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Generation Z's Perception of Leadership Effectiveness

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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M. Phil, Walden University, 2019

MS, Western Carolina University, 2014

BA, University of West Georgia, 2011

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The newest generation entering the workforce, Generation Z, has unique characteristics and workplace preferences that distinguish this generation from previous generations. The specific management problem is that current organizational leaders lack knowledge regarding which leadership style Generation Z employees perceive as most effective and risk not providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. Generational theory and social exchange theory comprised the theoretical framework. The research questions were designed to determine to what extent, if any, Generation Z office employees perceive transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership as effective. The random sample included 112 office employees aged 18-25 in the southwestern United States. Results of the Spearman correlation supported a perfect positive correlation of perceived effective leadership and authentic leadership ($r_s = 1$, $p < .001$), a strong positive correlation with transformational leadership ($r_s = .78$, $p < .001$), and a moderate positive correlation with transactional leadership ($r_s = .56$, $p < .001$). There was no correlation between laissez-faire leadership and perceived leadership effectiveness ($r_s = -.01$, $p = .89$). The results indicated authentic leadership as the leadership style perceived by Generation Z office workers as the most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. This study may promote positive social change by providing knowledge about Generation Z office employees' leadership style preferences, which may assist organizational leaders in improving leader and follower relations at work.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents, Joseph and Carol Corbitt. Thank you for all the lessons you taught and for always loving, supporting, and encouraging me along the way. I hope I make you proud.

Acknowledgments

I would not have completed this journey without the support, patience, and encouragement of many important people. To my wonderful parents, I cannot thank you enough. From an early age you instilled in me a love of learning, inspiring me to dream big and dream often and to always strive to be the best version of myself. You taught me that hard work truly pays the highest dividends, and that doing the right thing will always help me sleep at night. I could not ask for better role models of how to lead; you are the inspiration of this study.

To my loving husband, Kody, thank you for all your patience and love during this journey. You encouraged me to charge headfirst into any adventure; this was no exception. You dried many tears and reminded me who I am whenever I felt lost. I look forward to the many adventures in our future.

To my friends and coworkers, I appreciate your encouragement and support along the way. You bring a balance to my life that I would not find anywhere else. To my fearless leader Lisa, thank you for teaching me that you cannot fix certain traits in people, but that you can lead them. I aspire to one day lead with your tenacity and grace. Without your support, this would not have been possible.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The leadership style that organizational leaders display with their employees influences many factors that contribute to a positive and successful workforce (Afshari et al., 2017; Choi et al., 2015). Leaders must account for individual characteristics and leadership preferences to support the diversity of their employees and to create a positive and attractive workplace environment (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). One aspect of diversity that widely influences employee preference of leadership is generational cohort membership (Wiedmer, 2015). Failure to identify and understand the leadership preferences of each working generation may result in lost productivity, stifle organizational growth, and cause misunderstandings (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018; Gandolfi & Stone, 2016).

Four generations of employees comprise the most diverse workforce in U.S. history (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). The workforce in the United States includes the following four generations: (a) Baby Boomers, (b) Generation X, (c) Generation Y, and (d) Generation Z (Andrea et al., 2016). The newest generation of employees, Generation Z, contains 61 million members who are entering the U.S. workforce within the next decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Admittedly so, organizational leaders are unprepared to manage this generation and have concerns about leading Generation Z employees (Stuckey, 2016). Similarities exist between Generation Z and the preceding cohort, Generation Y (Andrea et al., 2016; Jiří, 2016). Despite similarities among generational cohorts, past study results indicated that a single leadership style does not support every generation in the workplace (Andrea et al., 2016; Jiří, 2016).

A knowledge gap exists regarding Generation Z and leadership preferences (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). Leaders also lack the specific knowledge of how to effectively manage Generation Z and support a productive workplace climate (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Stuckey, 2016). The focus of this study encompassed the leadership style preference of Generation Z employees. This study was conducted to provide insight for both practical application of leadership style and theoretical knowledge of Generation Z and leadership style preferences. Leaders who use preferential leadership characteristics with their employees positively influence job satisfaction, work engagement, and creativity (Dabke, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017). Identification of leadership style and traits that support a productive and positive workplace for Generation Z may result in improved workplace communication and supervisor-employee relations. Improved communication and overall job satisfaction may inspire positive social change by positively influencing employee home life due to decreased stress and work ambiguity.

This chapter contains background on the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the research questions. The theoretical frameworks and nature of the study are subsequently detailed in this chapter. Next, the definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study are included and explained. The chapter concludes with a summary and transition to Chapter 2.

Background of the Study

Individuals from Generation Z continue to join the U.S. workforce daily, with limited leadership knowledge available to current leaders (Stuckey, 2016). The addition of Generation Z to the workforce presents new challenges to leaders, as each generation

has unique leadership preferences and expectations. The leadership literature contains many empirical studies that indicate that a myriad of positive workplace effects are produced when leadership aligns with the preferences of each generation (Andrea et al., 2016; Stuckey, 2016). Generational leadership preferences of the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y appear identified in past studies (Fogarty et al., 2017; Jiří, 2016). The leadership literature has existed to supplement theoretical and practical leadership practices for leaders of generations before Generation Z. Despite the multitude of positive organizational effects produced as a result of leadership aligning practice with generational preferences, current leadership literature lacks representation of Generation Z leadership preferences (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). This study was needed to expand the current literature on generational preferences of leadership and generate knowledge that can assist leaders of Generation Z to understand the newest members of their multigenerational workforce.

The leadership literature contains empirical studies that identify multiple positive outcomes of aligning leadership with employee needs and preferences. Leadership style utilized by leaders positively influences organizational trust in leadership, performance, and commitment (Bandura & Kavussanu, 2018). Leaders who align their leadership practices with employee preferences may positively influence the workplace environment. The leadership literature also contains many studies with results that indicated negative workplace effects when leaders fail to align with generational preferences and employee need (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016). Misunderstandings, conflicts, relationship destruction, and stifled organizational growth represent several adverse

effects of inefficient and poorly aligned leadership (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016; Jiří, 2016). Leaders should seek ways in which they can align their leadership practices to support an efficient and motivated workforce and avoid the negative consequences of poor leadership alignment.

Generational leadership literature includes studies of the leadership style and behavioral preferences of the Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Fogarty et al., 2017). Leadership preferences vary between Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Wiedmer, 2015). Leadership that adapted and supported generational preferences increased job satisfaction and inspired creativity (Dong et al., 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017). Although many positive effects of leadership alignment with generational preferences exist, the existing generational leadership literature lacks research studies of Generation Z and leadership style preferences (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018).

Past studies of leadership preferences of various generations reveal unique preferences of leadership among Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Wiedmer, 2015). The variance of leadership preference across each generation present in the U.S. workforce suggests that Generation Z's preference of leadership may not conform to previous generations' preferences. This study contributes to the current leadership literature and expands theoretical and practical knowledge of Generation Z's leadership preference. This study was needed to expand previous generational leadership literature and fill the knowledge gap of the leadership preferences of the newest workforce members. The practical implications of this research include organizational

leader training and implementation of leadership styles that align with Generation Z preferences. Leaders who can support employee diversity create an attractive and positive workplace environment for their employees (Anderson et al., 2017).

Problem Statement

During the next decade, Generation Z employees will continue to enter the workforce and comprise a quarter of the U.S. population (Lanier, 2017). Each generation brings unique challenges to organizational leadership staff and the workplace (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018). A study of 1,000 Generation Z managers conducted by leadership consulting firm Forum Corporation produced results that indicated that 78% of managers are not prepared to lead Generation Z and 36% have not received any training for leading Generation Z (Stuckey, 2016). A worldwide research study of 1,005 Generation Z cohort members concluded that the most desirable working environment for this generation is corporate office spaces (Schawbel, 2014). Organizational leaders who understand leadership style preferences of each generation and align supportive leadership practices contribute to employee job satisfaction and organizational communication (Dabke, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017). Current organizational leaders do not possess knowledge of which leadership style to employ with Generation Z employees (Stuckey, 2016).

Generation Z literature contains general characteristics and workplace expectations of this cohort (Turner, 2015) but lacks inquiry into the preferred leadership style of Generation Z employees (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). The general management problem is that organizations that are lacking proper alignment of generational preferences and leadership style risk negative effects, such as decreasing employee

efficiency (Afshari et al., 2017), productivity, and employee motivation to support organizational goals (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Deichmann & Stam, 2015). The specific management problem is that current organizational leaders lack knowledge regarding which leadership style Generation Z office employees perceive as most effective and risk not providing a productive and supportive workplace climate for them (Goh & Lee, 2018; Stuckey, 2016). Results of this study might be helpful to organizational leaders aspiring to influence positive social change through improved leader and follower relations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. An online questionnaire containing the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) by Avolio et al. (2007) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) by Bass and Avolio (1990) was used to gather data regarding Generation Z preference of leadership style. The leadership style identified in the questionnaire with the highest average response represents the leadership style perceived by Generation Z as most effective. The four random variables were (a) transformational leadership, (b) transactional leadership, (c) laissez-faire leadership, and (d) authentic leadership. This study may contribute to positive social change by providing knowledge for organizational leaders regarding Generation Z employee preference of leadership style. The information gathered from this study may positively influence leadership skill training offered in organizations and potentially improve leader and follower relations.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following were the research questions and hypotheses for the study:

RQ1: To what extent, if any, does transformational leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 1$: Transformational leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 1$: Transformational leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 1$: Transformational leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does transactional leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 2$: Transactional leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 2$: Transactional leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 2$: Transactional leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ3: To what extent, if any, does laissez-faire leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 3$: Laissez-faire leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a3: Laissez-faire leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b3: Laissez-faire leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ4: To what extent, if any, does authentic leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

H_03: Authentic leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a4: Authentic leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b4: Authentic leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework for this study was the generational theory proposed by German sociologist Mannheim (1952). Mannheim posited that fundamental differences between generations exist and offered reasons why individuals differ between generations. Two factors that Mannheim suggested influence generational development are historical events and aging. Generational theory is a common foundation for studies addressing individual generations and serves as the support for leadership to adopt strategies to support employees. The basis of this study reflects the concept that generational cohorts are shaped by different factors and are distinctly different from one another, so leadership should adapt supporting behaviors and strategies to impact the

organization positively and optimally support generational performance. Generational theory is addressed in more detail in Chapter 2. Another framework used in this study was social exchange theory.

Homans (1958) explained social exchange as a type of reciprocal relationship that an individual enters into with others for social approval or monetary gains. In reciprocal relationships, individuals supply a personal sacrifice with the expectation of receiving tangible and nontangible rewards in return (Homans, 1958). Individuals who decide to join and remain with an organization enter into a psychological contract with their employer, and social exchange theory is the basis for this psychological contract (Nelson & Braekkan, 2017). Social exchange theory encompasses the premise of why Generation Z members work and enter into a psychological contract with their employer. Chapter 2 contains a thorough explanation of social exchange theory and analysis of literary representation.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was quantitative and involved the collection of data through the use of an anonymous online questionnaire. The ALQ written by Avolio et al. (2007) and the MLQ written by Bass and Avolio (1990) were compiled into a single questionnaire distributed online. Questionnaires represent a common method of collecting quantitative data for specific populations (Nardi, 2018). A questionnaire hosted online supported this study by providing a platform that could effectively amass large quantities of data from a diverse population and provide anonymity (Nardi, 2018).

The random variables were transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and authentic leadership. The MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1990) and the ALQ (Avolio et al., 2007) were chosen for use in this study due to high construct validity and reliability of testing the correlation of leadership style and job satisfaction (Rodriguez et al., 2017). The ALQ (Avolio et al., 2007) tests for authentic leadership. The MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1990) portion of the questionnaire tested for laissez-faire leadership, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership. The instructions of the questionnaire directed participants to answer questions by indicating the traits or behaviors of an effective leader.

Only responses from Generation Z individuals 18 and older, or those born between 1995 and 2001, were considered in the statistical analysis to capture the leadership preferences of individuals who are legally old enough to join the workforce and give consent. Generation Z individuals are proficient with technology and would likely be comfortable answering on an online platform (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). The secure online survey platform Qualtrics was used to host the questionnaire (Qualtrics, 2019). Population targeting was purchased from Qualtrics to ensure that a representative data sample was collected (Qualtrics, 2019).

Definitions

Authentic leadership: A leadership style proposed by leadership experts Bernard Bass and Paul Steidlmeier (1999) that more recent researchers expanded to include moral and ethical components (Duncan et al., 2017). The four behaviors of authentic leadership

are (a) self-awareness, (b) balanced processing, (c) internal moral perspective, and (d) relational transparency (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ): A questionnaire developed by leadership experts Avolio et al. (2007) to measure authentic leadership behaviors.

Effective leadership: Leadership behavior that includes providing stability, inspiring subordinates, and creating a vision among key stakeholders (Underwood et al., 2016).

Generation: A group of people born at a similar location and time, who were exposed to historically and socially significant events (McGinnis Johnson & Ng, 2016).

Generational theory: Initially proposed by German sociologist Karl Mannheim (1952). The assumption that variations of worldview and socio-historic experiences exist between generations of people (Mannheim, 1952).

Generation Z: No universally agreed-upon designation of cohort years of birth or name exists among researchers (Desai & Lele, 2017). For this study, Generation Z is defined as individuals born between 1995 and 2010 (Andrea et al., 2016).

Laissez-faire leadership: A leadership style that includes leader behaviors such as delegating decision making, minimizing interactions and communication with subordinates, abdicating responsibility, and avoiding relationship building with subordinates (Wong & Giessner, 2018).

Leadership: The process of influencing individuals to work together to accomplish shared goals (Yukl, 2010).

Leadership style: The collection of leader behaviors, traits, and the relationship between leader and follower in the workplace (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ): A questionnaire developed by leadership experts Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass (1990) to measure transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors.

Social exchange theory: The reciprocal relationship between individuals including a personal cost that is exchanged for tangible and nontangible items (Homans, 1958).

Transactional leadership: A leadership style whereby leaders focus efforts on incentivizing their workforce with rewards for performance and consequences for employee failure (Bass, 1990; Singh, 2015).

Transformational leadership: A leadership style initially proposed by leadership author Burns (1978). This leadership style involves leaders motivating and inspiring subordinates to pursue positive and ethical conduct (Burns, 1978) that supports organization-centered goals instead of self-centered goals (Dabke, 2016). Four dimensions of transformational leadership are individual consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence (Bass, 1990).

Assumptions

Social science research, whether qualitative or quantitative, relies on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and the researcher's role (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). Assumptions are the philosophical orientations that found the researcher's worldview (Burkholder et al., 2016). Researchers conducting studies should identify their philosophical orientation to provide the appropriate explanation of the relationship

between the goal of the study and the methods used to support the goal (Burkholder et al., 2016). The assumptions of this study are listed next.

There was an assumption that individuals who responded to this study comprehended the English language and understood the instructions provided. The instructions specified that participants should choose the behavior and traits that an effective leader possesses, not to describe a current or past leader. The results of the study could be biased if the participant did not understand the specific instructions or the English language. Another assumption in this study was that participants answered each question truthfully and did not respond with bias. An additional assumption was that participants who responded were within the age range required for validity. Any participant who did not meet the age requirements for this study and submitted responses would have threatened the reliability of the findings. There also was an assumption about having enough variance in leadership styles to identify significant differences for leading Generation Z.

Scope and Delimitations

The boundaries of a study are delimitations (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The scope of this study addressed the knowledge gap of leadership preferences among employees of the Generation Z cohort. Although there are many leadership theories, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership style theories were chosen for examination in this study. Transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership styles present a spectrum of leadership behaviors that individuals could identify as effective. By limiting the scope of this study to only four leadership

style theories, I did not consider other potential leadership styles and behaviors for examination.

Internal validity of a study refers to the extent that an individual can make valid conclusions based upon the causal effects of one variable in relation to another variable (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). The variables chosen for the study did not pose a threat to internal validity because participants responded with their perception of effective leadership behaviors. Internal validity may be negatively influenced by limiting the Generation Z cohort to only 6 years instead of the possible 15 years. The study population only included members of Generation Z who were 18 and older, or those old enough to legally work and give consent in the United States. The statistical analysis only contains responses from individuals residing in the southwestern United States and who were born between 1995 and 2001. Responses from other Generation Z members born from 2002-2010 were not included in the study.

One delimitation of this study was that open-ended questions were not included in the questionnaire, which limited participant response. Another research design option was a qualitative research design. Using previous quantitative data was not an option for this study because previous data on Generation Z leadership style preferences do not exist. The external validity, or ability to generalize study results, could be challenged by limiting the study geographically to the southwestern United States (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). Limiting the study to the United States decreased the generalizability of findings by prohibiting Generation Z individuals from other countries from participating.

Limitations

Potential weaknesses of the study methods or design describe the limitations of the study (Burkholder et al., 2016). Low response rate constituted a potential limit of internal validity. Failure to collect sufficient data may result in a sample that is not representative of the population studied. To ensure that responses from the appropriate sample size were collected, responses were purchased from the secure online questionnaire platform Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2019). Hosting the questionnaire on the internet challenged internal validity because the study might not have been accessible to individuals without internet access or a Qualtrics account (Qualtrics, 2019). Geographically limiting the study to participants in the southwestern United States may have resulted in low external validity or response bias.

Another possible limitation of the study might have arisen if participants misrepresented their true thoughts or did not understand the instructions. Self-reported data inherently risk data validity if the individual is not honest or is confused. The questionnaire was written in English, limiting the study to individuals who could read and understand the English language. The instructions were presented before the questionnaire to possibly decrease confusion. Participants who misrepresented their actual preferences for leadership style may have decreased the accuracy of the findings.

Significance of the Study

The employee perception of managerial effectiveness changes with the leadership style that leaders display in the workplace (Dabke, 2016). Individuals from multiple generations populate the workforce, and leaders seeking to support these generations

should adapt leadership strategies to boost employee perception of leadership effectiveness (Rodriguez et al., 2017). Leaders who exercise the leadership style that aligns with generational motivation and preferences can improve employee work life, increase employee creativity and productivity, and positively impact attrition rates (Dong et al., 2016; Ennis et al., 2018). To remain competitive in the labor market and positively motivate organizational commitment among employees, it is crucial that organizations identify and use supportive leadership practices (Anderson et al., 2017).

The results of this study may provide insight regarding leadership knowledge for individuals conducting research. Researchers equipped with knowledge of preferred leadership style for a particular generation can disseminate the knowledge to organizations with employees of this generation. Organizational leaders who seek to leverage employee strengths can align leadership training and strategies to support productive employees. The results of this study may contribute to positive social change by providing organizational leaders with knowledge of the preferred leadership style among Generation Z employees, possibly motivating a mutually beneficial and cohesive relationship between leader and employee. The results of this study may include information that leadership practitioners could use when managing Generation Z employees.

Significance to Theory

Generational cohorts respond to leadership in different manners due to individual experiences and understandings of leadership (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Leadership style effectiveness varies between generational cohorts regarding motivation and

retention (Wiedmer, 2015). Generation Z leadership preferences have sparse representation or empirical exploration in the current literature. Adding the results of this study to the Generation Z literature may expand practitioner knowledge of preferred leadership knowledge. The results of this study may include information that could be added to the leadership and leadership style literature. By contributing new knowledge to leadership and generational leadership literature, researchers may be able to design more specific and effective studies. Future leadership studies may be replicated and modified based on the strengths and weaknesses identified in previous leadership studies. Researchers may design future studies based upon the reliability of this study and possibly garner more information regarding the perceptions of leadership from the newest generation of employees, Generation Z.

Significance to Practice

The results of this study could add to leadership and generational literature. Leadership practitioners may align their leadership training with generational preferences for leadership style, potentially improving employee perceptions of leadership. Organizations may experience positive social change between leaders and employees as practitioners align their leadership style to support their workforce. Contributing to leadership theory may compel positive social change by supplying leaders with knowledge regarding effective leadership practices.

Significance to Social Change

The potential contribution from this study to the management body of literature may assist organizational leaders in understanding and potentially influencing leadership

practices. Positive social change may emerge among leadership practitioners and scholars with the possible new knowledge generated from this study. Organizational leadership may implement leadership styles that promote a positive workplace culture, increase organizational commitment, and motivate performance among employees. Improved leader-employee interactions and workplace culture may prompt positive social change among employees. As employee satisfaction with leadership increases, inspired and motivated employees can stimulate positive social change throughout their organization.

Summary and Transition

Organizational leaders who seek to foster positive workplace environments should understand generational diversity. Leaders can affirmatively influence positive social change, but they need proper knowledge and training on how to lead their subordinates. Knowledge of generational nuances better equips leaders to handle intergenerational conflict, motivate, and retain employees. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. An understanding of the leadership style preferences of Generation Z may increase organizational leaders' knowledge of preferred leadership behaviors, possibly improving the leaders' ability to effectively motivate and retain Generation Z employees and inspire positive social change.

Chapter 2 includes the literature review strategies, the study's theoretical foundation, and a review of all pertinent literature related to the study. Main topics in the literature review are a leadership overview, leadership styles, leadership effectiveness,

Generation Z characteristics, and the gap in the literature. The four leadership styles

explained in the leadership style section of Chapter 2 are transformational leadership,

transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and authentic leadership. The leadership

effectiveness section includes subsections on subordinate perceptions of leadership

effectiveness, trait theory, behavior theory, situational theory, and transformational

theory. The two subsections in the section on Generation Z characteristics are

management concerns and consideration and prior generational leadership preference

research. The last sections of Chapter 2 address the gap in the literature before the chapter

summary and conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The specific management problem is that current organizational leaders lack knowledge regarding which leadership style Generation Z employees perceive as most effective and risk not providing a productive and supportive workplace climate for Generation Z employees (Goh & Lee, 2018; Stuckey, 2016). The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. The current body of literature about Generation Z contains potential workplace strengths and characteristics of Generation Z (Turner, 2015). Limited research exists in this body of literature that measures Generation Z's perception of leadership style effectiveness (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). More research is needed to determine which leadership style best supports the management of Generation Z employees and developing current leadership talent to support Generation Z employees in the workplace (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018; Stuckey, 2016).

Chapter 2 begins with an overview of the literature review strategies to gather pertinent information and key search terms for this study. Discussion follows on the study's theoretical foundation. The third part of this chapter contains a literature review of all related research, variables, the gap in the literature, and a review of the literature on topics for examination during this study. A summary and conclusions section of the literature review ends Chapter 2.

