, the literature reflects a diverse approach to defining followership. For comparison purposes, Stech (2008) relied on Rost's (2008) definition of leadership to define followership. According to Rost (2008, p. 48), leadership is "influence directed at one or more other persons without coercion and toward a common purpose." Followership, according to Stech (2008, p. 49), is therefore "the acceptance of influence from another person or person without feeling coerced and toward what is perceived to be a common purpose." Stech's definition aligns with Bailey's (1988) view of a follower who has the option to accept guidance from the leader or the choice to follower the leader. Kelley (1992), and Townsend and

19

Gebhardt (2003) define followership in terms of active or passive engagement. According to Kelley (1992), active engagement refers to the person's willingness to show initiative, participate, and go above and beyond what is expected of them. Townsend and Gebhardt (2003) added that active engagement also refers to the level of involvement and the power given to followers to assist leaders in making final decisions while passive followers simply obeys orders given by the leader.

In one of the earliest known empirical studies on followership, Hollander and Webb (1955, p. 155) defined followership as "the extent to which an individual is desired by potential leaders of a group functioning within a circumscribed institutional context." From a military perspective, Townsend and Gebhardt (2003) defined followership as a process in which subordinates recognize their responsibility to comply with the orders of leaders and take appropriate action even in the absence of orders. Kellerman (2008) echoed Townsend and Gebhardt (2003) and defined followership as the response of those in subordinate positions to those in superior positions. These definitions are from a leader-centered perspective and define followership in hierarchical terms (Crossman & Crossman, 2011).

To further the understanding of followership, Meindl (1995) advanced the topic through the social constructionist lens as well as a follower-centric theory on leadership. From this perspective followers define leadership and leadership does not occur without the followers. While Meindl's (1995) approach gives voice to followers' view of leadership, Carsten et al. (2010) argued that research needed to be advanced to understand the follower's perspective of followership. Carsten et al. (2010) provided the first empirical investigation on the follower's view of followership. In an exploratory

qualitative study, they examined how followers described their roles as followers. They found that some followers socially construct definitions of followers around passivity or obedience while other stressed the importance of partnering with their leaders by taking ownership and by holding leaders accountable (Carsten et al., 2010; Chaleff, 2008; Kelley, 2008).

Followership was also defined in terms of relationships (Carsten et al., 2010; Defee, Stank, Esper & Mentzer, 2009; Kelley, 2008; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Kelley (2008) stated followership is about those followers who have the vision of the organization, the social capacity to work with others, and the ability to flourish without leader or heroic status. Defee et al. (2009, p. 69) indicated followership as "a relational concept between leader and follower in which the follower exhibits thinking, responsibility, collaboration, and commitment behaviors that define goal orientation and motivation(s) to succeed." Carsten et al. (2010) echoed Defee et al. (2009) and viewed followership as a relational role in which followers have the potential to influence leaders and contribute to the accomplishment of group and organizational objectives.

In sum, followers have been in existence as long as leadership. The negative connotations associated with the term prevented a clear understanding of the nature of followers and followership. The seminal works of Kelley (1992) and Chaleff (2003) were instrumental to the enhanced interest in followership among scholars and practitioners. As a result, follower and followership have been defined in numerous ways to include attributes, behaviors, and relational component. However, based on their review of extant followership literature, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014, p. 89) surmised that followership is, "an investigation of the nature and impact of followers and following in

21

the leadership process." What follows next is a discussion of followership models followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework of the present study, the courageous followership theory.

Followership Models

The most cited followership model is that of Kelley (1988). Since then, several follower-centric scholars have proposed follower models that describe follower attributes or behaviors and how these characteristics are manifested in leader-follower relationships (Chaleff, 2008; Kellerman, 2008; Lipman-Blumen, 2005), Table 1. Based on interviews with leaders and followers, Kelley (1992) determined that followership styles are based on two dimensions: independent, critical thinking, and active engagement. According to Kelley (1992, p. 114), "to become a full contributor, you need to cultivate independent, critical thinking and develop the courage to exercise it." Active engagement refers to members who are proactive, self-starters, take initiative, participate actively, and go above and beyond the job (Kelley, 1992). Based on these two dimensions, five follower styles emerged. Alienated followers think for themselves but demonstrate low engagement and serve as potential troublemakers who do not interact positively with the leader (Kelley, 1992). Lipman-Blumen (2005) describes the alienated follower as malevolent. The pragmatist stays within organizational rules when performing task and will show very little initiative. The passive follower is very dependent and will remain in a spectator role. The conformist is a yes person and avoids conflict; and the exemplary follower or star follower is the ideal follower who demonstrates initiative and facilitates the needs and interest of peers, leaders, and the organization (Kelley, 1992).

22

Kellerman (2008) approached followership from a political science perspective and focused on the follower's level of engagement, power, and how followers can serve as change agents. She describes followers as isolates, bystanders, participants, activists, and diehards. The isolate is completely detached and cares very little for the leader. Bystanders disengage from the organization and go along passively and are similar to Kelley's (1992) passive and conformist followers. Participants care about the leader and the organizations and will agree or disagree when necessary which is what Chaleff (2003) describes as the courage to challenge. Activists feel strong about the leader and organization and are very energetic, eager, and supportive. Diehards will give their all for an ideal or person (e.g. military personnel) especially if they consider it worthy (Kellerman, 2008).

Table 1. Followership Models

Authors	Kelley (1992)	Chaleff (2008)	Lipman-Blumen (2005)	Kellerman (2008)
Types	Alienated Pragmatist Conformist Passive Exemplary	Resource Individualist Implementer Partner	Benign Leader-Entourage Malevolent Followers	Isolates Bystanders Participants Activists Diehards

Lipman-Blumen (2005) focused on why followers followed toxic leaders and categorized these followers into three categories. The benign followers consists of followers who blindly follower bad leaders without questioning them and what Kelley (1992) would categorize as sheep. The leader's entourage are followers who commit to the toxic leader's agenda. The malevolent follower, like the alienated follower (Kelley,

23

1992) works against the leader, wants to become the leader, and is driven by greed, envy, or competitiveness (Lipman-Blumen, 2005).

Chaleff's (2003) four types of follower are based on the follower's courage to support and the courage to challenge the leader's behavior's or polices. Based on these behaviors, four types of followers evolve. Similar to Kelley's (1992) passive follower and Kellerman's (2008) isolates, the resource follower demonstrates low support and low challenge and will do the minimal of what is required. Second, the individualist demonstrates low support but high challenge and will be perceived as contrarian or as an alienated follower (Kelley, 1992). Third, the implementer demonstrates high support but low challenge and is viewed as a yes-person (Kelley, 1992). Lastly, is the partner and they demonstrate high support and high challenge and will assume full responsibility for their actions and well as their leader's actions (Chaleff, 2008).

The referenced typologies share some similarities in their descriptions. The level of engagement determines the type of follower. For example, the exemplary follower (Kelley, 1992), activist (Kellerman, 2008), and partner (Chaleff, 2008) represent ideal follower behaviors in the leader-follower relationship based on their high level of engagement and support. On the other end of the spectrum are the passive (Kelley, 1992), benign (Lipman-Blumen, 2005), and bystander (Kellerman, 2008), and resource followers (Chaleff, 2008) that demonstrate low engagement and perpetuate the negative stereotype associated with the term follower. The next section focuses on the theoretical framework for the present study, courageous followership and related studies.

24

Courageous Followership Theory

The courageous followership theory developed by Chaleff (2003) is based on the concept of courage. Courage is conceptualized as "the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, internal or external" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 30). In the followership literature, courage is the ability of an individual to speak and act on truth as she perceives it, despite external inequities in a relationship and is a force to be reckoned with (Chaleff, 2003). Kelley (1992, p. 168) views this as a courageous conscience which he defines as "the ability to judge right from wrong and the fortitude to take affirmative steps toward what one believes is right. It involves both conviction and action, often in the face of strong societal pressures for followers to abstain from acting on their belief." Chaleff (2003) expanded Kelley's (1988) work on the courageous nature of effective followers and stated that courageous followers demonstrate the following behaviors:

Courage to assume responsibility. This behavior involves assuming responsibility for one's self, the activities of the organization and being responsible for its outcome. The courage to assume responsibility describes followers who do not hold a paternalistic image of the leader but instead assumes responsibility for themselves and the organization. Chaleff's beliefs aligns with Kelley's (1988) argument that effective followers think for themselves and accomplish their responsibilities with independence. According to Dvir and Shamir (2003) followers who possess this type of behavior are expected to take the initiative and do more than what is required of them.

Courage to serve. This behavior describes followers who help alleviate leader responsibilities that could become burdensome. These followers are not afraid of hard

25

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work and look for ways to use their strengths to complement the leader. Kellerman (2008) describes this type of follower as a diehard follower who will give their all for a cause or a person.

Courage to participate in transformation. Describes followers who champion the need for organizational change, recognize their personal need for transformation, and become full participants in the change process. These individuals are also able to realize change signals, adjust their mindsets and behaviors, and present themselves appropriate to others (Zhu, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2009).

Courage to take moral action. Describes followers who are not afraid to act when their higher set of values differs from that of the leader's. Taking moral action may involve disobeying an order, appealing to a higher authority, or resignation. According to Kelley (1988), a courageous conscience helps keep a leader honest and out of trouble.

Courage to challenge the leader. Describes followers who are not afraid to voice their discomfort or beliefs when the policies of the leader or group conflict with their perspective of what's right. Chaleff (2003) also adds that followers must challenge their own actions. Kellerman (2008) views this type of behavior as essential for followers who are labeled participants in the leader-follower relationship.

Related Studies

In his dissertation, Eugene Dixon (2003) was the first to empirically test the courageous followership model. Dixon (2003) sampled 364 engineering service providers from U. S. businesses in the construction, engineering, and building services sector. The purpose of his correlational study was to provide an empirical process for measuring followership and to determine if a correlation exists between the self-

26

ascriptions of those behaviors characterizing a follower and organizational level. The null hypothesis was there is no difference in measures of follower behaviors relative to organizational level. Data was collected using The Followership Profile (TFP) questionnaire which Dixon (2003) designed specifically for his study. The TFP is a 56-item Likert-scaled self-assessment instrument of courageous follower behaviors. The response options are 1 (*to little or no extent*), 2 (*to a slight extent*), 3 (*to a moderate extent*), 4 (*to a great extent*), and 5 (*to a very great extent*). The TFP was found to be reliable, Cronbach's alpha 0.956 and Pearson product moment correlation 0.739. Non-parametric procedures was used since the data was categorical (e.g., good, better, best; effective or ineffective; yes or no) and did not meet parametric requirements. For each of the follower behaviors, the executive level had the highest mean response of 3.95, followed by the supervisor and middle manager at 3.74 and 3.80, and then the operation level at 3.60. The null hypothesis was rejected. Overall, Dixon (2003) concluded that followership was evident at various organizational levels.

The study proved beneficial for scholars and practitioners. First, the study involved the creation of the TFP. Dixon's (2003) TFP is the only instrument to measure courageous follower behaviors. Dixon (2006) later recognized the need to modify the TFP and developed a 20-item short-form survey instrument which is also being used in the present study. The short form also yielded high reliability, Cronbach's alpha 0.904. Secondly, practitioners could use the study to promote followership and reward systems that create a desire for demonstrating effective followership behavior. Since follower behaviors appeared strongest at the executive level, executives could build organizational

value for followership and incorporate the concept of followership into the organization's culture and practices (Dixon, 2003).

Dixon (2003) also noticed a weakness in the data analysis. Kruskal-Wallis test was used to demonstrate whether or not relationships exist between organizational levels and courageous followership. As a result, the Krsuskal-Wallis test was not able to identify which behaviors had a relationship with the independent variable (organizational level), only that one or more of the behaviors had a relationship with the independent variable. The use of bivariate correlation analysis could be useful in future studies. The newness of the test instrument is another concern. Therefore, further testing in other populations could produce additional validity and reliability scores.

In another study, Dixon teamed with Jerry Westbrook and replicated the study he conducted in his dissertation. Dixon and Westbrook (2003) conducted a quantitative correlational study among a random sampling of 299 engineers and technology workers from several multi-level U.S. governmental agencies. The purpose of their study was to empirically identify the existence of followership at all organizational levels. The null hypothesis was courageous followership is evident only at the lower organizational levels. Data was collected using the TFP survey instrument created by Dixon (2003). The Pearson's *r* between the TFP and the five dimensions of courageous followership was 0.739. Cronbach's alpha measurement was 0.969 and indicated strong consistency. The results mirrored Dixon's (2003) study. For each of the follower behaviors, the executive level had the highest mean response of 3.96, followed by the supervisor and middle manager who both had a mean score of 3.78, and then the operation level at 3.60. The null hypothesis was rejected. Overall, the researchers concluded that a conceptual

understanding of followership existed at all levels of the organization with the highest level of understanding at the executive level (Dixon & Westbrook, 2003).

The study of Dixon and Westbrook (2003) advanced the followership literature by providing additional validation for the use of the TFP as an instrument to measure courageous followership behaviors. For practitioners, the study provided a foundation for establishing followership metrics that could be used to further evaluate member performance. Senior executives and middle managers/supervisors demonstrated greater understanding of followership than lower levels. Dixon and Westbrooks's (2003) findings is also relevant for the present study. The sample of senior noncommissioned officers (followers) represent middle managers and supervisors. Since middle managers were knowledgeable of followership, as demonstrated in Dixon (2003), and Dixon and Westbrook (2003) studies, it was assumed that the sample population in the present study will possess a similar awareness which will allow them to complete the TFP instrument and provide additional knowledge for the followership literature.

Dixon and Westbrooks's (2003) study was insightful but several limitations need mentioning. Only self-report questionnaires were used to test the hypothesis in the study. As noted by Kets de Vries et al. (2004), responses can be influenced by the social desirability factor and result in the respondent developing cognitive bias. Future research should include multi-methods to avoid self-reporting bias (Dixon, 2003). Second, the study used a cross-sectional design that precluded the possibility of determining causality and any certainty (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994). Lastly, the TFP instrument requires further validation since it was the second time used in a study among a similar population

29

as the first study. Estimating validity using a different population could provide additional data for validity and reliability (Dixon, 2003; Hernon & Schwartz, 2009).

In another quantitative study, Ray (2006) also used a correlational design to support Dixon's (2003) findings that courageous followership was evident at various organizational levels. Ray (2006) sought to examine the correlation between courageous follower behaviors and administrative hierarchical levels in the North Carolina Community College System. The hierarchical levels included senior administration, middle administration, and lower administration. The 56-item TFP (Dixon 2003) was used to collect data from 412 administrators in three hierarchical levels at 57 North Carolina community colleges. The researcher did not provide any reliability and validity data. The null hypothesis for the study was follower behaviors and hierarchical levels are not related. One-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to test the mean differences between the levels of the independent variable (hierarchical level with three categories) and their effect on courageous followership behaviors (Ray, 2006). Evidence from the statistical analysis rejected the null hypothesis. The results indicated that the mean responses for follower behaviors were higher for all behaviors as the level of administrative responsibility increased. Senior administrators had the highest follower mean responses, and middle administration consistently had higher follower behaviors mean responses than lower administration.

Ray's (2006) study contributes to researchers and practitioners in several ways. For example, since senior administrators had the highest follower behaviors, they could possibly lead in the establishment of follower recognition and development programs, establish an organizational quality improvement program, and provide special training for

lower administration levels. Training for the lower administration could increase the awareness of the importance of the top down/bottom up approach to organizational effectiveness (Ray, 2006).

