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The Employees' Perspective: Situational Leadership Style Flexibility and Effectiveness and Employee Performance in a Technological Organization

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MPEM, Montana Technological University, 2018

BS, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey/DeVry University, 2008

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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June 2023

Abstract

Poor employee performance can have adverse effects on business outcomes. Business leaders are concerned with poor performance, which can minimize profitability and negatively impact business sustainability. Grounded in the Situational Leadership II® model, the purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between situational leadership style flexibility, effectiveness, and employee performance as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. A random sample of 99 technology company employees completed the Leader Behavior Analysis II®– Other and the Employee Job Performance measurement tools. Using hierarchical multilinear regression, employee gender, job location, and tenure were entered in block 1, explaining 18.4% of the variance in employee performance. Adding situational leadership style flexibility and effectiveness in block 2 accounted for 4.9% of the variation in employee performance, F change (2, 88) = 2.795, p >.05, but did not significantly improve the prediction. However, the final regression model, as a whole, was able to significantly predict employee performance with job location (NJ) (B = -.251, t = -1.968, p = .05), employee tenure (10 years– <20 years) (B = .367, t = 2.414, p < .05), and situational leadership style flexibility (B = -.024, t = -2.210, p < .05) as the only significant contributors to the model. A key recommendation is that business leaders compare work differences between the four states. The implications for positive social change include the potential to meet employees' needs, potentially improve their work performances, and provide economic stability.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my two fathers, my heavenly Father, God, and my earthly father, Evan Cortes, who passed 20 years ago. Heavenly Father, my most significant leader, thank you for giving me this vision of achieving my dream as a doctor. Thank you for your undying love and tender mercy, fortitude, and unwavering support that you have given me throughout this challenging journey. Thank you for my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the ultimate sacrifice for my salvation. Thanks to my dad, Evan Cortes, who always showed me the significance and power of knowledge and education. He learned, taught, and was a leader all his life and did it with the utmost humility. I would also like to dedicate this study to my family, who has supported and encouraged me throughout my doctoral journey.

Acknowledgments

I can do all things through Christ, my strength.

—Philippians 4:13

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Thanks to my original second committee member, Dr. Kevin Davies, and my university research reviewer, Dr. Brenda Jack, for being an essential part of my journey.

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I would also like to take a moment and thank Dr. Irene Williams and Dr. Annie Brown for stepping in as committee chair and second committee member, respectively, when prior committee members retired from the university. Thank you so much for jumping in with all of your efforts! Your support and dedication to your students do not go unnoticed.

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surveys. You were fantastic! Thanks to my technical manager, Dr. Robert Windeler, who consistently inquired how my journey was progressing and always showed support and encouragement. Thanks to Dr. Eric Addeo, Dr. Jeffrey Nicholson, Dr. Brian Mangan, and again, Dr. Robert Windeler, who all wrote excellent recommendation letters at the commencement of this journey. Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank the company that served as a research site and all the participants who took their time to make this study happen. You were also a significant part of this journey and significantly contributed to my doctoral dream becoming a reality.

Sincerely, thank you all again.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

There are many contributing factors to a successful business, among which leadership is the most important (Fahlevi et al., 2019). With nonexistent or ineffective leadership, a business is destined to fail (Baker, 2022). Effective leaders are self- and emotionally aware and are responsible for implementing company visions and values, driving organizational culture, and fortifying effective communication. They also make good decisions, provide resources, facilitate conflict resolution, and provide guidance while influencing employees to improve their performance and boost their morale (Chukwu, 2021; Sari et al., 2021). Employee performance is significant as employees are a company's most valuable and essential resource (Blanchard et al., 2013). Leaders with flexible and effective leadership styles who can positively influence employee performance are vital to a company's success and profit increases.

Background of the Problem

Leadership is a process whereby a person influences a group of followers or employees to accomplish a common objective (Northouse, 2022). Leaders affect business profitability by influencing followers' or employees' performances (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018). Employees are the businesses' workforce who execute the tasks required to accomplish the organizational objectives. Leadership styles can affect the organizational culture, employees' organizational commitment, and employee performance (Sharma et al., 2019). A leader's style can affect the employee's satisfaction and trust in their leader. Employees who are satisfied and trusting in their leader may improve their performance or productivity, creating an opportunity to optimize business profits. Therefore,

leadership styles may influence organizational employee behavior and organizational commitment (Sharma et al., 2019). Leadership styles can then affect organizational success and performance.

The leader must meet the employee's needs for an employee to be committed to an organization or business (Northouse, 2022). Furthermore, leaders have an ethical accountability to attend to followers' needs and concerns (Northouse, 2022). Although researchers have conducted many studies on leadership styles and employee performance (Farhani, 2019), there is a need to understand the relationship between flexible and effective situational leadership styles and employee performance, as I demonstrate in this section's literature review. The focus of this study was on an optical communications technology company with different branches throughout the eastern United States.

Problem and Purpose

Workplace leadership styles directly affect employee performance and business profitability (Mkheimer, 2018). From a financial perspective, poor leadership styles cost organizations 7% of their total annual sales each year due to their negative impact on employee performance (Perna, 2016). The general business problem is that a lack of effective leadership styles may lead to suboptimal employee performance, affecting business profitability. The specific business problem is that some business leaders do not understand the relationship between flexible and effective situational leadership styles and employee performance.

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between situational leadership style flexibility, effectiveness, and employee

performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The targeted population consisted of nonunion employees, with no direct reports, of a single optical communications technology company with branches located in the U.S. states of Massachusetts (MA), Connecticut (CT), New Jersey (NJ), and Georgia (GA). The primary independent variables were (a) situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and (b) situational leadership style (S1–S4) effectiveness. The covariates were employee (a) gender, (b) job location—NJ, MA, and CT, with GA as the reference category—and (c) tenure—0 – <1 year, 1 year – <5 years, 5 years – <10 years, and 10 years – <20 years, with ≥ 20 years as the reference category. The dependent variable was employee performance. The implications for positive social change include the potential to provide leaders with knowledge of how to adapt flexible and effective situational leadership styles to meet employee needs and enhance employees' work experience to improve their performance. Using the findings, business leaders may reach their desired goals and provide better jobs in the community, creating an opportunity for a better quality of life and economic stability for employees and their families.

Population and Sampling

The quantitative correlational study aimed to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance from an employee's perspective in an optical communications technological company while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The population aligned with the overarching research questions. The targeted population consisted of

non-union employees, with no direct reports, of a single optical communications technology company with branches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia. As a quantitative researcher who wants each population subject to get an equal chance in the selection, free from bias, and be inferred to the larger population, I have used the probabilistic simple random sampling method (Etikan & Bala, 2017) for my quantitative study. Using G*Power version 3.1.9.7 software, I conducted a priori analysis (Faul et al., 2007; Faul et al., 2009). Assuming a medium effect size (f^2= .20) (Cohen, 1988), α = .05, two independent variables and eight covariates, two of which were categorical, gender and job location (CT, MA, NJ) and four dummy variables for the ordinal covariate tenure, I identified that a minimum sample size of 91 participants is required to achieve a power of .80. Increasing the sample size to 172 will increase the power to .99. Therefore, I sought between 91 and 172 participants for this study.

Nature of the Study

I chose the quantitative method for the study. Quantitative research involves the analysis of relationships and associations between variables that are measured numerically; researchers use various statistical and graphical methods (Saunders et al., 2019). The quantitative method often integrates controls to certify the data's validity (Saunders et al., 2019). Quantitative research is associated with experimental and survey research conducted using questionnaires, structured interviews, possibly structured observation, or measured data (Saunders et al., 2019). Thus, the quantitative method was appropriate for the study because it involves using probability sampling techniques to ensure generalizability (see Saunders et al., 2019). The qualitative approach is

appropriate when the researcher needs to make sense and meaning of the phenomenon being studied and explore business practices and people's living experiences in their real-world roles (Yin, 2016). This was not my focus in this study. A mixed-methods approach combines qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analytical procedures (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). Therefore, the qualitative and mixed-method approaches were inappropriate for the study.

I chose the correlational and linear regression design for the study. A researcher who uses the correlational design describes and measures the strength of the relationship between two or more variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Regression expresses the relationship in the form of an equation that can be used to predict values of one variable based on another. Hierarchical multiple linear regression was appropriate because a key objective was to predict the relationship between predictor variables—situational leadership styles flexibility and effectiveness, while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure— and a dependent variable, employee performance. Other designs, such as experimental and quasi-experimental, can be used when the researcher seeks to evaluate a degree of cause and effect (Saunders et al., 2019). A researcher may use the quasi-experimental design to determine the causal impact of one variable on another, testing the causal hypotheses while lacking the random assignment element (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Furthermore, a researcher can use the experimental design to examine the causal relationships under highly controlled conditions (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The focus of the study was on recognizing an explanatory relationship; thus, the experimental and quasi-experimental designs were inappropriate for the study.

Research Question

What is the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling employee gender, job location, and tenure?

Hypotheses

H_0: There is no statistically significant relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure.

H_1: There is a statistically significant relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure.

Theoretical Framework

Hersey and Blanchard developed situational leadership in 1969. Research shows that the extension and refinement of Situational Leadership II® (SLII®), introduced by Blanchard in 1985 and updated in 1993, is a very effective leadership style to motivate employees. The situational leadership model consists of leaders changing the degree to which they are directive or supportive to meet the changing needs of the follower, according to the given situation of the follower, and their development level of motivation, commitment, and competence (Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Shaikh & Shaikh, 2019; Vidal et al., 2017). Leaders have to be both flexible and effective in their

situational leadership. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) identified four key directive and supportive situational leadership styles that form the situational leadership model (see also Thompson & Glaso, 2018). The first is the *directing* approach (S1). The second is the *coaching* approach (S2). The *supporting* approach (S3) constitutes the third style. The final style is called the *delegating* approach (S4). The situational leadership theory aligned with this study because the expectation was that the independent variables, situational leadership styles flexibility and effectiveness (S1–S4), as measured by a questionnaire based on the Blanchard model, would predict employee performance. The dependent variable, employee performance, was measured using an employee performance scale to assess this specific variable.

Operational Definitions

Commitment: A combination of a follower or employee's motivation and confidence specific to a task or goal (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2001).

Competence: The skills and knowledge a follower or employee brings to a task or goal (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2001).

Development level: The degree to which followers have the competence and commitment necessary to accomplish the objective or task (Northouse, 2022; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017).

Diagnosis: A leader's evaluation of a follower's need for direction and support by assessing their competence and commitment (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2001).

Effective situational leadership: Leadership that involves leaders determining where followers are on the developmental scale and adapting their leadership styles accordingly to achieve a specific task or goal (Shonhiwa, 2016).

Employee performance: The level of achievement of tasks that constitutes an employee's job or task (Reza et al., 2018).

Flexibility: The ability to comfortably use a variety of situational leadership styles (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2001).

Partnering for performance: A partnership that occurs when a leader reaches an agreement with their follower or employee about their development level and the leadership style the follower or employee needs to accomplish organizational and individual goals (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2003).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are beliefs that are considered true but are unverifiable in a study (Akaeze & Akaeze, 2017). There were two assumptions in the study. The first assumption was that every participant would answer all questionnaires truthfully and based on their own experience with their direct leader. The second assumption was that all the participants would understand all the questions in the data collection instruments and answer them truthfully and to the best of their knowledge.

Limitations

Limitations concern potential weaknesses of a study that are generally out of the researcher's control; the weaknesses are associated with the research design, statistical

model constraints, or other factors (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). These external conditions restrict the scope and potentially affect the study results (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The study was limited to Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia. Also, my focus was on one organization, an international technology company. The results may not be applicable to locales that are outside of these four states or to companies in a different sector. I also limited my focus to employees' perceptions as opposed to both employees' and leaders' perceptions. The study also had time constraints, whereas participants could provide different answers later after their leaders gain leadership experience or training.

Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries to the scope of the study that are in the researcher's control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The researcher establishes such parameters so that they are able to achieve the study's aims and objectives (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The study's delimitations included examining the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance from employees within the only four U.S. branches of an international technology company. The employees participating in the study were (a) non-union U.S.-based employees and (b) employees who did not serve in a leader or supervisory capacity and had no direct reports.

Significance of Study

Business leaders must ensure that employees perform in alignment with business success and profitability. Therefore, business leaders seek to enhance employee

performance to optimize profitability. The study's findings may aid business leaders in applying their leadership skills to improve employee performance in the workplace, adding value to the business. The study's results may also contribute to business practice and positive social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

The study's results may be significant to business practice because they may provide an explanatory and practical model for understanding the relationship between effective situational leadership styles and employee performance from the employee's perspective. Employee performance may be improved if a leader is attentive to the employee's needs and adjusts their leadership style (Iqbal et al., 2015). Enhanced employee performance may lead to increased profits in businesses.

Consequently, enhanced employee performance may be beneficial for business practices. The study's findings may aid business leaders in adapting effective situational leadership styles to improve employee and organizational performance. The study results may also be useful to leaders and employees who want to address employee performance as a potential means to optimize business profitability.

Furthermore, the study results include the potential to create an opportunity for business leaders of a single optical technology company with branches located in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia to adapt flexible and effective situational leadership styles and enhance employee performance. Leaders at the company may be better able to reach desired organizational goals and thus maximize profitability in the eastern United States. Leaders at all levels and in other organizations and

geographic areas could potentially benefit from the study's findings by understanding the significance of employee performance to business profitability from an employee's perspective. Furthermore, leaders may have a better understanding of how situational leadership styles may significantly affect employee performance (Iqbal et al., 2015).