Literature Search Strategy

The primary source of the literature review was the online Walden University Library and the Google Scholar search engine to source relevant literature. The literature reviewed consisted of six topics: (a) generational theory, (b) social exchange theory, (c) leadership styles, (d) Generation Z, (e) multigenerational studies, and (f) subordinate perception of leadership effectiveness. Research databases used to collect information were Academic Search Complete, ABI/INFORM Collection, Business Source Complete, EBSCO, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Emerald Management, ProQuest Central, Sage Premier, SocINDEX, and Taylor & Francis Online. Search terms applied in the literature review were *social exchange theory, generational theory, Generation Z, transformational leadership, laissez-faire leadership, transactional leadership, authentic leadership, leadership effectiveness,* and *leadership*. Combinations of search terms comprised *Generation Z and leadership effectiveness, Generation Z and leadership style,* and *Generation Z characteristics and management perception*.

Resources gathered during the literature review included books on generational theory (Mannheim, 1952), social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), and generational cohorts (Howe & Strauss, 2000), as well as a study of global generations (Volkmer, 2006). Other books gathered during research for the literature review included three on leadership and a handbook for the MLQ (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Burns, 1978; Yukl, 2010). The online Academic Search Complete database search yielded eight relevant articles on authentic leadership, seven on generational studies, six on leadership, four on transformational leadership, four on leadership effectiveness, three on

transactional leadership, three on laissez-faire leadership, and one on social exchange theory. The search of the ABI/INFORM Collection database produced two articles related to Generation Z and two articles on multigenerational studies.

The Business Source Complete database search produced 11 articles on leadership, eight on Generation Z, six on transformational leadership, five on laissez-faire leadership, five on transactional leadership, four on leadership effectiveness, four on authentic leadership, and four on multigenerational studies. One article related to Generation Y was found in the EBSCO database. The ERIC database contained one related article on transformational leadership, one on Generation Z, and one on leadership effectiveness. The search of the Emerald Management database yielded four related articles on leadership.

The ProQuest Central database search results contained two articles related to leadership, two on multigenerational studies, two on Generation Z, and one article on transformational leadership. The Sage Premier database contained one related article on generational theory, one on leadership, and one on Generation Z. The search of the ScienceDirect database produced two related articles on leadership style. The SocINDEX search produced two related articles on social exchange theory, one on Generation X, and one on transformational leadership. The Taylor & Francis Online database search produced one related article on leadership. Websites were also used to source articles and relevant information.

Google Scholar had one article on Generation Y and one article on laissez-faire leadership. The Wiley Library Online had one related article on multigenerational

studies. The U.S. Census Bureau website was used to gather Generation Z population information (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Study data regarding Millennial and Generation Z employees were collected from the North American website for the Randstad staffing company (Randstad Work Study, 2016). Online data from a poll of Generation Y and Generation Z employees conducted by the accounting and consulting firm Deloitte were also used in the literature review (O'Boyle et al., 2017).

The dates of the scholarly, peer-reviewed publications were narrowed to sources published from 2014 to 2019. The search years were broadened to 1945-2018 during the acquisition of seminal articles related to the theoretical framework and supporting studies. The results of using the search strategies indicated a lack of scholarly studies regarding Generation Z and preference of leadership style and leadership style effectiveness in workplace management.

Previous research data reflect differences of characteristics and perceived effective leadership style between current generations in the workplace, including the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Ennis et al., 2018; Fogarty et al., 2017; Jiří, 2016). A gap exists in the body of literature on the perception of effective leadership styles among Generation Z employees (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). Current research shows that Generation Z is characteristically and motivationally different from previous generations (Randstad Work Study, 2016; Stuckey, 2016). Future research is suggested to examine which leadership style is perceived as effective among Generation Z employees due to the characteristic workplace attitude differences present between generations (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018).

Theoretical Foundation

Two theoretical frameworks provided the basis for this study. Karl Mannheim (1952), a German sociologist, first prescribed a generational theory to address the nuances of generations and how social, historical, geographical, and socioeconomic locations shape each generation. Homans (1958) created social exchange theory to explain the reciprocal relationship that individuals enter into with others for social approval or monetary gains. Mannheim's generational theory and Homan's social exchange theory are distinguished in detail successively.

Generational Theory

The first theoretical framework of this study was Mannheim's (1952) generational theory. Mannheim initially wrote essays on sociological generational differences in 1928, and his work was translated to English and published in 1952 (Cassell, 2017). From a sociological perspective, Mannheim's generational theory is renowned as the most advanced and systematic assessments of generations due to its inclusion of socio-historical contexts (Pilcher, 1994). The basis of generational theory relies on the assumption that the variation of socio-historic experiences and worldviews exists between generations (Mannheim, 1952). The generational theory derives from two social science perspectives, the social forces perspective of Mannheim and the cohort perspective of Canadian-American sociologist Ryder (1965).

Mannheim (1952) posited a social forces perspective indicating that the composition of generations includes individuals who are born at a similar time and location, and who are exposed to socially and historically significant events (McGinnis

Johnson & Ng, 2016). The events that impact generational formation transpire typically

during childhood and early adolescence, but due to socioeconomic class location, not

every generational member will be affected by those events in the same manner

(Mannheim, 1952). Members of each generation living in the same geographic area tend

to have similar experiences, values, thought characteristics, and attitudes regarding work

due to distinct socially and historically significant events (Ertas, 2015).

Cohort Theory

Ryder's (1965) cohort perspective supports Mannheim's (1952) assertions that

individuals experience the same socially or historically significant event, but that cohorts

can be differentiated by beginning and ending birth years. Generations were further

analyzed as cohorts by American sociologist Glenn in 1977 to decrease the association of

the word "generation" with biological kinship (Dobewall et al., 2017). Both terms

"generation" and "cohort" are present in the literature and used by researchers to describe

individuals belonging to a particular age group that has experienced common socially and

historically significant events on a macrosocial level (Chawla et al., 2017). When

determining an individual's cohort, researchers typically refer to a range of birth years

spanning 15 to 20 years (Cassell, 2017). Cultural influences and socially or historically

significant events also influence the overall placement of an individual into a cohort

(Cassell, 2017; Kuron et al., 2015). There currently exists no universally agreed upon

cohort years or designated names for cohorts among researchers (Desai & Lele, 2017;

Jiří, 2016).

Researchers attempt to define generational cohorts to assist with clarity and understanding when explaining specific cohorts (Desai & Lele, 2017). There exists some consensus regarding birth years and terminology for each generational cohort, but each researcher still determines which set of birth years and terminology for cohorts they will use for research (Desai & Lele, 2017). Generational theory was popularized in the United States by sociologists Howe and Strauss during the 1990s (Ertas, 2015). Howe and Strauss (2000) assigned four working generations into the following cohorts:

- Silent Generation (born between 1925 and 1942),

- Baby Boomer (born between 1943 and 1960),

- Generation X (born between 1961 and 1981), and

- Generation Y (born after 1982), commonly referred to as Millennials (Ertas, 2015).

Since Howe and Strauss's (2000) work, researchers have defined Generation Z as individuals born after 1995 until 2010 (Andrea et al., 2016). A broader understanding among researchers exists that Generation Z members were born from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s (Turner, 2015).

Technology and globalization impact the outlook of researchers regarding generational theory (Edmunds & Turner, 2005). Some researchers have suggested that the spread of technology across the globe has allowed an interconnected global generation to emerge and refutes geography as a limitation (Cassell, 2017; Lanier, 2017). Edmunds and Turner (2005) asserted that Mannheim's (1952) generational theory refers to generations as being geographically independent of one another. The invention of new

communication devices and media that reach multiple countries allow generations of people to experience similar events globally, such as watching the Vietnam War on television (Cassell, 2017). Edmunds and Turner proposed that the new interconnectedness of people across the world could result in the emergence of a consciousness that spanned globally. Volkmer (2006) tested the theory of global generations in a study of nine countries and individual generational experiences. Volkmer's study results indicated similar experiences of generations despite differences in culture, society, and geographic location. With the invention of television, movies, the radio, and global communication devices, individuals have been able to experience similar social and historical events concurrently (Cassell, 2017).

Many researchers use generational theory as the theoretical foundation for scholarly work and studies worldwide (Lu & Gursoy, 2016; Masso et al., 2018). Generational theory was chosen to support the foundation of this study because the research questions included the concept that variation between generations exist, and generational differences affect perceptions of work and the workplace setting. Adjusting to the differences among generations can be leveraged to the strategic advantage of businesses leading multigenerational workforces and improve workplace harmony (Lanier, 2017). As recently as 2018, there was no research to assess which leadership style is most effective as perceived among Generation Z members globally (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018).

The research questions for this study related to generational theory by addressing the leadership style preferences of Generation Z. There also might be a difference in

leadership style based on the characteristic and motivational differences between Generation Z and other generations (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). Generational theory can be expanded by examining Generation Z's leadership style preferences and developing the current body of knowledge about the unique differences and preferences of Generation Z and other generational cohorts.

The second theoretical foundation was social exchange theory. Social exchange theory refers to the reciprocal relationship between individuals as a personal cost in exchange for tangible or nontangible items (Homans, 1958). An example of social exchange theory is evident in the workplace when an employee enters into a relationship with their employer to show up to work every day, which is the cost, in hopes of receiving a reward from their employer, including money or prestige. Homans (1958) posited that individuals exert an amount of effort that maximizes the returns or the quantity and frequency of returns. Homans stressed that employee behavior changes the greatest amount when the anticipated return is lowest. Homans focused on the psychological aspect of a reciprocal relationship and maintained that reinforcement of cost and rewards impacted the value and frequency of exchange.

American sociologist Blau expanded upon social exchange theory in 1964 (Emerson, 1976). Blau (1964) focused on individual behavior and thought that people would also alter their behavior and future behavior in expectation of future rewards and exchanges, particularly in exchanges reaping economic rewards. Blau suggested that individuals would change their behavior for not only guaranteed rewards, but also perceived future rewards. Emerson (1976) furthered Homans's (1958) and Blau's

explanations of social exchange. Emerson's research results indicated that social exchange is an avenue for making economic decisions in socially centered situations.

Several research studies that included social exchange theory foundations were conducted by researchers to examine the relationship between work engagement and leadership (Blau, 1964; Choi et al., 2015; Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015). Choi et al. (2015) conducted a study based on social exchange theory to determine the relationship between social exchange and organizational commitment. Employee creativity and organizational commitment were found to influence the relationship between employee work engagement, which positively relates to inclusive leadership behaviors (Choi et al., 2015). The leaders of organizations seeking increased organizational commitment should consider understanding leadership style that best motivates and retains contemporary employees.

Social exchange theory also served as a basis for this study due to the reciprocal nature of the employer-employee relationship. A combination of generational theory and social exchange theory provided the framework for this study due to the marked differences in generations and the unique relationship that emerges between employer and employee because of these generational differences. Understanding the reciprocal factors that motivate Generation Z employees to continue working, such as leadership style, may assist organizational decision making and leadership training (Khoreva & Vaiman, 2015). As recently as 2018, no studies existed about Generation Z and their perception of leadership effectiveness (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018), which is affected by social exchange from employer to employee. Organizational leaders who align their

social exchange behavior and leadership style to support their workforce create a productive and supportive work environment for Generation Z employees (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014).

Literature Review

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. This literature review includes a discussion of existing literature, topics that lack inquiry, and justification for the importance of this study. The first section of this literature review has an introduction to leadership and how organizational leaders display the concept of leadership in the workplace through leadership style. There is a review of past and current literature on leadership style outcomes and generational preferences of leadership style. The four prevalent leadership styles included in this section are: (a) transformational, (b) transactional, (c) laissez-faire, and (d) authentic leadership. The discussion encompasses the strengths and weaknesses of these leadership styles associated with practical applications.

The second section of this literature review contains an explanation of the concept of leadership effectiveness. The theories that comprise subordinate perception of leadership effectiveness, namely trait theory, behavior theory, situational theory, and transformational theory, are defined and explained. A review of subordinate leadership effectiveness literature and application outcomes concludes the second section. The last section of this literature review includes a thorough overview of identified characteristics

of Generation Z, workplace expectations, and related managerial concerns. The conclusion of this chapter contains an explanation of the gap in Generation Z literature, specifically noting the lack of research regarding Generation Z's preference of leadership style and perceived effective leadership behaviors.

Leadership Overview

Leadership, by definition, is a process that involves influencing individuals to work together and accomplish shared goals (Yukl, 2010). Leadership requires many individuals in an organization to achieve predetermined goals (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016). Effective leaders inspire their subordinates, provide stability, and create a vision for sharing among key stakeholders (Underwood et al., 2016). Leadership style encompasses a collection of leader behaviors, traits, and the relationship between leaders and subordinates in the workplace (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016). The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate.

Leadership Styles

Leadership style includes the pattern of behavior that a leader displays in the relationship with their subordinates to accomplish a shared goal (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016; Underwood et al., 2016). Leadership style influences the reciprocal social exchange between a leader and a follower (Afshari et al., 2017). A leader must display a reasonably consistent behavior to consider leadership behavior a leadership style (Afshari et al., 2017). Organizational leaders who adopt the appropriate leadership style in the workplace

can positively influence employee creativity, idea generation (Deichmann & Stam, 2015), motivation, and efficiency (Afshari et al., 2017). Generations understand and respond to leadership in different ways based upon individual cohort understanding and experiences of leadership (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Some leadership styles are not as effective in motivating and retaining different generations (Wiedmer, 2015). Organizational leaders should adopt a leadership style that best motivates each generation (Wiedmer, 2015).

There exists a multitude of research on generational preferences of leadership style among the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Jiří, 2016), but not among Generation Z. Empirical findings indicated that the Traditionalist generation preferred a direct leadership style, clear goals, and specific directions from their leader (Wiedmer, 2015). The Baby Boomer generation favored motivational tools such as power, prestige, and reward for hard work (Wiedmer, 2015). Baby Boomers preferred leadership that provided solely positive feedback (Fogarty et al., 2017) and did not threaten their rewards or position (Wiedmer, 2015). Distinguishably self-reliant, Generation X employees preferred leadership that does not micromanage, provides structure, and respects work and life balance (Jiří, 2016). Generation Y employees preferred leadership that prioritized flexible working arrangements and managers who took a personal interest in employee professional growth while providing consistent performance feedback (Wiedmer, 2015).

The body of leadership style literature lacks scientific inquiry into the leadership style perceived as the most effective among Generation Z employees (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). The body of knowledge in the United States still lacks scientific inquiry

by researchers into the leadership preferences of Generation Z employees. A study of

1,000 Generation Z managers conducted by the Forum Corporation, a leadership

consulting company, produced results that showed 78% of managers are unprepared to

lead Generation Z (Stuckey, 2016). Organizations that possess data on generational

preferences can align leadership development programs to best support a diverse

workforce (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018).

In 1990, leadership experts Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass developed the MLQ

to measure transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors (Bass &

Avolio, 1990). Bass (1990) believed that studying transformational, transactional, and

laissez-faire leadership would yield results with a full range of leadership behaviors.

Authentic leadership has many of the same emphasized leadership behaviors as

transformational leadership (Rodriguez et al., 2017). Both authentic and transformational

leadership styles emphasize the leader-follower relationship, high ethical and moral

standards, and integrity. Authentic and transformational leadership behaviors differ due

to the organizational activity highlighted in transformational leadership (Rodriguez et al.,

2017). Analyzing authentic leadership is also included in this study due to the similarity

between authentic and transformational leadership. Sequential discussion follows on

transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and

authentic leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership theorist Burns (1978) initially proposed the concept of

transformational leadership. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their

subordinates to pursue ethical and positive conduct that transforms the motivating factors of both leader and subordinate (Burns, 1978). The transformational leader motivates subordinates to embrace values that support the organization above self-interest values (Dabke, 2016), which reflects well on the leader through employees meeting or exceeding organizational goals. The successful use of transformational leadership in the workplace can increase employee empowerment and positively influence employee engagement (Han et al., 2016).

Transformational leadership includes dimensions of individual consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and charisma, also known as the idealized influence (Bass, 1990). The concept of individual consideration includes fostering a personal relationship between leader and subordinate (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). Inspirational motivation consists of the ways a leader engages subordinate minds and hearts and motivates their subordinates toward task accomplishment (Rodriguez et al., 2017). Intellectual stimulation refers to leadership behavior that inspires subordinate creativity and challenges subordinates to consider other viewpoints (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016). Idealized influence encompasses leader expertise and goal-achieving behavior that subordinates emulate (Rodriguez et al., 2017).

Some researchers focused studies on charisma and the relationship with transformational leadership practice. According to Bass (1990), charisma is a predictor of follower outcome. Management theorist House (1976) generalized that charisma was a trait that leaders possessed, which caused subordinates to model behavior, actions, and feelings after their leader. House conducted a study of charisma among political leaders

and used speeches and biographies for sources of information for his study. Due to the validity of questions raised with House's study and method of data collection, further research about charisma as an independent leadership style decreased. The concept of charisma and the role of the follower remains underrepresented in the charisma literature (Nisbett & Walmsley, 2016). Rating of leadership charisma exists on the MLQ in the outcomes of the leadership section (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Many research findings have shown that the effective use of transformational leadership in the workplace facilitates positive effects for subordinates (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Dabke, 2016; Deichmann & Stam, 2015). The use of transformational leadership principles by leaders in the workplace was found to positively impact employee job satisfaction (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Dabke, 2016). Research showed that creativity increased among employees in organizations where transformational leadership was present (Dong et al., 2016). Empirical findings also indicated that subordinate commitment increased in workplaces that have transformational leaders (Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Underwood et al., 2016). Study results also showed that leaders who utilize transformational leadership principles assist in decreasing workplace stress and burnout for subordinates (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016), which reduces employee turnover (Ennis et al., 2018).

Results of a study in India indicated transformational leadership is positively associated with employee perception of leadership effectiveness (Dabke, 2016). A study conducted among information technology (IT), banking, fast-moving consumer goods, and manufacturing industries produced results that also indicated a positive relationship

between transformational behaviors and perceived leadership effectiveness (Dabke, 2016). Both of these studies were conducted in India and should be replicated in other areas for generalizability.

Research studies produced results that indicated a positive correlation between transformational leadership and employee psychological empowerment (Dust et al., 2014; Han et al., 2016). A study conducted at a large university in the northeastern United States examined the mediating effects of psychological empowerment on the relationship of transformational leadership and employee job related behaviors (Dust et al., 2014). The results of this study indicated that psychological empowerment was positively related to transformational leadership, which influenced productive employee behavior (Dust et al., 2014). Han et al. (2016) conducted a similar study in South Korea. The study was designed to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing. The results showed a positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), organizational commitment, and psychological empowerment. Transformational leadership and knowledge sharing did not have a significant relationship, but OCB was identified as a primary motivating factor of knowledge sharing (Han et al., 2016).

The body of knowledge of transformational leadership contains research results indicating many positive outcomes of using transformational leadership principles in the workplace (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Dabke, 2016; Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Dong et al., 2016). Researchers conducted considerable amounts of empirical studies to examine the leadership style preferences among the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer,

Generation X, and Y Generations (Fogarty et al., 2017; Jiří, 2016; Wiedmer, 2015). Bass (1990) and Burns (1978) also specified transactional leadership as a common leadership style used between leaders and followers.

Transactional Leadership

Burns (1978) justified that transformational and transactional leadership represent opposite ends of a leadership spectrum. Transactional leadership differs from transformational leadership because transactional leaders offer tangible rewards for personal or professional gain as incentives to motivate positive workplace behaviors instead of motivating values focused on the organization (Bass, 1990; Deichmann & Stam, 2015). Transactional leaders focus their efforts on incentivizing their workforce with rewards for performance (Bass, 1990) and sanctions for failures to meet predetermined goals (Singh, 2015). Motivating individuals to work toward the accomplishment of a common objective remains the fundamental challenge for both transformational and transactional leaders (Burns, 1978). Although transformational leadership has a similar foundation as transformational leadership, transformational leadership embodies different characteristics and has a different presentation by leaders in the workplace.

Two factors that Bass and Avolio (1990) suggested comprising transformational leadership are contingent reward and management-by-exception. Transactional leaders promise contingent rewards in exchange for certain goal attainment and behaviors from subordinates (Avolio et al., 1999; Khaola & Coldwell, 2019). Over time, transactional leaders build trust with their subordinates by honoring their promises of rewards (Avolio

et al., 1999). Many researchers also examined the effects of transactional management style on workplace climate and subordinate perceptions of managerial effectiveness (Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Saleem, 2015).

Procedural and distributive justice are two factors that research results show influence leadership perception and employee job satisfaction, particularly in organizations using transformational and transactional leadership styles (Saleem, 2015). Employees perceived transactional leaders to possess low organizational fairness, and the use of transactional leadership decreased employee trust in leaders, job satisfaction (Saleem, 2015), and organizational commitment (Khaola & Coldwell, 2019). Employee level of trust in leadership was found to impact the relationship and perception of the leadership style present in the workplace (Bass, 1990). Bass (1990) judged transformational leaders lose the trust of their subordinates when they are unable to follow through with promises of rewards or penalties. Organizational policies and procedures may prohibit leaders from promising specific rewards or punishments. Failure to provide promised rewards or penalties may negatively affect employee perception of leadership effectiveness. Perceived leader performance influenced employee trust in organizations and had a positive relationship with employee satisfaction (Meng & Berger, 2019).

Previous study results indicated that transactional leadership positively influenced employee commitment to organizational goal achievement (Deichmann & Stam, 2015) and firm performance (Masa'deh et al., 2016). Deichmann and Stam (2015) prescribed that leadership affects employees' idea generation and creativity. Some research findings

indicated transactional leadership as a force that hindered creativity (Deichmann & Stam, 2015), whereas other researchers found transactional leadership encouraged creativity (Ma & Jiang, 2018). As of 2018, the leadership body of research has mixed research findings from researchers critiquing the relationship between transactional leadership and creativity (Ma & Jiang, 2018).