To the followership literature, Ray (2006) was able to support Dixon's (2003) findings that courageous follower behaviors could be recognized, measured, and developed. The study also added support to Dixon's (2003), and Dixon and Westbrook's (2003) studies that a statistically significant difference exists between organizational levels and measures of follower behaviors. In other words, members at the executive levels of an organization possess a greater awareness or demonstration of courageous follower behavior. Finally, this study addressed the call of Dixon (2003) to address the validity and reliability concerns of the TFP by using the instrument in a different population and setting. However, and as previously stated, the reliability and validity data was not provided in the study.

Dixon (2006) later recognized the need to shorten the TFP and developed a 20-item survey that also demonstrated high reliability, Cronbach's alpha 0.904 and Gutman split-half 0.893. The current study used the 20-item survey that was also utilized by McClure (2009), Rich (2008), and Muhlenbeck (2012). In her dissertation, McClure (2009) utilized the 20-item TFP in a non-experimental, ex post facto quantitative study to examine the relationship between organizational role and self-attribution of courageous follower behavior. In a survey of 378 leaders and followers in a privately held real estate investment company, McClure hypothesized that "there is a relationship between organizational role and courageous follower behaviors" (2003, p. 172). Since the variables in the study were ordinal, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to

31

test the relationship. The results indicated that having role experience was significantly and positively related to all five dimensions of courageous followership. Cronbach's alpha test was also conducted for the scales and the results were as follow: (a) courage to assume responsibility, $a = 0.609$, (b) courage to serve, $a = 0.701$, (c) courage to challenge, $a = 0.642$, (d) courage to participate in transformation, $a = 0.707$, and (e) courage to take moral action, $a = 0.497$.

The study contributed to researchers and practitioners. To the followership literature, it provided additional support for the 20-item TFP as a valid instrument to measure courageous followership behavior. The study offered insight for management to provide followership as part of individual and professional development programs. McClure (2009) did note that generalization of the findings was limited due to self-reporting bias, the use of a convenience sample, and the inability to ensure multiple completions of the research instrument did not occur.

Rich (2008) also used the 20-item TFP in a quantitative correlational study to examine the relationship between courageous follower behavior and supervisor's satisfaction with employee's performance. Rich (2008, p. 51) hypothesized that "there is a relationship between a supervisor's perception of an employee's display of courageous follower behaviors and supervisor's satisfaction with the employee's performance." Data was collected from 221 supervisors from the Chamber of Commerce in Southeastern Michigan. To test the relationship between the variables, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated and revealed a significant positive correlation between supervisor's satisfaction with employee performance and (a) courage to take responsibility ($r = 0.780$, $p < 0.001$), (b) courage to serve ($r = 0.657$, $p < 0.001$),

32

(c) courage to participate in transformation ($r = 0.658$, $p < 0.001$), (d) courage to challenge ($r = 0.586$, $p < 0.001$), and (e) courage to take moral action ($r = 0.507$, $p < 0.001$). Reliability data was not mentioned in this particular study.

The study was insightful for practitioners and researchers. On a practitioner level, the results indicated an opportunity for improved employee-supervisor relationship in the area of two-way feedback to where clear expectations for both parties can be discussed. To the followership literature, the study provided additional support for the use of the 20-item TFP to measure courageous followership behavior among a different population such as diverse business professionals. Along with these implications, Rich (2008) also noted a few limitations in the study. First, the use of spam blocker by the corporate office may have reduced to amount of participants in the study. In addition, the majority of the respondents rated themselves as being at least high performers which could have been a result of social desirability bias.

In another quantitative correlational study, Muhlenbeck (2012) examined the relationship between hope and the five dimensions of courageous followership. The null hypothesize was there will be no correlation between hope and the five dimensions of courageous followership. The 20-item TFP was used to collect data from 126 healthcare professionals. To analyze the data, Pearson's r were calculated and revealed a significant positive relationship between hope and the following courageous followership dimensions: (a) courage to assume responsibility ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.01$), (b) courage to serve, ($r = 0.221$, $p < 0.01$), (c) courage to challenge ($r = 0.340$, $p < 0.01$), (d) courage to participate in transformation ($r = 0.473$, $p < 0.01$), and (e) courage to take moral action,

33

($r = 0.293$, $p < 0.01$). The null hypothesis was rejected. Muhlenbeck did not perform reliability testing for the 20-item TFP.

The study was insightful for researchers and practitioners. For researchers, the study bridged several schools of thought to include positive psychology and leadership and demonstrated that the 20-item TFP could measure courageous followership behavior. The study also helps practitioners and leaders recognize the attitudes and efforts of followers and how better leader-follower relationships can help achieve the common purpose of the company.

Along with these implications, Muhlenbeck (2012) noted several limitations. First, the sample was small and limited to one industry and in turn effected generalization. Second, the study assumed an American philosophy of followership and could have very little bearing on a global level. Finally, the likelihood of rater bias was high since the assessment was self-administered.

Leader-Follower Relational Studies. Since the emergence of followership as a field of study, scholars such as Howell and Shamir (2005) have suggested researchers examine the relational aspect of leaders and followers. The leader-follower relationship through the lens of the follower continues to be minimally addressed (Baker, 2007). According to Hollander (1992), the follower's perspective of the leader has proven to be useful in understanding leadership. Ricketson (2008) and Colangelo (2000) specifically addressed the relationship between leadership style and follower behavior as perceived by the follower and used follower-centric models. The present research mirrors those studies in terms of focusing on the followers' perspective.

34

In a quantitative correlational study, Ricketson (2008) explored the relationship of the transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, and laissez-faire leadership style with the five dimensions of courageous followership behavior: courage to assume responsibility, courage to serve, courage to challenge, courage to participate in transformation, and the courage to take moral action. Dated was collected from a sample of 21 leaders and 80 followers in five different, nationally known quick-service restaurants. Leadership styles were measured by the leader's responses to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (1995). Courageous followership behaviors were measured by the follower's responses to the 56-item TFP developed by Dixon (2003).

The researcher chose to use propositions rather than hypothesis due to the exploratory nature of the study (De Vaus, 2001). The following propositions were explored:

(1) There is a relationship between transformational leadership style and the five dimensions of courageous followership;

(2) There is no relationship between transactional leadership style and the five dimensions of courageous followership;

(3) There is no relationship between laissez-faire leadership and the five dimensions of courageous followership; and

(4) There is a relationship between the sums of the MLQ set of variables and the TFP set of variables (Ricketson, 2008, p. 9).

The data collected was not a continuous random variable and the assumptions for Pearson *r* could not be met. Therefore, Spearman's rho correlation was performed (Ricketson,

35

2008). Bivariate correlation analysis was used and revealed a significant negative

correlation between laissez-faire leadership style and the courage to participate in

transformation ($r = -0.261$, $p < 0.05$). Canonical correlation analysis was also used to

measure the strength of the relationship of the sums of the MLQ set of variables and TFP.

Canonical analysis revealed a minimal relationship between the three leadership styles

and the five dimensions of courageous followership. The first canonical correlation was

statistically significant ($r = 0.477$, $p < 0.05$). However, the second and third canonical

correlations ($r = 0.239$, $p < 0.05$ and $r = 0.181$, $p < 0.05$) were even lower. The data

provided no support for Proposition 1 that a relationship exists between transformational

leadership and the five courageous followership dimensions. The data indicated support

for Proposition 2 that there is no relationship between transactional leadership and

courageous followership behaviors. No support was found for Proposition 3 that there is

no relationship between laissez leadership and courageous followership. Finally, the data

provided statistical support for Proposition 4 that there is a relationship between the sums

of the MLQ set of variables and TFP even though it is minimal. Ricketson (2008)

concluded that courageous followers behave according to their own characteristics

regardless of the leader's leadership style. These findings also challenged traditional

leadership theories that viewed follower behaviors as dependent variables affected by the

leader (Dvir & Shamir, 2003). In addition, it supported Chaleff's (2003) claims that

courageous followers do not hold a paternalistic image of the leader or organization and

do not need the leader to act.

Ricketson's (2008) study demonstrated the importance for leadership theorists to

recognize active and independent behaviors of effective and courageous followers. For

example, the theory of transformational leadership views the leader as the catalyst in the development of dynamic leader-follower relationships. Ricketson's (2008) findings revealed no relationship between transformational leadership and courageous followership behavior. However, additional research using the same variables but with different populations and geographical areas is needed to validate these findings. The present study fills this gap. Another potential area for future study is the followers' role in transformational leadership. For practitioners, Ricketson (2008) suggested training that would help transactional managers develop a more transformational leadership style to determine if a change in courageous follower behavior would occur. This could also help determine if manager training enhances employee job satisfaction and productivity.

Several limitations were noted in Ricketson's (2008) research. The self-reporting nature of the research instrument may have influenced the data. The researcher also used a convenience sample that consisted of restaurants in close proximity to his residence. The selection limited the study to restaurants located in the suburbs of a major southern metropolitan city. Finally, the sample size of managers ($n = 21$) and employees ($n = 80$) met the minimal number of employee observations (e.g., 10 observations for each variable) to fulfill the requirements of canonical correlation analysis (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1998).

The examination of leader-follower relationships using the courageous follower model is severely lacking. The aim of the present study is to fill that gap. However, another study that is important to the current discussion on leader-follower relationship is the research conducted by Colangelo (2000). In contrast to Ricketson's (2008) study, Colangelo (2000) utilized Kelley's (1992) followership model. In a quantitative

37

correlational study, Colangelo (2000) examined the relationship between the immediate supervisor's leadership and follower's followership style among 567 United States Air Force senior airmen (paygrade E4) who attended airmen leadership school at three locations of the United States Air Force European Command. The dependent variable in the study was followership style which consisted of active engagement, critical thinking, passion (Kelley, 1992) and team mindedness (Colangelo, 2000). The independent variable was leadership style and consisted of autocratic (low in relationship and high on task), democratic (high on relationship and either high or low on task), and laissez faire leaders (low on relationship and low on task). Kelley's (1992) followership survey was used to measure the dependent variable and Hersey's (1993) LEAD Other questionnaire was used to measure the independent variable. The major hypothesis was that supervisors' leadership style is significantly related to followership among United States Air Force senior airmen stationed in Europe. In order to be significantly related, leadership style had to be significantly related to all four components of the followership scale. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed and revealed that leadership style was not significantly related ($a = 0.34$, $p < 0.05$) at the bivariate level to the critical, independent component of the followership survey. Therefore, the major hypothesis was rejected. However, the supervisor's leadership style was found to be statistically significant at the bivariate level on three of the four followership subscales: active engagement, passion, and team mindedness ($a = 0.00$, $p < 0.05$). Critical, independent thinking was the only subscale of followership for which no significant differences were found among participants with different styles of leaders. It was concluded that critical, independent thinking was not dependent upon leadership style and

38

that courageous followers behave according to their own characteristics regardless of the leader's leadership style which is supported by Ricketon's (2008) findings.

The findings of Colangelo's (2000) study advanced the followership literature by identifying leadership styles that influence follower behavior such as active engagement, team-mindedness, and passion. The study has its limitations because no reliability and validity data was available for Kelley's (1992) followership survey and Hersey's (1993) LEAD Other questionnaire. In addition, generalization of the findings is limited to military populations. Nevertheless, military practitioners could find this study useful in the creation of training programs designed to develop followership along with leadership in professional military education programs.

Colangelo's (2000) findings regarding the democratic leadership style and follower behavior is of special interest. Democratic leaders demonstrate high relationship behaviors with followers which is similar to that of transformational leaders (Burns, 1978). It can be argued that a similar correlation may exist between the variables of the present study: transformational leadership and courageous followership. Colangelo (2000) suggested investigating the leader-follower relationship at the Noncommissioned Officer Academy which is the second level of professional military education. The present study examined participants who attended advanced professional military education for enlisted members. The SNCOs (followers) represent the top tier of the enlisted force and serve as middle managers and leaders and may possess a greater awareness of followership, as Dixon and Westbrook (2003) observed in their study of the different organizational levels.

39

Agho's (2009) quantitative correlational study also provided support for Dixon and Westbrook's (2003) and Ray's (2006) findings that leaders at the executive levels of an organization possess great awareness or understanding of followership. Specifically, Agho (2009) surveyed 302 senior level executives from various for-profit and non-profit organizations to examine the similarities and differences between the distinct characteristics of effective leaders and followers along with the perspective on leader-follower relationships. A survey was created which used Kouzes and Posner's (1990) characteristics of superior leaders along with general statements regarding importance of effective followership. Specific instrument validity and reliability data was not provided. Spearman's rank order correlation was used and revealed that a significant relationship ($r = 0.89$, $p < 0.01$) between the characteristics of superior leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 1990) and the respondents' rankings of effective leadership. There was no significant relationship ($r = 0.20$, $p > 0.05$) between the characteristics of superior leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 1990) and the characteristics of effective followers reported by the respondents. In addition, there was no significant relationship ($r = 0.39$, $p > 0.05$) between the respondents' rankings of characteristics of effective leaders and effective followers.

Agho (2009) also found that 99% of the respondents believed that good leadership enhances followers and 94% believed good followership enhances leaders. He noted that 77.5% of the respondents believed more attention needs to be paid to the follower's role in the leadership process and that 74.8% agreed that effective followership is a prerequisite to effective leadership. It was also observed that 99% of the respondents agreed that effective leaders and effective followers (Kelley, 1992) can influence organizational outcomes.

As previously noted, the perspective of these senior executives supported Dixon and Westbrook's (2003), Dixon's (2003), and Ray's (2006) findings that members at the executive level of organizations possess a great understanding of followership. These findings also supported the assumption in the present study that the senior noncommissioned officers (respondents) had a heightened awareness of followership due to experience and positions at the upper echelons of military organizations. The findings also have theoretical and practical implications.

The study advanced the body of knowledge on followership by validating the importance and significance of followers and followership as a field of study. A significant number of the senior executives viewed effective followership as a prerequisite to effective leadership which was also in support of Kelley's (1992) argument. From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that managers should focus on the development of effective followers as a condition for organizational success. Organizational leaders should also consider developing cultures that cultivate effective leader-follower interactions and follower involvement. By adopting these views, leaders and followers can assume shared responsibility for organizational success and failures (Agho, 2009; Chaleff, 2003). In regards to limitations, the data and methods were not robust enough to permit generalization of the findings or conclude a causal relationship between leadership and followership (Agho, 2009).

Another quantitative correlational study examining the leader-follower dyad from the follower's perspective was that of Brumm and Drury (2013). The purpose of their study was to examine whether there was a relationship between leaders' strategic planning and empowerment of followers. Data was collected from an online panel of 256

41

followers from organizations across the United States to obtain their perception of their supervisor's long-term planning behavior and how this in turn empowered them to be good or poor followers. A new survey was created to measure the supervisors' long-term planning and influence on an employee's sense of being empowered. As a special note, the followership behavior questions were formed around several followership models to include Chaleff's (2003) courageous followership model, Kellerman's (2008), and Kelley's (1992). Cronbach's alpha test was conducted for the 12 strategic planning items ($a = 0.941$), the seven positive followership items ($a = 0.923$) and the seven negative followership items ($a = 0.944$) and demonstrated strong reliability. The researcher hypothesized the following:

(1) There is a relationship between followers' perception of their leaders' good long-term planning and followers' perception of their leaders' influence toward positive follower behavior; and

(2) There is a relationship between followers' perception of their leaders' poor long-term planning and followers' perception of their leaders' influence toward negative follower behavior (Brumm & Drury, 2013, p. 19)

To test the overall relationship between these variables, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated and revealed a significant positive linear relationship between strategic planning and positive followership ($r = 0.810$, $p < 0.001$). Hypothesis 1 was supported. A significant negative correlation was found ($r = -0.655$, $p < 0.001$) between leaders who received a low rating on their long-term planning and negative followership which in turn indicated a statistically significant linear relationship between the two concepts. The finding regarding the positive relation between strategic planning

and positive followership supports Colangelo's (2000) finding of the positive relationship between democratic leaders and positive followership such as active engagement, team-mindedness, and passion.