Implications for Social Change

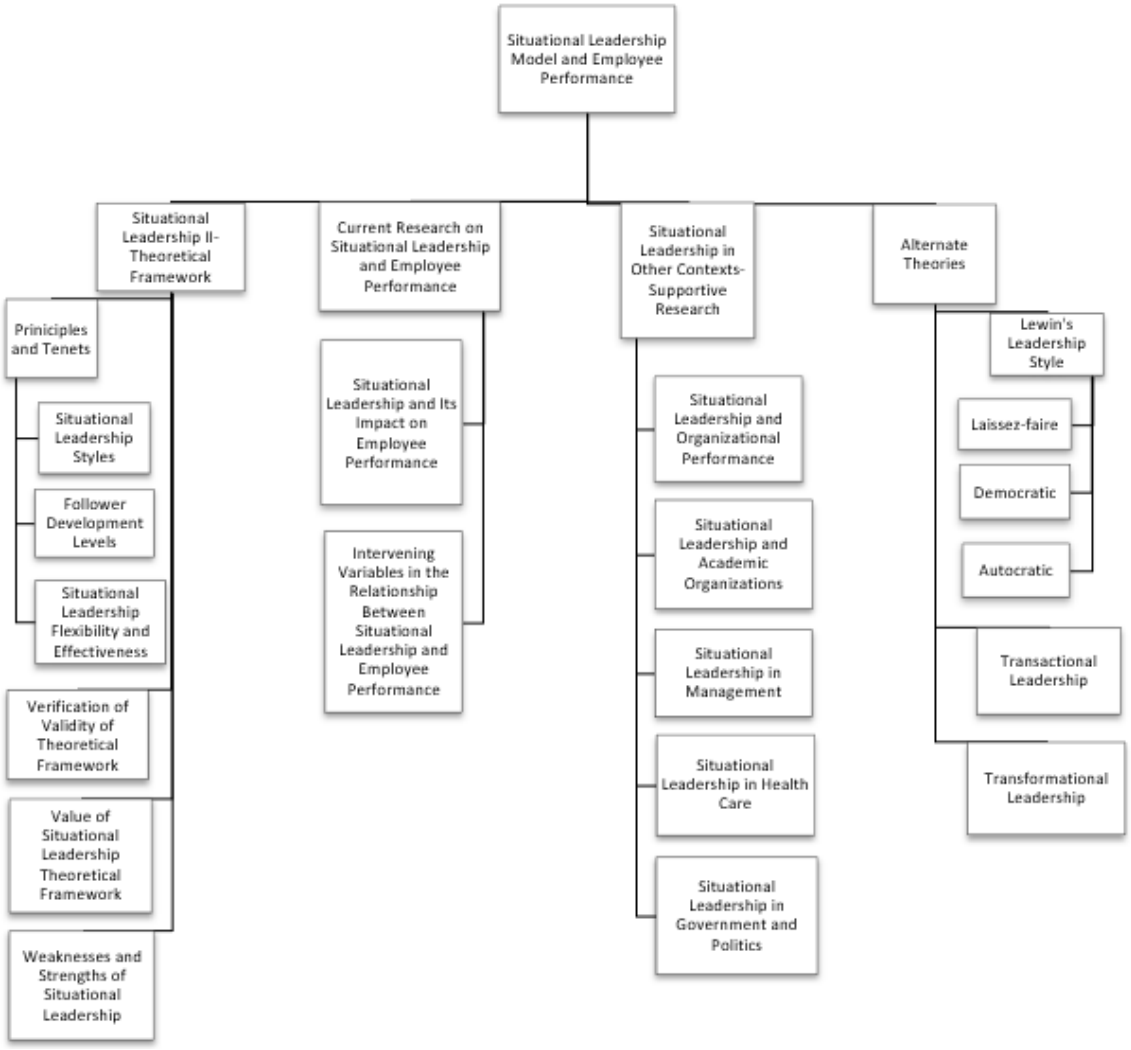
The implications for positive social change include leaders adapting flexible and effective situational leadership styles to meet employee needs, enhancing employees' work experience, and improving their work performances. Businesses may reach their desired goals, creating thriving businesses to provide better jobs in the community, creating an opportunity for a better quality of life and economic stability for employees and their families.

Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

In this quantitative correlational study, I examined the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The academic literature review primarily encompasses current research from peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and seminal works. The literature review mainly consists of peer-reviewed articles published from 2017 to 2022. The literature review includes studies on the situational leadership model, including situational leadership styles, employee performance, supportive situational leadership research, and alternate theories (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Literature Review Organization



As Figure 1 illustrates, the literature review contains four main sections: (a) situational leadership, the theoretical framework; (b) current research on situational leadership and employee performance; (c) other supportive research on situational leadership; and (d) alternate theories. In the first section, I discuss the situational leadership theoretical framework's principles and tenets, including the situational leadership styles of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. I also discuss the follower development levels of the situational leadership framework and situational leadership flexibility and effectiveness, which were my independent variables. In the first section of the review, I also verify the theoretical framework's validity and consider the value and weaknesses, and strengths of the situational leadership theoretical framework.

In the subsequent literature review section, I discuss my dependent variable, employee performance. The third literature review section encompasses supportive current situational leadership in other contexts outside the standard workplace. The fourth and final section of the literature review is about alternate theories, including Lewin's leadership styles and transformational and transactional leadership.

For my research, I used Walden University Library's online resources and Google Scholar to search for scholarly peer-reviewed articles published in 2017 or later. I used specific search databases: EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Business Source Complete, Sage Premier, Emerald Management, and Dissertation & Theses @ Walden University. The keywords that I used were *situational leadership styles*, *situational leadership model*, *situational leadership theory*, *leadership styles*, *leadership development*, *employee performance*, *organizational performance*, *job performance*, *directive leadership*

behavior, *supportive leadership behavior*, *commitment level*, *competence level*, and *follower development level.* The use of the keywords led to over 450 sources. After evaluating the articles, I had 180 articles, studies, websites, and books for the study (see Table 1).

Table 1

Source Material

Source	Within 5-year range (2017–2022)	Outside of 5-year range (2016 and prior)	Total
Peer-reviewed journal articles	120	34	154
Websites	6		6
Government reports and handbooks		1	1
Dissertations		2	2
Books	4	13	17
Total	130	50	180

The Theoretical Framework of Situational Leadership

In 1968, Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey developed the situational leadership model (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969a; see also Ebere & Fragouli, 2015; Stręk, 2018). It became popular and recognized the following year when Hersey and Blanchard (1969b) published their classic book *Management of Organizational Behavior*. In 1969, Hersey and Blanchard called the situational leadership model the life cycle theory of leadership in an article called "Management and Training." The theorists have refined and revised the model since its inception (Blanchard et al., 1985, 1993; Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Murichi & Hazel, 2018). The focus of the initial theory was relatable to how parents raise their children concerning their maturity and development level. In addition to their

research at Ohio State University, Hersey and Blanchard drew from Reddin's (1967) 3-D management model and Blake and Mouton's managerial grid theory in developing their situational leadership model (Shonhiwa, 2016). Hersey and Blanchard later applied their life cycle theory of leadership to employment. Hersey and Blanchard developed their styles in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1982, Blanchard and Johnson published their first book, *The One-Minute Manager.* After discovering that other researchers could not practically validate their original model, Hersey (1985) developed the concept of *situational leadership* in the book, *The Situational Leader* (see also Northouse, 2022).

The Situational Leadership® model has become one of the most widely recognized, popular, and long-standing leadership models. Leaders have applied the model to a wide range of situations, including gaming (Park & Kim, 2018), the design of speech with computational linguistics (Jackson et al., 2021), the financial industry (Brata, 2021; Princes & Said, 2022), the mining industry (Manyuchi & Sukdeo, 2021), crisis management (Wisittigars & Siengthai, 2019), service organizations (Todorović & Todorović, 2020), telecommunications (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020), and virtual reality (Suárez et al., 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, situational leadership became prominent. Experts identified it as the new normal mode of leadership and management because of the critical, risky business and educational period that the pandemic presented in its first year (Francisco & Nuqui, 2020; Francisco et al., 2020; Kwatubana & Molaodi, 2021; Siregar et al., 2022). Business leaders turned to situational leadership because the model emphasizes flexibility and adapting to different critical situations (Azahari et al.,

2020; Brown et al., 2021). The situational leadership model is among the most prominent academic works in leadership and management (Medeni, 2018).

Blanchard, along with Marjorie Blanchard, Don Carew, Eunice Parisi-Carew, Fed Finch, Lawrence Hawkins, Drea Zigarmi, and Patricia Zigarmi, created a new generation of the model called the Situational Leadership II® (SLII®) model (Blanchard, 1985; The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2003). The model's revision included incorporating development levels (Blanchard et al., 1985; Northouse, 2022). Blanchard (1985) asserted that situational leaders choose between directive and supportive behaviors according to the changing needs of the follower, based on the given situation of the follower, the task at hand, and their development level of competence and commitment (Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Vidal et al., 2017). I discuss the applicable principles and tenets of the situational leadership theoretical framework, including the directive and supportive leadership styles concerning the followers' development levels. In addition, I discuss the validity, value, and weaknesses and strengths of the theoretical framework of situational leadership.

Principles and Tenets of Situational Leadership

The SLII® model comprises two key dimensions: situational leadership styles and follower developmental level. There are both directive and supportive leadership styles in that a leader must apply them appropriately and effectively in each situation concerning the follower's developmental level. Directive behavior consists of a leader telling and showing followers what to do and when and delivering frequent feedback on results (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000). Supportive behavior includes listening, encouraging, praising, facilitating self-reliant problem-solving, and including others in making

decisions (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000). A leader must assess the follower's development level by evaluating their follower's competence and commitment level and adapt to the leadership style specific to their needs (Blanchard, 1985; Northouse, 2022). Followers' skills, competence, and motivation may vary over time. In situational leadership, leaders must change their directive or supportive leadership to meet the followers' changing needs. The model requires that the leader match their style to the follower's development level (Blanchard, 1985; Blanchard et al., 2013; Shonhiwa, 2016). Stręk (2018) argued that the innovative research proposed by Hersey and Blanchard asked practitioners and scholars to stop searching for one perfect type of leadership applicable to all situations. Stręk asserted that the ideal leadership style does not exist. Therefore, Blanchard (1985) proposed situational leadership, which involves a leader adjusting their leadership style specific to the follower's developmental stage and the situation. The leader must be flexible and adapt their approach to each follower's needs.

Situational leadership encompasses task and relationship behaviors. Situational leadership is a mixture of task behavior, worker or follower dedication, and relation behavior (Blanchard et al., 1993; Murichi & Hazel, 2018). Wanyama et al. (2016) added that task and relation-oriented behaviors are dependent rather than mutually exclusive. Furthermore, Reza et al. (2018) asserted that leaders combine the task and development level behavior of the relationship with the followers. Reza et al. emphasized that situational leadership behavior accuracy with the follower development level is essential to the organization's productivity and performance. Effective situational leadership task-relation behavior may influence followers' performance productively.

In principle, effective situational leaders are flexible. Effective situational leaders can recognize the follower's needs and development level and adjust and adapt the leadership to meet their follower's needs (Blanchard, 1985; Walls, 2019). Furthermore, effective situational leaders rationally understand the situation and provide an appropriate response, rather than enigmatic leaders with many devoted followers (Blanchard et al., 1993; Wanyama et al., 2016). Leaders maximize their effectiveness by matching the follower's needed situational leadership style to their development level. Thompson and Glaso (2015) asserted that it might be challenging for a leader to assess a follower's readiness level concerning the proper leadership style. Therefore, situational leaders must have a precise perception and be good diagnosticians. In situational leadership, there is no one way to lead and influence people. Different situations call for different leadership styles. They must be flexible and effective leaders.

Situational Leadership Styles. Leaders use influential behavior. Leadership style is an individual's behavior pattern to influence others to achieve an organizational goal (Al Khajeh, 2018; Shonhiwa, 2016). Furthermore, Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) added that leadership involves influencing and motivating people, implementing plans, and directing people (see also Northouse, 2022). Leadership styles affect how leaders make decisions, interact with others, or ask employees to take on responsibilities. Leadership style involves implicit and explicit leadership behavior (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016). Al Khajeh (2018) and Murichi and Hazel (2018) are similar in their assertions that leadership style is one of the key factors in a business's failure or success. Blanchard (1985) asserted that situational leadership involves concern for relationships, tasks, and

follower maturity or development. There are four styles of situational leadership: the directing approach (S1), the coaching approach (S2), the supporting approach (S3), and the delegating approach (S4).

Directing or Telling Style. The first style (S1), the directing or telling style, is highly directive-low supportive. The leader focuses on communicating goal achievement and spends little time on supportive behavior. The leader gives precise instructions, teaches, provides examples, and supervises the follower's new role (Blanchard, 1985; Stręk, 2018).

Coaching Style. The second style (S2), the coaching approach, is highly directive and supportive. The leaders focus on communicating objectives and meeting followers' needs (Blanchard, 1985; Solihin & Manurung, 2020). The leader continues to provide instructions and screen the employee's actions while concurrently regulating the feedback.

Supporting Style. The third style (S3) is the supporting approach, a high supportive-low directive approach. The leader focuses on the objective and uses supportive behavior to bring out the follower's skills that they may have to accomplish the task at hand (Blanchard, 1985; Solihin & Manurung, 2020). Stręk (2018) asserted that S3 is more cooperatively based rather than the leader directing instructions. It allows the follower to be independent without needing the leader's approval.