Singh (2015) conducted a study of employee perception of transformational and transactional leadership used at banks in India and the United States. The results of Singh's research indicated that the bank employees in India perceived transactional leadership behaviors as more effective, whereas the U.S. bank employees perceived transformational leadership as more effective. The findings of this study show that employee perception of leadership effectiveness has a cultural component. Generation Z is the most ethnically diverse workforce than ever before in the United States (Critical, 2016). Generation Z is also considered the first global generation by their frequent use of technology and status as the only generation born into the world with the internet (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018). This study included an examination of Generation Z's perception of transactional leadership to capture responses from this ethnically and culturally diverse cohort.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership was less represented in the leadership style research compared to the transactional and transformational leadership styles (Skogstad et al., 2014). Researchers determined that laissez-faire leadership produced destructive side effects in organizations (Skogstad et al., 2014). Behaviors such as abdicating

responsibilities, failing to intervene in workplace practices, and avoiding relationship

building with subordinates constitute laissez-faire leadership behavior (Wong &

Giessner, 2018). Laissez-faire leaders avoid conflict and situations that may require the

leader to make decisions (Asrar-ul-Haq & Kuchinke, 2016; Fiaz et al., 2017). Laissez-

faire leaders delegate decision making authority to followers and minimize interactions

and communication with subordinates (Fiaz et al., 2017). Bass (1990) detected that

passive management-by-exception involves leaders who only intervene if employees do

not achieve predetermined standards. The laissez-faire leadership research has positive

and negative organizational side effects, but there is more representation of the negative

side effects of laissez-faire leadership in the workplace (Chin, 2015).

Several negative outcomes and perceptions of employees about laissez-faire

leadership exist in contemporary leadership literature. Laissez-faire leadership negatively

is related to employee performance outcomes in the workplace (Asrar-ul-Haq &

Kuchinke, 2016; Chin, 2015; Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Employees perceived laissez-

faire leaders as less effective than leaders displaying other leadership style behaviors

(Wong & Giessner, 2018). Laissez-faire leadership was considered the least desirable

leadership style for university students and individuals working in the public sector

(Uusi-Kakkuri et al., 2016).

Laissez-faire leadership behaviors displayed by organizational leaders contributed

to workplace environments with bullying behaviors among employees (Dussault &

Frenette, 2015; Glambek et al., 2018). Laissez-faire leaders do not provide employees

with a model of appropriate behavior to display in the workplace (Dussault & Frenette,

2015). Leader inaction and failure to correct inappropriate workplace behavior contribute to interpersonal tensions, asocial behaviors, and frustration (Dussault & Frenette, 2015). Subordinates of laissez-faire leaders also perceived that the leader accepts bullying behavior (Glambek et al., 2018).

A Norwegian study of employees working in multiple industries reported coworker conflict inspired new cases of workplace bullying and that laissez-faire leadership strengthened the relationship between conflict and bullying (Ågotnes et al., 2018). Another analysis of the data gathered in the Norwegian study concluded that laissez-faire leadership was also a strong predictor of exposure to bullying behaviors and an increased rate of bullying for some time up to 2 years (Glambek et al., 2018). A study in Canada resulted in similar findings. Work-related and perceived bullying was strongly related to the laissez-faire leadership style and not to transformational or transactional leadership styles (Dussault & Frenette, 2015). Some laissez-faire leadership studies indicated positive workplace results.

Laissez-faire leadership researchers primarily outline negative effects in the workplace, but few studies linked laissez-faire leadership to positive workplace outcomes (Zareen et al., 2015). Certain organizational settings produce an optimal environment for laissez-faire leadership to positively affect change and workplace performance. Planned decisions, routine tasks, and predetermined regulations and rules provide an optimal environment in organizations where laissez-faire leadership positively influences change (Zareen et al., 2015). Organizations with individuals who understand their role, do not

require constant leader oversight, and are self-motivated, comprise the workplace environment where laissez-faire leadership is most successful (Zareen et al., 2015).

The results gathered from a study of federal Pakistani energy developers indicated a positive relationship between laissez-faire leadership and employee motivation (Fiaz et al., 2017). Another study conducted among commercial bank employees in Pakistan produced similar positive results of laissez-faire leadership. Laissez-faire leadership was distinguished in empirical findings as a contributing factor that positively correlated with employee motivation among Pakistani bank sector employees (Zareen et al., 2015). These two studies represent small sample sizes from a specific geographic location. Researchers must conduct more studies to detect the generalizability of these findings related to influence by the environment of the Pakistani culture and the positive link of laissez-faire leadership.

Compared to transformational and transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership has overall less representation in the body of leadership research, and primarily only negative side effects of laissez-faire leadership were studied (Skogstad et al., 2014). The lack of laissez-faire leadership inquiry provides a novel opportunity to examine Generation Z's perceptions of laissez-faire leadership effectiveness. Due to the diversity of Generation Z and the characteristic differences from previous generations (Grow & Yang, 2018), this study includes Generation Z's perception of laissez-faire leadership effectiveness. The last leadership style examined during this study was authentic leadership. Authentic leadership closely relates to the constructs of

transformational leadership, and results showed a positive effect of authentic leadership practice on workplace climate (Zubair & Kamal, 2015).

Authentic Leadership

In 1999, leadership experts Bernard Bass and Paul Steidlmeier (1999) created authentic leadership, which was initially considered a subsection of transformational leadership. Bass and Steidlmeier distinguished transformational leaders as either authentic or pseudo authentic transformational leaders, although not all transformational leaders ethically conduct themselves. Leadership experts asserted that leadership styles emerge from practical needs (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014). Authentic leadership developed as a response to growing concerns among scholars and practitioners after ethical scandals such as Enron and Lehman Brothers bankruptcies (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014; Fusco et al., 2015). Authentic leadership encompasses ethical and moral components that differentiate authentic leadership from other leadership styles (Duncan et al., 2017). Individuals considered authentic pseudo leaders either lack the commitment to a moral and ethical standard or fail to consistently apply authentic leadership behaviors in the workplace (Duncan et al., 2017).

Four distinguishing behaviors of authentic leaders include (a) self-awareness, (b) balanced processing, (c) internal moral perspective, and (d) relational transparency (Duncan et al., 2017; Walumbwa et al., 2008). The concept of self-awareness is identifying an individual's ability to assess and understand their strengths, weaknesses, and rationality. Balanced processing refers to the ability of a leader to analyze information objectively before making decisions. The concept of internal moral

perspective is an individual's ability to hold themselves accountable to a high ethical and moral standard. Relational transparency includes an individual's ability to present their true self to employees and subordinates, express their true feelings, and share information freely with others (Duncan et al., 2017). The application of these four behaviors by authentic leaders fostered positive workplace conditions for U.S. employees of pharmaceutical companies and Pakistani banking and software professionals (Zubair & Kamal, 2015).

The body of leadership research contains less empirical and theoretical data on authentic leadership due to the more recent development of authentic leadership compared with other leadership styles (Frederick et al., 2016; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Researchers concluded that authentic leadership fostered a workplace environment that promotes positive outcomes for employees (Guenter et al., 2017; Zubair & Kamal, 2015). Workplaces with authentic leadership showed improved levels of communication (Fusco et al., 2015; Guenter et al., 2017) and job satisfaction (Banks et al., 2016). Research study findings indicated that workplaces with authentic leadership increased employee performance, productivity (Duncan et al., 2017; Fusco et al., 2015), and creativity (Zubair & Kamal, 2015). Authentic leadership research encompasses scientific inquiry into the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational outcomes; however, there is a lack of any investigation into the relationship between generational differences and the perception of authentic leadership effectiveness.

Multigenerational study results support the theory that individual generations of employees have unique preferences for leadership behavior (Fogarty et al., 2017; Jiří,

2016; Wiedmer, 2015). Employees perceived authentic leaders as more effective than nonauthentic leaders in the workplace (Walumbwa et al., 2008). The authentic leadership literature does not contain inquiry into the relationship of generational differences and unique perceptions of authentic leadership effectiveness. This study included an examination of the relationship between Generation Z office employees and the perceptions of authentic leadership effectiveness.

Leadership Effectiveness

The leadership literature contains multiple studies on the perceived effectiveness of leaders and organizational outcomes of effective leaders (Dabke, 2016; Underwood et al., 2016). Performance results or subordinate perspective of a leader's ability to achieve goals and lead others with different indicators of success comprise effective leadership (Prochazka et al., 2018). Prevalent methods of inquiry that identify leadership effectiveness consist of measuring group organizational successes, such as goal achievement or profits, and measuring subordinate perceptions of leadership effectiveness (Hogan et al., 1994). Research results identified effective leadership positively influenced employee productivity (Singh, 2015) and firm performance (Masa'deh et al., 2016).

Although study results showed effective leadership positively influenced behavior that affects profits and goal achievements, not all profits and goal achievement relate directly to leadership effectiveness (Hogan et al., 1994). External factors may impact an organization and undermine the efforts of the leader. For example, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's administration suffered negative public perception due to the economic

crisis caused by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil embargo of 1973 (Hogan et al., 1994). Despite U.S. President Carter's leadership efforts, the economic crisis negatively affected the goal achievement of the U.S. President (Hogan et al., 1994). This study will involve examining perceptions of leadership effectiveness from the subordinate perspective to minimize any interference of external factors that could influence perceptions of leadership effectiveness from a profit-based measurement.

Effective leadership behavior in the workplace facilitates an environment of performance, creativity, social harmony (Deichmann & Stam, 2015), job satisfaction, role clarity, and commitment (Breevaart et al., 2015). Results of multigenerational studies concluded each generation perceived different leadership behaviors as effective in the workplace (Jiří, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017; Wiedmer, 2015). The literature on effective leadership lacks studies into the perception of leadership effectiveness from the newest generation of employees, Generation Z. The results of this study will potentially represent new knowledge to contribute to the leadership literature of Generation Z's perception of effective leadership. The components of effective leadership are discussed next to provide the context of what constitutes effective leadership behavior.

Subordinate Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness

Leadership effectiveness literature contains scientific inquiry about the subordinate perception of leadership effectiveness with four prevalent theories. The four theoretical models used to study leadership effectiveness in the leadership literature were (a) trait theory, (b) behavior theory, (c) situational theory, and (d) transformational

leadership theory (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). Research findings indicated that individuals often provided examples of behaviors, traits, and situations where an individual distinguished themselves as a leader to describe effective leadership (Hogan et al., 1994). Meta-analyses conducted in 1996 (Lowe et al., 1996) and 2014 (Dinh et al., 2014) produced results concluding that the leadership literature contains effectiveness studies from four theoretical models. The use of these four models in the workplace influences the effectiveness of leaders and their ability to accomplish organizational goals (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). Explanation follows on the trait, behavior, situational, and transformational leadership theories.

Trait Theory

Trait theory refers to the concept that individuals possess certain personality traits and cognitive abilities that predispose the individual to obtain success as a leader (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016; Xu et al., 2017). Research findings identified multiple leader traits, making it difficult for researchers to pinpoint exact traits and the socialization of those traits that contribute to the belief that a person is an effective leader (Xu et al., 2017). Leadership expert Ralph Stogdill (1948) identified 32 leadership traits. Examples of leadership traits include intelligence, insight, initiative, alertness, persistence, and responsibility (Stogdill, 1948). At least 10 more traits become identified per year, and as recently as 2017, a single trait to distinguish a leader from a follower has yet to be identified (Xu et al., 2017). Stogdill critiqued trait theory and stated to consider the leader and the situation when determining what constitutes an effective leader. Possessing a trait does not guarantee that the leader uses a particular trait with subordinates (Hogan et al.,

1994). The traits displayed by leaders with contrasting leadership styles were investigated within this study.

Behavior Theory

Leadership behaviors contribute to the subordinate perception of leadership staff and leadership effectiveness (Xu et al., 2017). Many researchers conducted leadership studies to analyze the particular behaviors that leaders display in the workplace (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Underwood et al., 2016). Results from a researcher who examined the relationship between leadership and organizational commitment showed that leadership behaviors such as risk-taking, subordinate developing, and friendly demeanor were behaviors most associated with effective leadership (Underwood et al., 2016). Bass (1990) described effective leadership behaviors as organizing and initiating work, showing employees consideration, recognizing and rewarding performance, and enforcing discipline for poor performance.

The consistent pattern of behaviors and the collection of behaviors by a leader comprise the leadership style (Afshari et al., 2017). The leadership behavior literature includes many scientific studies that identify effective leadership behavior in managing the Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Jiří, 2016). The leadership behavior literature does not have any studies concerning Generation Z and their perceptions of effective leadership behaviors (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). To address this gap in the leadership research, Generation Z's perceptions of effective leadership behaviors were examined in this study.

Situational Theory

Situational theory refers to the concept that situational factors influence leaders to adjust their leadership style to suit and motivate their workforce (Wright, 2017). The situational theory also includes the concept that one leadership style is not sufficient for every situation and that leaders must evaluate situational variables to make the best leadership decision (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). The literature on situational theory lacks considerable focus by researchers because of the difficulties in research design, measurement, and content of situational leadership (Lord et al., 2017). Researchers of situational theory identified nearly 435 different relationships and performance measures between rater and leader that are unable to be discerned from one another (Lord et al., 2017). Due to the issues associated with situational leadership measurement, many researchers favor studies that include situational differences, leadership differences, and have a higher rate of validity (Lord et al., 2017).

Transformational Theory

Transformational leaders motivate individuals to embrace organizationally centered thinking and behaviors instead of self-centered thinking and behaviors (Dabke, 2016). Bass (1990) stated that transformational leadership includes four dimensions of individual consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and charisma, also known as the idealized influence. The body of leadership literature comprised of subordinate perception of transformational leadership effectiveness contains multiple empirical studies that indicate a strong and positive relationship between transformational leadership and subordinate perception (Bass, 1990). The body of leadership literature

does not contain any studies specific to the Generation Z perception of transformational leadership effectiveness in the United States (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). The next section contains studies about Generation Z, cohort characteristics, management concerns and considerations, and the gap of research knowledge, specifically the leadership behaviors perceived effective by Generation Z.

Generation Z Characteristics

Researchers identify individuals born between 1995 and 2010 as members of the Generation Z cohort (Andrea et al., 2016). The beginning of this section outlines the research findings of general Generation Z characteristics and the historical and social contexts that shaped the world of Generation Z members. The second part of this section identifies Generation Z workplace specific characteristics and workplace expectations. The collection of literature related to Generation Z in the workplace and workplace attitudes lacks ample representation, despite the extensive amount of literature that exposes strategic advantages to studying generations in the workplace (Wiedmer, 2015). Organizational leaders recruiting top Generation Z talent should amass an understanding of Generation Z characteristics and workplace preferences to cultivate an attractive workplace climate.

Diversity distinguishes Generation Z from other generational cohorts. The breadth of diversity encompassed in the Generation Z cohort differentiates this generation as the most diverse and multicultural cohort of employees in U.S. history (Grow & Yang, 2018). Population projections assess Generation Z as the last cohort with a Caucasian majority in the United States (Critical, 2016; Shatto & Erwin, 2017). Exposure to other

cultures, races, and sexual orientations increased for Generation Z members due to a majority of this cohort growing up in urban areas and access to technology that connects this cohort with individuals from all over the world (Turner, 2015). The Generation Z cohort encompasses a diverse generation of employees that embrace many unique viewpoints and attitudes (Shatto & Erwin, 2017; Turner, 2015).

Generation Z cohort members were born beginning in 1995 and never lived in a world without the internet (Desai & Lele, 2017; Turner, 2015). The use of mobile technology from the early infancy contrasts Generation Z cohort members from previous generations (Lanier, 2017; Turner, 2015). Researchers refer to Generation Z members as digital natives and the internet generation due to their consistent relationship with technology (Lanier, 2017; Turner, 2015). The invention of social media and the widespread use of technology allowed Generation Z members to access information and collaborate with individuals globally from childhood (Turner, 2015). Generation Z adapts to new technology rapidly and values quick access to information, connectivity, and interactivity (Critical, 2016).

The ability to multitask characterizes the Generation Z cohort (Shatto & Erwin, 2017). Technological advances, the rapid invention of media communication devices, and frequent technology use aided in the development of multitasking behaviors (Turner, 2015). Generation Z members use several types of technology, applications, and communication platforms each day (Shatto & Erwin, 2017). Multitasking behavior may be confused for an absence presence (Turner, 2015). Absent presence occurs when an individual attempts to be socially and mentally present for multiple tasks at a time but

fails to provide results on any singular task (Turner, 2015). Organizational leaders should seek ways of positively influencing Generation Z cohort members to stay engaged and productive while at work and inspire productive behaviors.

Most members of Generation Z in the United States lived through the Great Recession of 2008 or were raised by parents who navigated the shrinking of the middle class (Randstad Work Study, 2016; Turner, 2015). Many Generation Z members experienced their parents struggle financially to repay student loan debt (Turner, 2015). A study conducted by Randstad Staffing resulted in 46% of Generation Z participants admitting their primary financial consideration is student debt (Randstad Work Study, 2016). Empirical findings determined that Generation Z members desire a strong sense of job security, generous pay, and opportunities for advancement in the workplace (Lanier, 2017). Research results also indicated Generation Z individuals are more entrepreneurial than Generation Y counterparts (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018; Lanier, 2017; Randstad Work Study, 2016).

The leadership style utilized by managers may result in an environment that influences organizational trust in leadership, performance, and commitment (Bandura & Kavussanu, 2018). Managers should assess their management strategies to ensure they effectively support the particular characteristics that distinguish the Generation Z cohort from previous generations to create an attractive workplace environment (Grow & Yang, 2018; Lanier, 2017). Failure to support generational preferences and variety may result in negative organizational consequences, such as turnover and conflict (Andrea et al., 2016;

Jiří, 2016). The next section includes workplace specific characteristics and expectations

of Generation Z employees.

Management Concern and Consideration

Generation Z cohort members possess personal characteristics and professional

expectations that vary from prior generations (Grow & Yang, 2018). The values and

desires of Generation Z members continue to form as this cohort evolves from childhood

to adulthood (Critical, 2016). Organizations seeking a qualified and talented workforce

should attempt to evaluate the expectations and foundational elements of their

generational cohorts in the effort to attract and retain top talent (Al-Asfour & Lettau,

2014). Leaders should endeavor to discern the expectations and characteristics of

generations present in the workplace (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018; Lanier, 2017).

Successively discussed are the workplace characteristics and expectations of Generation

Z.

Two workplace preferences of Generation Z include in-person communication

and coworking environments (Lanier, 2017). A study conducted by Randstad Staffing

resulted in 39% of Generation Z participants identifying the perceived most effective

method of communication in the workplace as face-to-face or in-person communication

(Randstad Work Study, 2016). Generation Z members desire frequent feedback and

coaching from managers (O'Boyle et al., 2017) and value in-person conversations

(Lanier, 2017). The Randstad Work Study (2016) results also showed that Generation Z

participants reported a willingness to communicate as the most important quality in

leadership. Previous generational workplace preference study results show a positive

relationship between communication and job satisfaction (Mehra & Nickerson, 2019) and a negative relationship with turnover (Ertas, 2015). Cohort members of Generation Z indicated a preference for the ability to collaborate with other employees (Wiedmer, 2015). Members of Generation Z value diversity in the workplace (Lanier, 2017) and value the ability to interact with diverse individuals with different points of view and fields of specialty (Critical, 2016). Communication and collaboration were recorded as motivators of retention and engagement for younger generations, such as Generation Y and Generation Z (Randstad Work Study, 2016).

Members of Generation Z learn more efficiently when leaders incorporate technology in the learning process (Shatto & Erwin, 2016). Generation Z members tend to acquire information through watching videos and independent internet research (Critical, 2016; Shatto & Erwin, 2016). Learning through technology and internet research decreases the transfer of tacit knowledge or specific information that is passed from person to person about customers or processes (O'Boyle et al., 2017). One of the largest accounting firms in the world, Deloitte, conducted a study with 4,000 Generation Z participants and found that 37% of participants described a concern that technology influenced their abilities to develop people skills and maintain interpersonal relationships (O'Boyle et al., 2017). Organizations may incur a loss of tacit knowledge if personal interactions are not included in operations (O'Boyle et al., 2017).

Generation Z cohort members possess an average attention span of eight seconds, which is four seconds lower than Generation Y (Shatto & Erwin, 2016). The innovation firm Altitude proposed that the decreased attention span of Generation Z developed as an

information filter due to the vast amount of research cohort members sort through during

their independent work online (O'Boyle et al., 2017). Deloitte study results showed that

92% of participants were concerned about technology and the influence technology has

on their personal and professional lives (O'Boyle et al., 2017). Workplace leaders who

lack advanced technological knowledge may experience conflict when managing younger

generations who are more technologically advanced (Shatto & Erwin, 2017). Generation

Z cohort members have a lower tolerance for individuals who are not able to easily

understand newer technologies (Shatto & Erwin, 2016). Older generations may perceive

frequent technology use by younger generations, particularly during instructional times,

as inattention (Shatto & Erwin, 2017). Failure to efficiently manage generational

nuances, diversity, or racial differences may result in conflict or employee turnover (Jiří,

2016).

Generation Z literature contains limited characteristic information and minimal

information regarding the work attitudes and preferences of Generation Z members.

Characteristics of Generation Z include diversity, multitasking ability, technical prowess,

and entrepreneurial tendencies (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018; Grow & Yang, 2018).

Workplace preferences encompassed in the body of literature regarding Generation Z

includes in-person communication, coworking, collaboration, and preference for

interactive technologies (Lanier, 2017; O'Boyle et al., 2017; Randstad Work Study, 2016;

Shatto & Erwin, 2017). Existing literature lacks research studies of Generation Z and

leadership style preferences (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Arrington & Dwyer, 2018).

Understanding the leadership preferences of Generation Z supports organizational

leadership efforts to influence the creation of a positive workplace climate and foster employee motivation, communication, and a general understanding of employees (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Andrea et al., 2016; Stuckey, 2016). Previous study results showed aligning appropriate leadership style with workforce preferences positively influences organizational behaviors (Andrea et al., 2016). Outlined in the next section are the outcomes of effective generational leadership research.

Prior Generational Leadership Preference Research

Each generation in the workforce develops different workplace attitudes and leadership preferences (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Generational perception of effective leadership behaviors and leadership style literature includes many studies across the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Generation X, Generation Y cohorts (Jiří, 2016). The leadership literature lacks representation of Generation Z leadership preference studies (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018) despite the multitude of positive effects produced when leadership aligns with generational preferences (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Andrea et al., 2016; Stuckey, 2016). Aligning supportive leadership styles with generational preferences creates workplace environments that facilitate employee productivity, improve attrition rates, and inspire creativity (Dong et al., 2016). Leaders who do not align their practices with generational preferences or diversity may encounter conflict and turnover (Andrea et al., 2016; Jiří, 2016). This section contains an outline of the existing literature on generational leadership preferences and the rewards and consequences of using leadership effectively.