These findings are relevant to the present study in two ways. First, it supported this study's hypothesis that a relationship exists between leadership style and followership behavior as perceived by the follower. Secondly, Brumm and Drury (2013) noted that initiating communication about the plan, seeking followers' input, providing goals, and training were aspect of long-term planning. These aspects correlate with transformational leadership behaviors (Bass, 1985). Brumm and Drury (2013) also indicated these aspects of long-term planning are related to having followers who will stand for what is right, support the leader, take initiative, and seek good working relationships which are all characteristics of Chaleff's (2003) courageous followership model. This provided added support for the hypothesis in the present study that a relationship exists between transformational leadership and courageous followership.

The findings of Brumm and Drury (2013) also has practical and theoretical implications. On the practical level, the findings demonstrate the positive effects initiating communication has on empowering followers to execute responsibilities. It addition, the findings help leaders' identify possible steps to take pertaining to their leadership behaviors to help improve follower performance. On the theoretical level, the study enhanced the leadership and followership literatures by providing a linkage between leadership planning and empowering followers. While these implications are beneficial, attention must be given to the limitations. As noted by Brumm and Drury (2013), even though Cronbach's alpha was relatively high for the new instruments,

43

additional studies are required to support validity and reliability. Future studies should consider a mix method approach to provide a more in-depth qualitative study that could enhance the understanding of the reader. Finally, the sample frame was limited to internet users and therefore excluded those followers that were not computer users.

Notgrass (2014) also took a follower-centric approach and conducted a quantitative correlational study to examine the relationship between the followers' perception of quality of relationship with their leaders (independent variable) and the followers' preferred leadership style (dependent variable) from their leaders. Data was collected from 105 certified public accountants (CPA) working in diverse United States companies with more than 1000 employees. The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX-7) questionnaire and the MLQ (Form-5X) were used to measure the followers' perceptions of the quality of relationship and the followers' preference for transformational or transactional leadership behaviors. The researcher hypothesized the following:

(1) There is a relationship between the follower's perceived quality of relationship with the leader and that the follower's preference for transformational leadership style from that leader; and

(2) There is a relationship between the follower's perceived quality of relationship with the leader and that the follower's preference for transactional leadership style from that leader (Notgrass, 2014, p. 61).

Pearson's r and two-tailed t test analyses revealed a positive, significant correlation between the quality of relationship and followers' preference for transformational leadership style ($r = 0.268$, $p < 0.05$) which provided supported for Hypothesis 1. There was no significant correlation between quality of relationship and

44

followers' preference for transactional leadership behavior ($r = 0.037$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2 was not supported at the composite level. However, bivariate analysis revealed a positive significant correlation between the followers' perception of quality of relationship and the followers' preference for contingent reward dimension of transactional leadership ($r = 0.352$, $p < 0.05$). These findings are consistent with other studies (Tyssen, Wald, & Sven Heidenreich, 2014; Zhu, Riggio, Avolio, & Sosik, 2011) that demonstrated the greater effect transformational leadership has overall in relation to transactional leadership in leader-follower relationships. The findings also shed support for the hypotheses in present study that a correlation may exist between transformational leadership style and courageous followership behavior, and transactional leadership style and courageous followership.

The limitation noted in the study pertained to the population and statistical test used to examine the correlation between the variables. The sample was drawn from professional CPAs throughout the U.S. The unique professional and educational requirements of this population prevented generalization of the findings. The Pearson's *r* statistical analysis was able to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables but was not able to determine any type of causal effect.

Along with these limitations, several theoretical and practical implications are noted. On the theoretical level, the study advanced the followership literature by providing the followers' perspective of the leader-follower relationship as suggested by other follower-centric scholars (Chaleff, 2003; Herold, 1977; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Kelley; 1992). On a practical level, leaders can enhance the quality of the relationship with their followers by incorporating transformational behaviors. In addition, the

followers' preference for supporting and clarifying leadership behaviors (e.g., contingent rewards) demonstrate the need for leaders to utilize this type of behavior as well to enhance the quality of leader-follower relationships.

Methodology

Ricketson (2008) and Colangelo (2000) used quantitative correlational methods to examine the relationship between variables and to test the specific followership theory. As noted by Allwood (2012), quantitative research is a means for testing variables and the correlation among them supports the present study's use of a quantitative design. The present study also advances the followership literature by using Pearson's r correlation. Ricketson (2008) utilized bivariate correlational analysis and canonical correlation analysis to examine the relationship between the scores on the MLQ and the TFP. Colangelo (2000) utilized a one-way ANOVA to determine whether leadership style was significantly related to each dimension of followership.

As in Brumm and Drury's (2013), and Notgrass's (2014) studies, Pearson's r correlation was used in the present study to determine the relationship between the supervisor's transformational leadership style or transactional leadership style and the follower's courageous followership behavior. Both variables were measured by the follower. The variables were measured using the MLQ and TFP, both of which are Likert-type scales. Controversy continues to exist regarding the measurement of Likert data as ordinal or interval (Jamieson, 2004; Norman, 2010). Likert data is traditionally viewed as ordinal data and typically depart from linear and normal distributions which in turn violates parametric assumptions making non-parametric methods more appropriate (Jamieson, 2004). While individual Likert items or questions may be ordinal, Likert-type

46

scales, which consist of sums across many questions may be interval (Norman, 2010). Carifio and Perla (2008) posit that it is appropriate to sum Likert items and analyze the sums parametrically using the means and standard deviations. It is also appropriate to use Pearson's *r* using the summative ratings (Carifio & Perla, 2008; Murray, 2013). Finally, Norman (2010) found that Pearson's *r* is robust enough to handle cases of non-normality regardless of the scale type.

  Summary. Studies have shown the existence of courageous followership behaviors in organizations (Dixon, 2003; Dixon & Westbrook, 2003; Ray, 2006). However, the examination of the leader-follower relationship from the follower's perspective using the courageous followership model is sparse. Prior to the present study, Ricketon (2008) was the only researcher to examine this phenomenon using Chaleff's (2003) model. Colangelo (2000) examined the leader-follower relationship using Kelley's (1992) followership framework. Even though the studies employed two different followership models, the findings in both studies revealed minimal correlation between leadership style and follower behavior. In other words, followers can act independent of leader influence. However, Notgrass (2014), and Brumm and Drury (2013) found that transformational leadership behaviors and transactional contingent reward behaviors were significantly related to positive followership behaviors. Additional testing among different populations in different geographical areas using different statistical models is needed to support these mixed findings.

47

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles have a significant impact on the quality of the leader-follower relationship. Leader-centric studies have shown that transformational leadership and transactional leadership have a positive impact among a wide range of follower behaviors such as engagement, development, moral and ethical values, and support (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). Even though the models are leader-centric, they focus on the reciprocal nature of the leader follower relationship and the importance of the follower. What follows is a brief overview of transformational and transactional leadership (also known as the Full Range Leadership Model) developed by Bass and Avolio (1997) and related leader-follower studies.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was introduced by Burns (1978) and expanded upon by Bass (1985), Bass and Avolio (2002). According to Burns (1978) transformational leaders facilitate mutual trust and respect between leaders and followers. Trust between leader and follower is crucial in the transformational relationship. Chaleff (2003) observed that in order for courageous followers to serve the leader, trust must exist between the two. As a result, the follower can serve in the role of defender, protector, and confident to the leader. Chaleff (2003) also notes that the very success of the leader-follower relationship may weaken a leader. For example, insularity may occur when leaders become comfortable and trusting with their closest followers and may cause both parties to lose perspectives and freshness of ideas (Chaleff, 2003).

Avolio and Bass (2002) also identified five dimensions of transformational leadership which provide an environment for courageous followership behavior. First,

48

idealized influence (attribute) describes how the leader demonstrates certain qualities that cause followers to take pride in their association with the leader. Leaders who display idealized influence set high standards for moral and ethical conduct among followers. This behavior by leaders enables followers to exhibit the courage to take moral action (Chaleff, 2003). Second, idealized influence (behavior) describes how the leader communicates values and purpose of the organization. When values and purpose are clearly articulated, courageous followers are apt to serve and assume responsibility for the success of themselves, the leader, and the organization (Chaleff, 2003). Third, inspirational motivation characterizes how the leader exhibits optimism about the vision and future of the organization. Fourth, intellectual stimulation describes the extent to which the leader encourages follower participation in innovation and creativity. According to Chaleff (2003), leaders appreciate when followers present them with ideas that could make a huge difference to the success of the organization. As a result, courageous followers energetically search for innovative and creative solutions to organizational challenges (Chaleff, 2003). Lastly, individualized consideration describes how the leaders try to meet followers' needs either as a mentor or coach. The other leadership style that focuses on the reciprocal nature of the leader-follower relationship is transactional leadership.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is an exchange relationship between leaders and their followers to satisfy agreed upon goals (Bass, 1985). The three dimensions of transactional leadership dimensions are contingent reward, management by exception-active, and management by exception-passive. Contingent reward is an exchange

49

between leaders and followers in which the leader attempts to obtain agreement from follower on what needs to be done and the reward for doing what needs to be done (Northouse, 2007). Leaders who practice management by exception in its active form monitor behavior, anticipate problems, and take action before the behavior becomes too serious (Howell & Avolio, 1993). Management by exception in its passive form occurs when leaders wait until the behavior becomes a problem and then take action (Howell & Avolio, 1993). Both active and passive use negative reinforcement to impact follower behavior.

In their study on transactional leadership, Zhu, Sosik, Riggio, and Yang (2012) observed that when leaders and followers find the exchange mutually rewarding, a positive relationship between the two develops which in turn contributes to the follower's identification with the organization. Organizational identification is concerned with the member's perception of oneness with an organization and its effect on followers' supportive behaviors for realizing the organization's objectives and goals (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hekman, Steensma, Bigley, & Hereford, 2009). If so, the relationship between transactional leadership and courageous followership could be realized. For example, Chaleff (2003) posits that effective leader-follower relationships enable courageous followers to assume responsibility and even take moral action for the sake of the organization. In his study of leaders and followers in the quick service restaurant industry, Ricketson (2008) noted a positive correlation between transactional leadership and the follower's courage to take moral action ($r = 0.214$, $p < 0.05$). He implied that followers who are managed by transactional leaders had a greater propensity to take a stand against the leader (Chaleff, 2003). This finding along with the negative

50

correlations between transactional leadership style and courage to assume responsibility (r = -0.096) and the follower's courage to challenge (r = -0.089) captured the impact the transactional leadership style has on the member's courageous follower behavior.

Transformational vs. Transactional. Transformational and transactional leadership are often viewed as opposite leadership styles when in all actuality, they represent the full range of leadership options available to leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1997). Even though they complement each other, differences do exist. Transactional leadership is based on an economic exchange and expects followers to achieve agreed upon objectives. In addition, transactional leaders do not encourage followers to assume greater responsibility for developing themselves or others (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). In contrast, transformational leadership is based on social exchange and more concerned with assessing follower's motives, satisfying their needs, an envisioning expansion of the follower's future responsibilities (Dvir, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2007; Robbins & Judge, 2009). Though empirically separable, both styles are displayed by effective leaders (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). In addition, scholars have also suggested that transformational leadership augments transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivsubramaniam, 1996).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Bass and Avolio (1995) developed the MLQ Form 5X to measure transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership behaviors. The MLQ 5X is a 45-item survey that uses a five-point Likert scale which allows respondents to rate their leaders. The response options are 0 (*not at all*), 1 (*once in a while*), 2 (*sometimes*), 3 (*fairly often*), and 4 (frequently, if not always). According to Avolio and Bass (2004), the reliabilities for the total items for the

transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership styles ranged from 0.70 to 0.84 (*n* = 12,118). The MLQ was appropriate for this study because it is the only instrument designed to collect and measure the transformational and transactional leadership variables examined in the present study.

Criticisms of Transactional and Transformational Leadership.

Researchers have identified several criticisms of transactional leadership. First, transactional leadership is not effective when time constraints cause subordinates to sacrifice quality of work to meet deadlines (Komaki, 1981). The support of followers is exchanged for incentives and therefore may be viewed as manipulated (Bass, 1985). The theory is also criticized by scholars because it utilizes a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership which disregards the situational and contextual factors affecting organizational challenges (Yukl, 1999; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Yukl (1999) also noted that the underlying influences of transactional and transformation leadership are vague, and the theories would be much stronger if the essential influence processes were clearly identified. Other critiques of the transformational theory include the overemphasis on the dyadic process and not on leader influence on group processes, and ambiguity about transformational and transactional behaviors (Yukl, 1999). Bass and Riggio (2006) also observed that the transformational leadership theory does not particularly recognize the characteristics or initiative of the followers. There is an interest on improving the quality of the leader–follower relationship, but it is still leader-centric and views followers in a narrow manner (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

52

Related Studies

In a longitudinal, randomized field experiment, Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002) tested the impact of transformational leadership on follower development and performance in the Israeli Army. The sample included 54 military leaders, their 90 direct followers, and 724 indirect followers. The experimental group leaders received enhanced transformational leadership training and the control group leaders received eclectic leadership training. Of the 54 military leaders, 32 had gone through the experimental workshops and 22 were in the control workshops. The researchers used Kelley's (1992) followership model to measure follower development in the area of critical independent thinking and active engagement and hypothesized the following:

(1) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on the development of

followers' motivation in terms of their self-actualization needs and extra effort;

(2) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on the development of

followers' morality in terms of their internalization of their organization's moral

values and a collectivistic orientation;

(3) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on the development of

followers' empowerment in terms of their critical-independent approach, active

engagement in the task, and specific self-efficacy; and

(4) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on follower performance

(Dvir et al., 2002, p. 736).

Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) and covariance (MANCOVA) were used to test whether the treatment affected development and performance. The results revealed that the transformational leaders in the experimental group had a greater

53

impact on direct and indirect followers' performance and development than the leaders in the control group. The results also confirmed Kelley's (1992) and Chaleff's (2003) argument that leadership plays an important role in creating cultures that allow followers to exhibit critical-independent thinking and active engagement. Agho (2009) agreed and stated that organizations can create cultures that foster effective and courageous followership by encouraging leaders to adopt leadership styles (i.e., transformational) that embrace the fruitful interaction between leaders and followers. The findings in Dvir et al.'s (2002) study lend support to the hypothesis in the present study that there is a relationship between transformational leadership and courageous followership.

By using the experimental design, Dvir et al. (2002) was able to demonstrate causal relationship between transformation leadership and follower development which has been rarely demonstrated because most prior studies used static, correlational, or non-experimental designs (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). However, due to the homogeneous nature of the military sample (all were men aged 18-22), the results could not be generalized to other settings. Replication of the study in civilian organizations with mixed populations could provide different results.

In another quantitative correlational study, Zhu, Avolio, and Walumbwa (2009) examined whether follower characteristics moderated the relationship between transformational leadership and follower work engagement. Data was obtained from 140 senior managers (i.e. followers) and their 48 supervisors (executive managers) from various industries in South Africa. The 48 managers were rated by two to five followers who used the MLQ to rate the manager's leadership style. The executive managers utilized Kelley's (1992) followership construct to measure their follower's active

54

engagement and critical-independent thinking. The researchers hypothesized the following:

> (1) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on the development of followers' motivation in terms of their self-actualization needs and extra effort;
>
> (2) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on the development of followers' empowerment in terms of their critical-independent approach, active engagement in the task, and specific self-efficacy;
>
> (3) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on the development of followers' morality in terms of their internalization of their organization's moral values and a collectivistic orientation; and
>
> (4) Transformational leadership has a positive impact on followers' performance (Zhu et al., 2009, p. 596).