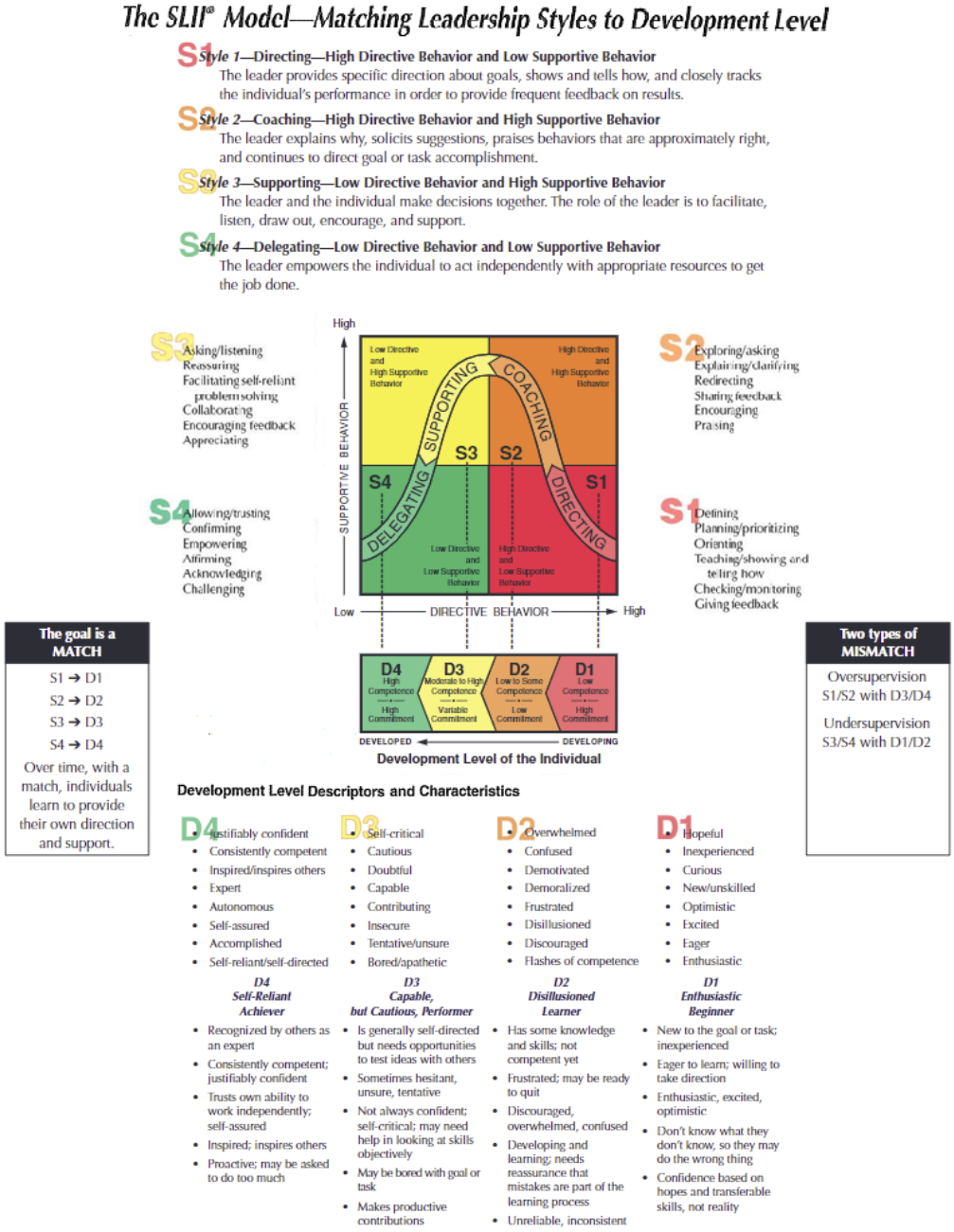
Delegating Style. Finally, the fourth style (S4) is a delegating, low supportive-low directive approach. In the delegating approach, the leader communicates less about the goal and social support but facilitates the follower's confidence and motivation to

complete the objective (Blanchard, 1985; Northouse, 2022). With the S4 style, the leader fully trusts and has faith in the follower. The follower or employee assumes full responsibility for their required task.

The first two styles are more leader-driven. The last two styles involve the leader pulling back and allowing the follower to map the course and set the direction. In other words, S1 and S2 have high directive behaviors, S3 and S4 have low directing behaviors, S2 and S3 have high supportive behaviors, and S1 and S4 have low supportive behaviors (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Situational Leadership II® (SLII®) Model—Matching Leadership Styles to Development Level



Note. S = style; D = developmental level. Adapted from "Situational Leadership® II, Teaching Others," by The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, *The Ken Blanchard*

Companies®, pp.3-6.

(https://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/situational_leadership_teach_others.pdf). Copyright 2000 by The Ken Blanchard Companies®. SLII® is a registered trademark of The Ken Blanchard Companies®. Used with permission (see Appendix B).

Follower Development Levels in Situational Leadership. A follower's goal- or task-specific development level encompasses a combination of competence and commitment. The development level is the degree to which followers have the competence and commitment necessary to accomplish the objective or task at hand (Blanchard, 1985; Northouse, 2022). To be considered at a high development level, followers must have high competence and commitment (Blanchard, 1985; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). If followers have little competence for the objective but have the confidence and commitment to complete the task, they are at the developing level (Blanchard, 1985; Setiawan et al., 2019). Leaders may classify followers into four development categories: D1, D2, D3, and D4 (see Figure 2), from developing to developed (Blanchard, 1985; Tortorella & Fogliatto, 2017; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). Followers at the D1 level are low in competence and high in commitment. D2 is the development category where leaders describe followers as having some competence but low commitment. D3 followers have moderate to high competence but may have varying commitment. Finally, D4 represents the highest development, having high competence and high commitment to getting the job done.

Situational Leadership Flexibility and Effectiveness. To obtain effective situational leadership, leaders must adjust their leadership style and match the appropriate leadership style to the follower's development level. The SLII® model (see Figure 2) is based on the relationship between the follower's development level, competence, and commitment to a particular task or goal and the leadership style with the directive and/or supportive behaviors the leader provides the follower. For a leader to select the correct

leadership style and how to lead the follower, the leader must be able to diagnose the follower's development level need for the correct direction and support. The leader must be flexible to adjust to the follower's level of support and direction they need in every situation. To diagnose the correct follower development level, the leader must evaluate the follower's competence and commitment levels specific to the goal or task. A leader may ask five key diagnosis questions to diagnose the follower's or employee's competence and commitment to the goal or task:

1. "What is the specific goal or task?" (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, p. 4)
2. "How strong or good are the individual's demonstrated task knowledge and skills on the goal or task?" (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, p. 4)
3. "How strong or good are the individual's transferable skills?" (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, p. 4)
4. "How motivated, interested, or enthusiastic is the individual?" (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, p. 4)
5. "How confident or self-assured is the individual?" (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, p. 4)

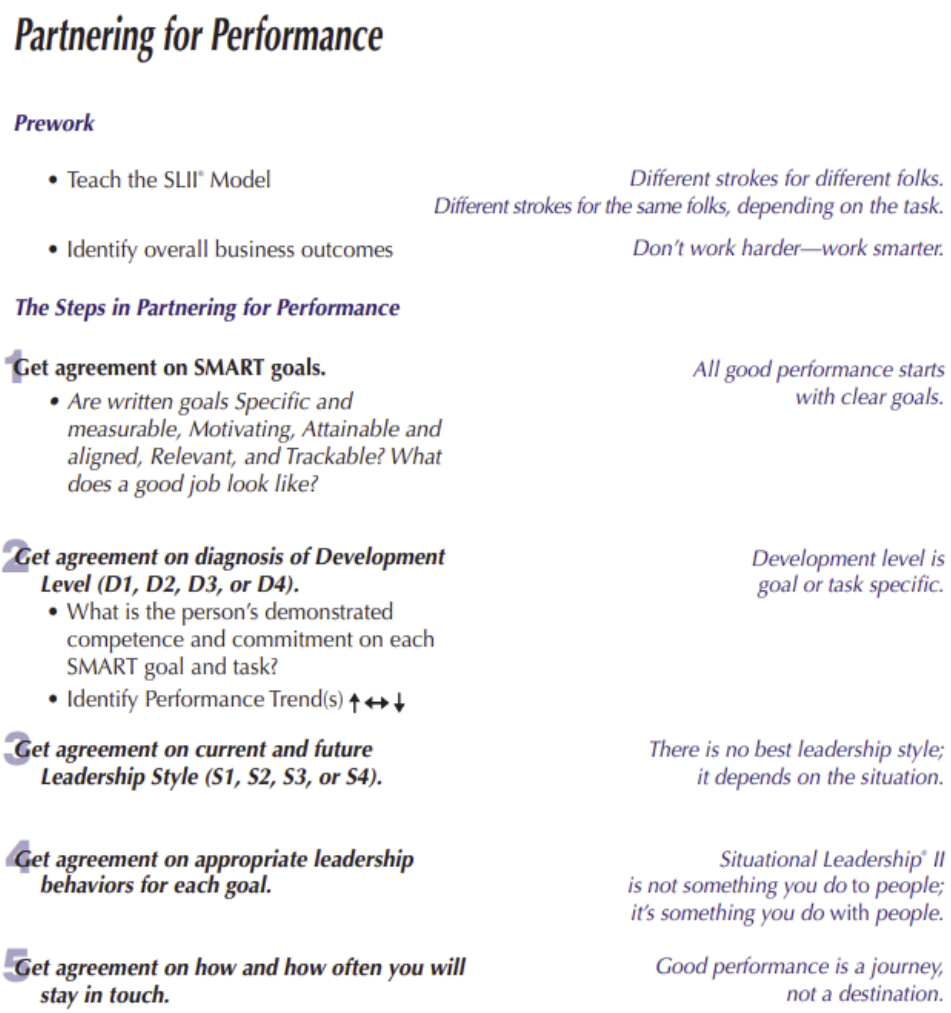
After diagnosing the follower development leader, the leader can choose the appropriate situational leadership style consisting of directive and supportive behaviors and match it to the follower development level (see Figure 2). To be effective situational leaders, leaders must be flexible and use all leadership styles accordingly. They must be

flexible to adjust their leadership style even when the follower's competence and commitment level change.

The most effective situational leaders are those who partner for performance (see Figure 3). The leader communicates with the follower to reach agreements about the development level and leadership style the follower needs to help them accomplish organizational and individual goals (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000). In partnering, the leader and follower agree on objectives, development level, current and future leadership styles, communications methods, and frequency. When a leader teaches the SLII® model to the follower, the follower understands their position in the partnership. When a leader and the follower understand the SLII® model, they can diagnose the follower's development level and agree on the appropriate situational leadership for the goal or task at hand.

Figure 3

Partnering for Performance



Note. S = style; D = developmental level. Adapted from "Situational Leadership® II, Teaching Others," by The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000, *The Ken Blanchard Companies®, p.7.* (https://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/situational_leadership_teach_others.pdf). Copyright 2000 by The Ken Blanchard Companies®. SLII® is a registered trademark of The Ken Blanchard Companies®. Used with permission.

Verification of Validity of Theoretical Framework

The evidence for and against the situational leadership model's validity has receded and flowed over the years. Ebere and Fragouli (2015) asserted that Hambleton and Gumpert, in 1982, used an abridged version of the leader effectiveness and adaptability description (LEAD) measurement instrument to verify the situational leadership theory's validity. Ebere and Fragouli discovered that evidence showed validity to the model. However, the researchers could not establish a definite causal relationship because of the limitations they had in their research design. The following study that Vecchio conducted in 1987 indicated methodological inconsistencies in the Hambleton and Gumbert study (Ebere & Fragouli, 2015). Vecchio's research consisted of mixed outcomes; the evidence was for and against follower level of maturity theoretical support of the situational leadership model. Other studies were similar to Vecchio's results (Ebere & Fragouli, 2015; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). During the '80s, there appeared to be feeble support for situational leadership's validity (Ebere & Fragouli, 2015; Thompson & Glaso, 2015). Ebere and Fragouli (2015) suggested that the deficiency of evidence can explain why Hersey and his colleagues labeled their situational leadership approach as a practical model that managers, salespersons, teachers, or parents may use. Blanchard argued that researchers fail to recognize the differences between Situational Leadership® and SLII®. Furthermore, Blanchard asserted that researchers used the LEAD instrument to test the incorrect model of situational leadership (Blanchard et al., 1993; Ebere & Fragouli, 2015) as an argument for the researcher's ambiguity.

Researchers have focused on the validity of the situational leadership model. Ebere and Fragouli's (2015) study focused on the validity of the situational leadership model. Using the LEAD measurement instrument, they examined the relationship between employee maturity and the leader's tolerance for autonomy in the Nigerian oil and gas sector. The researchers conducted a study to determine if the Nigerian petroleum industry's situational leadership model was applicable. Furthermore, the researchers wanted to determine whether the American understanding of the SLII® model principles was practical. With the findings, the researchers determined that there was support for the main principles of the situational leadership theory. There is no one best leadership style, and the leader must adjust their leadership according to the follower's needs when it comes to the manager (Ebere & Fragouli, 2015). However, with the results, Ebere and Fragouli (2015) argued that leaders had to consider followers' willingness to complete their tasks because the factor involved job gratification. The Nigerian workers who lacked confidence in the workplace and had less responsibility were comfortable with their leaders providing directive behavior and still desired to participate in the discussions. However, Ebere and Fragouli (2015) determined that highly confident, committed, and responsible employees wanted their leaders to converse with them but desired autonomy to make choices concerning their work. Ebere and Fragouli (2015) asserted that the leader's diagnoses concerning the followers were associated with the followers' experience level, knowledge, and skills. The diagnoses signified that managers should involve followers in discussions about tasks, then choose whether to permit

followers to make their own decisions based on how eager or motivated they are to do their work.