Each generation has specific expectations of leadership behavior (Wiedmer, 2015). The Traditionalist generation preferred clear goals and specific directions from their leader with a direct leadership style (Wiedmer, 2015). Traditionalists disengaged with management when they did not respect the leader or the leader's experience (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). Baby Boomers favored recognition such as power and prestige for their hard work (Wiedmer, 2015). The Baby Boomer generation appreciated leaders who provided only constructive and detailed feedback (Fogarty et al., 2017). Generation X members distinguished themselves as self-reliant and preferred sparse management presence that respected their work and life balance and provided structure (Fogarty et al., 2017; Jiří, 2016). Members of the Generation Y cohort desired leaders who allowed flexible working structures, provided frequent feedback, and displayed a personal interest in developing the workforce (Wiedmer, 2015). The leadership preferences of Generation Z have no research studies represented in the literature (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018) within the United States.

Effective use of workplace leadership results in positive organizational outcomes. The leadership style utilized by leaders influences the quality of work life, organizational performance, and employee perception of leadership (Xu et al., 2017). Leadership that supported generational preferences inspired creativity (Dong et al., 2016) and increased job satisfaction (Dabke, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017). Inclusive leadership positively influences work engagement (Choi et al., 2015). Employees with higher levels of engagement have a higher organizational commitment, increased productivity, and improved customer service (Breevaart et al., 2015; Choi et al., 2015). Understanding

generational preferences for leadership provides specific knowledge of how to motivate individuals to higher levels of organizational engagement and commitment (Breevaart et al., 2015).

Failure to align leadership practices with generational preferences results in negative effects for the organization (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). Poor alignment of leadership with employee needs can negatively impact the organization's economy, stifle organization growth, and destroy relationships (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016). Leaders who ignore generational differences risk causing miscommunication, misunderstandings, and send ambivalent signs to employees (Chawla et al., 2017). Conflict and turnover comprise two negative and expensive effects of poor leadership alignment (Jiří, 2016). Organizational leadership should acquire information about generational differences and align their leadership behaviors to promote organizational efficiency and an engaged workforce (Mehra & Nickerson, 2019). The literature on generational leadership preferences lack research studies of the newest generation of employees, Generation Z (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). The next section has an outline of the current gaps in generational leadership research.

Gap in the Literature

Generational differences include variance in characteristics and work attitudes among cohorts of individuals (Ertas, 2015). The literature on generational differences contains an extensive amount of research studies that concluded generational differences influence organizations, and leadership should adopt leadership behaviors to support a multigenerational workforce (Chawla et al., 2017). Previous research studies produced

results that identified leadership preferences of the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Fogarty et al., 2017; Jiří, 2016; Wiedmer, 2015). Generation Z cohort members exhibit unique characteristics that distinguish this cohort from previous generations (Grow & Yang, 2018). Generation Z's preference for leadership style has not yet appeared in the literature (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018).

As recent as 2017, Generation Z outnumbered Millennials in the U.S. by approximately 1,000,000 and now comprise a quarter of the population in the United States (Lanier, 2017). A study by the Forum Corporation resulted in 55% of current leaders admitting they had concerns about managing Generation Z members (Stuckey, 2016). Another 78% of the Forum study participants indicated they were ill equipped to handle the desires of Generation Z and maintain the support of other generations in the workplace (Stuckey, 2016). Determining the preferred leadership style of a particular generation group and aligning leadership practices fosters organizational communication and job satisfaction (Dabke, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017). A Gallup poll in 2015 produced results that showed roughly half of participants left their job due to poor leadership (Gandolfi & Stone, 2016). Replacing an employee who quit may cost an organization up to 200% of an individual's annual salary (Lee et al., 2017). Attracting and retaining talented employees is fiscally responsible and strategic for organizational leadership (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014).

Future research studies should include an examination of the leadership style preferences of Generation Z (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). This study might contribute to the knowledge gap of Generation Z's preference for leadership style in the workplace.

Organizational leaders who understand the workplace desires of each cohort of employees improve the organizational ability for decision making and team development (Bass, 1990). The next section includes a summary and conclusions of Chapter 2.

Summary and Conclusions

This literature review included an assessment of the literature regarding leadership styles, leadership effectiveness, and subordinate perceptions of leadership style effectiveness. Generation Z characteristics and workplace expectations were also discussed in this review. Organizational outcomes of leaders using transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership styles in the workplace were outlined. No research studies exist that show the leadership style preferences of Generation Z cohort members (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate.

Chapter 2 began with an introduction, followed by the literature review strategy and the theoretical foundation. The latter section of Chapter 2 was the literature review. The main sections of the literature review are leadership overview, leadership styles, leadership effectiveness, Generation Z characteristics, the gap in the literature, and summary and conclusions. The leadership styles section includes subsections of transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and authentic leadership. The subsections of leadership effectiveness are subordinate perceptions of leadership effectiveness, trait theory, behavior theory, situational theory,

and transformational theory. The Generation Z characteristics section also contains subsections of management concerns and considerations and prior generational leadership preference research. The gap in the literature is the last section of Chapter 2 before the summary and conclusions.

Chapter 3 contains an introduction, research design and rationale, methodology, data analysis plan, threats to validity, and a summary. Subsections of the methodology include population, sampling and sampling procedures, procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection and instrumentation and operationalization of constructs. The subsections of threats to validity include external validity, internal validity, construct validity, and ethical procedures. Chapter 3 concludes with a summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. The study comprised an online questionnaire that incorporated the ALQ created by Avolio et al. (2007) and the MLQ created by Bass and Avolio (1990). The four random variables were (a) authentic leadership, (b) laissez-faire leadership, (c) transformational leadership, and (d) transactional leadership. The leadership style identified by Generation Z with the highest average answer, or mean, represents the leadership style perceived as most effective. The results of this study may formulate new knowledge regarding the preference of leadership style among Generation Z office employees in the workplace. Organizational leaders with this knowledge could potentially construct leadership training that aligns with generational preferences and may prompt a positive social change in employee and leader relations.

Chapter 3 includes the research design and methodology of the study. The assessment of variables and data collection instruments in Chapter 3 are accompanied by the justification of use and appropriateness for this study. The population, sampling procedures, and data analysis plan are also discussed in this chapter. Threats to internal, external, and construct validity and ethical concerns are evaluated before concluding Chapter 3 with a summary and transition to Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

This quantitative correlational study was comprised of an online questionnaire to test the relationship, if any relationship exists, between four random variables. The four random variables were (a) authentic leadership, (b) laissez-faire leadership, (c) transformational leadership, and (d) transactional leadership. The MLQ and ALQ questionnaires were combined into a singular questionnaire and distributed online to test Generation Z office employee preference for effective leadership style. This section includes information about each portion of the research design and the rationale for the research design element.

Questionnaires serve as one of the most common methods of collecting empirical data from a specific population (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). By using questionnaires, researchers can collect large amounts of data from expansive and diverse populations and offer a high level of anonymity (Nardi, 2018). Online questionnaires may require less time and resources to administer for research (Nardi, 2018). A questionnaire was chosen for this study to potentially capture many participants in a cost-effective and timely manner. The questionnaire was distributed online due to Generation Z's general technological proficiency (Andrea et al., 2016).

The MLQ and ALQ were chosen as measurement instruments because they directly measure the variables in this study. Levels of laissez-faire leadership, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership were measured by using the MLQ, which was published by Bass and Avolio (1990). Authentic leadership levels were measured by using the ALQ published by Avolio et al. (2007). The high reliability and

construct validity of the MLQ and ALQ positively contributed to the decision to use these measurement tools in this study.

The questionnaire data collection method supports the collection of information from a large population, particularly when observational data would not be practical (Blumenberg & Barros, 2018). The research questions and hypotheses of this study were designed to potentially identify whether a relationship exists between leadership style and Generation Z's perception of leadership effectiveness. Online questionnaires are cost-effective, easy to administer, and convenient for participant access (Nardi, 2018). Some Generation Z members possess technical knowledge and value connectivity (Goh & Lee, 2018). Distributing the questionnaire online also supported possibly securing a diverse range of responses from Generation Z office employees.

Leaders who practice effective leadership characteristics and behaviors in the workplace can positively impel employee development, motivation, and organizational communication (Andrea et al., 2016). Researchers who conducted studies of generational differences concluded that organizations should integrate leadership behaviors to support a diverse and multigenerational workforce (Anderson et al., 2017). Perceptions of leadership effectiveness and preferences for leadership style varied between generations (Fogarty et al., 2017). Questionnaires facilitated online afford the opportunity to possibly gather responses from a diversified group of individuals (Blumenberg & Barros, 2018), such as Generation Z office employees, a population with minimal representation in the scholarly literature.

Part of research design includes methodology that supports the collection of data that align with the purpose and problem statement in order to sufficiently answer the research questions (Burkholder et al., 2016). Methodology that misaligns with the research purpose, problem, or research questions threatens the validity and reliability of research findings (Frey, 2018). Researchers should choose methodology that strengthens the validity and reliability of the proposed research (Burkholder et al., 2016). The methodology of the study is presented in the next section, containing the research population; sampling and sampling procedures; procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection; and instrumentation and operationalization of constructs.

Methodology

This section of Chapter 3 contains information about the population that was studied, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and how the sample size was determined. The recruitment, informed consent, and data collection procedures are also outlined. The preestablished questionnaires utilized to gather data are included, and reliability and validity values are provided to justify the appropriateness of using these tools relating to the research design. This section concludes with the data analysis plan, and a transition is provided to the section regarding threats to validity.

Population

The population of a study refers to the group of people that a researcher intends on determining conclusions about through scientific inquiry (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). Choosing a population that is too vast increases the risk that researchers may not be able to adequately answer the research questions, as all variances found that are not zero may

be considered statistically significant (Foody, 2009). Selecting a population that is too specific increases the risk that researchers will not have enough responses to have a representative sample of the larger population or fail to detect a larger effect (Foody, 2009). Identifying a population is a critical step for researchers when designing a study.

The target population for this study encompassed office employees in the southwestern United States who were born between 1995 and 2010. The precise number of Generation Z office employees in the southwestern United States is unknown. Assuming that a portion of the 39 million Generation Z cohort members currently working has an office job, an adequate sample size was needed to ascertain sufficient data to provide a representative sample (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). The target population was limited to individuals 18 and older due to their legal ability to give consent in any of the United States and to decrease any potential ethical issues that could arise from working with minors (Hiriscau et al., 2016). Responses from individuals who were born outside of the predetermined age group were not included in the data analysis. Defining the population extends context to the sampling strategy that researchers must subsequently develop to complete a study (Nardi, 2018).

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The sampling strategy includes the procedures for how the sample will be collected (Nardi, 2018). Gathering responses from an entire population is typically not time or resource conscious, particularly when the population is large. Researchers gather responses from a sample of a population to make inferences about the population as a whole (Rahi, 2017). The sample size influences the possible sampling error and

generalizability of findings (Garavan et al., 2019). This section contains the sampling strategy and procedures for this research.

The participant sampling strategy for this study was to secure responses from members of Generation Z who work in an office setting in the southwestern United States. Inclusion criteria for this sample encompassed individuals from the age range of 18 to 25 years to compile responses from the Generation Z cohort. Individuals under the age of 18 pose an ethical challenge to collecting data, so only individuals old enough to make legal decisions for themselves were included in the study (Hiriscau et al., 2016). The inclusion criteria also required the sample group to agree to informed consent and live in the southwestern United States. Exclusion criteria applied to individuals who were outside the age range of 18-25, did not work in an office setting, refused informed consent, or did not reside in the southwestern United States.

The advanced technological prowess and comfort of use with computers among Generation Z contributed to the determination that a questionnaire online might garner an increased response rate (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018). The questionnaire was hosted on the secure online survey platform Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2019). Hosting the questionnaire online meant that individuals could participate in the questionnaire at a preferred place and time. Qualtrics administered the survey and guaranteed that the required number of responses were collected. The responses were compiled on the Qualtrics site and downloaded as a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) file (Qualtrics, 2019). I uploaded the file was uploaded to the SPSS version 27 program for statistical analysis.

The statistical power calculator G*Power 3.1.9.4 was used to calculate the sample size (Faul et al., 2009). To accurately calculate sample size in G*Power, the alpha, power level, number of groups, and effect size must be identified. The alpha in a study refers to the level of risk that a researcher may commit a Type I error or incorrectly reject the null hypothesis (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). The alpha for this study was set at a level of $p < .05$, considering the wide acceptance of this predetermined statistical level in research (Cohen, 1992). The power level was set at .95 to increase the confidence of the mean. There were four groups in this study, which correlated with the number of random variables. The effect size was set at .40, which is a large effect for an analysis of variance (ANOVA) that has been identified as a relatively fixed level since 1977 (Cohen, 1992). When the F test was computed in G*Power with a power of .95, a group size of four, the effect size of .40, and an alpha of $p < .05$, the sample size was 112. The recruitment of the sample, participation, and data collection methods are discussed in the next section.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

Participants were recruited through the online survey platform Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2019). The only participants recruited for the questionnaire by Qualtrics were in the 18-25 years age group and worked in an office setting within the southwestern United States (Qualtrics, 2019). Minimal demographic information was gathered to increase anonymity. Participant date of birth was collected by Qualtrics at the time of account creation prior to this study (Qualtrics, 2019). Qualtrics only sent invitations to participate in the questionnaire if the participant previously disclosed their birth year and date as falling in the 18-to-25-years age category (Qualtrics, 2019). The one-way

ANOVA statistical test requires a minimum of two groups to compare means (Frey, 2018). The gender of the participant was needed to meet the minimum group requirement for statistical analysis.

Recruited participants received the questionnaire link from Qualtrics at their designated contact email address. Once the participant clicked the link in the email, the first page that the participant encountered was the informed consent page. Participants were not able to access the questionnaire without first providing an acknowledgment of informed consent. The informed consent page had an explanation that the study was voluntary in nature and included my contact information, as well as contact information for the Walden University Research Participant Advocate. The informed consent page also contained a brief background of the study, procedure information, any potential risks or benefits of participation, and information regarding privacy. Once participants acknowledged that they had read, understood, and agreed to the informed consent, they were routed to the next page to complete the questionnaire. Individuals who did not agree to the informed consent were not administered the questionnaire and were automatically redirected to exit the page.

Qualtrics secured servers housed the data and provided an SPSS data file for download once the total 112 questionnaires were complete (Qualtrics, 2019). If participants exited the questionnaire before completion, their progress was saved and stored on Qualtrics's servers as a response in progress (Qualtrics, 2019). Participants could return and complete their questionnaire for the duration of the response collection period, which was determined by response rate. The response collection period ended

once the required 112 responses were received. As participants exited the study, the last page included contact information for me and Walden University.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The instruments that were used to collect leadership preference data are described in this section. The appropriateness of using the instruments for the study is described first. Following the appropriateness of instrument use is an assessment of validity and reliability scores from prior studies or meta-analyses to augment the justification for using the MLQ and ALQ. An overview of past populations that participated in studies with these instruments and how validity and reliability scores were established concludes this section.

Two established instruments were used to examine the relationship between Generation Z leadership preferences and authentic, laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership behaviors. The MLQ, developed by leadership experts Avolio and Bass (1990), was the instrument used in this study to measure laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership style behaviors. Authentic leadership style behaviors were measured using the ALQ (Avolio et al., 2007). The use of the MLQ and ALQ together allowed the collection of data on a full range of leadership style behaviors. Once the MLQ and ALQ remote licenses were purchased, and permission to distribute was requested via MindGarden.com. The permission letters for the use of the MLQ and ALQ are included in the appendices.

The MLQ has a total of 45 questions grouped into nine behavioral scales and three outcomes of leadership scales (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The three outcomes of

leadership scales are Extra Effort (EE), Effectiveness (EFF), and Satisfaction (SAT). The MLQ question associated with EE is "Questions 39, 42, and 44". The EFF scale includes "Questions 37, 40, 43, and 45". SAT scale questions are "Question 38 and 41" (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Two scales measure passive-avoidant leadership behaviors on the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Passive-avoidant leadership behaviors are "Questions 3, 12, 17, and 20" for the Management by Exception (Passive; MBEP) scale. The Laissez-Faire scale includes "Questions 5, 7, 28, and 33". The two scales that measure transactional leadership are Contingent Reward (CR), with "Questions 15, 19, 29, and 31", and Management by Exception (Active; MBEA), with "Questions 4, 22, 24, and 27" (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Transformational leadership has five associated behavioral measurement scales. Idealized Attributes (IA) or Idealized Influence (Attributes; II) are abbreviated together as A (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The MLQ questions associated with the A scale are "Questions 10, 18, 21, and 25". Idealized Behaviors (IB) or Idealized Influence (Behaviors; II) are abbreviated conjointly as B. Questions corresponding to B comprise "Questions 6, 14, 23, and 34". The Inspirational Motivation (IM) scale has 9, 13, 26, and 36 as related questions. The Intellectual Stimulation (IS) scale includes "Questions 2, 8, 30, and 32". The final scale for transformational leadership is Individual Consideration (IC), represented by "Questions 15, 19, 29, and 31" (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The development of the MLQ was inspired by focusing exploratory research on the transactional and transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The MLQ was

appropriate to use in this study because it measures three of the four leadership style behaviors that were examined in this study. I used the MLQ to measure the preference for laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership style behaviors. Three of the four research questions for this study may be answered by the data analysis from the MLQ question responses. The dynamic population administration of the MLQ also advances the appropriateness of using this instrument with the chosen population, Generation Z.

Since its publication in 1990, researchers have used the MLQ in more than 300 research studies (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The MLQ has been used by researchers to measure leadership behaviors across diverse populations of individuals, including military members, middle and senior-level managers, health care coordinators, school principals, and bank managers worldwide (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Despite cultural and geographical differences in the populations that were administered the MLQ, researchers have consistently tested and reported high reliability and validity values (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016; Fiaz et al., 2017). These high reliability and validity values found across diverse populations supported my decision to use the MLQ with this population, as Generation Z cohort members constitute the most diverse generation in the United States (Critical, 2016).

Meta-analyses were completed to distinguish the reliability and validity values of the MLQ. The validity of a study refers to the extent an instrument measures what was intended on being measured (Gundry & Deterding, 2019). The likelihood a study can be replicated and produce similar results is reliability (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). Cronbach's

alpha, signified as α, is a standard measurement used by researchers to test for internal

consistency of an instrument (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The Cronbach's alpha is

calculated at a level of 0 to 1, with scores ranging from .75 to .95 considered acceptable

(Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Researchers should endeavor to use measurement tools with

higher reliability and validity scores to boost the generalizability of findings (Frey, 2018).

A correlational analysis conducted by Avolio and Bass (2004) with 12,118

participants resulted in reliability scores ranging from .70 to .83. An assessment of MLQ

internal reliability by Dimitrov and Darova (2016) produced reliability results ranging

from .74 to .87, supporting internal reliability for measuring laissez-faire, transactional,

and transformational leadership. A meta-analysis of 33 studies that used the MLQ

resulted in a positive correlation between transformational leadership and performance

measurements (Lowe et al., 1996). The reliability scores from the correlational analysis

and meta-analysis indicate that the MLQ as a leadership behavior style measurement

instrument retains high reliability across studies (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Dimitrov &

Darova, 2016; Lowe et al., 1996).

Avolio et al. (1999) tested MLQ reliability by using Confirmatory Factor Analysis

(CFA) and Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI). Researchers use CFA for construct validity to

test hypothesized relationships between observed factors and hypothesized outcomes

(Vogt & Johnson, 2011). The GFI values range from 0 to 1 and measure the strength of

the collected data compared with the statistical or theoretical model (Frey, 2018). The

1999 research by Avolio et al. included two separate groupings of previous studies for

total sample size, indicated by N, of $N = 3,786$. The GFI rating for the first group in the

research was .89, and the GFI rating for the second group was .87. The reliability scores for the leadership scales ranged from .64 to .92, with only the .64 score of management-by-exception below .70 (Avolio et al., 1999). The results of this study indicated relatively high reliability scores.

Since its publication in 1990, researchers have administered the MLQ to varying populations in more than 22 countries worldwide (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016). A study conducted in Bulgaria measured the reliability of the MLQ by comparing the response data to previous studies in Europe and the United States (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016). The questionnaire was distributed to Bulgarian military officers with a total sample size of N = 363. The mean data gathered from Dimitrov and Darova's (2016) study were compared with findings from a study in Europe with a sample of N = 1,143 and one study in the U.S., N = 3,375. The Cronbach's alphas ranged from .74 to .87, indicating high internal reliability.

A study conducted in Pakistan among 110 middle and senior level managers of a federally controlled energy development organization yielded an overall Cronbach alpha score of .79 for the MLQ, indicating internal consistency (Fiaz et al., 2017). The alpha levels for the laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership styles ranged from .68 to .89 (Fiaz et al., 2017). The MLQ was also used in a study to measure transformational leadership style behaviors among 200 middle and senior level managers in banking, manufacturing, IT, and fast-moving consumer goods industries in India (Dabke, 2016). The Cronbach alpha score of Dabke's (2016) research was .72, which indicates a positive correlation.

Researchers have used the MLQ in many countries worldwide with consistently acceptable or high reliability ratings. The consistency in reliability influenced my decision for the MLQ to be used to measure laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership in this study. The fourth random variable in this study was authentic leadership. The instrument that was used to measure authentic leadership is the ALQ.

The ALQ is an instrument used by researchers to measure authentic leadership behaviors (Avolio et al., 2007). Sixteen questions compose the ALQ with four behavioral measurement scales. The scales associated with the ALQ are Transparency, Moral/Ethical, Balanced Processing, and Self-Awareness. Transparency is measured by responses to "Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5" within the ALQ. Moral/Ethical leader behavior is assessed by "Questions 6, 7, 8, and 9". The next three items, "Questions 10, 11, and 12", measure Balanced Processing. The last four items of the ALQ measure leader self-awareness, "Questions 13, 14, 15, and 16" (Avolio et al., 2007).

The ALQ was appropriate to use in this study because it measures authentic leadership behavior, which is one of the four leadership styles examined in this study. One of the research questions will be answered by the results of the ALQ data analysis. The use of the ALQ in addition to the MLQ ensures that a full range of leadership behaviors are examined. The ALQ has been administered by researchers worldwide to varying populations of individuals, and results have yielded consistently high reliability and validity values (Rodriguez et al., 2017).