Hierarchical linear modeling revealed that positive follower characteristics and transformational leadership were positively related to follower work engagement. These findings support the studies of Dvir and Shamir (2003) and Shamir and Howell (2000) who found that followers who are more proactive in work setting or possess more positive characteristics are more likely to take greater responsibility and initiative, and take on more challenges. Chaleff (2003) made similar assertions that courageous followers demonstrate the courage to assume responsibility.

Zhu et al.'s (2009) study had theoretical and practical implications. For instance, the findings suggest that the followers' personal beliefs can explain the positive influence transformational leadership has on their levels of work engagement and performance (Zhu et al., 2009). As the interest in followership increases, research objectives should be

55

aimed at the effects of positive follower characteristics in the leader-follower relationship. In the present study, courageous followership, which is a positive characteristic, was examined. The findings regarding the relationship between followers who rate themselves as courageous followers and transformational leadership behaviors could potentially fill this gap. From a practical standpoint, leaders should consider the different types of followers they lead which in turn will shape how they motivate followers to perform. For instance, a leader who has followers who perceive themselves as having positive characteristics (i.e., initiative, critical-independent thinking, innovative, courage), may delegate more authority and responsibility to that follower which in turn promotes effective followership (Chaleff, 2003; Kelley, 1992).

While these results are encouraging to the study of followership, potential weaknesses were observed. The data collected for ratings of leadership and work engagement was from followers and may have caused an inflated relationship because of the potential single source or methods effect (Zhu et al., 2009). Data from future studies should be obtained from different sources over different periods of time. Finally, follower work engagement is a measure of work attitude and not an indication of the measure of work performance (Zhu et al., 2009).

Another quantitative study that proved insightful to the present study was conducted by Zhu, Riggio, Avolio, and Sosik (2011). Zhu et al. (2011) conducted a correlational study and an experimental study to examine the effects of transformational and transactional leadership behaviors on followers' moral identify. The first study was a correlational study in which they utilized survey data obtained from 672 respondents who held an assortment of managerial positions within a variety of industries. The MLQ

instrument along with a newly developed instrument to measure moral identity (Cronbach's $a = 0.91$) were used. The researchers hypothesized the following:

(1) Transformational leadership has a positive effect on followers' moral identity;

(2) Transactional leadership has a positive effect on followers' moral identity; and

(3) Transformational leadership has a larger positive effect on follower' moral identity than does transactional leadership (Zhu et al. 2011, p. 153).

Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that transformation leadership had a positive relationship with follower moral identity ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$) and transactional leadership was also positively related ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$) with follower moral identity and supported Hypotheses 1 and 2. Based on the significant difference between the two regression coefficients (0.29 vs. 0.17), Hypothesis 3 was supported.

The second study was a web-based experimental study that consisted of 215 teachers from several public schools in the Midwest. The purpose of this experiment was to also examine the effects of transformational and transactional leadership behaviors on followers' moral identify. The hypotheses used in the survey study were also used in the experimental study. The researchers randomly assigned the respondents to one of the two experimental conditions (transformational leadership or transactional leadership). The respondents read a short story about the principal and then rated the principal's leadership style as well as their own moral identity. ANOVA revealed similar results as the survey study. Transformational leadership ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and transactional leadership ($r = 0.16$, $p < 0.05$) were significantly correlated with follower moral identify and supported Hypotheses 1 and 2. Hypothesis 3 was also supported by these findings. The results from the survey study and experimental study demonstrated transformational and

transactional leadership had a positive effect on followers' moral identity and that transformational leadership had a larger positive effect than transactional leadership. A recent study conducted by Tyssen et al. (2014) which follows this discussion supports these findings. The findings also support the present study's hypothesis that there is a relationship between transformational leadership and courageous followership. According to Chaleff (2003) courageous followers possess the courage to take moral action which will allow them to confront unethical leadership behavior.

The study by Zhu et al. (2011) has theoretical and practical implications. The researchers contributed to the literature on transformational leadership by being the first to examine the effect of transformational and transactional leadership on follower's moral identity. In addition, the study contributed to the followership literature by providing a new scale for follower moral identity. On a practical level, the study demonstrated that by modeling high moral standards (transformational behaviors), managers can strengthen their follower's moral identity and influence the follower's ethical decision-making behaviors. Managers can also influence follower moral identity by setting standards and clear expectations (transactional behaviors).

Along with these implications are limitations. For example, common method variance could be an issue since all the questions were answered by the same respondent. The construct of moral identity could use additional clarity to distinguish between a relational-level moral identity and organizational-level moral identity. In spite of these limitations, the experimental design was able to identify the causal effects of leadership on follower behavior.

58

Tyssen et al. (2014)4) also used a quantitative correlational design to empirically test the effects of transactional and transformational leadership on the followers' commitment in projects. Data was obtained from 163 respondents (followers) who were members of the International Project Management Association (IPMA) in Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. The respondents were asked to provide their subjective perspectives of the project's characteristics and the perception of the project leader's behavior. The researchers hypothesized the following:

(1) Transactional leadership has a positive effect on a follower's commitment to the project;

(2) Transformational leadership has a positive effect on a follower's commitment; and (3) Transformational leadership has a stronger positive influence on a follower's commitment to the project than transactional leadership (Tyssen et al. 2014, p. 378).

The MLQ was used to measure transformational and transactional leadership. Tyssen et al. (2014) used Herscovitch and Meyer's (2002) construct to measure affective commitment to change with a 5-point Likert-type scale. Data was tested by applying structural equation modeling and revealed that transformational ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$) and transactional leadership ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.01$) were positively related to follower's project commitment and that transformational leadership had a stronger positive influence than transactional leadership. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were supported. These findings replicated the results found in Zhu et al.'s (2011) study. The findings also support the present study's hypothesis in that there is a relationship transformational leadership and

59

courageous followership. According to Chaleff (2003), courageous followers assume responsibility and are committed to the organization's shared values and purpose.

These findings also have theoretical and practical implications. On a theoretical level, articulating higher goals of a project (i.e., transformational leadership), exerts a positive influence on the success of the project by establishing higher level of commitment. On a practical level, project managers must recognize the importance of both leadership styles in regards to the effective administration of the project and focusing on the needs of the project team members.

However, a few limitations deserve mentioning. The respondents measured both leadership style and follower commitment which could lead to common method variance as an area of concern. Procedural and statistical remedies minimized these concerns. It was suggested that future research utilize a dyadic design. Due to time restraints, organizational officials prevented the researchers from using the complete scales measuring transformational and transactional leadership.

Summary

Transformational and transactional leadership theories highlight the relational aspects of the leader-follower dyad. Transactional leadership is based on an economic exchange where the leader sets goals, provide feedback and clarity, in exchange for rewards for accomplishment (Dvir et al. 2002). In contrast, transformational leadership is based on social exchange and more concerned with assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, an envisioning expansion of the follower's future responsibilities (Dvir, et al., 2002; Northouse, 2007; Robbins & Judge, 2009). Criticisms of the two model exist. However, studies have shown (Dvir et al., 2002; Tyssen, et al., 2014; Zhu,

60

et al., 2009; Zhu, et al., 2011) the positive influence transformational and transactional leadership has on follower performance and development. These findings extend the knowledge of transformational leadership and transactional leadership and provide useful implications for leaders in their interaction with followers.

Chapter Summary

In an effort to provide a foundation for the present study on the relationship between courageous followership and leadership styles, a brief historical overview of followership was presented followed by the various definitions of the term follower and followership. This chapter also discussed seminal and recent studies related to courageous followership along with a discussion on transformation and transactional leadership and related studies. For scholars who used follower-centric models, empirical evidence demonstrated mixed results regarding the relationship between leadership style and follower behavior. For example, Colangelo (2000) found that leadership styles was significantly related to followers' active engagement, team-mindedness, and passive; but leadership style was not significantly related to critical, independent thinking. Ricketson (2008) found no significant relationship between the sums of the MLQ set of variables and The Follower Profile. The findings in both of these studies suggest followers act independently of the leader. More recent studies (Brumm & Drury, 2013; Notgrass, 2014) revealed significant positive relationship between transformational/transactional leadership behaviors and follower behaviors and preferences. In light of the criticism and limitations noted with these studies, they all advance the followership literature by providing the followers' perspective of followership and leadership.

61

As previously noted, the role of followers in the leader-follower dyad was often examined using leader-centric theories such as transformational and transactional leadership. Both of these models address the relational aspect between followers and leaders. Studies conducted by Dvir et al. (2002), Zhu et al. (2009), Zhu et al. (2011) and Tyssen, et al. (2014) demonstrate the positive impact transformational leadership has on follower performance and development. The results of these studies advanced the leadership literature by providing leadership factors that influence the leader-follower relationship. However, the current study contributed to the scarce research on courageous followership; specifically, the follower's perspective of the leader-follower relationship and leadership influence.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study explored the relationship between leadership style (transformational and transactional) and courageous followership behavior among senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 – E8) in the United States Air Force from the followers' perspective. This chapter discusses the selection of the research design, population, sample, and setting. Specifically, the selection of the quantitative correlational design is discussed and justified. A discussion on the instruments used to collect the data is presented followed by data collection procedures, and data analysis. Finally, validity and reliability issues, along with the ethical considerations are addressed.

Research Design

The current non-experimental quantitative correlational study utilized Pearson's *r* correlational analysis to examine the linear relationship between leadership style and courageous followership behavior. The research question along with the sub-questions that guided the study are:

(1) What is the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and the leader's leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(1a) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transformational leadership style as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(1b) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transactional leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

The hypotheses along with the sub-hypotheses of the present study are:

Ho$_1$: There is no significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ha$_1$: There is a significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ho$_{1.1}$: There is no significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ha$_{1.1}$: There is a significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ho$_{1.2}$: There is no significant correlation between the transactional leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ha[1.2]:   There is a significant correlation between the transactional leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Correlation analysis was appropriate in the current study because it is a statistic that is designed to measure the strength of a linear relationship between two quantitative variables (Miller et al., 2011). In addition, correlation analysis does not imply cause and effect (Elliott & Woodward, 2007) but only that a correlation existed. Since the hypotheses in this study did not imply that leadership caused courageous followership behavior but only that a correlation between the two variables may or not have existed, the use correlational analysis was justified.

Based on a review of the literature, quantitative correlational analysis was used in many studies to examine the relationship between leadership style and follower behavior. For example, Ricketson (2008) conducted a quantitative correlational analysis to examine the relationship between leadership style and courageous follower behavior among 21 leaders and 80 followers in five different, nationally known quick-service restaurants. Similarly, Brumm and Drury (2013) conducted a quantitative study via correlational analysis to examine the relationship between leaders' strategic planning and empowerment of followers among 256 followers from diverse organizations across the United States. Notgrass (2014) also utilized quantitative correlational analysis in his examination of the relationship between the followers' perception of relationship with their leaders and the followers' preferred leadership style from their leaders. These studies, along with others (Dixon & Westbrook, 2003; Ray, 2006), supported the research design used in the present study. Specifically, this non-experimental, correlational study

65

utilized Pearson's *r* correlation to determine the linear relationship between leadership style and courageous followership behavior.

Utilizing quantitative research methods is also indicative of a post-positivist viewpoint. As noted by Veliquette (2012) and Hatch and Cunliffe (2006), the underlying ontological foundation for post-positivists is that reality and ultimate truth exist and can be partially understood because it is impossible for precise measurement and observations. It addition, postpositivism recognizes that human behavior makes it difficult to isolate cause and effect (Sharma, 2010). As a result, the correlational design was ideal because it did not imply cause and effect. The present study adopted this line of thinking and utilized survey instruments to measure leadership styles and courageous followership behaviors of the respondents. Surveys provide a format for obtaining information regarding participants' attitudes and beliefs (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). Data was collected and analyzed to accept or reject the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant correlation between leadership style of supervisors and followers' courageous followership behavior. According to Mertens (2008), the epistemological perspective for post-positivists is that objectivity is imperative and achieved through the elimination of all forms of bias. Data for the present study was collected using an online instrument administered by a third-party company called Qualtrics. The researcher had no contact with the respondents which minimized any bias to the participants. As a result, the study followed the assumptions held by post-positivists.

Population/Sample

The target population for this study consisted of senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8) serving in the United States Air Force. Senior noncommissioned officers (SNCOs) are experienced, operational leaders skilled at merging personal talents and other team functions to accomplish the mission of the organization (AFPAM 36-2241, 2011). Senior noncommissioned officers serve as followers and leaders and as middle managers within the Air Force organizational structure.

The sample frame consisted of senior noncommissioned officers attending professional military education training. This training prepares SNCOs from the Air Force, Navy, Army, Marines, and Coast Guard to lead the enlisted force in the employment of air, space and cyberspace power in support of national security objectives (AFPAM 36-2241, 2011). SNCOs are assigned throughout the 10 major commands in the Air Force and various military branches. Each major command and military branch is given a quota to send SNCOs to attend professional military education that ensures a broad representation of SNCOs from the overall Air Force SNCO population as well as the other military branches. As a basis for inclusion, the participants were senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8) attending professional military education, a member of the United States Air Force, male or female, and come from a variety of Air Force career specialties, and have over 10 years of military service in the United States Air Force.

Sample Size

The study examined the relationship between leadership styles and courageous followership behavior. Based on the target population, a sample size for the present

67

study was determined using a-priori power analysis, the G*Power 3.1 program (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). Since the research questions were based on correlation, the correlation statistical test was selected. The hypotheses for the study were non-directional and dictated the use of a two-tailed test. The effect size of .30 was based on Cohen's (1992) tests where he indicated for human behavioral sciences research, Pearson's *r* coefficients from 0.10 to 0.30 are considered small effects, 0.30 to 0.50 are considered medium effects, and 0.050 to 1.00 are considered large effects. The confidence level was set at 95% and the recommended power level was set at 0.80 (Field, 2009). Based on the inputted data, a sample size of 82 participants was required. Table 2 shows the data used to determine the sample size.

Table 2. *G*Power Analysis*

Input Parameters	Output Parameters
Two Tails	Non-centrality parameters ($\hat{\delta}$) = 2.84
Effect size |p| = 0.30	Critical t = 1.99
A error probability = 0.05	DF = 80
Power (1-β error probability) = 0.80	Total Sample Size = 82
	Actual Power = 0.803

Sampling Strategy

A simple random sampling technique was used to select participants from the sampling frame that consisted of senior noncommissioned officers attending professional military education. With simple random sampling, each person has an equal probability of being selected from the population which in turn ensures the sample is presentative of

68

that population (Patten, 2012). Those who met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate in completing the survey. A total of 98 respondents participated in the study.

Instrumentation/Measures

The present study used an online, self-report survey instrument administered by Qualtrics and consisted of three parts. Part I consisted of demographic information which included gender, age, race, education, job description of primary job, grade, time in grade, and time in service. Part II measured courageous followership behavior and used the TFP (Dixon, 2003; 2006) which consisted of 20 Likert-type items. The TFP uses a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (*to little or no extent) and 5 (to a very great extent).* Part III measured leadership style using the 45-item Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Short Form 5X (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The MLQ also uses a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 0 *(not at all)* to 4 *(frequently, if not always)*. The survey took about 10-20 minutes to complete.

The Follower Profile

The Follower Profile (TFP) was utilized in the current study because it is the only instrument that measures the five dimensions of courageous followership behavior (Dixon, 2003) which is a variable in the current study. The TFP was developed by Dixon (2003) in consultation with Chaleff (2003) and is based on the courageous followership behaviors described by Chaleff (2003) as the courage to serve, the courage to assume responsibility, the courage to take moral action, the courage to participate in transformation, and the courage to challenge. Permission to use the TFP was granted by Dixon. The 56-item TFP is a self-rating, forced-choice instrument that uses a 5-point

69

Likert-type scale. The response options are 1 (*to little or no extent*), 2 (*to a slight extent*),

3 (*to a moderate extent*), 4 (*to a great extent*), and 5 (*to a very great extent*). Cronbach's

alpha for the 56-item version was 0.956 and demonstrated strong internal reliability. In

the addition, the Gutman split-half measure was 0.934 (Dixon, 2003). Dixon (2006) later

recognized the need to shorten the TFP and developed a 20-item survey that also

demonstrated high reliability, Cronbach's alpha 0.904 and Gutman split-half 0.893.