Researchers have countered Ebere and Fragouli's assessment of the situational leadership model. Northouse (2022) and Shonhiwa (2016) asserted that not only does the model consider the follower's development level, including the follower's skills and knowledge of the follower, but the model also includes consideration of the follower's motivation or *eagerness,* as Ebere and Fragouli (2015) put it. Research findings have shown that the situational leadership model consists of leaders changing the degree to which they are directive or supportive to meet the changing needs of the follower, according to the given situation of the follower and their development level of motivation and commitment (Shaikh & Shaikh, 2019; Tortorella & Fogliatto, 2017). Therefore, Northouse (2022), Shaikh and Shaikh (2019), and Shonhiwa (2016) opposed Ebere and Fragouli's (2015) assertion that the SLII® model not being valid in the Nigerian petroleum industry. Additionally, Nikezić et al. (2016) contended that the situational approach is practical and applicable because it is a model. Therefore, leaders can apply it worldwide. Schuetz (2016) asserted that many practitioners in many companies worldwide have successfully adapted the situational approach. Schuetz's assertion opposed Ebere and Fragouli's claim of the inability to apply Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership approach in Nigeria. Ebere and Fragouli may have claimed that is because of the LEAD measurement instrument they used. In contrast, Blanchard et al. (1993) noted and pointed out the instrument's weakness for some time.

Recent studies have indicated innovative measurement instrumentation for the situational leadership theoretical framework. In more recent studies, researchers have noted positive support for the model using innovative measurement instrumentation and design research approaches (Meirovich & Gu, 2015; Thompson & Glaso, 2015; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). Thompson and Glaso identified that the model's main issue involves the leader accurately measuring the follower's development level. Thompson and Glaso (2015) conducted a study and offered different views for defining follower development level and applied the views for testing the validity of the situational leadership model with the rating measures. The researchers found that determining the level of agreement between leader rating of follower aptitude and commitment and follower self-rating was a fundamental problem for identifying follower aptitude and commitment.

Thompson and Glaso (2015) determined that situational leadership estimates may be valid when leader rating and follower self-rating are congruent, more objective measures, rather than using leader rating alone, a subjective measure, as seen in previous studies. With the findings of the study, Thompson and Glaso (2015) gathered that both leader and follower need to establish an approach of follower capability and commitment, separately then collectively, as in partnering for performance (Lynch, 2015), to deliberate similarities and differences and attempt to agree upon the determination of follower competence and commitment. According to the situational leadership model, if there is an agreement with the ratings, the leader can provide the correct directive and supportive leadership styles. Thompson and Glaso (2015) argued that the approach might constitute a new approach to assessing the validity of follower development and situational

leadership models. They asserted that a new leader-follower congruence approach as an innovative measurement tool might provide essential future research elements to test situational leadership's validity. The researchers followed up with the approach in 2018.

Researchers considered an innovative alternative measurement to test the validity of situational leadership. In 2018, Thompson and Glaso conducted a study to identify the follower competence and commitment level by measuring the agreement between leader rating and follower self-rating to achieve the most effective leadership style. The researchers determined that situational leadership principles are valid when leader rating and follower self-rating are consistent. However, when leader rating and follower self-rating are inconsistent, there is no support for Blanchard's suggestion to apply the follower's self-ratings. There is support for using the leader's assessment of the follower's development level to provide the follower with the direction and support needed. Khandekar (2019) argued that Thompson and Glaso (2018) used the measurement of the leader-rating-and-follower-self-rating degree of the agreement to determine the follower development level to study the situation. However, Khandekar (2019) argued that Thompson and Glaso (2018) reinvestigated the style of initiating structure and consideration, but there is a lack of structuring of the situation's concept.

Value of Situational Leadership Theoretical Framework

Research studies have indicated that there is value in situational leadership. Walls (2019) described situational leadership's value by asserting how situational leadership methods can prepare community practitioners with the essential skills they need in the field. Walls (2019) emphasized that with situational leadership, combined strategies have

benefits that consider individual and environmental needs. Walls (2019) asserted that students or followers could optimize their learning experiences and fulfillment within practice contexts with benefits. Walls (2019) stated described the benefits of incorporating the situational leadership model: (a) situational leadership is a flexible leadership approach, (b) there is the encouragement of successful collaboration among the student/follower and teacher/leader, (c) the model is fluid and adaptable to various situations, students, and teachers, (d) there is an assessment of each student's/follower's maturity or development level and allows the teachers/leaders to adjust to the student/follower, and (e) it is a supportive model that continues letting students/followers to practice and gain confidence.

Research indicates that there are advantages to the situational leadership model. Similar to Walls (2019), Nikezić et al. (2016) asserted that there were advantages to the situational leadership model. Nikezić et al. (2016) posited that the situational leadership model is easily applicable in practice, and leaders may use it worldwide. Walls posited that the situational leadership model benefits support practice teachers/leaders devising individual learning strategies, based on the students' variances, for the community nursing program students. The researchers in both studies found benefits and value in the situational leadership model. However, apart from the situational leadership theoretical framework's strengths, there are also weaknesses.

Weaknesses and Strengths of Situational Leadership

Research studies have indicated that there are both weaknesses and strengths to the situational leadership model. Meirovich and Gu (2015) pointed out that there are

weaknesses in the model, while Walls (2019) contended that there are benefits to situational leadership. It is significant to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the model.

Weaknesses. Researchers have noted that there are inconsistencies in the model. Meirovich and Gu (2015) asserted that the most salient inadequacies of the model are (1) there is an inconsistency between SLT® and SLTII®. Meirovich and Gu claimed that Graeff, in 1997, pointed out the inconsistencies in the model. There is a conceptual difference between maturity and development, willingness and commitment, and ability and competence (Meirovich & Gu, 2015). There are substantial variations between identifying employees' development levels in the 1985 version and maturity/readiness levels in the 1977 and 1996/2013 versions (Meirovich & Gu, 2015). However, there is little inconsistency between the earlier version of Hersey and Blanchard's theory in 1977 and more modern versions in 1996 and 2013. Hersey and Blanchard defined readiness levels separately, which was rather basic (Meirovich & Gu, 2015). The third weakness of the model Meirovich and Gu (2015) posited is the LEAD instrument developed by Hersey and Blanchard was not empirically validated. In 1987, Vecchio argued that the instrument had unknown psychometric qualities (Meirovich & Gu, 2015). Researchers most commonly use Stogdill and Coons LBDQ-XII survey instrument developed in 1957 for measuring task and relationship-oriented behavior. The instrument serves a purpose in a more general sense. The instrument also addresses inclusive leader behavior at the macro level, contrasting the LEAD instrument, a customized tool researchers use to describe readiness and style in specific situations (Meirovich & Gu, 2015). Similarly,

Shonhiwa (2016) and Northouse (2022) asserted that those are weaknesses that researchers have discovered regarding the situational leadership model. However, there are other important weaknesses to point out.

Researchers have asserted significant weaknesses in considering the situational leadership model. Murichi and Hazel (2018) argued that the situational approach has a conceptual weakness. It is difficult to develop certain verifiable propositions because it does not allow for strong implications about the causality direction. Additionally, researchers have only conducted a few studies to validate the situational leadership model's propositions (Northouse, 2022; Shonhiwa, 2016). Shonhiwa and Northouse questioned whether situational leadership improves follower or employee performance.

Similarly, there is also a weakness in explaining how to scale follower development levels. Northouse (2022) and Shonhiwa (2016) have pointed out that Blanchard did not explain competence and commitment across the various follower development levels. Northouse and Shonhiwa also criticized the model's prescription regarding the model's aspect where the leader adapts their leadership style to the subordinate development level. They support their claim by providing the example of Vecchio's study in 1987. However, Meirovich and Gu (2015) have questioned Vecchio's study validity and would not support what Northouse and Shonhiwa contend. Northouse and Shonhiwa also asserted that the model is weak because it failed to account for how specific demographic characteristics affect the leader-follower prescription of the model. The authors used Vecchio's study in 1987 as an example to support their claim. Meirovich and Gu would question the study's validity to make the assertion. Finally,

Northouse and Shonhiwa added to Meirovich and Gu's weakness assessment by claiming that the model is not fully practical because it does not entirely discuss one-to-one versus group leadership in an organizational situation. However, Ridlwan et al. (2021) contended that it is a fact that if there is a well-formally organized group, then there must be an effective leader.

Research studies have indicated that situational leaders base their leadership on task and relationship behavior. Pasaribu (2015) asserted that situational leadership involves influencing a group of people to achieve the organization's goals by combining task-relation-oriented behavior under the follower's development level. Furthermore, Medeni (2018) argued that managers might apply the model's basic principles individually and to project teams or consortium members. With the situational leader model, managers may use it as a conceptual framework based on task and relationship behavior (Hakim et al., 2021). Ironically, Northouse (2022) and Shonhiwa (2016) address the model's practicality as a strength because it is easy to understand and intuitively sensible. Researchers may easily apply it to several settings.

Similarly, Walls (2019) agreed that the situational leadership model had value because Walls found it practical. Walls (2019) asserted that the model is fluid and may be adaptable to various situations. Thus, it is valid to emphasize the strengths of the situational leadership model.

Strengths. Apart from weaknesses in the situational leadership theoretical framework, there are also strengths. Walls (2019) asserted that there were five advantages that Northouse (2022) and Shonhiwa (2016) considered as strengths of the situational

leadership model. The authors agree that the model has several strengths, particularly for practitioners (Northouse, 2022; Shonhiwa, 2016; Walls, 2019). Corporation leaders perceive the model as a credible source for training people to become effective leaders (Northouse, 2022; Shonhiwa, 2016).

Furthermore, all authors contended that the model is indeed practical. However, the situational leadership approach is not entirely practical because it does not address leaders applying the model in a group setting (Northouse, 2022; Shonhiwa, 2016). Northouse, Shonhiwa, and Walls agreed that the model has prescriptive value, the strength of leader flexibility, can help subordinates gain new skills confidence, and deserve the leader's direction or support concerning the follower's needs to improve their follower performance. Improved follower performance may lead to improved organizational performance.

Current Research on Situational Leadership and Employee Performance

Organizational leaders center themselves on employee performance to have successful organizations. Employee performance encompasses how employees carry out their responsibilities and duties and complete their required tasks. Employee performance includes the quality and effectiveness of how an employee performs (Lubis et al., 2022; Rahadiyan et al., 2019). Leadership style is one of the factors that influence employee performance. Researchers have discussed leadership styles and employee performance in various research studies (Ghazzawi et al., 2017). Researchers have indicated a significant influence of leadership style on employee performance (Farhani, 2019; Rahmat et al., 2019). Research findings have indicated that organizations must focus on employee

performance to thrive in business (Mkheimer, 2018). Therefore, discussing the value of situational leadership styles and employee performance is essential. The following subsections are on current research on situational leadership and the impact on employee performance and situational leadership's effect on employee performance with intervening variables.

Situational Leadership and Its Impact on Employee Performance

Situational leaders must have employee development needs evaluation skills. In situational leadership, an effective leader must be a good evaluator. The leader evaluates the employee's needs and the situation's demands and adapts the leadership style to meet those demands (Iqbal et al., 2015). Rahmat et al. (2019) asserted that leaders use indicators with the situational leadership approach. According to Schuetz (2016), six critical factors may influence leader effectiveness: perceptual precision, leader's background, prior involvement and character, supervisor's expectations and style, follower's background, maturity, disposition, understanding of the task, and peer expectations. Furthermore, Schuetz asserted that it is essential that leaders consider both aspects of themselves and the entire leadership situation and understand that apart from being diagnosticians and having flexibility (Ayaz et al., 2021), having patience is also vital. The leaders are attentive to the situation and adapt their style accordingly.

When leaders are attentive and have a precise perception of the situation, they are also aware of the employee's needs. Leaders may use different leadership styles to fit the employee's needs based on direction amount, empowerment, and decision-making power (Iqbal et al., 2015). Employee performance may be affected by the lack of a leader

providing proper direction, support, and the application of strategic handling of daily tasks. Therefore, leaders must effectively choose one of the four situational leadership styles when determining the best style for their needs.

Research findings have indicated the need and value for all four situational leadership styles concerning employee performance. Study findings indicated that all four situational leadership styles are needed. When the leaders adapt effective situational leadership styles for the specific employee, employee performance is enhanced (Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). Therefore, there is no one leadership style more significant than another. All four leadership styles are significant in adapting effective situational leadership concerning employee performance.

Quantitative research studies have indicated a correlation between effective situational leadership styles and employee performance. Researchers conducted a study in Indonesia where situational leadership significantly affects employee sales performance at a bank (Ferdianto et al., 2019). Similarly, researchers conducted a study in North Lebanon that revealed a positive relationship between situational leadership and employee productivity (Ghazzawi et al., 2017). Ghazzawi et al., 2017 emphasized Hersey and Blanchard's assertion that no unique leadership style is appropriate for all situations. A leader fulfilling a follower's needs will allow for job satisfaction and, in turn, positively affect employee productivity.