Walumbwa et al. (2008) conducted a CFA from samples gathered in the United States and China. The U.S. sample was collected from 224 employees at a technology manufacturer, and the Chinese sample was collected from 212 employees of a state-owned company. The Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency of the behavioral measures ranged from .76 to .92, showing adequate to high internal consistency. The ALQ was also administered to 435 college and university athletes in the United Kingdom, resulting in a Cronbach alpha range of .85 to .95 (Bandura & Kavussanu, 2018).

A study conducted among 206 workers in the United Kingdom and Greece produced an overall Cronbach's alpha of .96 for authentic leadership (Lyubovnikova et al., 2017). The participants from the United Kingdom worked at two organizations from the energy sector, and the participants from Greece worked for a nonprofit organization (Lyubovnikova et al., 2017). The results of the studies by Walumbwa et al. (2008), Bandura and Kavussanu (2018), and Lyubovnikova et al. (2017) suggested that the internal reliability of the ALQ is adequate to high, even across geographically and culturally different areas. The consistency in high reliability values found in diverse populations motivated my decision to use the ALQ in this study. The next section entails the data analysis plan, research questions, and statistical tests that were used in the research.

Data Analysis Plan

Researchers consider best practices to analyze the data that is gathered during a study (Burkholder et al., 2016). Researchers choose data analysis plans that align with

their study design to adequately answer the research questions (Burkholder et al., 2016).

The first part of this section includes the research questions and hypotheses. Outlined in

this section are the data cleaning and screening techniques and statistical analysis tests

that will be used to analyze the gathered data. Justification for each statistical test will be

provided before the discussion of results interpretation.

The following were the research questions and hypotheses for this study:

RQ1:   To what extent, if any, does transformational leadership relate to

Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 1$:   Transformational leadership does not relate to Generation Z office

employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 1$:   Transformational leadership does positively relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 1$:   Transformational leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ2:   To what extent, if any, does transactional leadership relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 2$:   Transactional leadership does not relate to Generation Z office

employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 2$:   Transactional leadership does positively relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 2$:   Transactional leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ3: To what extent, if any, does laissez-faire leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0$3: Laissez-faire leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a3: Laissez-faire leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b3: Laissez-faire leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ4: To what extent, if any, does authentic leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0$4: Authentic leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a4: Authentic leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b4: Authentic leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

I downloaded the data collected from the Qualtrics platform as an SPSS file (Qualtrics, 2019). I opened the data in SPSS version 27 to complete the statistical analysis. Avolio and Bass (2004) recommend not adding a score to final calculations for items that are not answered. Qualtrics guaranteed complete questionnaires to ensure the minimum number of responses, so that all questionnaires will have complete data (Qualtrics, 2019).

Both the MLQ and ALQ have a 5-point Likert scale to measure leadership behaviors. Questions are grouped to measure specific leadership behaviors and outcomes of leadership. The scores of each question group were added together to correlating question groups and divided by the total number of questions in that group. Once all leadership question groups were combined and calculated, the scores were divided by the total number of participants for an overall mean of the leadership behavior tendency.

The statistical test that was used to test the hypotheses is a one-way ANOVA. The means that were compared are the means of authentic, laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership tendencies, as identified by Generation Z office employee responses. The *t* test is another statistical test that could be used to calculate the difference between mean scores. The *t* test was not chosen for use due to the limitation of comparing only two means during one test. The likelihood of committing a Type I error increase as multiple *t* tests are performed (Warner, 2013).

Researchers may use a one-way ANOVA to test more than two mean scores of a group at one time (Warner, 2013). The initial data output of a one-way ANOVA test displays the overall statistical difference between and within the groups, the degrees of freedom (*df*), the F ratio, and the *p* value. To determine the statistical differences between the individual groups, a post-hoc test must be completed. The significance level will indicate the next steps for post-hoc analysis. A *p* value result of less than the predetermined level of .05, the results will be considered statistically significant. If homogeneity of variances were not violated, a Tukey's honestly significant difference post hoc test would be completed. Violation of the homogeneity of variances will result

in the completion of a Welch F test (Warner, 2013). The next section of Chapter 3 contains an explanation of the threats to the validity of the research.

Threats to Validity

Researchers conducting studies endeavor to design and conduct their studies to support external, internal, and construct validity of their findings (Frey, 2018). External validity refers to the generalizability of research findings (Frey, 2018). Internal validity refers to the ability to correctly establish causal effects of the variables (Flannelly et al., 2018). Construct validity describes how the variables relate to the constructs being studied (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). This section includes the threats to external, internal, and construct validity and how the research was designed to address each threat. Ethical procedures are also addressed before a transition to Chapter 4.

External Validity

External validity describes the generalizability of research findings (Frey, 2018). Threats to external validity include testing reactivity, interaction effects of selection, the specificity of variables, reactive effects of experimental arrangements, and multiple-treatment interference (Gundry & Deterding, 2019). This study did not have experimental arrangements; thus, this threat did not pertain to the research. Participants only took the questionnaire once, so multiple treatment interference did not apply to the study. Strategies to minimize external threats to validity are described in this section before transitioning to internal threats to validity.

Testing reactivity occurs when an individual participating in a study changes their behavior or performance due to their awareness of test participation (Vogt & Johnson,

2011). Conducting research in an unobtrusive manner assists with decreasing the potential of testing reactivity (Flannelly et al., 2018). This questionnaire was distributed online, and participants could complete the questionnaire at a time and location that is conducive to their schedule and comfort. Participants were not visually watched or timed in any manner to decrease possible testing reactivity.

Interaction effects of selection may increase due to selecting only employees working in an office setting. Individuals working in office settings may be predisposed to the particular leadership style that is present in their office. The oldest members of the Generation Z cohort are 25 and may have limited experience of more than one leadership style. To minimize the interaction effect of selection threat to external validity, the questionnaire was distributed by Qualtrics to a panel of random Generation Z office employees located in the southwestern United States (Qualtrics, 2019). The distribution to a breadth of workers in many types of office settings may have increased the likelihood of gathering a sample of individuals with varied experiences and preferences of leadership. In addition to external threats to validity, studies also have threats to internal validity. The next section contains the strategies utilized in this study to address internal threats to validity.

Internal Validity

The concept of internal validity refers to correctly establishing causal effects of variables (Flannelly et al., 2018). The presence of internal validity threats may influence the study design of research projects (Flannelly et al., 2018). Many factors may threaten the internal validity of research, including maturation, statistical regression, history,

selection maturation, and experimental mortality. This section includes the strategies employed to minimize internal threats to validity.

The questionnaire was only distributed for the study once; thus, the internal validity threat of maturation was minimal. The threat of statistical regression was mitigated by setting statistical parameters to help increase the reliability of the output. The power level was set at a level of .95 and a statistical significance level of $p < .05$. The power level was set at .95 to increase the confidence of the mean. The significance level was set at $p < .05$ to verify the generalization of findings. The sample was recruited by Qualtrics to further decrease the threat of statistical regression by increasing the probability of a truly random sample (Qualtrics, 2019).

History refers to any event or circumstances that could prevail between a primary and secondary measurement (Flannelly et al., 2018). There was only one measurement collected during the study; thus, the threat of history influencing internal validity was minimal. Only one group received the questionnaire, and no true experimental treatment was administered, resulting in no selection maturation threat. Qualtrics replaced any partially completed questionnaires with fully completed questionnaires until the sample size required was attained, further minimizing the threat of experiential mortality. An additional type of validity threat researchers encounter is construct validity. The next section includes the construct validity threats and steps that were taken to minimize any impact.

Construct Validity

Construct validity refers to the extent research variables measure the intended construct of the study (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). Social science construct validity typically involves both construct and statistical threats to the overall findings. Preestablished instruments with consistently high validity and reliability values were chosen for this study to support construct validity. The ANOVA statistical test was selected to minimize the statistical threat to construct validity. Evaluated successively are the construct and statistical threats to the research and strategies to minimize potential impact.

The MLQ and ALQ represent preestablished instruments with high validity and reliability values among diverse populations worldwide. The instruments were partially chosen for this study to minimize the threat to construct validity due to the consistently high validity and reliability values. The constructs of authentic, laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership behaviors may have been influenced by participant understanding of the behaviors due to previous exposure to these behaviors. Participants were directed to describe an ideal leader to minimize rater bias by previous interactions with the chosen leadership constructs. Statistical adjustments may also assist with decreasing threats to construct validity.

The decision to use the ANOVA statistical test was influenced by the decreased possibility of a Type I error that might otherwise arise from multiple t tests. The power level was set at a level of .95, and the statistical significance level was determined at $p <$ .05. The power level was set at .95 to increase the confidence of the mean. The power

level was set at a level of .05 to increase the generalization of findings. The statistical adjustments were made to the research design to decrease threats to construct validity.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations arise when researchers conduct studies with human participants, as treatment effects or exposure to variables could cause harm or unintended consequences. Minimizing adverse effects and ensuring participant awareness of the potential risks associated with the study constitutes the ethical behavior of a researcher (Burkholder et al., 2016). I submitted an application for review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University to minimize possible ethical problems within the research. I did not collect any data before receiving IRB approval. Walden University IRB granted my permission to collect data on September 30, 2020, approval # 09-30-20-0658486. Different parts of the research design have ethical considerations that I addressed. This section includes the ethical considerations of this research and the methods I used to minimize any possible unethical practices.

Qualtrics recruited study participants, which minimized possible conflicts of interest or power differentials from me to the participant (Qualtrics, 2019). The use of recruitment through Qualtrics increased the confidentiality of participant identities. Individuals recruited by Qualtrics were under no obligation to complete questionnaires (Qualtrics, 2019). If any inappropriate or unethical recruitment processes had been reported to me, I would have immediately ceased data collection and moved the questionnaire to another secure, online survey hosting platform.

Recruited individuals who considered participation in the questionnaire must first have agreed to the informed consent form, which was the first webpage they encountered. Recruited individuals only gained access to the questionnaire after they acknowledged that they understood the voluntary nature of the questionnaire and any associated risks. Participation in the questionnaire was entirely voluntary, and no monetary or other compensation was promised for participation in the questionnaire. Participants could end the questionnaire at any time, and participation was not monitored or time-bound.

Minimal personal information was collected from participants to increase anonymity. Participant gender was the only personal information collected. Participants who decided to leave the questionnaire before completion had their responses saved on the Qualtrics site under their account (Qualtrics, 2019). If the participant chose to return to the questionnaire during the data collection timeframe, the participant could complete the questionnaire. Qualtrics discarded any questionnaires with partial responses at the end of the data collection timeframe, and no incomplete questionnaires were submitted to me (Qualtrics, 2019).

The data collected by Qualtrics was only accessible by me and protected by a password (Qualtrics, 2019). The data that Qualtrics released to me did not have any identifying information other than participant gender. I have the collected data in my home and on a computer that is password protected. The computer is in my home office with a keyed lock and only accessed by me. My home is protected by a security system. Data will be retained for 5 years to comply with Walden University requirements. After 5

years, the data will be destroyed by SPSS file deletion. The last section in Chapter 3 is the summary.

Summary

The purpose of Chapter 3 was to provide a review of the design and methodology of the study. The population and sampling strategy were included in this chapter. The statistical analysis techniques and threats to research validity were also addressed before the conclusion of this chapter with ethical procedures. Chapter 4 contains information on the data collection process and collected demographic information about the population sample. The data displayed from the statistical analyses will be used to explain the results of the study. The analysis and answers to the research questions are also included in Chapter 4 before transitioning to Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. The following were the research questions and hypotheses for the study:

RQ1: To what extent, if any, does transformational leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0$1: Transformational leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a1: Transformational leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b1: Transformational leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does transactional leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0$2: Transactional leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a2: Transactional leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b2: Transactional leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ3: To what extent, if any, does laissez-faire leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0$3: Laissez-faire leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a3: Laissez-faire leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b3: Laissez-faire leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

RQ4: To what extent, if any, does authentic leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0$4: Authentic leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_a4: Authentic leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

H_b4: Authentic leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

Chapter 4 includes data collection process information about data collection time frame, response rate, and any discrepancies with the data collection plan outlined in Chapter 3. The study results are also discussed in this chapter, including descriptive statistics, statistical assumptions, statistical analysis findings, and post-hoc analysis. Statistical output is evaluated and illustrated in tables and figures before Chapter 4 concludes with a summary and transition to Chapter 5.

Data Collection

The section of Chapter 4 includes information about recruitment, response rate, and how much time it took to collect data. Discrepancies between the data collection plan that was outlined in Chapter 3 and the data collection I performed are successively discussed. This section also contains information about sample representativeness and basic sample analysis. The section after the section on data collection includes study results, statistical analysis, and answers to the research questions.

Data Collection and Discrepancies

Data collection began after the Walden University IRB granted permission to collect data, approval # 09-30-20-0658486. Individuals who met inclusion criteria received an invitation to participate in the questionnaire from Qualtrics. Within 7 calendar days, responses from 112 participants were collected. The total number of invitations sent is unknown; thus, the response rate cannot be determined. The data were complete for all 112 questionnaires. No discrepancies exist between the data collection that transpired and the data collection plan outlined in Chapter 3.

Sample Demographics

A total of 55 males and 57 females participated in the questionnaire. As illustrated in Table 1, the sample included 49% male and 51% female participants. Gender responses of Other or Prefer Not to Answer were provided, but none of the participants self-identified their gender with these responses. The age range of participants was 18 to 25 years. Exact participant age and other demographic information were not collected because such data were not required to answer the research questions.

Table 1

Gender Demographics

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	55	49%
	Female	57	51%
	Total	112	100%

Sample Representativeness

Office employees in the southwestern United States who were born between 1995 and 2010 were invited by Qualtrics to participate in the questionnaire. Generation Z contains 61 million members, and 39 million comprise a portion of the U.S. workforce (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). The exact number of Generation Z office employees in the southwestern United States is unknown. The representativeness of the 112-participant sample cannot be determined.

This section includes information pertaining to data collection, participant response rate, and discrepancies with the proposed data collection in Chapter 3. Sample demographics and representativeness are also included in this section. The data collection was completed by Qualtrics, and the SPSS file was sent to me within 7 days. The participant response rate was not available, as Qualtrics recruited participants, and the invitation and response rate were not shared with me. Sample representativeness was not determined, as specific population information was not available. The next section includes study results, statistical analysis, and answers to the research questions.

Study Results

The questionnaire instructions directed participants to identify the leadership behaviors and characteristics that an ideal leader may possess and exhibit in the workplace. The 5-point Likert scale ranged from 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *once in a while*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *fairly often*, and 4 = *frequently, if not always*. Leadership style behaviors were grouped by corresponding question numbers and calculated for an overall mean. For the purpose of this study, the leadership style behavior with the highest mean was considered the perceived most effective leadership style behavior by Generation Z office employees.

The lowest leadership style behavior mean was related to the laissez-faire leadership behavior with a value of 1.80. The mean of transactional leadership behavior was 2.18, and the mean of transformational leadership behavior was 2.27. The authentic leadership behavior mean was 2.35 and had the largest value of the four leadership behavior means. Authentic leadership behavior was perceived as the most effective by Generation Z office employees. Leadership behavior means are illustrated in Table 2. Further statistical analysis must be completed to determine if there are statistically significant differences between the leadership style behaviors.

Table 2

Leadership Style Behavior Means

	Transformational	Transactional	Laissez-faire	Authentic
Total	112	112	112	112
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.27	2.18	1.80	2.35

A one-way ANOVA statistical test was chosen to test for a significant difference in the means of transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership style behaviors. To conduct a one-way ANOVA statistical test, six statistical assumptions must be met:

- The dependent variable must be continuous.

- The independent variable must have more than two groups that are independent of one another.

- Observations must be independent of one another.

- The data must not contain significant outliers.

- Dependent variable data should be normally distributed.

- Population variances must be assumed as equal (Frankfort-Nachmias & Leon-Guerrero, 2015).

The data were quantitative and measured on a Likert scale, meeting the statistical assumption that the dependent variable is continuous. Qualtrics recruited participants for this study who completed the questionnaire independently of one another. Participation in the questionnaire was optional, and participant identities were anonymized by Qualtrics.

Four groups were comprised of the mean responses for the questions relating to transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership style behaviors.

The assumptions that the sample had at least two groups, independent participants, and observations were met. The first three assumptions for the one-way ANOVA were met. The data contained outliers, statistically nonnormal distribution, and heterogeneity of variance. Although a one-way ANOVA test is relatively robust, these assumptions must be met or confirmed with additional analysis that is not as sensitive to these conditions. The last three assumptions of a one-way ANOVA are discussed successively, along with how they were addressed by the analysis performed.

Histograms and Q-Q plots were produced for the leadership style behaviors to confirm normality visually. Figure 1 includes a Q-Q plot of transformational leadership style behaviors. Figure 2 contains a Q-Q plot of transactional leadership style behaviors. Figures 3 and 4 depict the Q-Q plots of laissez-faire and authentic leadership style behaviors. Each histogram and Q-Q plot was visually inspected, and all four leadership style behaviors were considered normally distributed.

Figure 1

Normal Q-Q Plot of Transformational Leadership Style Behavior Means
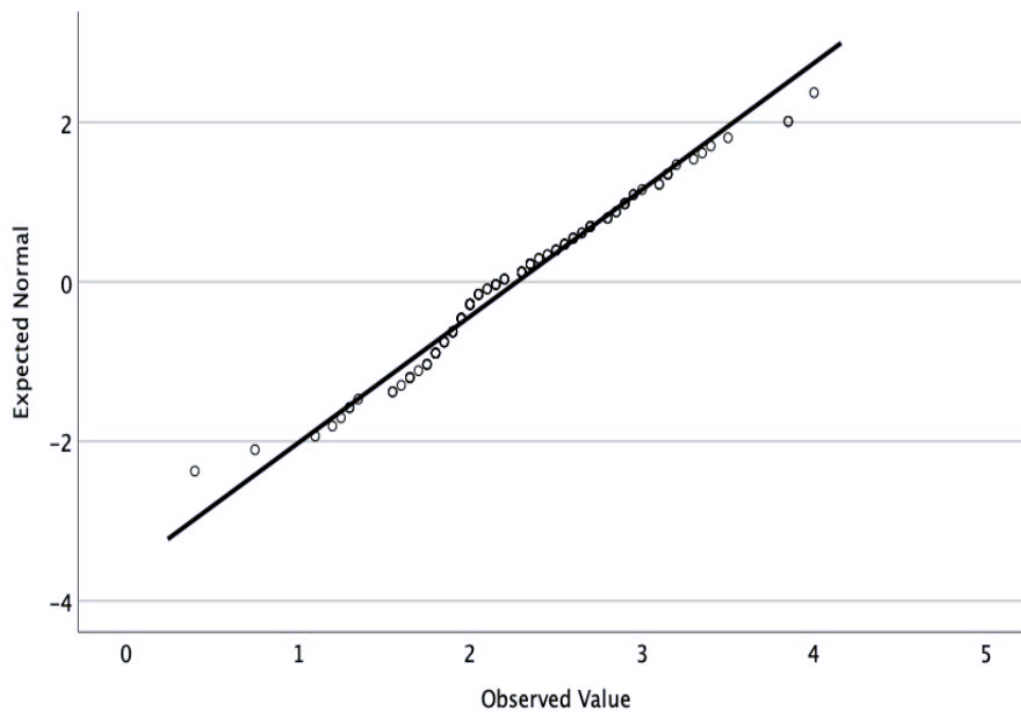
Figure 2

Normal Q-Q Plot of Transactional Leadership Style Behavior Means
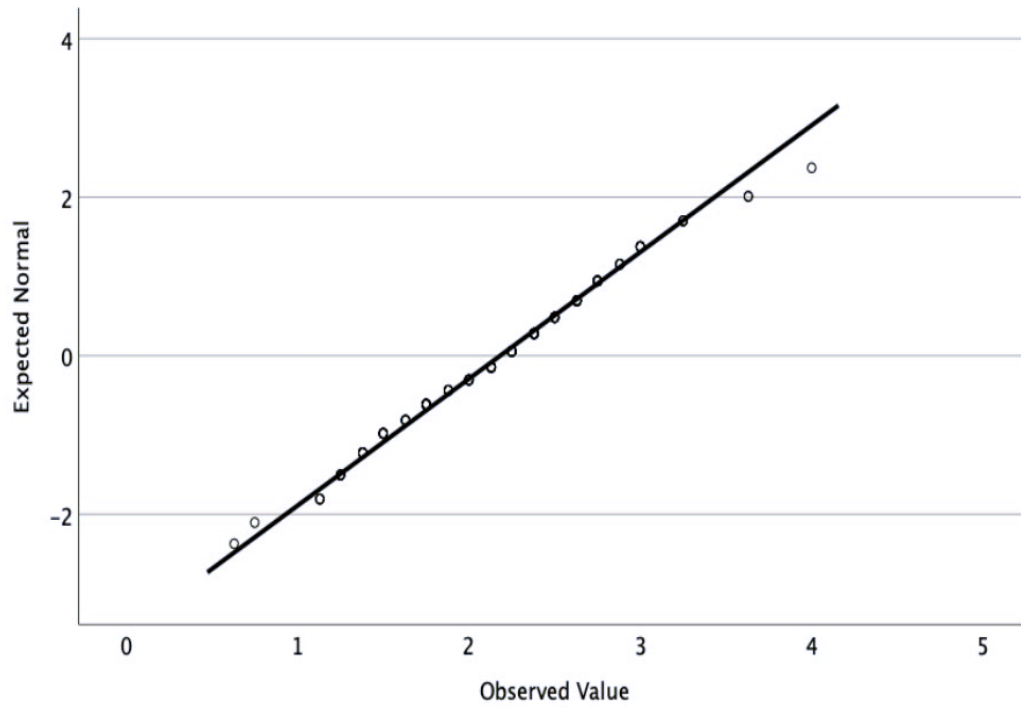
Figure 3