Questions pertaining to each courageous followership dimension for the 20-item version

are listed in Table 3. In regards to the courage to serve, Dixon (2006) recognized the

limited number of questions for this dimension but based on factor analysis, these items

were capable of producing meaningful results.

Table 3. *Courageous Followership Dimensions and Related Questions*

Dimension	Related Questions	Number of Questions
1. Courage to Assume Responsibility	2, 6, 8, 16, 17, 19	6
2. Courage to Serve	7, 11, 12, 13, 14	5
3. Courage to Challenge	15, 18	2
4. Courage to Participate in Transformation	1, 3, 4, 10	4
5. Courage to Take Moral Action	5, 9, 20	3

Note. From the Relationship of Organizational Level and Measures of Follower
Behaviors, by E. N. Dixon, 2006, Union Township, NJ. Adapted with permission.

Dixon and Westbrook (2003), Ray (2006), Ricketson (2008) utilized the 56-item

TFP instrument and their findings were presented in Chapter 2, the literature review of

the current study. The current study used the 20-item survey that was also utilized by

McClure (2009), Rich (2008), and Muhlenbeck (2012) to obtain data to address the following research question: What is the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and the leader's leadership styles as measured by Senior Noncommissioned Officers in the United States Air Force?

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Short Form 5X)

The MLQ was developed to measure the full range of leadership model that consists of transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidant leadership styles (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass & Avolio, 1995; Burns, 1978). The instrument has undergone several revisions to its current form. Permission to use the MLQ was granted by Mind Garden, Inc. and purchased for up to 150 licenses. The MLQ was selected for use in this study because of its ability to measure transformational and transactional leadership behaviors. Another instrument that measures transformational leadership is the Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI) by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990). Even though the TLI has shown factorial, discriminant, and predictive validity, it has received little attention in research literature (Hardy, Arthur, Jones, Shariff, Munnoch, Isaacs, & Allsopp, 2010). However, the MLQ is one of the most popular instruments used to measure transformational and transactional leadership behaviors and is used for ratings of supervisors from peers and followers in any organization or industry (Avolio & Bass, 2004). It addition, the MLQ includes items that measure the leader's effect on the follower's personal and intellectual development (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The MLQ consists of 45 Likert-type items that measure transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidant leadership behaviors (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The five

71

factors that measure transformational leadership are idealized influence attributed and behavior, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. The two factors that measure transactional leadership are contingent reward, and management by exception (active) The passive avoidant scales consist of the additional 17 items. The response options are 0 (not at all), 1 (once in a while), 2 (sometimes), 3 (fairly often), and 4 (frequently, if not always). The MLQ was reported to have reliability numbers ranging from 0.70 to 0.84 (N = 12,118) (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The dimensions (transformational and transactional) and statements relevant to this study are noted in Table 4.

Table 4. *MLQ Leadership Styles and Related Questions*

Dimension	Related Questions	Number of Questions
1. Transformational	2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36	20
2. Transactional	1, 4, 11, 16, 22, 24, 27, 35	8

.

The scales of the MLQ were used to address the following research questions:

(a) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transformational leadership style as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(b) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transactional leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

72

As previously noted, the MLQ is the most used instrument by researchers and doctoral students to measure transformational and transactional leadership behaviors (Avolio & Bass, 2004, Hardy et al. 2010). Dvir et al. (2002), Zhu et al. (2011), and Tyssen et al. (2014) are among the thousands who have used the MLQ instrument and their findings are reported in Chapter 2 of the current study.

<div align="center">

Data Collection

</div>

The target population of this study were U.S. Air Force senior noncommissioned officers SNCO) attending advanced military education. In order to participate in the study, participants had to be an Air Force SNCO (pay grades E7 - E8), male or female, and from diverse Air Force career specialties. The advanced professional military education is for senior noncommissioned officers from diverse career specialties to develop their leadership skills. The site was used because of its ability to gather SNCOs into one location. The class size was 222 students and was an ideal sample size for the present study. Permission was granted to conduct the study by HQ Air University and HQ USAF Research & Oversight Compliance Division. Coordination was made with the site point of contact (POC) to administer the electronic survey to potential participants. Survey technology by Qualtrics was used to create an electronic survey. Using Qualtrics's secure server was advantageous because of its ability to maintain the participants' privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity as suggested by Cooper and Schindler (2011). In addition, the quick turnaround time for completed data invaluable for this study. The study package included a cover letter, a brief introduction of the study a consent form, and survey link which were e-mailed by the site (POC) to the potential

participants. The data collection started on January 14, 2015 and after a few reminders

for participation ended on February 12, 2015. The data was coded on an EXCEL®

spreadsheet and transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for data

analysis. Data was saved on a separate password protected flash drive and stored in a

locked filing cabinet at the researcher's home which is only accessible by the researcher.

The data will be maintained for a period of seven years and then destroyed.

Data Analysis

Missing Data Analysis

Prior to any treatment of these missing items, Little's (1988) test of missing

completely at random (MCAR) was performed is SPSS. MCAR is a pattern of

missingness that results from a process totally unrelated to the variables in the study or

from a completely random process (Little, 1988; Newman, 2014). Since the missing data

was MCAR at the construct level, the maximum likelihood (ML) missing data technique

was used as recommended by Norman (2014). The expectation maximization (EM)

function in SPSS version 22 which is one of several ML approaches, was used to estimate

various parameters which were then used to estimate the missing scores (Schlomer,

Bauman, & Card, 2010). ML and EM are unbiased under MCAR, and when there is a

sizeable amount of construct-level missingness, EM outperforms listwise and pairwise in

regards to the reduction of missing data bias and error (Enders, 2010; Newman, 2003;

Newman, 2014). Based on these findings, EM was used to address the missing items in

the current study.

74

Further Data Analysis

The study also utilized SPSS version 22 to analyze the correlation between the variables leadership style and courageous followership behaviors. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic information. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses in this study. Correlation coefficients measure the strength of a linear relationship between two variables (Elliott & Woodward, 2007). On the other hand, correlational studies do not equate to causation. The assumptions associated with Pearson's r include normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, interval variables, and that outliers are kept to a minimum or removed (Hair et al., 1998). Normality is the assumption that the data collected is normally distributed. To determine if the data was normally distributed, SPSS was used to produce the (Q-Q plots) graphs and histograms. If the values fall on the diagonal of the plot than the distribution is considered normal; however, deviations from the diagonal indicate a deviation from normality (Field, 2009). An alternative statistical model is the Spearman's rho which is a non-parametric test and could be used if the data have violated parametric assumptions (Field, 2009).

Linearity refers to the extent that two variables form a straight line when plotted on a graph (Field, 2009). SPSS was used to produce a scatterplot to determine linearity. As noted by Elliott and Woodward (2007), using a scatterplot is necessary because it is possible that a correlation coefficient may seem important when examination of the data could reveal something to the contrary. Homoscedasticity refers to the equality of variance and can also be detected using a scatterplot (Vogt, 2007).

Another assumption made with respect to Pearson's r is that the variables must be interval or ratio measurements. Data for courageous followership, transformational

75

leadership, and transactional leadership were collected using the TFP and MLQ, both of which are Likert-type scales. According to Norman (2010) and Carifio and Perla (2008), Likert-type scales, which consist of sums across many questions, can be interval and thereby analyzed parametrically. The variables in the current study were calculated as linear sums and measured at the interval level (See Table 5).

Table 5. *Research Variables*

Variable	Level of Measurement
Transformational Leadership	Interval
Transactional Leadership	Interval
Courageous Followership	Interval

Controversy continues to exist regarding the measurement of Likert data as ordinal or interval. Likert data is traditionally viewed as ordinal data and typically departs from linear and normal distributions which in turn violates parametric assumptions and makes the use of non-parametric methods more appropriate (Jamieson, 2004). However, Murray (2013), Norman (2010), and Carifio and Perla (2008) argued that while individual Likert items or questions may be ordinal, Likert-type scales, which consist of sums across many questions may be interval. The variables were tested for normal distribution using the Shapiro-Wilk test and visual inspection of their histograms, normal Q-Q plots and box plots. The data for courageous followership was normally distributed. The distribution for transformational and transactional leadership was not normal. However, researchers such as Pearson (1931), Dunlap (1931), and Havlicek and Peterson (1976) used theoretical distributions to show that Pearson's *r* is very insensitive

76

to extreme violations of the basic assumptions of normality and the type of scale. Most recently, Norman (2010) confirmed these results with real scale data. Based on these conclusions, the transformational and transactional leadership variables were included in the analysis since Pearson's *r* was robust enough to handle violations of normality regardless of the type of scale. However, Spearman's rho analysis was also performed and the results were very similar to the Pearson's *r* (see Table 10).

The last assumption deals with outliers. An outlier is a case that differ significantly from the main trend and can skew the data (Field, 2009). The scatterplot is also used to detect outlines. In cases where outliers exist, the case can be removed or data transformation can be performed (Field, 2009).

Validity and Reliability

The current study used the TFP and MLQ Form 5X which were existing instruments. The MLQ reported Cronbach's alphas ranging from 0.70 to 0.84 (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The TFP 56-item version was also found to be reliable, Cronbach's alpha 0.956 (Dixon, 2003). Dixon (2006) later modified the TFP to 20-items and had similar high reliability, Cronbach's alpha 0.904. The MLQ and TFP are both 5-point Likert scales. The use of 5-point and 7-point Likert scales are very common in research studies. Previous studies have suggested that 7-point scales are likely to show higher reliability that any other options (Wakita, Ueshmia, & Noguchi, 2012). However, Chang (1994) found that an increase in options does not always result in higher reliability. The use of Likert-type scales in this study minimized the threat to internal validity by consistently measuring what they were designed to measure (Hernon & Schwartz, 2009; Patten, 2012). The survey was also administered on-line which in turn minimized the

77

researcher's contact with the participants. Data was collected from a random sample which would typically allow for generalization of the findings. However, the current study does not have external validity because the findings cannot be extended beyond the research setting and sample (Bordens & Abbott, 2007). The sample in the current study was obtained from a military population thus limiting generalization to other military settings. In regards to reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the instruments used in the current study.

Ethical Considerations

Protecting human subjects is an important ethical principle that all researchers should uphold. As such, this researcher obtained permission from the Air Force to perform the study on its military personnel. Permission was also granted by the Capella Institutional Review Board prior to collecting data from participants. After gaining the necessary permissions, potential participants were provided with a summary of the study, a consent form, and a link to the survey questionnaire via email. They were assured of privacy and confidentiality since no participant or organizational specific identifiers was used to complete the survey. No experimentation was used and participants were not asked any questions that were personal or sensitive. Participants were also able to exit the survey at any time. The voluntary nature of the study was also stressed to ensure students were aware that the performance evaluations or grades were not contingent upon their participation in this study. The data collected in this study was analyzed and stored on a password protected flash drive and locked in a file cabinet that is only accessible to the researcher. The data will be maintained for seven years and then destroyed.

Summary

The study examined the relationship between leadership styles and courageous followership behavior and measured by Air Force senior noncommissioned officers. Qualtrics was used to collect survey data for the study. Based on the postpositivist perspective, a quantitative correlational research design was used in the current study. Specifically, Pearson's *r* was used to examine the linear relationship between the variables. Since this study was grounded in postpositivism, quantitative methods using survey instruments were appropriate in the current study. According to Miller et al. (2011), the use of quantitative methods in future research is important to further development of this design. As a result, the quantitative correlational method was appropriate for the present study.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the findings and analysis of the data collected to answer the research questions. The objective of this quantitative correlational study was to investigate the relationship between leadership style and courageous followership behavior from the followers' perspective who in this study were senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8) in the United States Air Force. The leadership styles included transformational leadership and transactional leadership. As noted in Chapter 3, Pearson's r was used to address the following research questions:

(1) What is the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and the leader's leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(1a) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transformational leadership style as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(1b) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transactional leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

The chapter begins with and a description of the population and sample. The next two sections provide a summary of the results followed by a detailed analysis for each of the hypotheses. Chapter 4 concludes with an overall summary of the chapter.

Description of the Sample

Missing Data Analysis

In the current study, the collected data revealed missing and incomplete data sets. Surveys were distributed to 222 potential participants, 98 of whom provided responses (response rate = 44%). Fifty-seven of these were fully completed surveys where the respondent answered every scale item (full response rate = 25%); whereas 41 of these were partially completed survey where the respondents answered some or none of the scales (partial response rate = 18%). The partial response surveys consisted of the following: (a) item-level missingness where the respondents left a few items blank; (b) construct-level missingness where the respondents answered more than zero but fewer than all of the items from a scale or construct; and (c) person-level missingness where respondents entered the survey but failed to respond to any part of the survey (Newman, 2014).

Prior to any treatment of these missing items, Little's (1988) test of missing completely at random (MCAR) was performed is SPSS. MCAR is a pattern of missingness that results from a process totally unrelated to the variables in the study or from a completely random process (Little, 1988; Newman, 2014). The data in the current study was found to be missing completely at random, ($a > 0.05$, $p = 0.190$). A total of 15 cases were categorized as person-missingness (Norman, 2014) and excluded from further

81

analysis because they started the survey and opted out or failed to answer a majority of the statements listed on the scales used in this study. A total of 83 cases were used for further analysis. Since the missing data was MCAR at the construct level, the maximum likelihood (ML) missing data technique was used as recommended by Norman (2014). The expectation maximization (EM) function in SPSS version 22 which is one of several ML approaches, was used to estimate various parameters which were then used to estimate the missing scores (Schlomer et al., 2010). ML and EM are unbiased under MCAR, and when there is a sizeable amount of construct-level missingness, EM outperforms listwise and pairwise in regards to the reduction of missing data bias and error (Enders, 2010; Newman, 2003; Newman, 2014). Based on these findings, EM was used to address the missing items in the current study.

Description of the Sample

The general population for the study were United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers in the pay grades of E7 and E8 (master sergeant and senior master sergeant). The sample was obtained from senior noncommissioned officers attending professional military training. Participants were asked to respond to a demographic survey, the MLQ Form 5X, and the TFP. The data was collected through the use of survey technology called Qualtrics. Out of 222 invitations, 83 surveys were completed resulting in a 37% response rate. The number of completed survey met the required sample size of 82 for sufficient power and significance.

Table 6 provides the frequency counts and percentages for the sample demographics. Of the 83 participants, 66% were male, and 65% of the respondents indicated they were white. Over half of the sample (56%) were between 30 to 39 years of

age. The majority of the sample were in the grade of E7 (73%) and 72% of the respondents (to include E7 and E8) indicated they held their current grade for 1 to 3 years. Approximately 84% of the respondents indicated their time in service at 16 years or greater. In regards to the type of job or occupation, 22% indicated other, with operational (19%) and maintenance (15%) rounding out the top three.

Table 6. *Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables*

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender			
Male	55	66.3%	66.3%
Female	28	33.7%	100.0%
Race			
White	54	65.1%	67.5%
African	9	10.8%	78.8%
American	4	4.8%	83.8%
Asian	7	8.4%	92.5%
Hispanic	6	7.2%	100.0%
Other			
Age	47	57.3%	57.3%
39-39	35	42.7%	100.0%
40 and up			
Pay Grade	60	73.2%	73.2
E7	22	26.8%	100.0%
E8			
Time in Grade	60	73.2%	73.2%
1 to 3	15	18.3%	91.5%
4 to 6	7	8.5%	100.0%
More than 7			
Time in Service			
10 to 15	13	15.9%	15.9%
16 to 20	50	61.0%	78.8%
21 or greater	19	23.2%	100.0%
Education			
Some College	38	46.9%	46.9%
College Grad	32	39.5%	86.4%
Grad work and	11	13.6%	100.0%
beyond			
Job			
Admin	7	8.4%	8.5%
Operational	16	19.3%	28.0%
Security	2	2.4%	30.5%
Maintenance	13	15.7%	46.3%
Logistics	6	7.2%	53.7%
Medical	8	9.6%	63.4%
Communications	8	9.6%	73.2%
Other	22	26.5%	100.0%

Note. Total sample size $N = 83$.