Similarly, researchers conducted a study at a developer company in East Java. They revealed that implementing effective situational leadership styles affected employee

performance through job satisfaction (Rahadiyan et al., 2019). Employees having job satisfaction also led to enhanced employee performance.

Comparably, a study in Indonesia indicated that applying effective situational leadership styles enhanced employee performance. Researchers surveyed an Indonesian construction company. The findings revealed that the project manager adjusting the situational leadership style to the specific employee and situation enhanced the relationship between the leader and the employee (Setiawan et al., 2019). The effective situational leadership style adjustment improved the task at hand and enhanced the employee's performance. The outcome may enhance the company's overall performance (Setiawan et al., 2019). Similar to a study where the researchers completed the study in a North Sumatra province, effective situational leadership styles significantly correlated with organizational culture, considerably affecting the private vocational training institutions (Pasaribu, 2015). Therefore, applying effective situational leadership styles may enhance employee performance. Employees improving their performance may also enhance the company's organizational performance. Researchers have asserted that situational leadership is a factor that drives the success of employees' performance because if employees find comfort with their leader, they will discover loyalty to the organization. Employees will not hesitate to complete their tasks and responsibilities (Nuryanti & Rahmawati, 2016). Thereby, there also may be an organizational performance improvement.

Intervening Variables in the Relationship Between Situational Leadership and Employee Performance

Research findings have indicated that situational leadership has affected employee performance with intervening variables. One study's findings showed that situational leadership positively and significantly impacted employees' performance through job satisfaction (Setyorini et al., 2018). Through leaders utilizing effective situational leadership skills, employees attain job satisfaction. When employees achieve job satisfaction, employees enhance their performance.

Similar to another study conducted in Indonesia, leaders implemented situational leadership styles. Employees were motivated by their work, and leaders could see its reflection. Therefore, the leaders compensated the employees for their work (Selviasari, 2019). When the leader significantly compensated the employees, employees enhanced their job performances.

There have been studies with leaders using situational leadership with another variable that has positively impacted employee performance through an intervening variable. For example, researchers studied developer companies in East Java, Indonesia, where motivation and leaders implementing effective situational leadership styles positively affected employee performance through work satisfaction (Rahadiyan et al., 2019). Leaders were using effective situational leadership styles and situational motivation, which allowed employees to be satisfied with their jobs. In turn, the employees improve their job performance. Similarly, researchers studied situational leadership and work ethics on employee performance through the intervening variable of

organizational climate (Tangdigling et al., 2019). They found that situational leadership and work ethics positively and significantly affected the corporate environment and positively impacted employee performance. There also have been studies with more than one intervening variable. In a similar study, researchers determined that situational leadership significantly positively affected employee performance through the intervening variables of corporate and organizational working citizen behavior (Hartono et al., 2018). Furthermore, research studies have indicated that effective situational leadership styles may enhance employee performance through intervening variables.

Supportive Research on Situational Leadership in Other Contexts

Apart from employee performance, researchers have conducted studies encompassing situational leadership in other contexts. In many studies, research findings have revealed that there has been a positive impact on situational leadership in different contexts outside of its effect on employee performance. Research findings have indicated that situational leadership has impacted organizational performances, educational organizations, health and management sectors, and government and politics.

Situational Leadership and Organizational Performance

Research has indicated that leadership may impact organizational performance. Leadership style influences corporate culture and sequentially affects organizational performance (Al Khajeh, 2018). Leadership has become the most extensively studied facet of organizational performance. Several theories focus on the principles, styles, and the situational leadership model. Current leadership theories have classifications of leaders based on how they motivate or influence the employee to improve performance to

accomplish organizational visions and goals. Leaders' importance and the influence of leadership styles are pertinent to organizational performance and success (Al Khajeh, 2018; Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016). Researchers claimed that leaders have a substantial, direct cause-and-effect relationship with an organization's efficiency, success, or performance by influencing an employee's performance (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018; Mkheimer, 2018). Furthermore, researchers have shown a strong positive impact of leadership style on employee performance, performance, and success (Farhani, 2019; Murichi & Hazel, 2018). Therefore, it is critical to understand leadership styles and their significance to organizational performance.

With their leadership style, influential leaders may motivate employees to improve work performance to attain a lasting competitive advantage for successful organizational performance. Leadership style may also affect the employee's trust and satisfaction with the leader (Sharma et al., 2019). If an employee trusts his leader, the employee may feel comfortable, have job satisfaction with the leader, and improve job performance, which may enhance organizational performance.

With the situational leadership approach, there is no best leadership approach appropriate for every situation. Therefore, leaders should adopt a style that will have an optimum positive effect on the employee's performance. With improved performance, employee motivation, continuous growth in productivity, accomplishing the company's goals, attaining job fulfillment and career enhancement, and increased organizational performance, stakeholders may achieve satisfaction (Ridlwan et al., 2021). Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) asserted that it is essential to grasp the situational key elements of task

behavior in an organizational environment, the leader's guidance and amount, relationship behavior, the total emotional and social support the leader provides, and follower readiness and development. Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) also contended that organizations should support and develop their leaders with proficiencies, values, competencies, and encouragement to pursue improvements. Organizational superior leaders may support inferior leaders by providing effective situational leadership training, a mentoring mechanism, and ways to show appreciation when leaders complete a job well done.

Furthermore, a situational leader who has adapted their leadership style to organizational elements, characteristics, and goals may accomplish efficiency or effectiveness (Nikezić et al., 2016). Like Nikezić et al.'s claim, Woods (2019) asserted that effective leaders could adapt their leadership in congruence with the required organizational goals and objectives. Apart from being flexible and engaging in task and relation behaviors, an effective leader should understand the situation and rationalize the situation to respond effectively to organizational goals. Leaders who apply the effective situational approach will provide an efficient mechanism to identify company talent and warrant a promotion for demonstrating effective organizational leadership.

Many researchers have examined the impact of leadership styles on organizational performance in various contexts. Murichi and Hazel (2018) asserted that in Swarup's study findings in 2013 concerning IT organizations, situational leadership had a significant positive impact on organizational performance. Swarup's results revealed that situational leadership was a stronger predictor of organizational performance,

satisfaction, and commitment (Murichi & Hazel, 2018). In Murichi and Hazel's (2018) study, the researchers determined a positive and significant effect on Nairobi commercial banks' organizational performance. With the study's findings, the researchers determined that the delegating, supporting, and coaching styles significantly impacted organizational performance.

Research has indicated a correlation between situational leadership and organizational commitment. Researchers have asserted a positive connection between situational leadership styles and affective organizational commitment (da Silva et al., 2019). In their study, da Silva et al. (2019) asserted that organizational commitment is essential to the organization and organizational performance for employee retention and engagement. Leaders must engage with employees to excite their organization's responsibility, which may affect organizational performance.

Organizational culture may impact organizational performance. Organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) may impact organizational culture. Organizational culture is an extra-role organizational member behavior that may improve organizational performance (Alghamdi, 2018). Furthermore, leadership styles are essential in creating a vibrant organizational culture (Basit et al., 2017). Pasaribu (2015) asserted that leaders might consider organizational culture an avenue to make, control, guide, and shape a productive work attitude that may affect organizational productivity. However, Reza et al. (2018) conducted a study in Indonesia where they found that organizational culture has an insignificant influence on employee performance through work motivation in the millennial generation, although situational leadership

significantly influenced employee performance and work motivation in the millennial generation. Wuryani et al. (2021) and Achmad (2021) studied situational leadership styles and work motivation on employee performance. Both leadership styles and motivation significantly influence employee performance. However, Pasaribu (2015) conducted a study where the researcher determined that situational leadership correlated to organizational culture. Situational leadership, organizational culture, and human resource management strategies (Widyadharma et al., 2020; Yumiarti & Andika, 2022) significantly improved the training institutions' productivity.

Research has indicated that situational leadership has also impacted organizational citizen behavior. Similar to Alghamdi's (2018) claim, Solihin and Manurung (2020) and Mustofa and Muafi (2021) asserted that OCB might positively impact organizational performance. Solihin and Manurung (2020) posited that organizational citizenship behavior is discretionary, not part of the job requirement, contributes to the workplace's psychological and social ambiance, and promotes an effectively functioning organization. Successful organizations have employees who will go above and perform beyond expectations (Solihin & Manurung, 2020). Research has indicated that situational leadership significantly positively affects organizational citizenship behavior (Solihin & Manurung, 2020). With situational leadership having a significant positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior, organizational performance may also be improved. Situational leadership has also impacted an array of organizations, including educational organizations.

Situational Leadership and Academic Organizations

Situational leadership has also been influential in educational organizations. A kindergarten headmaster using effective situational leadership styles in an academic environment significantly predicted kindergarten teachers' employee performance (Rozalena et al., 2018). The teacher may also play a leader's role in education, whereas students play the followers' role.

Many researchers have applied situational leadership to teachers' performance. Ruslan et al. (2020) found that the principal's, the school's highest-ranking administrator (Cuaresma-Escobar, 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2018), choice of situational leadership style affects the teacher's performance. Hidayat et al. (2020) found a significant positive correlation between situational leadership and teacher productivity. Research has shown that there has been a positive correlation between effective situational leadership styles and teachers' motivation for achievement (Mudiyantun, 2019; Zohair et al., 2021). Additionally, research has demonstrated that using situational leadership can improve a teacher's commitment to an organization (Suhardi et al., 2019). Raza and Sikandar (2018) contended that when a teacher uses an effective situational leadership style, the students' performances improve. In health science, researchers have found that when teachers employ effective situational leadership styles, students become more confident and committed to health practice (Kuivila et al., 2020). Therefore, situational leadership is prominent in academic organizations.

Situational Leadership in Management

Researchers contend that managers may also incorporate situational leadership in management. Stręk (2018) asserted that leaders might use the four types of management styles and apply them to the followers' four stages of the manager's development level. Situational leadership has added value to various management sectors. In human and robot resource management and project management, leaders adapted the situational leadership model to suggest a framework and develop new perspectives considering the latest developments and applications in artificial intelligence (Medeni, 2018). Medeni argued that the model's basic principles might apply to individuals.

Situational leadership has also added value to lean manufacturing implementation to support business sustainability. Tortorella and Fogliatto (2017) conducted a qualitative study to interview the company leaders to diagnose their suitability using the situational leadership model alongside its lean manufacturing implementation needs. The researchers found that using the situational leadership model in lean manufacturing implementation. Company leaders may identify lean manufacturing implementation stages that they poorly lead with current leadership styles, anticipate problems, and develop strategies to mitigate them (Tortorella & Fogliatto, 2017).

Situational Leadership in Health Care

Situational leadership has also been prominent in the health care industry. Health care organizational leaders have different responsibilities and tasks; one is dealing with continuous change, staff relations, and the ability to achieve targets (Alsaqqa, 2020). For this reason, situational leadership is critical in health care. Being flexible and adaptable to

different situations is crucial. Researchers consider situational leadership relevant to the health care industry as there are clear standards for supervisor-subordinate behaviors and a distinct authority hierarchy (Alsaqqa, 2020). Furthermore, a more comprehensive and flexible leadership style is needed because our world is continuously evolving, such as in our recent pandemic.

Mainly, situational leadership has positively impacted nurses and doctors in hospitals. Researchers considered that the performances and overall working environments of nurses, the most significant human resource element in health organizations, may be improved and can achieve health care organizational goals, as situational leadership is adaptive (Alrobai, 2020; Heryyanoor et al., 2020). Therefore, it is critical for nurse leaders to employ flexible leadership, as leadership style is a crucial aspect affecting burnout levels and job satisfaction among qualified nurses. Researchers have also examined the predominant situational leadership used by head nurses in government and private hospitals and found that both government and private hospital head nurses use the delegating style (Sudrajat et al., 2020). Apart from nurses, doctors have also found situational leadership to be very effective in hospital settings.

Doctors' performance is vital in accomplishing a hospital's mission and vision. Researchers have found that situational leadership has a positive and significant impact on the performance of general practitioners (Harsono et al., 2021). They have also found that situational leadership is efficient to use in a medical context with doctors, particularly newly minted interns and experienced fellows (Stoller, 2020). Effective

health care leadership is crucial to physicians, health care professionals, and our health care industry, both at the executive and bedside levels.

Situational Leadership in Government and Politics

Researchers have emphasized the value of situational leadership in government and politics. Situational leadership has been valuable to several governmental establishments, organizations, and political parties (Stręk, 2018; Wanyama et al., 2016). Researchers have also studied situational leadership and its impact on employee performance in government agencies (Basit et al., 2017). Therefore, researchers have found situational leadership practical to businesses and in various contexts if there is a leader and a follower.

Alternate Theories

There are many alternate theories of situational leadership to consider. Many researchers have researched seminal leadership theories. Scholars have described current leadership theories as leaders based on traits or how leaders use influence or power to accomplish organizational goals (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Trait-based leaders may use Lewin's leadership styles. However, when there is an exchange of power and using it to secure outcomes, leaders may be transactional and transformational apart from situational leaders.

Lewin's Leadership Style

Lewin's leadership encompasses three leadership styles: democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire. Lewin developed the three leadership styles in 1939 (Basit et al., 2017). Research has shown that Lewin's leadership style has significantly influenced employee

performance (Basit et al., 2017). Discussing the three different leadership styles within Lewin's leadership styles is pertinent.