Normal Q-Q Plot of Laissez-Faire Leadership Style Behavior Means
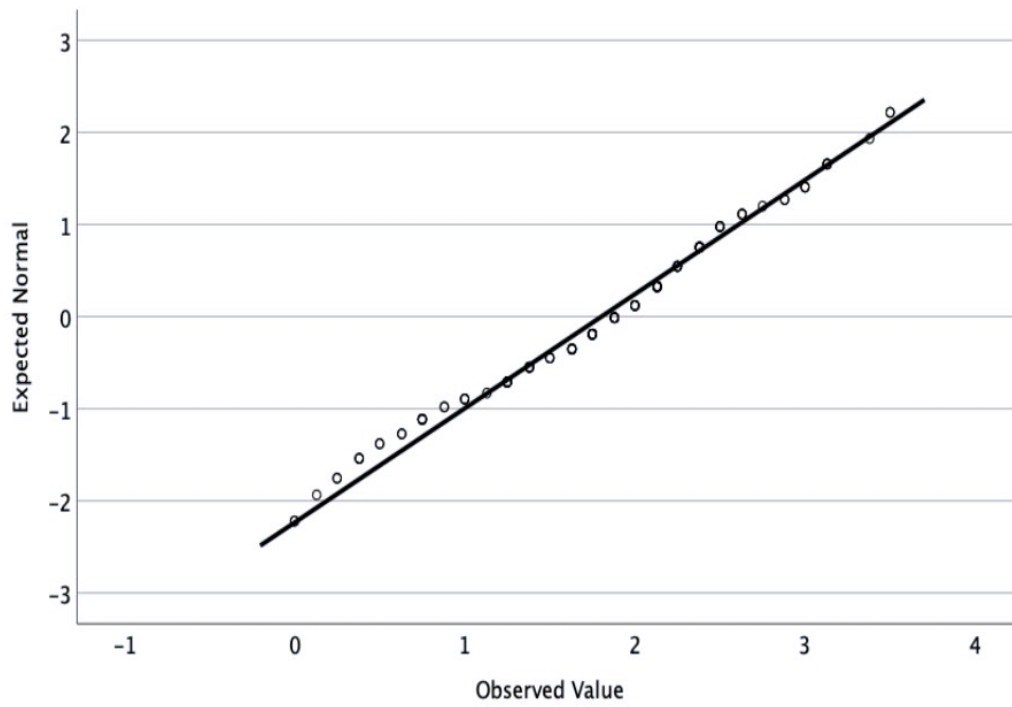
Figure 4

Normal Q-Q Plot of Authentic Leadership Style Behavior Means
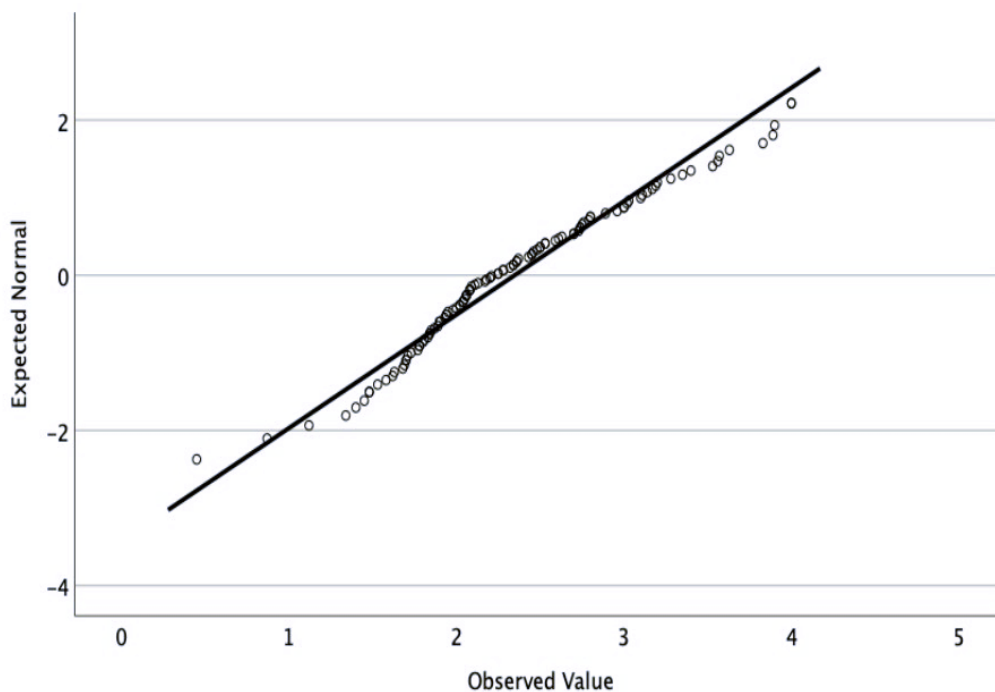
Authentic leadership behavior had the highest mean of the four leadership style behaviors and had the highest skewness value of .39, indicating a longer right-side tail distribution. A Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to confirm normal distribution. Authentic leadership style behavior data was statistically significant at the .02 level. The null hypothesis was rejected, and authentic leadership behavior data was determined to be not normally distributed. Laissez-faire leadership behavior data was not statistically significant at the .08 level. The null hypothesis was accepted, and laissez-faire leadership behavior data was determined to be normally distributed. Table 3 contains Shapiro-Wilk test statistics for each leadership style behavior.

Table 3

Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality Leadership Style Behavior Means

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Leadership style	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Leadership means	Transformational	.98	112	.14
	Transactional	.99	112	.57
	Laissez-faire	.98	112	.08
	Authentic	.97	112	.02

Transformational leadership behavior data was not statistically significant at the .14 level. The null hypothesis was accepted, and transformational leadership behavior data was determined to be normally distributed. Transactional leadership behavior data was not statistically significant at the .57 level. The null hypothesis was accepted, and transformational leadership behavior data was determined to be normally distributed. Although authentic leadership had a statistically significant Shapiro-Wilk value, it is considered normally distributed based upon the visual confirmation and higher skew value than the other leadership style behaviors. The assumption of normal distribution was met.

A box plot was produced for the leadership style behaviors to visually confirm if the data contained outliers. The box plot for the leadership style behaviors is illustrated in Figure 5. Laissez-faire leadership behavior data did not contain any outlying data points. Authentic leadership behavior data had one outlying data point below the first quartile range. Transformational leadership behavior data had one outlying data point below the

first quartile range and one above the fourth quartile. Transactional leadership behavior

data had one outlying data point above the fourth quartile range.

Figure 5

Box Plot With Outliers for Transformational, Transactional, Laissez-Faire, and

Authentic Leadership Style Behaviors
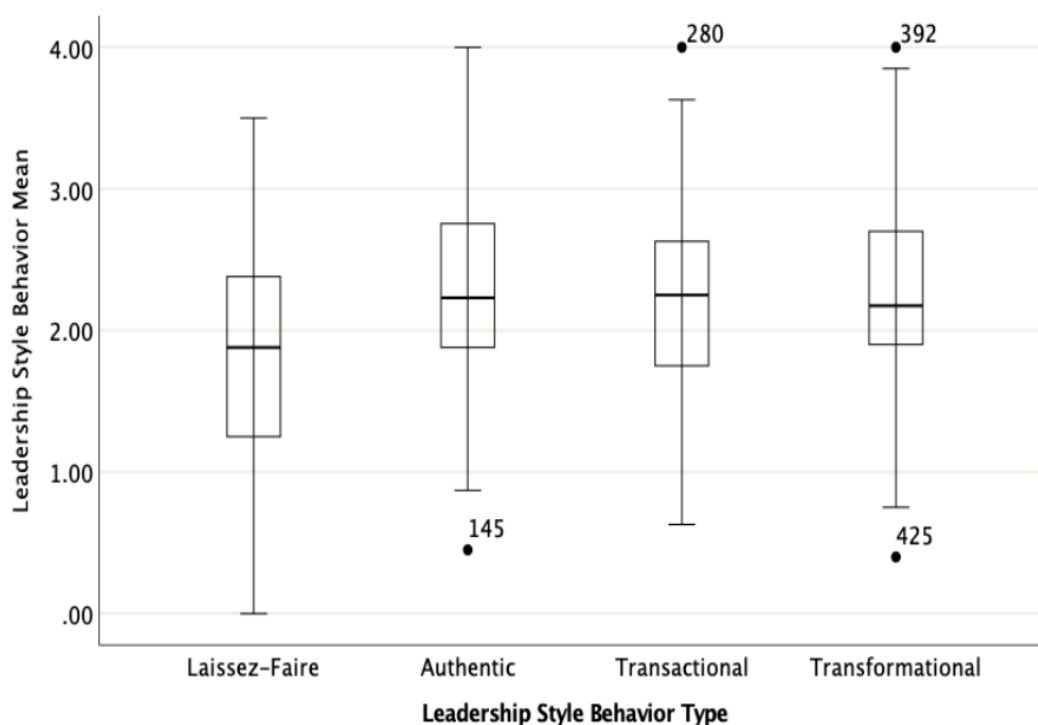
Note. Box plot of transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership

style behaviors with outliers. Outliers are represented by round dots outside of the upper

and lower quartile range.

Researchers who have outlying data should verify if a coding error exists or if the

data is incorrect (Leys et al., 2019). The original data was checked, and all values were

correctly recorded in SPSS. The data cannot be determined as incorrect because it is how

the participants responded. The outliers were not a large value of the distribution and,

therefore, were not considered random outliers (Leys et al., 2019). Interesting outliers

refer to situations where the subject identifies in-group but does not statistically respond

as the in-group (Leys et al., 2019). The outlying responses were considered interesting

but still relevant to representing the sample and were not removed. The outliers were not

considered significant, and the assumption that there was no outlying data was met.

Homogeneity of variances was tested by reviewing Levene's test statistic within

the one-way ANOVA output. To test the null hypothesis that there are no significant

differences between the means of transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and

authentic leadership style behaviors, a one-way ANOVA was conducted using SPSS

version 27. The descriptive statistics output of the one-way ANOVA is listed in Table 4.

The descriptive statistics output analysis is outlined successively.

Table 4

One-Way Analysis of Variance Descriptive Statistics

					95% confidence interval			
	N	M	SD	Std. error	Lower bound	Upper bound	Minimum	Maximum
Transformational	112	2.28	.63	.06	2.15	2.40	.40	4.00
Transactional	112	2.18	.62	.06	2.06	2.30	.63	4.00
Laissez-faire	112	1.80	.81	.08	1.65	1.95	.00	3.50
Authentic	112	2.35	.68	.06	2.22	2.47	.45	4.00
Total	448	2.15	.72	.34	2.08	2.22	.00	4.00

The participant number for each group was $N = 112$ as the data was complete for

each participant within the four groups. The mean for transformational leadership

behaviors was $M = 2.28$, with a standard deviation of $SD = .63$. The mean for

transactional leadership behaviors was $M = 2.18$ and a standard deviation of $SD = .62$.

Laissez-faire leadership behaviors had the lowest mean of $M = 1.80$ and the highest

standard deviation of all leadership style behaviors, $SD = .81$. The mean for authentic

leadership behaviors was the highest, $M = 2.35$, and a standard deviation of $SD = .68$.

Laissez-faire leadership behaviors had the lowest lower and upper bound

confidence intervals of 1.65 and 1.95, respectively. The closest lower bound confidence

interval was transactional leadership behaviors with a score of 2.06. The laissez-faire

group had a maximum score of 3.50 and was the only group that did not have a mean

meet the maximum possible score of 4.00. The next section includes an analysis of the

one-way ANOVA output in Table 5 and Levene's test for homogeneity of variance.

Table 5

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Leadership Style Behaviors

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p	η^2
Between groups	19.66	3	6.55	13.76	.000	.08
Within groups	211.54	444	.48			
Total	231.20	447				

The last assumption for the one-way ANOVA is that equal variances are assumed.

The outcome of Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variances in Table 6 displays results

that the variances between the four groups were not equal. The one-way ANOVA

produced the following results: $F(3, 444) = 13.76$, $p < .001$. The eta-squared ($\eta^2 = .08$)

confirmed that leadership style behaviors contributed to 8.5% of the variability of the

responses. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, and the Welch

ANOVA statistical correction was chosen in addition to the one-way ANOVA to

minimize the possibility of a Type 1 error. Table 7 includes the output of the Welch test, and the Welch statistic was statistically significant, $p < .001$, confirming that at least one of the group means is significantly different.

Table 6

Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variances for Leadership Style Behavior Means

		Levene's statistic	*df*1	*df*2	Sig.
Leadership means	Based on mean	2.98	3	444	.03
	Based on median	2.69	3	444	.05
	Based on median and with adjusted *df*	2.69	3	425	.05
	Based on trimmed mean	2.95	3	444	.03

Table 7

Welch Test Output

	Statistic[a]	*df*1	*df*2	Sig.
Welch	11.15	3	245.70	.000

[a] Asymptotically F distributed.

The initial output of the one-way ANOVA and Welch tests resulted in a statistically significant difference between at least one of the groups. This information is not sufficient to answer the research questions, and a post-hoc test must be performed to determine which group is significantly different. The homogeneity of variance

assumption was not met and a post-hoc test that is robust to the heterogeneity of variance must be selected. The Games-Howell post-hoc test was utilized to test which group mean was significantly different. Results of the Games-Howell post hoc test are displayed in Table 8.

The Games-Howell post-hoc test results showed that the laissez-faire leadership style behavior differed significantly from the authentic leadership style behavior (Mean difference = -.54, p < .001), the transactional leadership style behavior (Mean difference = -.38, p < .001), and the transformational leadership style behavior (Mean difference = -.47, p < .001). All other pair-wise comparisons between the leadership style behaviors produced nonsignificant results. Leadership style behavior preferences identified as effective were significantly different for the laissez-faire leadership style behaviors than all other leadership style behavior groups. The highest mean of all four groups was associated with authentic leadership behaviors. The highest mean is considered the perceived most effective leadership style behaviors among Generation Z office employees. This information alone is not sufficient to answer the research questions. Further statistical testing must be completed to determine the extent of the relationship, if any, exist between perceived effective leadership behaviors and transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership style behaviors. The strength and direction of the relationship between perceived effective leadership style behavior and transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership style behaviors can be determined by finding the Spearman correlation coefficient.

Table 8

Games-Howell Post Hoc Mean Comparison Results

Leadership style	Comparison	Mean difference	p
Laissez-faire	Authentic	-.54*	> .001
	Transactional	-.38*	> .001
	Transformational	-.47*	> .001
Authentic	Laissez-faire	.54*	> .001
	Transactional	.16	.28
	Transformational	.07	.85
Transactional	Laissez-faire	.38*	> .001
	Authentic	-.16	.28
	Transformational	-.09	.76
Transformational	Laissez-faire	.47*	> .001
	Authentic	-.07	.85
	Transactional	.09	.76

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Spearman correlation coefficient r_s represents the strength and direction of the relationship between interval, ordinal, or ratio variables (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). The value of the correlation coefficient r_s varies between -1 to 1. The r_s value indicates the direction of the relationship, either positive or negative. A correlation coefficient value of 0 indicates no relationship, and the closer the value is to -1 or 1 indicates a stronger relationship (Dancey & Reidy, 2007).

The strength of the relationship is indicated by the r_s value. A perfect relationship is represented by the r_s value of +/- 1. A strong relationship is represented by the r_s value

between +/- 0.7 to 0.9. A moderate relationship is determined when the r_s value is

between +/- 0.4 to 0.6. A weak relationship is determined when the r_s value is between

+/- 0.1 to 0.3 (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). The Spearman correlation coefficient was

calculated to determine the strength of the relationship, if any exists, between perceived

effective leadership and transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic

leadership style behaviors.

To test for Spearman correlation, three assumptions must be met. The first

assumption that must be met is that variables must be measured on an interval, ordinal, or

ratio scale. This assumption was met, as the variables in this study are ordinal and

measured on a Likert scale. The second assumption is that there is a monotonic

relationship between the variables. A monotonic relationship exists when variables

increase or decrease in value together. This assumption was tested by producing

scatterplots for each of the relationships, and I visually confirmed the output.

The scatterplots indicated monotonic relationships between perceived effective

leadership behaviors and transformational, transactional, and authentic behaviors. The

scatterplot of laissez-faire behaviors and effective leadership behaviors indicated no

relationship. Scatterplots are depicted in Figures 6 through 9 in the following section with

their respective research questions. The third assumption is that the variables are related

pairs. The data was complete, and there were values for each of the variables. All three of

the assumptions were met to conduct the Spearman correlation. The next section of

Chapter 4 includes the research questions, hypotheses, and answers to each research

question.

Research Question 1

The first relationship tested was between transformational leadership style

behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office

employees. For this study, the leadership style behavior with the highest mean was

perceived among Generation Z office employees as the most effective leadership style

behavior. Authentic leadership style behavior was perceived as the most effective

leadership style by Generation Z office employees, so its values were used to compare

with transformational leadership style behaviors to determine if a relationship exists.

Research Question 1, the null and alternative hypotheses are listed below, followed by

the answer to the research question.

RQ1: To what extent, if any, does transformational leadership relate to

Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 1$: Transformational leadership does not relate to Generation Z office

employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 1$: Transformational leadership does positively relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 1$: Transformational leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z

office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

As illustrated in Table 9, the r_s value is .78 and is significant at the $p < .001$ level.

The correlation values indicate a strong and positive correlation between perceived

effective leadership behavior and transformational leadership behavior, $r_s(110) = .78, p <$

.001. The r_s value of .78 and significance at the $p < .001$ level means that the null

hypothesis, $H_0 1$, that there is no relationship between transformational leadership and perception of leadership effectiveness, is rejected. The r_s value is positive, indicating a positive relationship with effective leadership. The first alternative hypothesis, $H_a 1$, transformational leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness is accepted. The r_s value is positive, not negative, which rejects the second alternative hypothesis, $H_b 1$, that transformational leadership is negatively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness.

Table 9

Spearman's Correlation Between Transformational Leadership Behaviors and Perceived Effective Leadership Behaviors

			Rank of transformational leadership	Rank of effective leadership
Spearman's rho	Rank of transformational leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.78**
		Sig (2-tailed)		.000
		N	112	112
	Rank of effective leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.78**	1.00
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	112	112

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A scatterplot was created to test if a monotonic relationship existed between transformational leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership behavior. The

scatterplot displays a strong and positive relationship between transformational

leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership behavior. As perceived effective

leadership behavior increases by 1-unit, transformational leadership increases by .78

units. The third assumption of Spearman correlation is confirmed by the monotonic

relationship illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Scatterplot to Test Monotonic Relationship Between Transformational Leadership Style

Behaviors and Perceived Effective Leadership Style Behaviors

Note. Scatterplot to test for a monotonic relationship between transformational leadership

style behaviors and perceived effective leadership style behaviors with perfect linear

relationship line. The numbers on each axis represent the ranked variables. The

scatterplot indicates a monotonic relationship; as one variable increases, the other

variable increases.

As outlined in Chapter 3, transformational leadership has 5 behavioral scales that

are measured on the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The transformational leadership mean

was calculated by adding together the questions that comprise the 5 behavioral scales

within transformational leadership and calculating the total mean, as directed within the

MLQ manual (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The subscales include Idealized Attributes (IA) or

Idealized Influence (Attributes) (II), Idealized Behaviors (IB) or Idealized Influence

(Behaviors), Inspirational Motivation (IM), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and Individual

Consideration (IC) (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The means of each subscale were calculated

and compared for male and female participants.

The Likert scale for the MLQ has the following values 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *once in*

a while, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *fairly often*, and 4 = *frequently, if not always*. All means

relating to transformational leadership behaviors were between 2 = *sometimes* and 3 =

fairly often. Specific transformational leadership scale means ranged from 2.18 to 2.42

for both genders. The highest mean from both genders were within the IM scale with a

total mean of 2.41, male mean of 2.41, and female mean of 2.42. The scale with the

second highest value for both genders was IC. The total mean for IC was 2.3 total and 2.3

for both genders, respectively.

The scale with the third highest value was (B), comprised of Idealized Behaviors

(IB) and Idealized Influence (Behaviors) (II). The total mean for (B) was 2.26, male

mean of 2.32, and female mean of 2.20. The (B) scale had the largest mean variance

between each gender. Male participants indicated (B) behaviors as more ideal in an

effective leader than female participants.

The fourth highest value of 2.22 total was (A), comprised of Idealized Attributes

(IA) and Idealized Influence (Attributes) (II). Male mean responses for (A) were 2.19,

lower than the 2.24 mean among female participants. Female participants indicated (A)

behaviors as more ideal in an effective leader than male participants. The scale with the

lowest value was IS with a mean of 2.18 total and 2.18 for both genders, respectively.

Table 10 contains descriptive statistics for the mean of each scale by gender.

Leaders utilizing transformational leadership behaviors in office environments

may consider employing the transformational behavior that was indicated most

frequently, as it is perceived as the most effective transformational leadership behavior

among Generation Z office workers. The highest mean of both genders and total within

the transformational leadership behaviors was IM with a total mean of 2.41. Inspirational

motivation refers to how a leader engages the hearts and minds of their subordinates

toward accomplishing tasks (Rodriguez et al., 2017). Conversely, leaders utilizing

transformational leadership behaviors in office environments may consider avoiding

leadership behavior that was not indicated as frequently and perceived as the least

effective transformational leadership behavior. The lowest mean of both genders and total

within the transformational leadership behaviors was IS, with a total mean of 2.18.

Intellectual stimulation refers to leadership behavior that challenges subordinates to

consider alternate viewpoints and inspires creativity (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016).

Table 10

Transformational Leadership Subscale Means by Gender

		Male	Female	Total
Idealized attributes (IA) or Idealized influence (attributes; II)	Mean	2.19	2.24	2.22
(A)	*N*	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.89	.71	.80
Idealized behaviors (IB) or Idealized influence (behaviors; II)	Mean	2.32	2.20	2.26
(B)	*N*	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.77	.70	.73
Inspirational motivation (IM)	Mean	2.41	2.42	2.41
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.79	.74	.76
Intellectual stimulation (IS)	Mean	2.18	2.18	2.18
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.75	.70	.72
Individual consideration (IC)	Mean	2.3	2.3	2.3
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.75	.75	.75

This section of study results included the first research question and the associated null and alternative hypotheses. The Spearman correlation test was completed to test the relationship between transformational leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. The first research question was answered in this section, and the first alternative hypothesis, H_a1, that transformational leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness, was accepted. Mean comparisons were completed for the subscales of transformational leadership style behaviors, and analysis of the means by gender was outlined. The next section includes the second research question, additional subscale analysis, and the answer to the second research question.

Research Question 2

The second relationship tested was between transactional leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. For this study, the leadership style behavior with the highest mean was perceived among Generation Z office employees as the most effective leadership style behavior. Authentic leadership style behavior was perceived as the most effective leadership style by Generation Z office employees, so its values were used to compare with transactional leadership style behaviors to determine if a relationship exists. Research Question 2, the null and alternative hypotheses are listed below, followed by the answer to the research question.