Summary of Results

Pearson's *r* was conducted to test the hypotheses of this study. The details of the findings are discussed in the next section. However, a summary of the findings is as follows:

$H_0 1$: There is no significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected

($r = 0.329$, $p = 0.002$).

$H_0 1.1$: There is no significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected ($r = 0.304$, $p = 0.005$).

$H_0 1.2$: There is no significant correlation between the transactional leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected ($r = 0.353$, $p = 0.001$).

Details of Analysis and Results

This section provides an explanation of how the scores for the variables were calculated and data analysis. The data analysis for the current study consisted of exploring the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and minimal outliers

85

(Hair et al., 1998). Cronbach's alpha tests were performed to confirm the reliability of the Followership Profile and the MLQ Short Form 5X used in this study. Finally Pearson' *r* was used to test the hypotheses. Results of the assumption tests and hypotheses testing are presented below. Prior to presenting the study results, an overview of how the variable scores were calculated is provided.

Calculation of MLQ Survey Scores

The MLQ Short Form 5X is a 45-item survey that measures the full range of leadership to include transformational, transactional, and passive avoidant leadership styles. Transformational leadership consisted of 20 statements which were equally distributed across the following five subscales: (a) idealized attributes, (b) idealized behaviors, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, and (e) individual consideration. Transactional leadership consisted of eight statements that were equally distributed across two subscales: (a) contingent reward and (b) management by exception (active). Management by exception (passive) and laissez-faire are considered passive avoidant leadership styles (Avolio & Bass, 2004, p. 123) and were not analyzed in the current study. The survey response options were 0 (*not at all*), 1 (*once in a while*), 2 (*sometimes*), 3 (*fairly often*), and 4 (*frequently, if not always*). Instructions for calculating the MLQ score were found in the MLQ manual (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The survey score is the average score for items on a particular scale. For example, the average score for idealized attributes would be the sum of the items on the scale divided by four. If the sum is 18, the average score would be $18 \div 4$ which equals 4.5.

86

Calculation of Courageous Followership Scores

Courageous followership consisted of the following five dimensions: (a) courage to assume responsibility, (b) courage to serve, (c) courage to challenge, (d) courage to participate in transformation, and (e) courage to take moral action. The response options were 1 (*to little or no extent*), 2 (*to a slight extent*), 3 (*to a moderate extent*), 4 (*to a great extent*), and 5 (*to a very great extent*). The score for a particular dimensions consisted of the sum for those items that made up that particular scale. The dimension courage to assume responsibility consisted of six questions and the amount of points the respondents could receive for that dimension was from six to 30 points. For example, if the respondent posted scores of 2, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 for the six items pertaining to courage to assume responsibility, then the total score for that dimension is 17. Courage to serve consisted of five questions and the amount of points available ranged from five to 25. Courage to challenge consisted of two questions and the amount of points available ranged from two to 10. Courage to participate in transformation consisted of four questions and the amount of points available ranged from four to 20. The courage to take moral actions consisted of three questions and the points available ranged from three to 15. The total composite score for courageous followership ranged from 20 to 100.

Table 7 are the measures of central tendency for the study variables. The most frequent score for courageous followership was 80 out of a possible 100. The most frequent scores for transformational leadership and transactional leadership were 3.75 and 3.38 out of 4.0.

Table 7. *Measures of Central Tendency*

Variable	*N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mode	Mean	Standard Deviation
Courageous Follower	83	56.49	96.00	80	78.62	8.51
Responsibility	83	18.67	29.00	23.00	23.94	2.66
Serve	83	5.0	25.00	20.00	19.92	3.39
Challenge	83	4.0	10.00	9.00	8.01	1.38
Transformation	83	11.0	20.00	17.00	16.30	2.01
Moral Action	83	5.0	15.00	10.00	10.42	2.04
Transformational	83	1.50	4.00	3.75	3.25	0.654
Transactional	83	1.75	4.00	3.38	3.05	0.588

Results of Assumption Tests

Normality assumption. Figures 2 – 7 illustrate the Q-Q plots and histograms for transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and courageous followership variables. To determine if the variables were normally distributed, the data plots must have fallen on the diagonal of the plot or formed a bell shape curve on the histogram. The data for transformational leadership (Figure 2) reflected a deviation from the diagonal line. Figure 3 indicated the distribution was skewed to the left with the mean score as 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. The graphic view indicated the data for transformational leadership was not normally distributed.
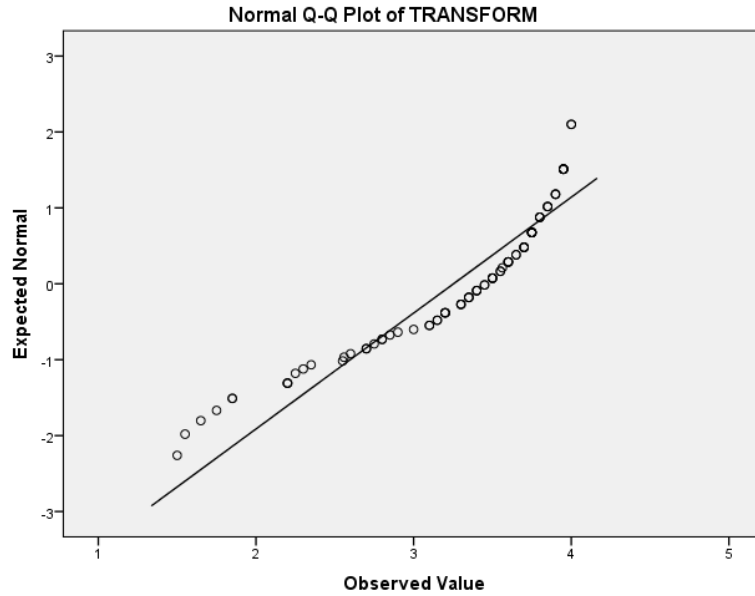
Figure 2. Observed versus predicted plot for transformational leadership.
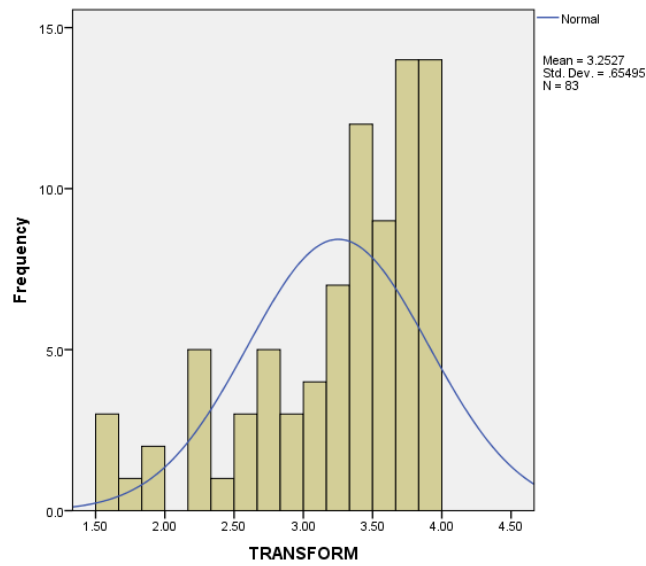

Figure 3. Histogram transformational leadership.

The Q-Q plot for transactional leadership (Figure 4) showed a slight deviation

from the diagonal line indicating non-normality. The histogram (Figure 5) also showed

89

that the distribution was skewed to the left. On a 4.0 scale, the mean score was 3.06.

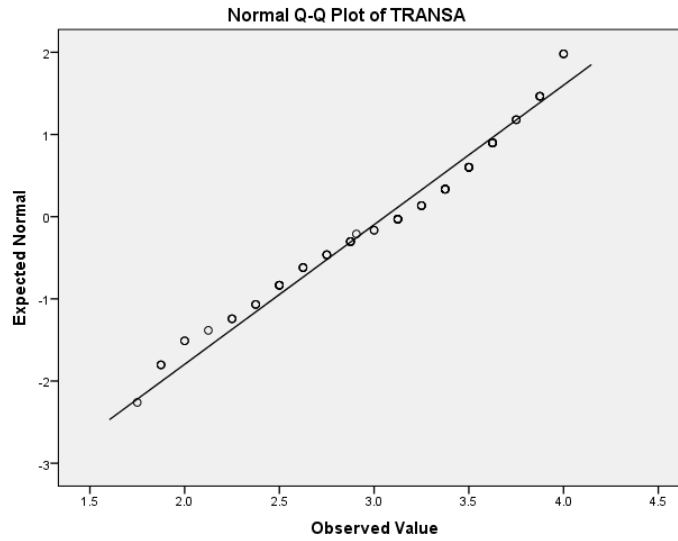Both figures indicated the data was not normally distributed.

Figure 4. Observed versus predicted plot for transactional leadership.
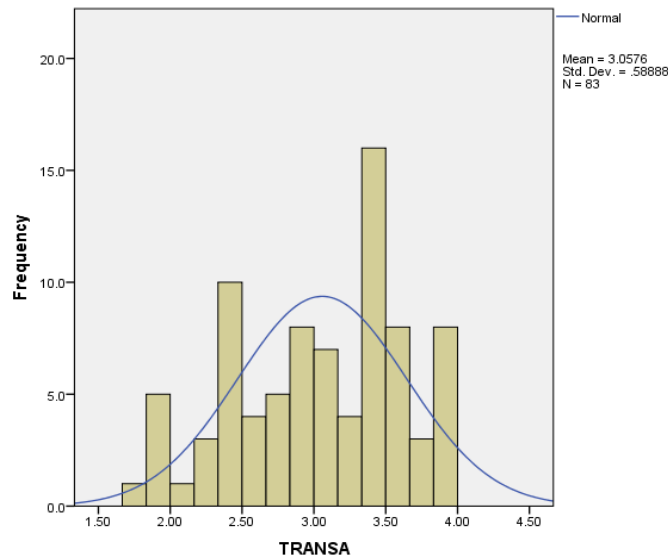

Figure 5. Histogram for transactional leadership.

The Q-Q plot courageous followership (Figure 6) indicated the data was normally

distributed. The plots were tightly grouped on the diagonal line. The histogram (Figure

7) also showed that the distribution was slightly skewed to the left. Out of a possible 100

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points, the mean score was 78.63 which explained why the high scores were distributed
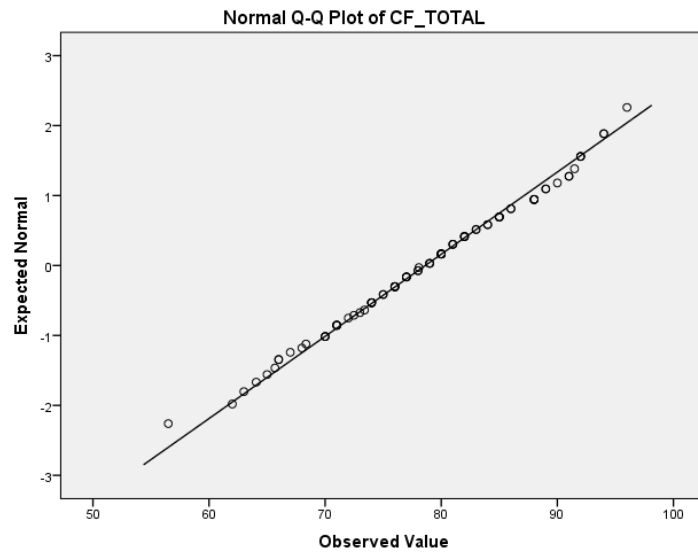
more to the right.

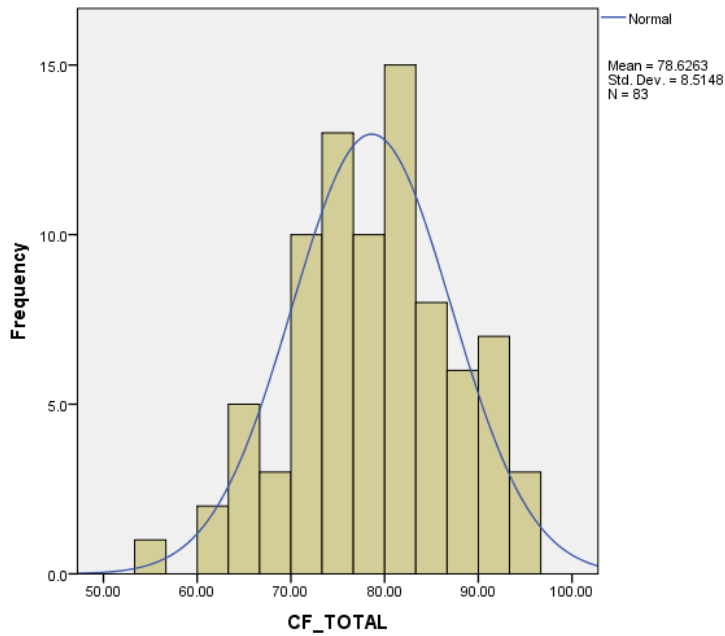*Figure 6.* Observed versus predicted plot for courageous followership.

Figure 7. Histogram for courageous followership.

The Shapiro-Wilk test was also used to test the normality of the data. The null hypothesis for this test of normality is that the data are normally distributed. If the $p = $ < 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected. As shown in Table 8, the p-value for courageous followership (0.741) and greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypotheses cannot be rejected. The p-values for transactional leadership (0.010) and transformational leadership (0.000) were less than 0.05 and therefore, the null hypotheses for these variables were rejected. However, Field (2009) noted that a significant result does not necessarily indicate whether the deviation from normality is enough to bias any statistical procedure. In addition, when normality assumptions are violated for parametric variables (as used in this study), Spearman's Rho is utilized instead of Pearson's r. However, Norman (2010) found that Pearson's r is robust enough to handle violations of normality regardless of the type of scale. Therefore, the use of Pearson's r for analysis was acceptable in the current study. For comparison purposes, Table 10 shows that the outputs for Pearson's r and Spearman's rho analyses were very similar for transformational and transactional leadership. These findings also support Murray's (2013) findings that the type of analysis conducted on Likert scale data does not affect the conclusions drawn from the results.