Laissez-Faire Leadership. The first leadership style, laissez-faire, requires that leaders are comfortable and confident with their followers. The laissez-faire or French for *leave it be*, also known as the *hands-off* (Basit et al., 2017) leadership style, is one of the least people-concerned leadership styles. The leadership style encompasses the idea of allowing subordinates to work on their own. Research has indicated that there may be unproductiveness, ineffectiveness, and dissatisfaction (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Leaders avoid making decisions. The leadership style is appropriate when team members comprehend their obligations and have strong analytical skills (Basit et al., 2017). The leadership style is most effective when team members are highly skilled, trustworthy, and capable of taking on their responsibilities (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). However, the leadership style may negatively affect employees if they do not have the skills, experience, or knowledge to do their work or perform poorly with time management. To implement this leadership style, leaders must be very confident in their team members.

Democratic Leadership. Democratic leadership is known as the participative leadership style. In democratic leadership, leaders consistently influence followers with the fundamentals of democratic principles and processes, such as equal participation and inclusiveness, encouraging group decisions and discussions (Basit et al., 2017; Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). The leaders communicate with their employees, inform them of anything affecting their work, and encourage them to participate in problem-solving. Leaders promote the participation of subordinates in problem-solving.

However, there are also drawbacks to democratic leadership: competency, crisis, consensus, pseudo-participation, and adherence. Overcoming weaknesses allows organizations to have employees with improved performance and feel empowered, creative, and initiative participation with employee retention that may qualify for a healthier future with the organization (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). The leaders encourage and invite team members to play a significant role in decision-making. Still, ultimately, the power relies on the leaders' hands.

Autocratic Leadership. In autocratic or authoritarian leadership, the primary decision-makers tell their subordinates what to do. The leaders retain power and exclusively make decisions (Basit et al., 2017). Leaders focus on the traditional premise that leaders are good managers who direct and control people. In this style of leadership, leaders expect followers to follow their orders. However, followers may not agree or have received any explanation. With situational leadership, leaders are the most directive in the matching of S1 and D1. They have the most control over the situational leadership style and follower development level matches. In autocratic leadership, leaders do not trust their employees and do not ask for employees' input. As a result, there is usually low employee morale, absenteeism, and high turnover (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). However, research has indicated that there are times when autocratic leadership can be valuable (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). The leadership style may be effective when new and untrained employees have time constraints to make decisions or managers ineffectively manage the workplace.

Autocratic leadership may not be the best option for every situation. Still, it may be effective and beneficial in cases where followers need a great deal of direction and supervision and maintain a sense of order and rules strictly enforced. Laissez-fair leadership may be helpful in groups with highly qualified experts. However, it may lead to a lack of motivation and poorly defined roles. Finally, democratic leadership or participative leadership is focused on the follower. It is a practical approach to maintaining a relationship with others by supporting one another.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership encompasses the logic of exchanging promises of rewards and benefits of leaders to followers to promote their fulfillment of agreements. The leaders focus on the exchanges between themselves and their followers designed to benefit themselves and their followers (Bass, 1985; Weber, 1947). The exchanges allow leaders to achieve their performance goals, complete the required tasks, and motivate followers through an agreement to achieve established goals. The exchange process in transactional leadership results in follower compliance with leader requests. However, still, it is unlikely to produce excitement and commitment to a task objective. Instead, the leader focuses on having followers perform required tasks to reach organizational goals (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Burns (1978) described transactional leadership as how leaders and followers achieve individual gains by providing incentives or gratification exchanges.

Scholars have critiqued transactional leadership. Benefits associated with transactional leadership include employees' clearly defined roles and responsibilities,

leaders judging employees on performance, and employees thriving due to external rewards or incentives (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Employees clearly understand what they must do and what they will receive in exchange. The downside of transactional leadership is followers may have short-term lived exchanges with the transactional leader (Burns, 1978). As a result, followers do little to improve their job satisfaction. Temporary gratification exchanges can often create resentment between participants, suppressing employees' morale and leading to organizational turnover. Scholars also criticize transactional leadership theory because its one-size-fits-all approach to leadership disregards contextual and situational circumstances related to organizational challenges.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is the most studied and debated leadership theory. Burns (1978) developed the transformational leadership style and later expanded by Bass (1985) to help employees achieve their goals by building commitment. It encompasses motivations and values in measuring how leaders approach power. Transformational leaders focus on inspiring followers through their qualities (Basit et al., 2017). Burns (1978) identified a transformational leader as one who raises followers' awareness about the value and significance of desired goals and the methods of reaching those goals. With transformational leadership, followers and leaders encourage each other to higher levels of morality and motivation (Christie et al., 2019). Transformational leadership motivates followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values, encouraging employees to perform beyond expectations, and transforming the individuals and the organization (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Transformational leadership is a leadership approach

where leaders develop a positive relationship with their followers to build a strong relationship with them, improve their performance, and improve organizational performance. Transformational leaders focus on the followers, looking past their own needs and focusing on the group's best interest as a whole.

Transformational leaders are emotionally aware, passionate, motivated, and energetic. Transformational leadership has four elements: charismatic, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Charisma includes attributes of the leader with a mission of instilling pride in the group. An inspirational leader encompasses a leader setting high standards and looks to increase awareness of the desired goals. Individual stimulation is when a leader stimulates followers by challenging new ideas and breaking away from their old ways. In the last element, individual consideration, the leader cultivates the followers by coaching and mentoring them individually, paying attention to their concerns.

Scholars have critiqued transformational leadership. Research findings have shown that transformational leadership has positively impacted followers and organizational performance. However, scholars have criticized transformational leadership (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Scholars have suggested that the theory lacked adequate identification of situational and context variables on leadership effectiveness.

Transition

Leadership styles can impact employee performance, which can, in turn, affect business profitability. Therefore, further examining the relationship between flexible and

effective situational leadership styles and employee performance from an employee's perspective is essential. This quantitative correlational study aimed to examine the relationship between situational leadership styles' flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance from an employee's perspective. I have used a hierarchical multiple linear regression model to analyze the relationship between situational leadership styles and employee performance. The situational leadership model formed the theoretical framework for the study. According to the professional and academic literature review, situational leadership styles impact employee performance, and leaders need to use all four leadership styles effectively and flexibly to have effective situational leadership.

The completed section, Section 1, included the foundation of the study. Section 2 proceeds with the project section. Section 2 consists of the following topics: the restatement of the purpose, the role of the researcher in the data collection process, the participants in the quantitative study, the research method that I applied in the study, research design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection technique, data analysis, study validity, and the transition and summary. Following Section 2 will be Section 3, consisting of the following topics: the presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and further research, reflections, and conclusions.

Section 2: The Project

The situational leadership model encompasses a leader's ability to adjust their leadership style according to the follower's development level and situation to accomplish the task at hand or objective. In this section, I discuss the research method and design I used to conduct this quantitative correlational study to determine the relationship between situational leadership styles and employee performance. The sections include the following: (a) the purpose statement, (b) the role of the researcher, (c) the description of the participants, (d) the research method, (e) research design, (f) population and sampling technique, (g) ethical research considerations, (h) data collection methods, and (i) examination of the data and validity. I conclude this section with a transition and summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The targeted population consisted of nonunion employees with no direct reports of a single optical communications technology company with branches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia. The leading independent variables were (a) situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and (b) situational leadership style (S1–S4) effectiveness. The covariates were employee (a) gender, (b) job location, and (c) employee tenure. The dependent variable was employee performance. The implications for positive social

change include providing guidance that leaders can use to adapt flexible and effective situational leadership styles to meet employee needs, thereby enhancing employees' work experience to improve their work performances. Business leaders may be able to reach their desired goals and provide better jobs in the community, creating an opportunity for a better quality of life and economic stability for employees and their families.

Role of the Researcher

In conducting this quantitative correlational study, I strove to collect the data in an ethical, unbiased manner. Although bias can be significantly reduced, there still was a chance of confirmation bias, when data analysis is conducted in a way that supports one's prior beliefs or confirms a desired position (Simon & Goes, 2018). Therefore, it was essential that, in my role as the researcher, I collect and analyze data and present the findings in an unbiased and ethical manner (see Simon & Goes, 2018). In correlational studies, the researcher collects the data without regard to the participants or themselves (Simon & Goes, 2018). Therefore, I sought to collect and analyze the data and present conclusions impartially in an unbiased, ethical manner. I had no direct or personal relationships with any study participants. Although I currently work at a technological company in NJ, I was not influenced by my current employment location or status; neither created bias or affected my impartiality or analysis of the findings.

I conducted my research study in an ethical way. Resnik (2018) asserted the significance of research ethics as protecting people. Ethical research encompasses trust, informed consent and purpose, confidentiality, risk minimizations, risks and benefits, protection of vulnerable subjects, experimental design, research integrity, and research

oversight (Resnik, 2018). I performed the research ethically and ensured voluntary informed consent, purpose, and participant confidentiality. I also informed participants of their protection and research integrity and explained the oversight.

As the researcher, it was essential that I heed ethical standards when conducting the study. The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1979) established protocols in the *Belmont Report* involving research principles and ethics concerning human subjects. The three fundamental principles include (a) respect for human subjects; (b) safeguards to prevent harm to participants, including maximizing benefits and minimizing risks for participants; and (c) equal delivery of justice to research participants. I complied with *Belmont Report*, Walden University Institutional Review Board (approval number-11-04-22-0982833), and the American Psychological Association ethical protocols.

Participants

I took care when selecting the study's participants. I ensured that the population sample aligned with the overarching research question (Majid, 2018). My research question encompassed flexible and effective situational leadership style (S1–S4) and employee performance from an employee's perspective while controlling for gender, job location, and tenure. Therefore, the criteria to ensure that the participants represented the target population was the following: nonunion employees, with no direct reports, of a single optical communications technology company with branches located in Massachusetts, Connecticut, NJ, and Georgia.

My strategy to gain access to participants included contacting the human resources director and informing her of my study purpose and ethics. Via a conference call, I discussed the study purpose and criteria for participants. The human resources director knew of my study and its purpose. Upon proposal approval, the director instructed me to provide her with a sample consent form to present to the participants to cover the ethics, such as participant confidentiality and anonymity. After obtaining Walden University Institutional Review Board approval (approval no. 11-04-22-0982833), I received authorization from the organization's director to proceed with the study. It was essential that I, as the researcher, elicit the participants' trust by conveying the nature of the voluntary participation, provisions for anonymity and confidentiality within the company, and the study purpose to the study participants (see Pietilä et al., 2020). The director was then able to provide the invitation email (see Appendix A) with the link to consent forms and surveys to the non-union employees, with no direct reports, and on the company's U.S.-based email list. Upon study completion, I will provide the director with a summary of findings and conclusions. The director can then make the summary available to the participants.

Research Method

I chose the quantitative method for the study. Quantitative researchers analyze relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2019); employ objective measures such as surveys, tests, and questionnaires; and use statistical and numerical data analysis techniques to describe, predict, or control variables of interest (Taguchi, 2018). To analyze data, they use two primary methods: descriptive and inferential statistics

(Taguchi, 2018). Descriptive statistics summarize the characteristics and provide information about the distribution of a data set, including frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation (Taguchi, 2018). Inferential statistics help the researcher make predictions based on the data and generalize the data involving statistical techniques such as t-tests, correlation, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and regression (Taguchi, 2018). In adapting the predictive approach, the researcher preselects variables that serve as measurable constructs (Taguchi, 2018). Thus, the quantitative method was appropriate for the study because it features probability sampling techniques to generalize results to a wider population and test causal relationships between variables (McLeod, 2019). In contrast, qualitative research does not involve predetermined variables; it is exploratory in nature.

The qualitative method is appropriate when the researcher needs to understand the studied phenomenon and explore business practices and people's living experiences in their real-world roles (Yin, 2016). The researcher focuses on gaining an understanding of a phenomenon through interviews, observations, field notes, and other methods (Taguchi, 2018). The researcher may analyze the data using grounded theory or thematic analysis (McLeod, 2019). A mixed-methods approach combines qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analytical procedures (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). Researchers use inductive and deductive reasoning and offset the limitations of exclusively quantitative and qualitative research through a complementary approach that strengthens each data type through data integration, which may occur during data collection, analysis, or results in presentation (Harvard Catalyst, 2022; Taguchi, 2018). It

allows the researcher to test theories or integrate a specific theoretical perspective while exploring a clearer sense of a process or experience (Taguchi, 2018). Therefore, the qualitative and mixed-method approaches are inappropriate for the proposed study.

Research Design

I chose the correlational and regression design for the proposed study. Correlational design is associated with a researcher describing and measuring the relationship between two or more variables with no influence from extraneous variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). With the correlational design, the researcher can determine the degree, strength, and relationship type between the variables. The variables a researcher investigates in a correlational study are not manipulated and do not seek to determine cause and effect but describe or predict relationships (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The findings from correlational studies can be expressed using statistics: positive correlation, negative correlation, and no correlation (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Additionally, the hierarchical multiple linear statistical regression technique is appropriate for the study because a key objective is to predict the relationship between predictor variables—situational leadership styles flexibility and effectiveness, while controlling for employee gender, job location, tenure— and a dependent variable, employee performance. Table 2 indicates the categorical control variables and their respective dummy variables.