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does transactional leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 2$: Transactional leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 2$: Transactional leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 2$: Transactional leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

As illustrated in Table 11, the r_s value is .56 and is significant at the p < .01 level. The correlation values indicate a moderate and positive correlation between perceived effective leadership characteristics and behaviors and transactional leadership, $r_s (110) =$ .56, p < .001. The r_s value of .56 and is significant at the p < .001 level means that the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between transactional leadership and perception of leadership effectiveness is rejected. The r_s value is positive, indicating a positive relationship with leadership effectiveness. The first alternative hypothesis, $H_a 2$, transactional leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness is accepted. The r_s value is positive, not negative, which rejects the second alternative hypothesis, $H_b 2$, that transactional leadership is negatively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness.

Table 11

Spearman's Correlation Between Transactional Leadership Behaviors and Perceived

Effective Leadership Behaviors

			Transactional leadership	Effective leadership
Spearman's rho	Transactional leadership	Correlation coefficient	1.00	.56**
		Sig (2-tailed)		.000
		N	112	112
	Effective leadership	Correlation coefficient	.56**	1.00
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	112	112

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A scatterplot was created to test if a monotonic relationship existed between transactional leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership behavior. The scatterplot displays a moderate and positive relationship between transactional leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership style behavior. As perceived effective leadership behavior increases by 1-unit, transactional leadership increases by .56 units. The third assumption of Spearman correlation is confirmed by the monotonic relationship illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Scatterplot to Test Monotonic Relationship Between Transactional Leadership Style Behaviors and Perceived Effective Leadership Style Behaviors

Note. Scatterplot to test for a monotonic relationship between transactional leadership style behaviors and perceived effective leadership style behaviors with perfect linear relationship line. The numbers on each axis represent the ranked variables. The scatterplot indicates a monotonic relationship; as one variable increases, the other variable increases.

As outlined in Chapter 3, transactional leadership has 2 scales that are measured on the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The transactional leadership mean was calculated by adding together the questions that comprise the 2 scales within transactional leadership and calculating the total mean, as directed within the MLQ manual (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The subscales include Contingent Reward (CR) and Management by Exception (Active) (MBEA) (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The Likert scale for the MLQ has the following values 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *once in a while*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *fairly often*, and 4 = *frequently, if not always*. All means relating to transactional leadership behaviors were between 2 = *sometimes* and 3 = *fairly often*. Specific transactional leadership scale means ranged from 2.01 to 2.29 for males and 2.11 to 2.3 for females. The highest mean from both genders were within the CR scale with a total mean of 2.29, male mean of 2.29, and female mean of 2.3. The MBEA scale had a total mean of 2.06, male mean of 2.01, and female mean of 2.11. The MBEA scale had the largest mean variance between each gender. Female participants indicated both CR and MBEA behaviors as more ideal in an effective leader than male participants. Table 7 contains descriptive statistics for the mean of each scale by gender.

Leaders utilizing transactional leadership in office environments may consider employing the transactional behaviors that were indicated most frequently, as they are perceived as the most effective among Generation Z office workers. The highest mean of both genders was CR, with a total mean of 2.29. Contingent reward refers to the rewards that leaders promise in exchange for goal attainment by subordinates (Khaola & Coldwell, 2019). Conversely, leaders utilizing transactional leadership behaviors in office environments may consider avoiding leadership behavior that was not indicated as frequently and perceived as the least effective transactional leadership behavior. Management by exception (active) produced the lowest mean of both genders and total within the transactional leadership behaviors. Leaders who actively monitor progress made on tasks and task achievement by subordinates display MBEA behaviors (Bass, 1990).

Table 12

Transactional Leadership Subscale Means by Gender

		Male	Female	Total
Contingent reward (CR)	Mean	2.29	2.3	2.29
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.75	.75	.75
Management by exception (active; MBEA)	Mean	2.01	2.11	2.06
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.71	.82	.76

This section of study results included the second research question and the associated null and alternative hypotheses. The Spearman correlation test was completed to test the relationship between transactional leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. The second research question was answered in this section, and the first alternative hypothesis, H_a2, that transactional leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness, was accepted. Mean comparisons were completed for the subscales of transactional leadership style behaviors, and analysis of the means by gender was outlined. The next section includes the third research question, additional subscale analysis, and the answer to the third research question.

Research Question 3

The third relationship tested was between laissez-faire leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. For this study, the leadership style behavior with the highest mean was perceived among Generation Z office employees as the most effective leadership style behavior. Authentic leadership style behavior was perceived as the most effective leadership style by Generation Z office employees, so its values were used to compare with laissez-faire leadership style behaviors to determine if a relationship exists. Research Question 3, the null and alternative hypotheses are listed below, followed by the answer to the research question.

RQ3: To what extent, if any, does laissez-faire leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?

$H_0 3$: Laissez-faire leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_a 3$: Laissez-faire leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

$H_b 3$: Laissez-faire leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

As illustrated in Table 13, the r_s value is -.01 and is not significant at the .89 level. The correlation values indicate a negative correlation between perceived effective leadership characteristics and behaviors and laissez-faire leadership, $r_s(110) = -.01, p = .89$. The null hypothesis, $H_0 3$, that there is no relationship between laissez-faire

leadership and perception of leadership effectiveness is accepted due to the r_s value of -

.01 and not significant at the .89 level. The r_s value is negative, indicating a negative

relationship with leadership effectiveness. Although the r_s value is negative, the value of -

.01 is below the minimum threshold of +/- 0.1 for a weak relationship, and no

relationship is found between the variables (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). The first alternative

hypothesis, H_a3, laissez-faire leadership is positively related to Generation Z office

employee perception of leadership effectiveness is rejected. There is no relationship

between the variables, rejecting the second alternative hypothesis, H_b3, that laissez-faire

leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership

effectiveness.

Table 13

Spearman's Correlation Between Laissez-Faire Leadership Style and Perceived Effective

Leadership Style

			Laissez-faire leadership	Effective leadership
Spearman's rho	Laissez-faire leadership	Correlation coefficient	1.00	-.01
		Sig (2-tailed)		.89
		N	112	112
	Effective leadership	Correlation coefficient	-.01	1.00
		Sig (2-tailed)	.89	
		N	112	112

A scatterplot was created to test if a monotonic relationship existed between laissez-faire leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership behavior. The scatterplot displays no relationship between laissez-faire leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership style behavior. As perceived effective leadership behavior increases by 1-unit, laissez-faire leadership decreases by -.01 units. The third assumption of Spearman correlation is not confirmed, as a monotonic relationship does not exist, illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Scatterplot to Test Monotonic Relationship Between Laissez-Faire Leadership Style Behaviors and Perceived Effective Leadership Style Behaviors
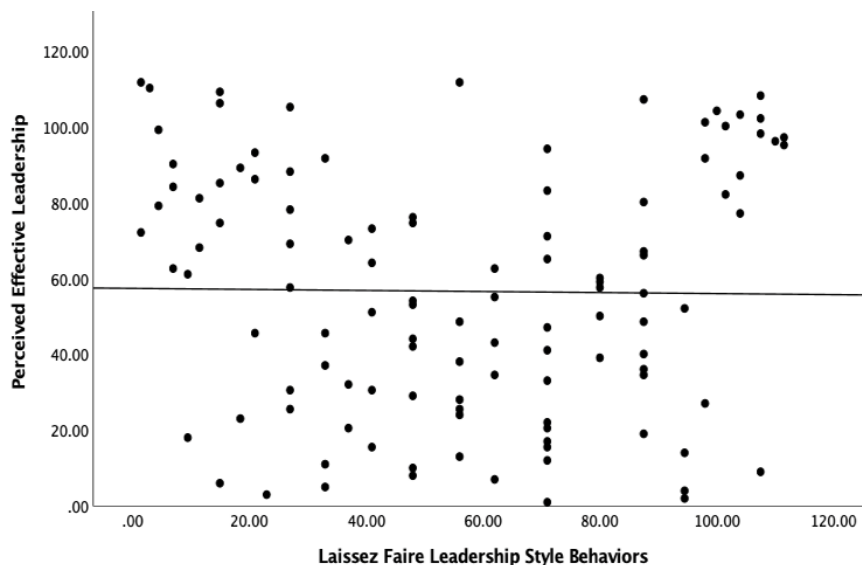
Note. Scatterplot to test for a monotonic relationship between laissez-faire leadership style behaviors and perceived effective leadership style behaviors with perfect linear relationship line. The numbers on each axis represent the ranked variables. The scatterplot indicates no monotonic relationship.

As outlined in Chapter 3, laissez-faire leadership has 2 scales that are measured on the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The laissez-faire leadership mean was calculated by adding together the questions that comprise the 2 scales within laissez-faire leadership and calculating the total mean, as directed within the MLQ manual (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The subscales include Management by Exception (Passive) (MBEP) and Laissez-Faire (LF) (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The Likert scale for the MLQ has the following values 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *once in a while*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *fairly often*, and 4 = *frequently, if not always*. All means relating to laissez-faire leadership behaviors were between 1 = *once in a while* and 2 = *sometimes*.

Specific laissez-faire leadership scale means ranged from 1.79 to 1.94 for males and 1.68 to 1.8 for females. The highest mean from both genders were within the MBEP scale with a total mean of 1.87, male mean of 1.94, and female mean of 1.8. The LF scale had a total mean of 1.73, a male mean of 1.79, and a female mean of 1.68. The MBEP scale had the largest mean variance between each gender. Male participants indicated both MBEP and LF behaviors as more ideal in an effective leader than female participants. Table 14 contains descriptive statistics for the mean of each scale by gender.

Leaders utilizing laissez-faire leadership in office environments may consider employing the laissez-faire behaviors that were indicated most frequently, as they are perceived as the most effective among Generation Z office workers. The highest mean of both genders was MBEP, with a total mean of 1.87. Leaders that only intervene when subordinates do not meet expectations display MBEP behaviors (Bass, 1990). Conversely, leaders utilizing laissez-faire leadership behaviors in office environments

may consider avoiding leadership behavior that was not indicated as frequently and are perceived as the least effective laissez-faire leadership behavior. Laissez-faire refers to leadership behaviors that include delegating decision-making, conflict avoidance, and minimizing communication (Fiaz et al., 2017). Laissez-faire produced the lowest mean of both genders and total within the laissez-faire leadership behaviors.

Table 14

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style Behavior Subscale Means by Gender

		Male	Female	Total
Management by exception (passive; MBEP)	Mean	1.94	1.8	1.87
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.89	.86	.87
Laissez-faire (LF)	Mean	1.79	1.68	1.73
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.85	.98	.91

This section of study results included the third research question and the associated null and alternative hypotheses. The Spearman correlation test was completed to test the relationship between laissez-faire leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. The third research question was answered in this section, and the null hypothesis, H_03, that there is no relationship between laissez-faire leadership and perception of leadership effectiveness, was accepted. Mean comparisons were completed for the subscales of laissez-faire

leadership style behaviors, and analysis of the means by gender was outlined. The next section includes the fourth research question, additional subscale analysis, and the answer to the fourth research question.

Research Question 4

The fourth relationship tested was between authentic leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. For this study, the leadership style behavior with the highest mean was perceived among Generation Z office employees as the most effective leadership style behavior. Authentic leadership style behavior was perceived as the most effective leadership style by Generation Z office employees, so its values were used to compare with authentic leadership style behaviors to determine if a relationship exists. Research Question 4, the null and alternative hypotheses are listed below, followed by the answer to the research question.

> RQ4: To what extent, if any, does authentic leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness?
>
> $H_0 4$: Authentic leadership does not relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.
>
> $H_a 4$: Authentic leadership does positively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.
>
> $H_b 4$: Authentic leadership does negatively relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness.

The values of authentic leadership responses were used as the most effective leadership style by Generation Z office employees, and a perfect relationship exists between authentic leadership and the perceived most effective leadership style by Generation Z office employees. The correlation values indicate a perfect positive correlation between perceived effective leadership characteristics and behaviors and authentic leadership. The r_s value of 1 means that authentic leadership behaviors and characteristics utilized are the behaviors and characteristics perceived as the most effective by Generation Z office employees, r_s (110) = 1, p < .001.

As illustrated in Table 15, the r_s value of 1 and significance at the p < .001 level means that the null hypothesis, H$_0$4, that there is no relationship between authentic leadership and perception of leadership effectiveness, is rejected. The r_s value is positive, indicating a perfect and strong positive relationship with leadership effectiveness. The first alternative hypothesis, H_a4, authentic leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness is accepted. The r_s value is positive, not negative, which rejects the second alternative hypothesis, H_b4, that authentic leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness.

Table 15

Spearman's Correlation Between Authentic Leadership Style Behaviors and Perceived
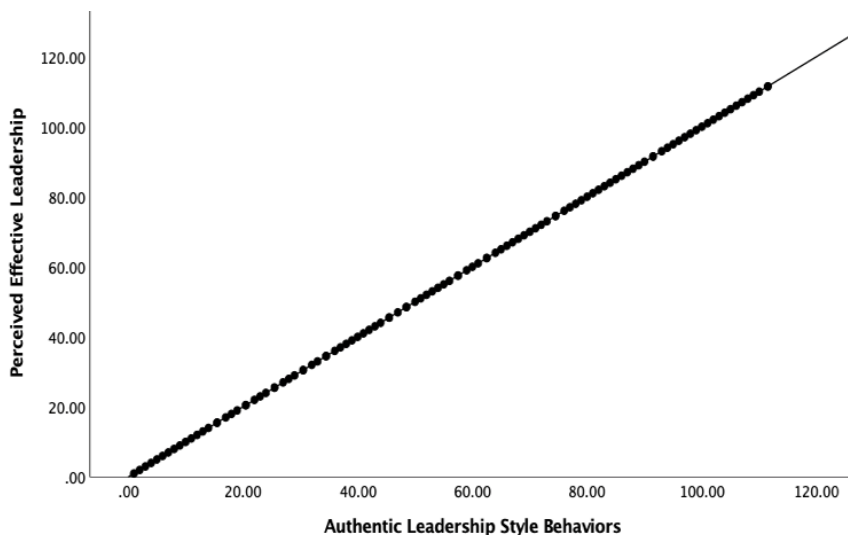
Effective Leadership Style Behaviors

			Authentic leadership	Effective leadership
Spearman's rho	Authentic leadership	Correlation coefficient	1.00	1.00
		Sig (2-tailed)		
		N	112	112
	Effective leadership	Correlation coefficient	1.00	1.00
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	112	112

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A scatterplot was created to test if a monotonic relationship existed between authentic leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership behavior. The scatterplot displays a perfect and positive relationship between authentic leadership behavior and perceived effective leadership style behavior. Authentic leadership behavior was indicated as the perceived effective leadership behavior, and the values were the same. As perceived effective leadership behavior increases by 1-unit, authentic leadership increases by 1-unit. The third assumption of Spearman correlation is confirmed by the perfect monotonic relationship illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Scatterplot to Test Monotonic Relationship Between Authentic Leadership Style

Behaviors and Perceived Effective Leadership Style Behaviors

Note. Scatterplot to test for a monotonic relationship between authentic leadership style behaviors and perceived effective leadership style behaviors with perfect linear relationship line. The numbers on each axis represent the ranked variables. The scatterplot indicates a monotonic relationship; as one variable increases, the other variable increases.

As outlined in Chapter 3, authentic leadership has 4 behavioral scales that are measured on the ALQ (Avolio et al., 2007). The authentic leadership mean was calculated by adding together the questions that comprise the four behavioral scales within authentic leadership and calculating the total mean, as directed within the ALQ manual (Avolio et al., 2007). The subscales include Transparency, Moral/Ethical, Balanced Processing, and Self-Awareness (Avolio et al., 2007).

The Likert scale for the ALQ has the following values 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *once in a while*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *fairly often*, and 4 = *frequently, if not always*. All means relating to authentic leadership behaviors were between 2 = *sometimes* and 3 = *fairly often*. Specific authentic leadership scale means ranged from 2.4 to 2.5 for males and 2.2 to 2.31 for females. The highest mean from males were within the Self-Awareness scale with a mean of 2.5. The highest mean from females were within the Balanced Processing scale with a mean of 2.31. The highest total mean from the four subscales was Moral/Ethical with a total mean of 2.4, male mean of 2.43, and female mean of 2.3. Although the Moral/Ethical scale had the highest total mean for both genders, it was the second highest mean for both males and females.

The scale with the third highest mean for males was Transparency and a mean value of 2.42. The scale with the third highest mean for females was Self-Awareness and a mean value of 2.27. The scale with the lowest value for males was Balanced Processing and a mean value of 2.4. The scale with the lowest value for females was Transparency and a mean value of 2.2. The Self-Awareness scale had the largest mean variance between each gender. Male participants indicated Self-Awareness behaviors as more ideal in an effective leader than female participants. Table 16 contains descriptive statistics for the mean of each scale by gender.

Leaders utilizing authentic leadership in office environments may consider employing the authentic behaviors that were indicated most frequently, as they are perceived as the most effective among Generation Z office workers. The highest total mean of both genders within the authentic leadership behaviors was Moral/Ethical, with a

total mean of 2.4. Moral/Ethical refers to an individual's ability to hold themselves accountable to high moral and ethical standards (Duncan et al., 2017). Conversely, leaders utilizing transformational leadership behaviors in office environments may consider avoiding leadership behavior that was not indicated as frequently and perceived as the least effective authentic leadership behavior.

The lowest total mean and lowest mean for females was Transparency. The female Transparency mean was 2.2 and the total Transparency mean was 2.3. The lowest mean for males was Balanced Processing, with a mean value of 2.4. Transparency refers to an individual's ability to share their authentic self and feelings (Duncan et al., 2017). Balanced processing refers to a leader's ability to analyze information and make objective decisions (Duncan et al., 2017). Transparency and balanced processing behaviors were perceived as the least effective authentic leadership behaviors.

Table 16

Authentic Leadership Style Behavior Subscale Means by Gender

		Male	Female	Total
Transparency	Mean	2.42	2.2	2.3
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.71	.78	.74
Moral/ethical	Mean	2.43	2.3	2.4
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.73	.8	.76
Balanced processing	Mean	2.4	2.31	2.35
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.85	.79	.82
Self-awareness	Mean	2.5	2.27	2.37
	N	55	57	112
	Std. deviation	.71	.88	.8

This section of Study Results included the fourth research question and the associated null and alternative hypotheses. The Spearman correlation test was completed to test the relationship between authentic leadership style behavior and effective leadership style behavior perceived by Generation Z office employees. The fourth research question was answered in this section, and the first alternative hypothesis, H_a4, authentic leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness, was accepted. Mean comparisons were completed for the subscales of authentic leadership style behaviors, and analysis of the means by gender

was outlined. The next section includes a review of the Study Results section and a

transition to Chapter 5.

Summary

Chapter 4 included a restatement of the purpose of this quantitative study and the

research questions, null and alternative hypotheses. The data collection methods were

explained, including sample demographics and representativeness. The statistical tests

and analyses were discussed, and the findings were interpreted. The four research

questions were answered, and behavior subscales were analyzed.

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership

style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective

for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. The perceived effective

leadership style behavior was identified by comparing the means of transformational,

transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership style behavior means. Mean

comparison of the four leadership style behaviors indicated authentic leadership style

behavior as the perceived most effective leadership style behavior. A one-way ANOVA

and Welch test was statistically significant, indicating at least one of the leadership style

behavior means were statistically different. The laissez-faire leadership style behaviors

were statistically significant from transformational, transactional, and authentic or

effective leadership.

To test the direction and strength of the relationships with perceived effective

leadership behavior and answer the research questions, a Spearman correlation was

conducted. Three of the research questions were answered by rejecting the null

hypotheses and accepting the alternative hypotheses that predicted a positive relationship between leadership style behaviors and perceived effective leadership style behavior. One research question was answered by accepting the null hypothesis that predicted no relationship exists between the leadership style and perceived effective leadership style behavior. A summary of the research question answers is provided successively.

Transformational, transactional, and authentic leadership style behaviors were positively related to the Generation Z office employee perceived effective leadership style behavior. Research Question 1 was answered by accepting the first alternative hypothesis, H_a1, that transformational leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness. Research Question 2 was answered by accepting the first alternative hypothesis, H_a2, that transactional leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness. Research Question 4 was answered by accepting the first alternative hypothesis, H_a4, that authentic leadership is positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness. The null hypotheses that the leadership styles were not related to perceived effective leadership style behavior were rejected for research questions 1, 2, and 4. The second alternative hypothesis that the leadership style behaviors were negatively related to perceived effective leadership style behavior was rejected for research questions 1, 2, and 4.

Laissez-faire leadership style behavior was not related to the Generation Z office employee perceived effective leadership style behavior. Research Question 3 was answered by accepting the null hypothesis, H_03, that there is no relationship between

laissez-faire leadership and Generation Z office employee perception of leadership

effectiveness. The first alternative hypothesis, H_a3, that laissez-faire leadership is

positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness

was rejected. The second alternative hypothesis, H_b3, that laissez-faire leadership is

positively related to Generation Z office employee perception of leadership effectiveness

was rejected.

The data collection process and study results are presented in Chapter 4. The

research questions were outlined, and answers were provided to the four research

questions, concluding Chapter 4. The findings from the study will be evaluated and

interpreted with more detail in Chapter 5. The limitations of the study, recommendations

for further research, implications, and study conclusion will also be presented next in

Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. This study was quantitative and was comprised of an anonymous online questionnaire. The Generation Z cohort consists of 61 million members entering the workforce during the next decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Organizational leaders have concerns about leading the newest generation of workers, and a knowledge gap exists regarding the leadership preferences of Generation Z (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018; Stuckey, 2016). This study was conducted to examine the relationship between Generation Z's perception of leadership effectiveness and transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership behaviors.

The study produced results that indicated that Generation Z office employees living in the southwestern United States perceived authentic leadership behaviors as the most effective. The study yielded results confirming a positive correlation between perceived effective leadership behaviors and transformational, transactional, and authentic leadership behaviors. Authentic leadership had a perfect positive correlation with perceived effective leadership behaviors. A strong and positive correlation existed for transformational leadership, and transactional leadership had a moderate correlation with perceived effective leadership behaviors. Laissez-faire leadership had no correlation with perceived effective leadership behaviors. Statistical analysis was completed, and the results distinguished varying responses from male and female participants relating to leadership behavior effectiveness.