Table 8. *Shapiro-Wilk Test on Normality*

	Statistic	df	p-value
Courageous Followership	0.989	83	0.741
Transformational Leadership	0.876	83	0.000
Transactional Leadership	0.959	83	0.010

Note. Significance level at p-value < 0.05. $N = 83$

Linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions. Scatterplots were used to test the variables for linearity and homoscedasticity. In Figure 8, an upward linear trend was observed between courageous followership and transactional leadership, and courageous followership and transformational leadership. The assumption of linearity was met for these variables. Figures 9 – 11 demonstrated the data values were equally scattered to about the same extent and satisfied the assumption of homoscedasticity. Based on the review of Figures 9 – 11, the assumption of minimal outliers was also met.
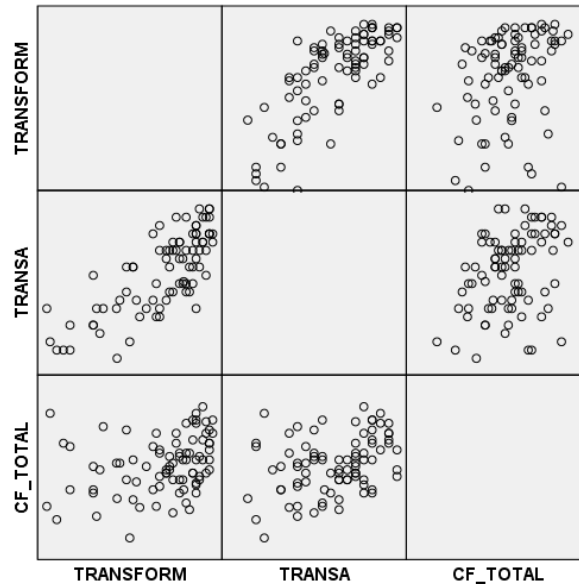

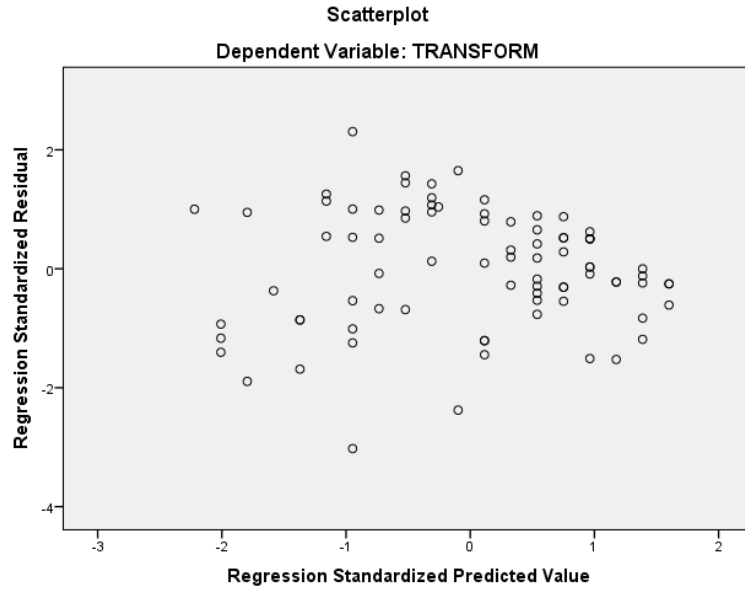*Figure 8.* Scatter plot matrix for linearity.

93

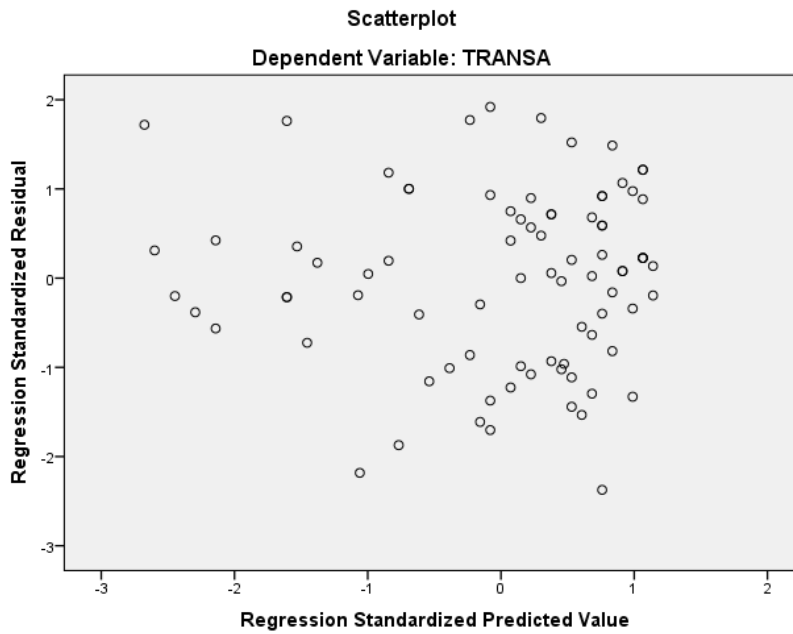*Figure 9.* Test for homoscedasticity transformational leadership.

Figure 10. Test for homoscedasticity transactional leadership.

94
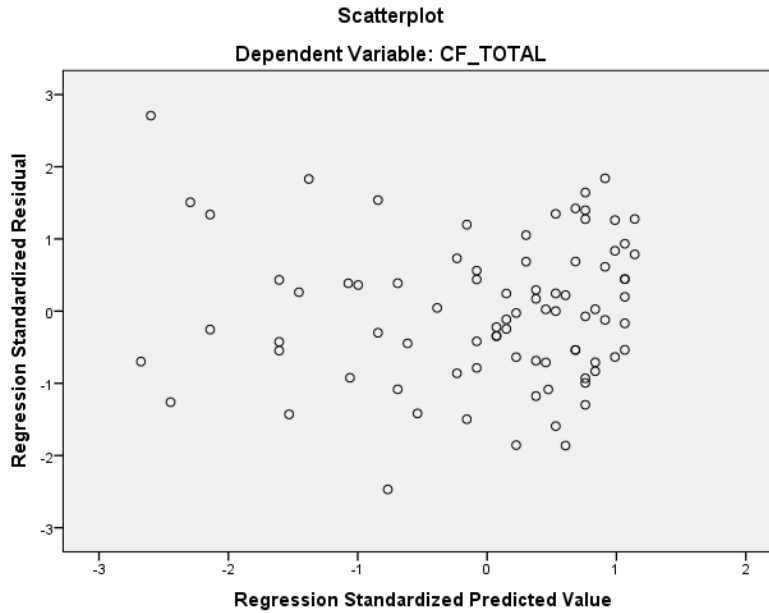
Figure 11. Test for homoscedasticity courageous followership.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted to determine whether the survey items were good measures of the constructs in the current study. Cronbach's alpha indicates overall reliability of an instrument. According to Kline (1999), alpha levels of 0.7 or greater are acceptable levels of reliability. Table 9 provides the results of this analysis. As noticed, the 20-item TFP was reliable in measuring the construct courageous followership (Cronbach's alpha = 0.753). The items for the MLQ were reliable for measuring the leadership constructs (Cronbach's alpha = 0.917).

Table 9. *Reliability Analysis of Constructs*

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No. Items
Courageous Followership	0.823	20
MLQ Leadership	0.917	28

95

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between courageous followership and leadership style (transformational and transactional). Correlation coefficients range from -1 and +1. Zero equates to no linear correlation. Cohen (1992) suggested that a coefficient of 0.10 is considered a small effect, 0.30 is a medium effect, and 0.50 is considered a large effect. SPSS software version 22 was used to perform the Pearson's correlation and Spearman's correlation analysis. As noted by Vogt (2007), a negative correlation indicates an inverse relationship whereas a positive correlation indicates a direct relationship where the variables tend to move in the same direction. A significant relationship existed between the variables if the p-value was less than 0.05. As previously indicated, the data for transformational leadership and transactional leadership violated the assumption of normality. According to Norman (2010), Pearson's r is robust enough to handle violations of normality regardless of the type of scale. However, for comparison purposes, the results of the Spearman's Rank was also included in Table 10 to demonstrate that the correlations were similar to Pearson's r.

Hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis indicated there was no significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. The alternative hypothesis proposed that there was a significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. As indicated in Table 9, the correlation

96

analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between courageous followership behavior and leadership style ($r = 0.329$, $p = 0.002$). Therefore, H_01 was rejected.

Table 10. *Pearson's r and Spearman's Rho Analysis Courageous Followership*

	Pearson's r	p value	Spearman's Rho	p value
Leadership (Transactional & Transformational	0.329	0.002	0.393	0.000
Transformational Leadership	0.304	0.005	0.365	0.001
Idealized Attributes	0.192	0.082	0.261	0.017
Idealized Behaviors	0.424	0.000	0.458	0.000
Inspirational Motivation	0.280	0.010	0.369	0.001
Intellectual Stimulation	0.216	0.050	0.243	0.027
Individual Consideration	0.259	0.018	0.295	0.007
Transactional Leadership	0.353	0.001	0.355	0.001
Contingency Reward	0.267	0.015	0.297	0.006
Management by Exception (Active)	0.290	0.008	0.282	0.010

Note. Significance level at $p < 0.05$. $N = 83$.

Hypothesis 1.1. The null hypothesis indicated there was no significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. The alternative hypothesis proposed that there was a significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

As shown in Table 10, the correlation analysis indicated a significant positive relationship existed between courageous followership behavior and the transformational

97

leadership style ($r = 0.304$, $p = 0.005$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

However, it was also noticed that no significant correlation existed between courageous

followership and idealized attributes ($p = 0.082$) or intellectual stimulation ($p = 0.050$).

The significance levels for these subscales were at or slightly above 0.05.

Further analysis was conducted to examine the correlation between

transformational leadership and the individual dimensions of courageous followership

(Table 11). A positive significant correlation existed between transformational

leadership and courage to assume responsibility ($r = 0.227$, $p = 0.039$,) and

transformational leadership and courage to serve ($r = 0.395$, $p = 0.000$). Since the p

values exceeded 0.05, there were no correlations between transformational leadership and

the dimensions of courage to challenge, courage to participate in transformation, and

courage to take moral action. Overall, there was a positive significant correlation

between transformational leadership and courageous followership ($r = 0.304$, $p =$

0.005).at the 0.05 level of significance. As previously indicated, $H_01.1$ was rejected.

Table 11. *Pearson's Correlation Analysis Transformational Leadership*

	Pearson's r	p value
Courageous Followership	0.304	0.005
Courage Responsibility	0.227	0.039
Courage to Serve	0.395	0.000
Courage to Challenge	0.066	0.552
Courage Transformation	0.196	0.076
Courage Moral Action	0.075	0.050

Note. Significance level at $p < 0.05$. $N = 83$.

98

Hypothesis 1.2 The null hypothesis indicated there was no significant

correlation between the transactional leadership style of supervisors and courageous

followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay

grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. The alternative hypothesis proposed

that there was a significant correlation between the transactional leadership style of

supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior

noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance. As

observed in Table 10, the correlation analysis indicated a significant positive relationship

existed between courageous followership behavior and the transactional leadership style

($r = 0.353$, $p = 0.001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Further analysis was conducted to examine the correlation between transactional

leadership and the individual dimensions of courageous followership (Table 12). A

positive significant correlation existed between transactional leadership and courage to

assume responsibility ($r = 0.326$, $p = 0.003$), and transactional leadership and courage to

serve ($r = 0.398$, $p = 0.000$). There were no correlations between transactional leadership

and the dimensions of courage to challenge ($r = 0.153$, $p = 0.168$), courage to participate

in transformation ($r = 0.166$, $p = 0.133$), and courage to take moral action ($r = 115$, $p =$

0.302) since the p values exceeded 0.05. Overall, there was a positive significant

correlation between transactional leadership and courageous followership ($r = 0.353$, $p =$

0.001) at the 0.05 level of significance. As previously indicated, $H_0 1.2$ was rejected.

Table 12. *Pearson's Correlation Analysis Transactional Leadership*

	Pearson's *r*	*p* value
Courageous Followership	0.353	0.001
Courage Responsibility	0.326	0.003
Courage to Serve	0.398	0.000
Courage to Challenge	0.153	0.168
Courage Transformation	0.166	0.133
Courage Moral Action	0.115	0.302

Note. Significance level at $p < 0.05$. $N = 83$.

Summary of Results

Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between the leaders' leadership style and followers' courageous followership behavior as measured by the followers who were in this study, United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (paygrade E7 - E8). The results indicated a significant positive relationship between courageous followership and leadership style at the 0.05 level of significance. Specifically, a significant positive relationship was found between courageous followership and transformational leadership as well as courageous followership and transactional leadership. All of the null hypotheses for the current study were rejected.

Chapter Summary

Data analysis was performed to examine whether a significant relationship existed between leadership style (transformational and transactional) and courageous

100

followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8). The random sample consisted of 83 respondents. As shown in Table 5, the majority of the sample were males (67%), and 73% of the sample were in the grade of E7. Over half of the sample were between the ages of 30 and 39 and a large percentage (85%) had over 16 years in the military.

The assumption of normality for Pearson's *r* was not met. Specifically, the histogram, Q-Q plots, and Shapiro-Wilk test statistic indicated the data for courageous followership was normally distributed but the data for transactional leadership and transformational leadership were not normally distributed. However, based on Norman's (2010) findings, Pearson's *r* is robust enough to handle violations of normality regardless of the type of scale. Based on these findings, Pearson's *r* was still used to analyze the data in the current study. For comparison purposes, Spearman's Rank was used to demonstrate the correlations were similar to the Pearson's *r* correlations. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were also satisfied in this study. In addition, reliability testing was performed on the TFP and MLQ. The Cronbach's alphas for the TFP and MLQ were 0.753 and 0.917 respectively and demonstrated to be good measures of the variables in the current study.

Finally, the results of the Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that a significant positive correlation between the leaders' leadership style and the followers' courageous followership behavior as reported by the followers who in this study were Air Force senior noncommissioned officers. A significant positive correlation was also observed between transformational leadership and courageous followership, and transactional leadership and courageous followership. Overall, the null hypotheses in the current study

101

were rejected. The next chapter, Chapter 5, will interpret the results, limitations,

implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Followers are important to the organization's success but seldom viewed as
responsible for the organization's outcomes. In the leadership literature, the leader is the
driver of organizational performance and often gets the credit for its success and blamed
for its failures (Kelley, 1988; Meindl, 1995). The same view is held in military cultures
where everything rises and falls on leadership. Since followership is an emerging area of
study, the current study examined the relationship between the follower's courageous
followership behavior and their supervisor's leadership style from the followers'
perspective. Meindl (1995) and Oc & Bashshur (2013), and Uhl-Bien et al. (2014)
argued that over the years, leadership studies have been biased towards the thoughts and
actions of leaders and overlooked the significance of followers.

This study provided a follower-centric perspective on the leader-follower
relationships. The current study was a quantitative correlational design to examine the
relationship between the leaders' leadership style (transformational and transactional) and
the followers' courageous followership behavior from the followers' perspective. The
followers in this study were United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers
(pay grades E7- E8). Data from a random sample of 83 respondents was collected
through use of the 20-item Followership Profile (TFP) (Dixon, 2006) and the Multifactor
Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Short Form 5X (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The TFP

103

measured the courageous followership behaviors and the MLQ measured the transformational and transactional leadership behaviors. Pearson's correlation was used to examine the relationship and the findings indicated that a significant positive relationship existed between leadership style and courageous followership behavior. A summary of the results is provided in the next section.

The overall purpose of Chapter 5 is to interpret the results reported in Chapter 4. A summary of the results is provided along with implications and limitations of the current study. Recommendations for further research are also discussed followed by the conclusion.

Summary of the Results

For years, researchers have utilized a leader-centric research agenda to understand the nature of leaders and their influence on follower behaviors (Crossman & Crossman, 2011; Mendl, 1995). However, within the past two decades, researchers have embarked on a journey to understand followers and how their behaviors and characteristics influence organizational outcomes such as leader-follower relationships. Oc and Bashshur (2013) argued for inclusion of followers in the leadership process as important sources of influence. This supports Shamir and Howell's (2005) recommendation that scholarly research be aimed at the relational aspects between leaders and followers using follower-centric models.

The current study was very significant to the leadership and followership body of knowledge because it provided additional insight in the leader-follower relationship from the follower's perspective. It also provided a greater understanding of the courageous followership theory as it related to military followers. On a practical level, the study was

104

significant because it provided value to management practitioners as a useful tool to enhance organizational members' leadership and followership skills. The study is also supported recent findings of correlations between leadership and follower behaviors from the follower's perspective.