Table 2

Categorical Control Variables and Their Dummy Variables

Categorical variable	Scale of measurement	Number of categories	Number of dummy variables
Gender	Nominal	Two (Male and Female)	One = Female *Male* is the reference category
Job location	Nominal	Four (CT, MA, NJ, and GA)	Three = CT, MA, and NJ *GA* is the reference category
Employee tenure	Ordinal	Five (0– < 1yr, 1yr – <5 yrs, 5 yrs– <10 yrs, 10 yrs – <20 yrs, and ≥20 yrs)	Four = 0 – < 1yr, 1yr – <5 yrs, 5 yrs– <10 yrs, and 10 yrs – <20 yrs *≥20 yrs* is the reference category

Other designs, such as experimental and quasi-experimental, can be used when the researcher seeks to evaluate a degree of cause and effect (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019; Moss et al., 2019; Saunders et al., 2019). A researcher may use the quasi-experimental design to determine the causal impact of one variable on another, testing the causal hypotheses while lacking the random assignment element (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019; Gopalan et al., 2020; Moss et al., 2019). Quasi-experimental research designs use non-experimental variation in the main independent variable of interest and are typically conducted in a setting where it is not logistically practicable nor ethical to conduct a randomized controlled trial and is therefore typically used in a health care setting (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Alternatively, a researcher can use the experimental design to examine the causal relationships under highly controlled conditions (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). With experimental designs, the researcher can determine a cause-and-effect relationship between an intervention (the cause) and the study result (the effect)

(Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The study focused on recognizing an explanatory relationship; thus, the experimental and quasi-experimental designs are inappropriate for the proposed study.

Population and Sampling

The quantitative correlational study aimed to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance from an employee's perspective in an optical communications technological company while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The population aligned with the overarching research questions. The targeted population consisted of non-union employees, with no direct reports, of a single optical communications technology company with branches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia.

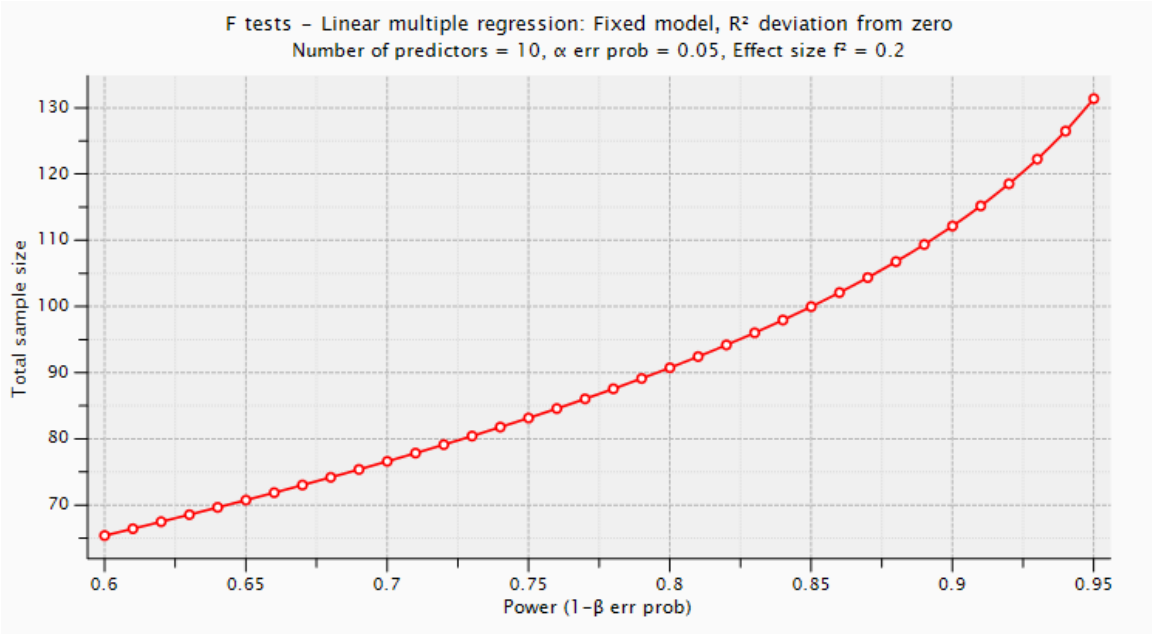
A sample is a particular group that represents the entire population. There are two major categories of sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Each population member has a fair and equal selection opportunity in probability sampling, contrary to non-probability sampling (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Therefore, with probability sampling, the results are unbiased. However, probability sampling may be tedious and time-consuming, especially when creating larger samples (Glen, 2021). Non-probability sampling does not involve a random process for selecting participants. Therefore, the population members do not have an equal opportunity to be selected for the study, and the results are more or less biased. There is the chance that, in many cases, some members of the population have no opportunity to be selected at all.

Probability sampling or random sampling is conclusive, while non-parametric sampling is exploratory. Probability sampling is ideal for quantitative research because the results may be generalized to the larger population. In contrast, nonprobability samples cannot be generalized to the larger population (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Probabilistic sampling includes simple random, stratified, systemic, and cluster sampling (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Non-probabilistic or non-random sampling includes convenience, purposive, quota, and snowball sampling (Etikan & Bala, 2017). As a quantitative researcher who wants each population subject to get an equal chance in the selection, free from bias, and be inferred to the larger population, I have used the probabilistic simple random sampling method for my quantitative study.

I used G*Power, a statistical software that quantitative researchers use to conduct an a priori sample size analysis (Faul et al., 2007; Faul et al., 2009). Using G*Power version 3.1.9.7 software, I ran a power analysis to determine the appropriate sample size for the study. With an a priori analysis, assuming a medium effect size ($f^2 = .20$) (Cohen, 1988), $\alpha = .05$, two independent variables and eight covariates, I identified that a minimum sample size of 91 participants is required to achieve a power of .80. Increasing the sample size to 172 will increase the power to .99. Therefore, I sought between 91 and 172 participants for the study (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Power as a Function of the Total Sample Size



Ethical Research

Before proceeding with data collection, I obtained Walden University's Institutional Review Board approval (approval no. 11-04-22-0982833). Then, I commenced the data collection with a simple random sample drawn from a single technological company with branches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia, who were non-union employees with no direct reports. Finally, I provided the participants with an informed consent form through Survey Monkey they read before proceeding with the survey questions.

In the consent form through Survey Monkey, the participant was able to read the purpose of the study, the instructions, their role as a participant in the study, and contact information on how they may communicate with me. Before participating in the study

and completing the questionnaires, the consent form notified the participants, advising them that they may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and instructions on how to withdraw from the study. To ensure that the ethical protection of the participants is adequate, as a researcher, I followed the protocols of the *Belmont Report* (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979) within the basic principles of the ethics of research related to the respects of persons, beneficence, and justice.

Since the early 1980s, the ethics code of the American Psychological Association has been crucial in the psychological and educational sciences (Kaiser, 2019). For this quantitative study, the ethical norms included honesty requirements, informed consent requirements, anonymity and data storage, the participant's right to access their data and results, and the duty of confidentiality for all research participants (Kaiser, 2019). During this study, the names of the participants and the organization remained anonymous to protect confidentiality of the participants and the organization. Before submitting the final study, reviewing the final study, confirming anonymity for participants and the company has secured confidentiality.

Securely, I collected and will continue to store raw data through Excel and SPSS data sets for a total of 5 years to ensure participant confidentiality. I have used the raw data as the SPSS input for the correlational study. Additionally, I stored the files in a password-protected computer and a password-protected external hard drive to which only I will have access. SurveyMonkey securely stores responses in the System and Organization Controls (SOC), two data centers that adhere to security and technical best

practices (SurveyMonkey, 2021). SurveyMonkey collects data transmitted over a secure HTTPS connection. User logins are protected through Transport Layer Security data encryption and protocols (Survey Monkey, 2021). Data at rest, the data that is stored in Survey Monkey, is also encrypted through standard encryption algorithms and strength (SurveyMonkey, 2021). Upon conclusion of the 5 years, I will destroy all data, including the external hard drive, a password-protected computer, and all hard copies of existing data. Once my study is complete and approved, I will provide a one-to-two-page summary of the research results to the company with all the branches participating so that they may distribute the results and summary to the interested participants and leaders of the study.

Data Collection—Instrumentation

In the Data Collection section, I describe each instrument's purpose, intended populations, scales, scoring process, and the time the participants needed to complete the questionnaires. I also discuss the reliability and validity of the instruments. I include the details of the reliability measures employed and the instrument's content and construct validity.

I used the Leader Behavior Analysis II® (LBAII®) in this study. The LBAII® is an instrument to measure both the perceptions of self and others of leader flexibility. The LBAII® also measures the leader's effectiveness in choosing an appropriate situational leadership style (S1– S4, the independent variables) that matches the follower/employee/direct report development level (Zigarmi et al., 1997). For this study, I used the LBAII®-Other measuring tool. Employees used their perceptions of how their

leaders apply situational leadership styles (S1– S4) to specific situations (follower development level). I also used the Employee Job Performance (EJP) Self Questionnaire. Employees completed a self-assessment of their job performance to address the dependent variable, employee performance. The EJP Questionnaire was appropriate for this study because it encompassed employee task/job time, task/job quantity or productivity, task/job quality, the components of employee job performance, and the study's dependent variable.

Leader Behavior Analysis II®-Other

The LBAII® stems from the work of Hersey and Blanchard. When the authors diverged, the SLII® model changed in 1984 – 85 (Zigarmi et al., 1997). The authors used the exact format of the LBA® when writing the LBAII® the same year the SLII® model was changed. There is unity in the model with the changes made as described by Blanchard et al. (1985).

An effective situational leader must diagnose the employee's development level specific to a task or goal. Furthermore, the effective situational leader must be flexible in adapting their leadership style according to the employee's development level. Therefore, the LBAII® tool has two primary scores: the flexibility score and the effectiveness score.

Flexibility score

The flexibility score is a numerical indicator of how frequently the participant selected a different style of their leader (S1– S4) to solve the 20 questions in the LBAII® (Zigarmi et al., 1997). Suppose a respondent frequents their leader a particular style in the 20 situations. In that case, it will be evident that there is less flexibility. Suppose the

participant assesses that their leader flexes in choosing the leadership style by evenly selecting all four SLII® styles. In that case, the score will have higher flexibility. The flexibility score is a ratio scale of measurement raining from 0-30, where a 0-13 indicates a low leadership style flexibility (Zigarmi et al., 1997). A score of 14-20 suggests that the leader had a normal leadership style flexibility, and a score of 21-30 indicates that a leader has a high leadership style flexibility (Zigarmi et al., 1997). The mean is a score of 17. If a participant scored their leader a 14, their leader was not very flexible and leaned toward selecting the consistent one or two styles for a given situation. If participants scored their leader above 20, they had high flexibility and leaned to nearly equally selecting all four styles.

Effectiveness Score

The effectiveness score, the most significant score derived from the LBAII®-Other instrument, is a ratio scale representing the participant's perception of their leader's appropriate use of the selected style concerning the specific situation and development level of employees described in the questions of the questionnaire. For a leader to demonstrate high leadership style effectiveness, the leader must show both high leadership style flexibility and choose the most appropriate leadership style for the situation. The employee's perception of the leader must lead the employee to select the most fitting leadership style for the situation (Blanchard et al., 2013). In the SLII® model, a leader leads with a particular style that is effective in a particular case (Zigarmi et al., 1997). In the LBAII®, the effectiveness score indicates the participant's diagnostic skill in selecting the appropriate style supported in the SLII® model (Zigarmi et al., 1997). There

are 20 questions with 5 situations in which either S1, S2, S3, or S4 would be more effective, according to the competence and commitment of the follower (Zigarmi et al., 1997).

The LBAII® has a value for excellent, good, fair, and poor answers, respectively. Therefore, if a participant's perceptions of their leader score all exceptional values, the score would be calculated by multiplying 4 and 20 to generate 80 points. The leadership style effectiveness scores range from 20-80. The mean is a score of 54. If the participants perceived their leaders to have scores of 20-49, they received a low effectiveness score. If the participant's perception of the leader yields scores between 50-58, they had a normal effectiveness score. If the participant's perception of their leader produces scores of 58-80, then the participant's leader scored a high leadership effectiveness score. If the participant's perception of their leader yielded a score below 50, their perception of their leader yielded more fair and poor leadership style choices than other participants taking the assessment. If the participant's perception of their leader produced a score above 58, there is a high leadership effectiveness score. The employee assessed that their leader would select a higher number of good and excellent leadership style choices than other participants' leaders in the assessment.

Participants who believed their leaders would score 50 and above indicated good or excellent leadership effectiveness scores. The leaders, as perceived by participants, selected the effective use of S1, S2, S3, and S4 in certain situations to fit the criteria of at least normal effective situational leaders. Then, I continued to examine the relationship between flexible and effective situational leadership styles and employee performance.

The secondary scores are the preferred leadership style score, where I can determine the participant's primary, secondary, and developing leadership styles. With the LBAII®, I can also determine which leadership styles the participant is misusing or overusing. For this study, I did not use the preferred leadership style score or the misusing or overusing the styles score because they were not pertinent to my research questions. The LBAII®-Other is appropriate in this quantitative study because the measurement tool includes assessing flexibility in leadership style and how effective leaders use the correct situational leadership style in a particular situation.

Many researchers in various populations and forms have used the LBAII® in various research studies. Researchers completed studies in the fields of crisis management (Kavoosi et al., 2019; Kavoosi et al., 2020), business (Puszko, 2021; Zigarmi, 1997), education (Hernández Colón, 2021; Munir & Akhter, 2021), and the religious sector (Judkins & Mundy-Judkins, 2018). From 1982-1996, researchers conducted and reported 15 studies in business, 31 studies in education, seven studies in nursing, and seven in other fields (Zigarmi et al., 1997). The researchers used various LBAII® Self or Other designs in the studies or both LBAII® Self and Other designs.