This chapter begins with the interpretation of the study findings and how they may confirm, disconfirm, or extend knowledge found in the literature review. The external, internal, and construct validity limits that arose during the execution of the study are outlined, and recommendations for areas of further research are presented. The study's potential contribution to positive social change, theoretical implications, and recommendations for practice are also explained. The chapter concludes with a message capturing the essence of the study.

Interpretation of Findings

This section has information pertaining to the findings of this study and how they confirm, disconfirm, or add to existing knowledge. The overall findings of this study confirm previous knowledge of transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership. Findings for this study related to transactional and laissez-faire leadership varied slightly from the findings in the leadership literature. The findings of this study may extend knowledge on leadership or Generation Z. This section concludes with an interpretation of study findings as they associate to the theoretical framework.

Findings' Confirmation of Literature Review

The findings of this study confirmed knowledge presented in the literature review in Chapter 2 for transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership. The body of leadership literature contains many studies that generated results of positive workplace outcomes when transformational leadership principles are applied (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Dong et al., 2016). Empirical studies found within the body of leadership literature produced results that illustrate a positive relationship

between transformational leadership and perceived leadership effectiveness (Dabke, 2016). The findings of the present study showed that transformational leadership behaviors had a strong and positive correlation with perceived effective leadership behaviors. The findings for transformational leadership are consistent with the literature indicating that transformational leadership behaviors are positively perceived as effective (Dabke, 2016).

The body of leadership literature contains studies with findings that confirm that employees perceived transformational leadership as more effective than transactional leadership (Singh, 2015). Transactional leadership behaviors were perceived as the overall third most effective leadership behavior within the findings of this study. A strong correlation was found between transformational leadership behaviors and perceived effective leadership behaviors, whereas transactional leadership had a moderate correlation with perceived effective leadership behaviors, confirming the study results found within the body of leadership literature (Singh, 2015).

The transactional leadership literature has mixed results pertaining to workplace outcomes and employee perception of leaders who employ transactional leadership behaviors (Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Saleem, 2015). The transactional leadership behavior of contingent reward was perceived as more effective than the transformational behaviors of idealized behaviors, idealized attributes, and intellectual stimulation. The transactional leadership behavior of management by exception (active) was perceived as less effective than all other authentic and transformational leadership behaviors. The perception of transactional leadership behaviors was mixed within this study, confirming

the mixed results within the body of literature regarding employee perception of transactional leaders who employ these behaviors (Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Saleem, 2015).

Contemporary leadership literature includes research that yielded both positive and negative outcomes and perceptions of laissez-faire leadership compared to other leadership styles (Wong & Giessner, 2018; Zareen et al., 2015). Negative outcomes of laissez-faire leadership are represented more often in the body of leadership literature (Chin, 2015). Study results confirm that compared with other leadership styles, employees perceive laissez-faire leaders as less effective and laissez-faire behaviors as the least desirable leadership style (Uusi-Kakkuri et al., 2016; Wong & Giessner, 2018). The present study findings confirmed the outcomes of prior laissez-faire leadership research within the body of leadership literature.

The findings of this study represent laissez-faire leadership as the leadership behavior that was perceived as the least effective compared with transformational, transactional, and authentic leadership behaviors. The specific laissez-faire behaviors of management by exception (passive) and laissez-faire were identified second to last and last when comparing means of all leadership behaviors that were studied. Correlational analysis revealed that laissez-faire leadership behaviors had no correlation with perceived effective leadership behaviors within this study. These results are consistent with what has been found in previous studies of laissez-faire leadership behaviors, confirming laissez-faire as the least desirable leadership style (Uusi-Kakkuri et al., 2016).

The present literature contains studies that led researchers to confirm that authentic leadership behaviors fostered positive outcomes for employees (Guenter et al., 2017; Zubair & Kamal, 2015). Authentic leadership research is less represented in leadership literature due to its more recent development than other leadership styles (Frederick et al., 2016; Walumbwa et al., 2008). The results of a study conducted by Walumbwa et al. (2008) demonstrated that employees perceived authentic leaders as more effective than nonauthentic leaders. The results of the present study confirm this tenet, as authentic leadership behaviors were perceived as more effective than transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. The results of this study confirmed knowledge that exists pertaining to perceptions of transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership. The knowledge disconfirmed by the results of this study is outlined in the next section.

Findings' Disconfirmation of Literature Review

The overall results of this study are relatively consistent with previous research findings. The findings related to transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership differ slightly from existing research in the body of leadership literature. A study conducted within the U.S. banking industry produced results indicating that employees preferred transformational leadership behaviors over transactional leadership behaviors (Singh, 2015). Upon analysis of all leadership behaviors in the present study, the transactional leadership behavior of contingent reward was rated as more effective than the transformational leadership behaviors of idealized behaviors, idealized attributes, and intellectual stimulation. Overall findings indicated that office employees perceive

transformational leadership as more effective than transactional leadership, but the higher rating of contingent reward individually did not align exactly with the banking study (Singh, 2015).

Laissez-faire leadership generally has less representation in leadership literature than transformational and transactional leadership, and primarily negative organizational outcomes of laissez-faire leadership are studied (Skogstad et al., 2014). The findings of this study align with previous research that indicated that laissez-faire leadership was perceived as less effective and less desirable than other leadership styles (Uusi-Kakkuri et al., 2016; Wong & Giessner, 2018). Conversely, these findings disconfirm the findings of two laissez-faire studies conducted in Pakistan (Fiaz et al., 2017; Zareen et al., 2015). A study of Pakistani energy developers (Fiaz et al., 2017) and a study of banking sector employees (Zareen et al., 2015) produced findings that laissez-faire leadership was correlated with employee motivation. The present study findings indicated that laissez-faire leadership did not correlate with perceived effective leadership behaviors, disconfirming the findings of the Pakistani studies (Fiaz et al., 2017; Zareen et al., 2015). The next section includes information about the present study and its possible extension of knowledge.

Findings' Extension of Knowledge

The literature on leadership and Generation Z lacks empirical inquiry into preferred leadership behaviors for the Generation Z generational cohort (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). Generation Z literature contains research about general workplace expectations and characteristics (Turner, 2015); however, organizational leaders lack

knowledge of which leadership style is perceived as effective for Generation Z (Goh & Lee, 2018; Stuckey, 2016). The leadership literature contains a myriad of research on generational preferences of leadership style for the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts (Jiří, 2016), but not for Generation Z. The findings of this study may extend the bodies of knowledge pertaining to Generation Z and leadership.

The findings of this study created knowledge that did not previously exist in Generation Z and leadership literature. The findings of this study indicated that Generation Z office employees perceive authentic leadership as the most effective leadership style when compared with transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Transformational, transactional, and authentic leadership behaviors positively correlate with Generation Z's perception of effective leadership. The study results also highlight which leadership behaviors within each leadership style are perceived as effective. Implications of this knowledge extension are outlined in this chapter.

Findings' Interpretation Within Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study included Mannheim's (1952) generational theory and Homans's (1958) social exchange theory. The generational theory postulates that each generation has varying socio-historic worldviews and experiences (Mannheim, 1952). The findings of this study revealed variance in the perception of leadership behavior effectiveness between male and female participants. The top five ranking of all leadership behavior means showed that male participants

perceived effective leadership behaviors as self-awareness, moral/ethical, transparency, inspirational motivation, and balanced processing. The top-ranking of all leadership behaviors for female participants identified effective leadership behaviors as inspirational motivation, balanced processing, moral/ethical, individual consideration, and contingent reward.

Previous research confirmed that variance of leadership preferences exists across multiple generations (Jiří, 2016). The variance of responses in this study across gender and within the same generation suggests a variance of worldviews and experiences. The findings of this study support generational theory, as variance was found within the sample. Further research and statistical analysis between Generation Z and other generations' perception of effective leadership behaviors may further confirm the generational theory.

The second theoretical framework utilized for this study was social exchange theory (Homans, 1958). Social exchange theory describes the relationship between personal cost to an individual that is exchanged for tangible or nontangible items (Homans, 1958). The findings of this study do not expressly confirm or disconfirm social exchange theory. The instructions of the questionnaire directed participants to identify the behaviors of an ideal leader. To answer the questionnaire, participants might consider the exchange from the leader to themselves. The next section of the chapter outlines the limitations of the study.

Limitations of the Study

The study had external, internal, and construct validity limitations that impacted the generalizability and validity of the results. The external validity limitations of the study were attributed to the specificity of the sample pertaining to inclusion and external criteria. The demographic information that was not collected and the online distribution of the questionnaire also impacted the generalizability of the results. Internal validity may have been limited if someone other than the intended sample completed the questionnaire. The construct validity limitations of the study included participant understanding and agreeance with questionnaire responses. External, internal, and construct limitations that impacted generalizability and validity of results are outlined successively.

External Validity Limitations

External validity refers to the generalizability of research findings (Frey, 2018). Several external validity limits were found, although a measurable impact cannot be determined due to a lack of information. Participant inclusion and exclusion criteria were a limit to the generalizability of the study results. Inclusion criteria of the study required participants to be part of the Generation Z cohort between the ages of 18 and 25, to be employed in an office setting, to reside in the southwestern United States, and to agree to informed consent. The exact number of Generation Z office employees who reside in the southwestern United States is unknown, and the representativeness of this sample cannot be determined. The sample was also limited to Generation Z office employees who were at least 18 years old and born between 1995 and 2001. The generalizability of results is

limited for Generation Z, as this sample only included responses from participants born within a six-year span and excluded responses from Generation Z office workers born between 2002 and 2010.

Prospective participants who did not agree to the informed consent page were not permitted to view or answer the questionnaire. Declining to accept the informed consent page does not negate the validity of the perceptions of effective leadership held by prospective participants who otherwise met inclusion criteria. The results of the study do not contain the perceptions of leadership effectiveness from prospective participants who did not accept the informed consent page, limiting the generalizability of the results. Qualtrics was unable to supply me with the number of prospective participants who declined the informed consent page.

Another limit to the generalizability of the study results pertained to demographic information that was not collected. Participant gender was the only demographic information collected from the sample. The sample was 49% male and 51% female. Participants had other options for gender identification, Other or Prefer Not to Answer, but no responses were received from these options. The lack of demographic information could limit the generalizability of results if responses were collected from a demographically homogenous sample. Without further demographic information, skew cannot be determined.

The generalizability of the study results was also limited due to the questionnaire being distributed and completed online. Participants needed a technological device with internet connectivity and a Qualtrics account to receive the study participation invite from

Qualtrics. Responses were not collected from individuals who did not have access to a technological device with internet connectivity or a Qualtrics account. Internal validity limitations are discussed in the next section.

Internal Validity Limitations

Internal validity refers to accurately establishing causal effects of variables (Flannelly et al., 2018). The execution of the study did not produce measurable threats to internal validity. Qualtrics extended study participation invitations to individuals with a Qualtrics account who met inclusion criteria. Internal validity could be impacted if the questionnaire was completed by someone who did not meet inclusion criteria. The data was anonymized, and I did not collect any personally identifying information or contact information for the participants. I was unable to confirm that the questionnaires were answered by the intended sample that met inclusion criteria. Construct validity limitations are outlined successively.

Construct Validity Limitations

Construct validity is defined as the extent to which research variables measure the construct of the study (Vogt & Johnson, 2011). The MLQ and ALQ were selected to measure transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership behaviors due to their high validity and reliability values. The questionnaire was written in English, and the validity of the responses may have been influenced if a participant did not understand the instructions or what was asked. The questionnaire was comprised of only Likert scale answers, introducing a potential level of response bias. I could not determine participant understanding and agreeance with the Likert scale answers, and this was a

possible limit to the validity of the study results. Recommendations for future research are discussed in the next section.

Recommendations

Upon completion of the study and review of the data, areas for further examination were found in the areas of strengths and limitations of this study. Limitations in the study design were attributed to the lack of information requested of the participants. The only demographic information requested of participants was gender. Future research should include requests of the participant work industry, years of experience, and demographic information. Study participation was limited to Generation Z office employees in the southwestern United States born between 1995-2001, narrowing responses to only Generation Z cohort members born within a 6-year span of a possible 15-year span. This study could be replicated in other regions of the United States and Generation Z cohort members born within the full 15-year span. Future researchers should study Generation Z employees in both leadership roles and no leadership roles to possibly determine if the perception of effective leadership varies with role and responsibility.

The study was quantitative in nature, and participants could only choose answers from the Likert scale. Future research could be designed as qualitative to highlight other possible perceptions of effective leadership. The study could be replicated with other generations to determine the extent to which, if any, Generation Z's perceptions of effective leadership relate to the perceptions of effective leadership from other

generations. The next section outlines implications for positive social change, theory, and practice.

Implications

This study examined four research questions and hypotheses to determine what extent, if any, does transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership relate to Generation Z office employees' perception of leadership effectiveness. As presented in the literature, organizations that do not align with generational preferences of leadership risk detrimental effects to the organization, including decreased employee productivity, support of goal attainment, and efficiency (Afshari et al., 2017; Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Deichmann & Stam, 2015). Organizational leaders lack knowledge of which leadership style Generation Z employees perceive as effective and risk not providing a workplace supportive of their leadership preferences (Goh & Lee, 2018; Stuckey, 2016). Results of this study have possible implications for positive social change, theory, and practice, which are detailed successively.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The results of the present study indicated authentic leadership was perceived as the most effective leadership behavior by Generation Z office workers in the southwestern United States. The findings also revealed a strong and positive correlation between transformational leadership and perceived effective leadership and a moderate positive correlation between transactional leadership and perceived effective leadership. No correlation was found between laissez-faire leadership and perceived effective leadership. As presented in leadership literature, organizations that support generational

preferences of leadership may cultivate a workplace climate that stimulates job satisfaction and supports communication (Dabke, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017).

These findings may positively contribute to social change by possibly providing knowledge to leaders of Generation Z employees that they can use to make leadership decisions in the workplace and support the generational preference of leadership. Leaders who improve leader and follower relations may positively influence workplace culture and organizational commitment. Improving leader and follower relations may result in positive social change by supporting communication and increasing employee motivation and satisfaction with leadership. Employees who are satisfied with their leaders may be inspired to perpetuate positive social change within the organization.

The results of this study may contribute to positive social change within the families and communities of the employees who are influenced by a positive and supportive workplace. Employees who are dissatisfied with their leadership may spread negativity to their families and communities. Conversely, employees who are satisfied with their leadership may have less ambivalence or stress about their working relationships and may interact with and influence their families and communities more positively, furthering positive social change. The next section includes information on how the results of the present study could impact theory.

Implications for Theory

Results of this study may contribute to the Generation Z and leadership literature. Future researchers may find areas for improvement in this study and design more effective inquiries pertaining to effective leadership. Further scientific inquiry with more

efficient studies could contribute to the knowledge base of effective leadership and possibly lead to more accurate theories. Refining and perfecting theories could garner more information about Generation Z and possibly contribute to more effective studies of leading this generation.

The current Generation Z literature lacks inquiry of Generation Z's workplace leadership preferences (Arrington & Dwyer, 2018). This study may add to the Generation Z literature specifically for office employee leadership preferences. The study findings indicated Generation Z office employees in the southwestern United States perceived authentic leadership behaviors as more effective than transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Generation Z literature did not previously contain findings that indicated the leadership preference of Generation Z office employees within the southwestern United States. Future scientific inquiries could replicate this study in different industries and geographic regions of the United States to explore the leadership preferences of Generation Z employees in different areas, possibly extending the theoretical knowledge of Generation Z and their workplace preferences.

The study results may contribute information to leadership literature. Previous study results indicated authentic and transformational leadership behaviors were identified as effective and facilitate positive workplace outcomes for subordinates (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; Duncan et al., 2017). The results of this study mirrored the present leadership literature and extended it to the newest generation of office workers being Generation Z. Authentic leadership has less representation in leadership literature than other leadership styles due to the more recent development of authentic leadership

compared to other leadership styles (Frederick et al., 2016). The findings of this study may extend the body of knowledge about authentic leadership and generational aspects of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

The findings of this study may contribute to the leadership and generational literature. Leadership practitioners with knowledge of employee leadership preferences may review their current practices and align leadership training. Leaders with additional knowledge of effective leadership practices and training on how to implement changes in practice may positively influence their relationships with employees. Organizations may also encounter positive social change as a result of improved leader-employee relations.

The leadership and generational literature contain many studies with results that indicate leading employees in an effective manner and supporting a diverse generational workforce produce positive organizational results (Breevaart et al., 2015; Jiří, 2016; Rodriguez et al., 2017; Wiedmer, 2015). Leaders should seek opportunities to support the diversity of their workforce, including generational diversity and the leadership preferences of each generation. Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that individuals who lead Generation Z office workers should consider learning and applying authentic and transformational leadership behaviors when interacting with Generation Z office employees. Another recommendation for leadership practice is for organizations to provide training to leaders based upon the generational diversity of their workforce. Failing to identify which leadership practices are effective may result in negative workplace consequences, as evidenced in the leadership literature (Afshari et al., 2017;

Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Deichmann & Stam, 2015). The final section of Chapter 5 is the conclusion of the present study.

Conclusion

Each generation that joins the workforce poses new challenges to leadership, as each generation has unique leadership expectations and preferences. Organizations seeking to attract and retain talent should seek and embrace opportunities to support diversity, including generational diversity. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine leadership style preferences as perceived among Generation Z office employees as most effective for providing a productive and supportive workplace climate. Results produced from this study illustrated authentic leadership was perceived by Generation Z office workers as more effective than transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership.

Regardless of which leadership style is considered most effective, leaders who do not actively engage with and support their workforce may create an unwelcoming workplace climate. To create an inclusive and supportive workplace environment, leaders should endeavor to find ways to remain engaged with their workforce. Leaders of Generation Z office workers in the southwestern United States should consider learning and adopting authentic and transformational leadership behaviors based upon the findings of this study. Leadership practitioners who create an inclusive and supportive workplace climate may positively influence social change by improving leader-employee relations through strengthening communication and improving employee motivation and satisfaction. Employees who feel supported and satisfied with leadership may feel less

stress and ambivalence, possibly extending positive social change to their families and communities. Exploring, understanding, and supporting leadership preferences among the diverse workforce should become an evolving priority for employers seeking to attract and retain talent.

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Appendix A: Permission to Use Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire[TM]

Instrument (Leader and Rater Form)

and Scoring Guide
(Form 5X-Short)

by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

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As a leader .... .

> I talk optimistically about the future.
> I spend time teaching and coaching.
> I avoid making decisions.

The person I am rating... .

> Talks optimistically about the future.
> Spends time teaching and coaching.
> Avoids making decisions

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Appendix B: Permission to Use Authentic Leadership Questionnaire

Lauren Seamon

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Appendix C: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and Authentic Leadership

Questionnaire Instruction Alteration Agreement

Conditions of Use

Effective date is August 18, 2020 for:

Lauren Seamon

You submitted your statement for altering a Mind Garden instrument at 4:16 pm EDT on August 16, 2020.

mind garden

Lauren Seamon

Conditions of Use for Altering a Mind Garden Instrument

Before conducting your research:

1) You will register your intent to make an alteration of a Mind Garden instrument by describing the type of alteration(s), the details of the alteration(s), and the rationale behind the alteration(s). (You have fulfilled this condition. The information you provided is included below).

Instrument Name:

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Specific Alterations:

Change instructions

Alteration Details:

I would like to change the instructions for the MLQ and ALQ together to read: "The following anonymous survey is about an effective leadership style based on your perception. You are not identifying the leadership style of a current leader. Instead, you are indicating which leadership style you perceive as effective. Specify how frequently each of the 61 statements fits an effective leadership style by using the following scale. Answer all items on this answer sheet. You can leave an answer blank if something appears irrelevant or you do not know the answer. Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous survey on your perceived effective leadership style".

Reason for Alterations:

I have previously received approval (and permission) to change the instructions for the usage of both the MLQ and the ALQ together. However, I have discussed further with my chair and he requested I update the instructions to what I submitted.

2) You will assign all rights to the altered instrument to the copyright holder. (You agreed to this condition by electronically signing and submitting the form).

3) You will put the instrument copyright, including the notification that the instrument was altered, on every page containing question items from this instrument. Add the following text to the end of the copyright:

"Altered with permission of the publisher."

An example, using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, is shown below.

Appendix D: Invitation Email Sample

A New Survey is Available

Hi Katy,

Someone wants to know what you think...

145 SB
Award
Value

35 min
Time to
Complete

This survey won't be available for long. Act now if you're interested.

Take Your Survey

Can't open the link? You can copy the link below into your browser:

http://s.cint.com/Survey/Start/f4fcc8c1-6383-92fb-c88d-fed740c5b71ddd

After successfully completing this survey, it may take up to 5 business days to receive SBs in your account

If you cannot participate in this survey we would appreciate it if you could decline participation in this survey by clicking on the following link*: Decline survey

For any concerns or questions regarding your survey please contact: surveysupport@swagbucks.com.

To make sure our emails do not get sent to you Junk/SPAM inbox, please add surveys@swagbucks.com to your contacts list or address book.

Thank you in advance!

Appendix E: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Rater Form (5x-Short)

Instructions: The following anonymous survey is about an effective leadership style based on your perception. You are not identifying the leadership style of a current leader. Instead, you are indicating which leadership style you perceive as effective. Specify how frequently each of the 61 statements fits an effective leadership style by using the following scale. Answer all items on this answer sheet. You can leave an answer blank if something appears irrelevant or you do not know the answer. Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous survey on your perceived effective leadership style.

Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

1. Talks optimistically about the future…………………….……………...0 1 2 3 4
2. Spends time teaching and coaching…………………………………….....0 1 2 3 4
3. Avoids making decisions……………………………....................................0 1 2 3 4

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To comply with copyright laws, only three sample items may be included.

Appendix F: Authentic Leadership Questionnaire

Instructions: The following anonymous survey is about an effective leadership style based on your perception. You are not identifying the leadership style of a current leader. Instead, you are indicating which leadership style you perceive as effective. Specify how frequently each of the 61 statements fits an effective leadership style by using the following scale. Answer all items on this answer sheet. You can leave an answer blank if something appears irrelevant or you do not know the answer. Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous survey on your perceived effective leadership style.

Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

1. Says exactly what he or she means...………………………..……………...0 1 2 3 4
2. Admits mistakes when they are made………………………………………....0 1 2 3 4
3. Encourages everyone to speak their mind………………………………….0 1 2 3 4

To comply with copyright laws, only three sample items may be included.