Most recently, Notgrass (2014) took a follower-centric approach and conducted a quantitative correlational study to examine the relationship between the follower's perception of quality of relationship with their leaders and the followers' preferred leadership style from their leaders. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a positive significant relationship between the quality of relationship and follower's preference for transformational leadership style. Brumm and Drury (2013) also examined from the follower's perspective the relationship between the follower's perception of their leader's strategic planning and their leader's influence towards positive follower behavior. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between strategic planning and positive followership.

The current study was also a quantitative correlational study but examined the relationship between the leader's leadership style and the follower's courageous followership behavior from the follower's perspective. The followers were United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grade E7 - E8). The theoretical frameworks used in this study were courageous followership model (Chaleff, 2003), and the transformational and transactional leadership models (Bass; 1985; Burns, 1978). It was hypothesized that a relationship existed between the leadership styles and courageous followership behavior at the 0.05 level of significance. Pearson's r analysis revealed that a significant positive relationship existed between leadership style and

105

courageous followership behavior. Specifically, there was a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and courageous followership, and transactional leadership and courageous followership. More details regarding the results are provided in the next section.

Discussion of the Results

The purpose of this section is to interpret the results of the study in relation to the hypotheses and research questions. The current study sought to answer the following research questions:

(1) What is the relationship between the follower's courageous followership behavior and the leader's leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(1a) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transformational leadership style as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

(1b) What is the relationship between the followers' courageous followership behavior and the leaders' transactional leadership styles as measured by senior noncommissioned officers in the United States Air Force?

The respondents in the current study were senior noncommissioned officers (SNCOs). SNCOs are part of the top tier of the Air Force enlisted structure and serve as mid-level managers and leaders at various organizational/hierarchical levels. As mid-level managers and leaders, they are in a unique position where they must know how the effectively lead and follow. On average, they rated themselves as highly courageous

106

followers (78.62 out of 100). The high mean scores for courageous followership and the high level of responsibility these SNCOs possess support Ray's (2006) findings that the demonstration of courageous followership behavior increases as the level of responsibility increases.

Out of a possible 4.0, the respondents rated their leader's leadership style above average: (3.25) for transformational and (3.05) for transactional. The mode for transformational was very high at 3.75 and relatively high for transactional at 3.38. Prior studies have shown that it is not uncommon for leaders to demonstrate both transformational and transactional leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 1995; 2000). According to Shamir (1995), transactional leaders demonstrate transformational leadership when they build trust and dependability with their followers by consistently honoring their agreements. The high mean scores for courageous followership (78.62 out of 100) and the above average ratings for transformational leadership and transactional leadership imply that highly courageous followers typically work for leaders who demonstrate both transformational and transactional type leadership behaviors.

Hypothesis testing was used to address the research questions and further discussion of the results is provided below. There were no research/methodological design flaws or problems in this study.

Hypothesis 1.

Ho$_1$: There is no significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

107

Ha$_1$:   There is a significant correlation between the leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Pearson's correlation was performed and indicated a significant positive relationship between the leaders' leadership style and the followers' courageous followership behavior ($r = 0.329$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected. The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the leaders' leadership style and the followers' courageous followership behavior was very moderate and not unexpected. The military culture is one where subordinate members are required by law to obey the orders of those appointed over them. However, it is also a culture where SNCOs typically recognize their responsibility to serve, assume responsibility, to challenge, take moral action, and participate in transformation especially when these courageous followership behaviors lead to mission accomplishment. The dimensions of courageous followership is part of the military ethos and is contrary to blind obedience. What this finding indicates is that the willingness of SNCOs (followers) to demonstrate courageous followership behaviors is moderately correlated to the leaders' leadership style.

Hypothesis 1.1.

Ho$_{1.1}$: There is no significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ha$_{1.1}$:   There is a significant correlation between the transformational leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

108

Pearson's correlation analysis was performed and indicated a significant positive relationship between the leaders' transformational leadership style and the followers' courageous followership behavior ($r = 0.304$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis was rejected. Specifically, the correlation between the leaders' transformational leadership style and followers' courage to assume responsibility was significant but moderate ($r = 0.227$, $p < 0.05$). The correlation between the leaders' transformational leadership style and followers' courage to serve was also significant but moderate ($r = 0.395$, $p < 0.05$).

However, as reflected in Table 10, there were no significant relationships between the leaders' transformational leadership style and followers' courage to challenge ($r = 0.066$, $p > 0.05$), courage to participate in transformation ($r = 0.196$, $p > 0.05$), and courage to take moral action ($r = 0.075$, $p > 0.05$). These particular findings of non-significance were consistent with Ricketson's (2008) findings. Ricketson (2008) sampled a population in the fast food industry and found no significant correlation at the 0.05 level between transformational leadership and five dimensions of courageous followership at the bivariate level of analysis.

Furthermore, in the current study, the overall mode score for courageous followership behavior was 80 and the mean was 78.62. These scores indicated that the respondents rated themselves relatively high as courageous followers. These high ratings were also reflected for each courageous follower dimension. As reflected in Table 6, the mode for courage to challenge was nine out of a possible 15 points. Out of a possible 20 points, the mode for courage to participate in transformation was 17. Out of a possible 15 points, the mode for courage to take moral action was 10. The mean score for the leaders' transformational leadership style was 3.25 out of 4.0. The fact that there was

109

either a moderate significant correlation or no significant correlation imply that the respondent's willingness to exhibit courageous followership behavior is either not heavily related or not related at all to the leaders' transformational leadership style. This also supports Chaleff's (2003) argument that courageous followers do not hold paternalistic images of their leaders and will act on their own.

The overall finding that there is a significant positive correlation between the leader's transformational leadership style and the follower's courageous followership behavior contradicts Ricketson's (2008) study. Based on the findings of these two studies, further research is recommended.

Hypothesis 1.2.

$Ho_{1.2}$: There is no significant correlation between the transactional leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

$Ha_{1.2}$: There is a significant correlation between the transactional leadership style of supervisors and courageous followership behavior of United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 - E8), at the 0.05 level of significance.

Pearson's correlation was performed and indicated a significant positive correlation between the leaders' transactional leadership style and the followers' courageous followership behavior ($r = 0.353$, $p < 0.05$). Specifically, a positive correlation existed between transactional leadership and the dimensions of courage to assume responsibility ($r = 0.326$, $p < 0.05$), and courage to serve ($r = 0.398$, $p < 0.05$). These findings imply a moderate relationship between the leaders' demonstration of transactional leadership and the follower's demonstration of courage to serve and courage

110

to assume responsibility. Transactional leadership refers to a form of leadership that implies an exchange relationship between leaders and their followers to satisfy agreed upon goals (Bass, 1985). Within the military culture, members are rewarded when they meet agreed upon goals and objectives and responsibilities. The moderate correlation in this study implied that the followers' willingness to exhibit courageous followership behavior is not heavily related to whether an exchange or agreement is made between the follower and the leader. Further analysis (see Table 11) supports this position because there were no significant correlations between the leaders' transactional leadership style and the followers courage to challenge ($r = 0.153$, $p > 0.05$), courage to participate in transformation ($r = 0.166$, $p > 0.05$), and courage to take moral action ($r = 0.115$, $p > 0.05$). These specific findings of non-significance were consistent with Ricketson's (2008) findings. Ricketson (2008) sampled a population in the fast food industry and found no significant correlation at the 0.05 level between transactional leadership and five dimensions of courageous followership at the bivariate level of analysis.

Furthermore, in the current study, the overall mode score for courageous followership behavior was 80 and the mean was 78.62. These scores indicated that the respondents rated themselves relatively high as courageous followers. These high ratings were also reflected for each courageous follower dimension. As reflected in Table 6, the mode for courage to challenge was nine out of a possible 15 points. Out of a possible 20 points, the mode for courage to participate in transformation was 17. Out of a possible 15 points, the mode for courage to take moral action was 10. The mean score for the leaders' transactional leadership style was 3.04 out of 4.0. The fact that there was either a moderate significant correlation or no significant correlation imply that the

111

respondents' willingness to exhibit courageous followership behavior is either not heavily related or not related at all to the leaders' transactional leadership style. This also supports Chaleff's (2003) argument that courageous followers do not hold paternalistic images of their leaders and will act on their own.

The overall finding that there is a significant positive correlation between the leaders' transactional leadership style and the followers' courageous followership behavior contradicts Ricketson's (2008) study. Based on the findings of these two studies, further research is recommended.

Implications of the Study Results

Theoretical Implications. The findings of the current study filled a gap in the followership literature. Specifically it addressed the lack of research in the leader-follower relationship by using a follower-centric model such as the courageous followership model from the followers' perspective. Prior to this study, Ricketson (2008) was the only study to examine the relationship between the constructs of transformational/transactional leadership and courageous followership behaviors. Ricketson (2008) sampled respondents in a fast food industry and found no significant relationship between transformational leadership and courageous followership behavior and transactional leadership and courageous followership behavior. In contrast, the findings of the current study revealed a moderate significant positive correlation between the leader's transformational/transactional leadership styles and follower's courageous followership behavior. This implied that the relationship between leadership style and courageous was contextual and may vary among populations.

112

The current study also contributed to the followership body of knowledge by being the first to empirically examine courageous followership in a military setting. The use of correlation analysis was not intended to imply causation but to simply understand if a relationship existed between the leader's leadership style and the follower's courageous followership behavior. In addition, this study provided further validation for the 20-item Followership Profile (Dixon, 2006) as a reliable measurement of courageous followership behavior (Cronbach's alpha, 0.758).

The findings also provide additional support for Chaleff's (2003) courageous followership theory. Chaleff's (2003) theorized that courageous followers do not hold paternalistic images of their leaders but instead demonstrate the ability to act on their own. The moderate significant correlation between the leader's leadership style and the follower's courage to serve and assume responsibility, and no significant correlation with courage to challenge, to take moral action, and participation in transformations appear to support Chaleff's claim.

Practical Implications. Within the military, an intentional focus on followership development continues to lag behind leadership studies. However, in this study, courageous followership behavior was evident among this military sample of senior noncommissioned officers. Military leaders must realize that their role as leaders also involve effective followership. A formalized followership curriculum could provide greater understanding of followership that could impact leader-follower relationships at all organizational levels in the Air Force.

113

Limitations

Several limitations were noted in the current study. The military is a unique culture in comparison to civilian cultures. The military is organized to fight and win wars. The power delineation and rank structure that exist are designed to regulate the lives of men and women in uniform to carry out their mission (Herspring, 2011). Furthermore, military members solemnly swear to obey the orders of those appointed over them. As a result, the discussion of leadership and followership among civilian and military organizations differs and therefore limits generalization of the findings in the current study to military populations.

Self-reporting was limitation in this study. As noted by Kets de Vries et al. (2004), responses can be influenced by the social desirability factor and result in the respondent developing cognitive bias. The results in this study may not be a true indicator of the supervisors' leadership styles as perceived by the follower or the followers' perception of their own courageous followership behavior. Since the initial sample was random, split sampling was used and the order of the instrument was reversed to assess potential rating bias (see Table 13). Those who evaluated their leaders' leadership style before rating their own followership behavior is indicated by a "1". Those who rated their followership behavior prior to rating their leaders' leadership style is indicated by a "2". As noted in Table 13, the order in which the respondent answered the surveys did not appear to play a major role in their ratings. However, this finding does not negate the limitations of self-reporting.

114

Table 13. *Self-Reporting Analysis*.

	Total	CF	Transf	Transa
1	$N = 53$	77.69	3.21	3.04
2	$N = 30$	80.26	3.31	3.08

Finally, this researcher's status as a retired U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt) may have influenced participation in the survey. CMSgt (paygrade E9) is the highest enlisted rank in the military. Whether active duty or retired, military members still give the utmost respect and support for CMSgts. Every effort was made to ensure voluntary participation and based on the 37% participation rate this appeared to be the case. This researcher was not physically involved in the administration of the survey in order to minimize or control for undue influence.

Recommendations for Further Research

The opportunity for further research in the area of followership studies is great. This study was the first to test the courageous followership model on a military sample. This study could be replicated in a military setting by using junior enlisted personnel or commissioned officers to examine the possible relationship between leadership style and courageous followership behavior. Due to the contradictory findings between this study and Ricketson's (2008), it is recommended that additional research be performed with different populations.

Since correlational analysis prevented any prediction of causation, an experimental design may be worth exploring to determine if leadership styles has an

effect on followership behavior or vice versa. A mixed method design involving quantitative and qualitative methods could also provide additional insight into followership behavior and the influence of leadership styles.

The demographic variables in this study were not specifically targeted for examination and how they relate to courageous followership behavior. Therefore, further research could explore the relationship between age, race, or gender and how these variables interact with courageous followership behavior. Such examination could provide insight to enhancing leader-follower relationships.

Conclusion

Followers continue to play a vital role in the organization's success. In the leadership literature, the leader gets the credit for this success with very little mention of the followers. The same view is typically held in military cultures where everything rises and falls on leadership. To bring more focus on the role of followers, this study took a follower-centric approach and examined the relationship between the leader's leadership style and the follower's courageous followership behavior from the follower's perspective. The followers in this study were United States Air Force senior noncommissioned officers (pay grades E7 – E8).

A quantitative correlational design was used in the current study. The correlation analyses revealed a significant positive relationship between the leader's leadership style and the follower's courageous followership behavior. Specifically, transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles were moderately correlated with the courage to assume responsibility and the courage to serve. However, there were no

116

significant correlations between these leadership styles and the courage to challenge, the courage to participate in transformational, and the courage to take moral action. These findings implied that the respondent's willingness to exhibit courageous followership behavior is primarily self-motivated and not strongly related to the leader's transformational or transactional leadership style. The overall finding in the current study contradicted Ricketson's (2008) study which revealed no significant correlation between leadership styles (transformational/transactional) and all five of the dimensions of courageous followership behaviors. The findings in this study underscore the need for additional research in the area of followership among diverse populations.

117

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127

APPENDIX A. STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL WORK

Academic Honesty Policy

Capella University's Academic Honesty Policy (3.01.01) holds learners accountable for the integrity of work they submit, which includes but is not limited to discussion postings, assignments, comprehensive exams, and the dissertation or capstone project.

Established in the Policy are the expectations for original work, rationale for the policy, definition of terms that pertain to academic honesty and original work, and disciplinary consequences of academic dishonesty. Also stated in the Policy is the expectation that learners will follow APA rules for citing another person's ideas or works.

The following standards for original work and definition of *plagiarism* are discussed in the Policy:

> Learners are expected to be the sole authors of their work and to acknowledge the authorship of others' work through proper citation and reference. Use of another person's ideas, including another learner's, without proper reference or citation constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty and is prohibited conduct. (p. 1)

> Plagiarism is one example of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own. Plagiarism also includes copying verbatim or rephrasing ideas without properly acknowledging the source by author, date, and publication medium. (p. 2)

Capella University's Research Misconduct Policy (3.03.06) holds learners accountable for research integrity. What constitutes research misconduct is discussed in the Policy:

> Research misconduct includes but is not limited to falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, misappropriation, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. (p. 1)

Learners failing to abide by these policies are subject to consequences, including but not limited to dismissal or revocation of the degree.
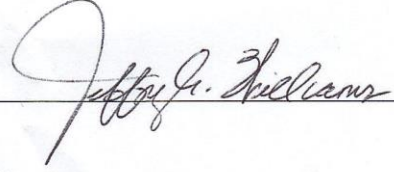
Statement of Original Work and Signature

I have read, understood, and abided by Capella University's Academic Honesty Policy (3.01.01) and Research Misconduct Policy (3.03.06), including the Policy Statements, Rationale, and Definitions.

I attest that this dissertation or capstone project is my own work. Where I have used the ideas or words of others, I have paraphrased, summarized, or used direct quotes following the guidelines set forth in the APA *Publication Manual*.

Learner name and date	Jeffrey A. Williams, June 2, 2015
Mentor name and school	Dr. Gregory Gull, Capella University

129