Reliability

Establishing reliability in a measurement instrument is important to reduce measurement error. A researcher can deem an instrument to be reliable because it can measure the same construct each time the participant participates in a questionnaire (Zigarmi et al., 1997). The results would be consistent over time among the same methods or several administrations with one sample (Zigarmi et al., 1997). The

instrument is reliable if it consistently measures what it intends to measure. There are four common methods to examine an instrument's reliability: test-retest method, alternate-form method, split-halves method, and internal consistency.

Test-Retest Method. The test-retest method consists of the uniformity or consistency of a measure assessed over time. For example, suppose administering the test using the same instrument to a group of participants at two different periods, and for both administrations, the scores are highly correlated >.60. In that case, a researcher can deem the scores reliable. If the two tests' administrations have identical results, the reliability coefficient would be 1.00 (Zigarmi et al., 1997). Nye (1986) subjected the LBAII® to a test-retest reliability method as one of the methods to establish the reliability and reported a coefficient of .72 (N=24) on flexibility scores (Zigarmi et al., 1997).

Alternate-Form Method. In the alternate-form method, the researcher uses two instruments of similar content to measure the same thing on the same sample. Researchers can then take the scores from both instruments and correlate them. Researchers may consider the instrument reliable if there is a high correlation among the scores. Not many researchers have completed reliability studies with the Alternate-Form Method on the single LBAII® (Form A) and the LBAII® Self and Other (Form B) and correlated the scores.

Split-Halves Method. The split-halves method requires one test administration. The number of items on the instrument is divided into halves (odd and even-numbered items). Researchers make a correlation to estimate the reliability of the test (Zigarmi et al., 1997). Researchers determined this method has a certain indeterminacy in

determining reliability because of how items in the halves can be categorized (Zigarmi et al., 1997). Researchers have not used the Split-Halves Method on the LBAII® because there is a limited number of items in the measurement tool and subconstructs to be considered.

Internal Consistency. The researcher uses one instrument they administer once, and they base reliability on the average correlation among the items within the test. The size of the reliability coefficient is based on the average correlation among items within a subscale and the number of items responded to systematically. The coefficient alpha (α) (or Cronbach's Alpha) and the Kuder- Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20) are more commonly used in classical test theory to assess the correlations or internal consistency of the item (Anselmi et al., 2019). If the α coefficient is low, the test is not long enough, or the items have little cohesion (Zigarmi et al., 1997). In the 1950s, a Danish mathematician, Georg Rasch, developed the Rasch (*R)* Measurement in modern test theory (Anselmi et al., 2019). It is a tool for quantifying unobservable human conditions. The observed variance is the sum of true and error variance in the three internal consistency methods. Yet, they are dissimilar in the way researchers obtain these quantities. For the KR-20, the error variance of an average participant from the sample is used, which overestimates the error variance of participants with high or low scores (Anselmi et al., 2019).

Conversely, with R, the researcher incorporates the real average error variance of the sample. For KR20 and α, the researcher uses the participants' test scores to determine the observed variance, which may mislead because test scores are not linear

interpretations of the underlying variable. In contrast, the calculation of variance involves linearity (Anselmi et al., 2019). On the contrary, if the data fit the Rasch model, the measures that the researcher estimates for each participant are on a linear scale, therefore, numerically appropriate for calculating the observed variance (Anselmi et al., 2019). With these differences, researchers may expect R to be a more reliable index of internal consistency than KR20 and α.

Zigarmi et al. (1997) noted that the Rash model is a calculated model that assesses the discrepancy between what is supposed to happen with the items and what happens with the items falling on a natural logistic curve called the *Test of Fit*. Punch (1987) conducted a Rasch measurement analysis. It determined that 15 of the 20 items on the LBAII® fit the rating response model very well, with two items being over-discriminate and only three under-discriminate.

Validity

Along with reliability, it is also important to establish the validity of an instrument, for a researcher can use an instrument that is reliable but may not necessarily be valid for the study. The validity of an instrument refers to how accurately the researcher can use the instrument to measure what the researcher intends to measure in a quantitative study (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Validation involves collecting and analyzing data to measure the accuracy of the instrument. There are three common types of validity that researchers consider, and they include content, construct, and criterion validity (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). I will now define the validity methods.

Content validity alludes to the appropriateness of the instrument's content. With content validity, the researcher can measure the extent to which the items encompassing the scale precisely represent or measure all aspects of the information the researcher is evaluating (Middleton, 2019). According to Zigarmi et al. (1997), the LBAII® measurement tool's content validity leans mainly on appeals to reason concerning the adequacy for which the significant content (i.e., support, direction, and development level) has been sampled based on SLII® and the appropriateness for which the content researchers have rendered into test items. Researchers may also establish LBAII® content validity inherently in determining the construct validity level.

Construct validity is the extent to which a researcher can use the research instrument or tool to measure the intended construct (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). When a researcher generally subjects a test to several statistical processes or comparisons to determine whether they can measure a construct, the test generally has good construct validity (Zigarmi et al., 1997). A researcher may use a subconstruct to further expand or define the construct. A researcher can use three types of evidence to demonstrate an instrument has construct validity. There is homogeneity, convergence, and theory evidence. Homogeneity is when the researcher uses the instrument to measure one construct. Convergence occurs when the researcher uses the instrument to measure concepts similar to that of other instruments, and theory evidence is evident when behavior is similar to the theoretical propositions of the construct (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020).

The third common type of validity is criterion-related validity. A criterion is any other instrument in which the researcher can measure the same variable or concept. Criterion-related validity is the extent to which a research instrument is related to other instruments with valid measures of the same variables or concepts (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020; Middleton, 2019). Researchers conduct correlational studies to determine the extent to which the different instruments measure the same variable. There are three common ways researchers may measure criterion-related validity: convergent validity, divergent validity, and predicted validity (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). With convergent validity, an instrument is highly correlated with instruments measuring similar variables. If there is divergent validity, the instrument is poorly correlated to an instrument that measures different variables. With predictive validity, the instrument should have high correlations with future criterion (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). For instance, a score of high self-efficacy related to performing a task should predict how the participant would complete the task.

Zigarmi et al. (1997) performed four analyses to establish validity for the LBAII® -Self and Other (same constructs). To establish construct and predictive validity of the LBAII®-Self and Other, Zigarmi et al. (1997) examined the relationship between responses to the LBAII® and concurrent responses on another leadership style instrument for which researchers had already determined construct validity (Zigarmi et al., 1997). Zigarmi et al. (1997) examined the relationships of 552 subordinate participant responses concerning the leadership style of 122 managers on the LBAII®-Other and the Multilevel Management Survey (MLMS). Zigarmi et al. chose the Multilevel Management Survey

(MLMS) (Wilson, 1981) because researchers predicted that with the MLMS, they could measure the same constructs as with the LBAII®. Furthermore, Zigarmi et al. (1997) noted that for the instruments' analyses, the managers and subordinates were not aware of SLII ® before participating in the study. The four analyses included: Global Construct Validity, Specific Subconstruct Comparison, Stepwise Regression, and Predictive Validity.

For Global Construct Validity, Zigarmi et al. (1997) examined the overall relationship or global relationship between the LBAII® and the MLMS (Subscales 1-15). The first analysis aimed to determine if, with the LBAII®, researchers can measure the same constructs as the MLMS, concerning manager-specific leadership characteristics. The purpose of the second analysis, the specific subconstruct comparison, was to determine the correlation between specific subscale scores or the clusters of subscale scores on the MLMS and each of the six LBAII® scores (Zigarmi et al., 1997). In the third analysis, Zigarmi et al. (1997) used a stepwise regression method to compare the directive, supportive, and integrative behavior of the MLMS Subscales and LBAII® response scores. In the fourth analysis, predictive validity, Zigarmi et al. (1997) correlated the MLMS Subscales 16-23 concerning group motivation and morale with the six LBAII® response scores to determine the relationship of the instruments concerning the group and organizational climate dimensions.

Using the four analyses, Zigarmi et al. (1997) determined the construct and predictive validity of the LBAII®. The results of the full model did not restrict flexibility and effectiveness scores. Zigarmi et al. found that a significant relationship ($p < .0001$)

was evident in all but one (93%) of the comparisons, Subscale 4, Expertise, which was significant at the .0004 level. Therefore, a strong and highly significant global relationship exists between the MLMS and the LBAII® scores, as reflected in the participant scores. Additionally, Zigarmi et al. found that with the stepwise regression, there is a strong significant statistical and conceptual relationship ($p < .0001$) between the LBAII® and MLMS subconstructs. They also found a strong significant relationship ($p < .0001$) between the directive and supportive subscales of the MLMA and the LBAII®. With that, Zigarmi et al. found that the LBAII® measures the Directive and Supportive dimensions of the SLII® model and the broad constructs of Directive and Supportive behaviors contained in the MLMS Subscales. Furthermore, Zigarmi et al. found predictive consequences with the LBAII® scores in the MLMS work environment and were consistent with the SLII® model. Therefore, the two instruments are statistically and philosophically connected.

Employee Job/Task Performance Scale

The second instrument appropriate for the study I used to address the dependent variable, employee performance, was the Employee Job Performance (EJP) Scale questionnaire. The EJP scale is an interval 5-point Likert scale where 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 denote strongly disagree, disagree, indifferent, agree, and strongly agree, respectively, encompassing the job or task time, quality, and quantity or productivity constructs of employee performance. The mean and standard deviation of the scores for the interval data were assessed along with Pearson's *r* correlation. Na-Nan, Chaiprasit, and Pukkeeree developed the scale in 2017 and published it in 2018 (Na-Nan et al., 2018).

An employee's performance marks an organization's efficiency and productivity (Leitão et al., 2019). Peterson and Plowman (1953), one of the earlier job performance researchers, along with Na-Nan and Chalermthanakij (2012), asserted that there are three constructs to consider when measuring employee job performance: job or task time, job quantity or productivity, and job quality. Na-Nan et al. (2018) determined that previous research on employee performance questionnaires and measurement scales lacked all-encompassing employee job performance evaluation tools; hence they determined it was difficult to improve inadequate employee performance outcomes. Furthermore, Na-Nan et al. (2018) asserted that practitioners need instruments to assess employee performance; therefore, they conducted empirical research where they developed a comprehensive EJP questionnaire that considers the job or task time, quality, and quantity. They validated the questionnaire using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Finally, they examined employee job performance with the questionnaire the researchers developed.

Having an effective employee performance evaluation tool can contribute to improving employees' performances and accomplishing organizational goals. Petsri (2014) asserted that employee performance refers to employees' behaviors related to their responsible tasks and organizational goals. Researchers have asserted that an employee's performance is influenced by the employee's ability, interest, satisfaction, motivation, environment, and the management styles employed in the workplace (Na-Nan et al., 2018). Employee performance encompasses the employee behaviors at work that amount

to the delivery of outcomes desired by the organization regarding task quality, quantity, and time. Consequently, discussing task/job quality, quantity, and time was pertinent.

Job quality in an organization's products and services is imperative. Peterson and Plowman (1953) asserted that job quality concerns meeting the set criteria and standards regarding the procurement, production, quality inspection, and delivery of goods and services. Organizational leaders may also refer to job quality as process control and quality determinant within quality control and inspection. The employee's job or task quality reflects the employee's attentiveness and dedication to the work-related activity. According to Peterson and Plowman (1953), job quantity concerns units of output produced by employees' behaviors, such as product quantity, waste quantity, and sales figures. Job or task time involves the amount of time required to complete work-related activities concerning the difficulty of the tasks. The time dimension of employee performance concerns driving and directing employees to perform tasks and deliver outcomes in a timely matter (Na-Nan et al., 2018).

EJP Scale Scoring

The EJP scale 5-point Likert interval scale depicts that 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 denote strongly disagree, disagree, indifferent, agree, and strongly agree, respectively, encompassing the job or task time, quality, and quantity or productivity constructs of employee performance. The 13-statement, five-point Likert scale assesses the task time, quality, and quantity constructs of employee performance with four, five, and four questions, respectively. Statements 10–13 assess the time construct, statements 1–5 assess the quality construct, and statements 6–9 assess the quantity construct. To obtain

the EJP score, the researcher must first obtain the mean of the time statements, the mean of quality statements, and the mean of the quantity statements. Then the researcher may take the mean of all three construct mean scores to obtain the final EJP final score. The five interval levels are categorized by 1–1.80, 1.81–2.60, 2.61–3.40, 3.41–4.20, 4.21–5.00, where 1–1.80 is considered the lowest level of employee job performance, 2.61–3.40 is considered a medium level of employee performance, and 4.25–5.00 is the highest level of employee performance (Na-Nan et al., 2018).

Reliability and Validity

Na-Nan et al. (2018) developed a 13-question EJP scale questionnaire based on employee performance concepts and theories from Peterson and Plowman (1953) and Petsri (2014), among other researchers who have studied employee performance. The researchers developed the 13-question, five-point Likert scale that assesses the task time, quality, and quantity constructs of employee performance. The researchers validated the questions using exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which describes the construct validity of the employee job performance, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on 260 auto-parts assembly line sampled workers along the three employee performance dimensions. The factor analysis results confirmed the validity of the questionnaire as a reliable employee performance evaluation tool, as evidenced by the composite reliability (CR) of 0.894 and the average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.739, and $\chi^2 = 63.340$, df = 54, p = 0.180, the goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.976, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.960, RMSEA = 0.021, and root mean square residue (RMR) = 0.014, in which GFI and AGFI should be close to 1, RMR should not exceed 0.02. An AVE above 0.5 is

statistically significant (Na-Nan et al., 2018). The researchers' findings of the analysis confirmed that the EJP questionnaire applies to the evaluation of employee performance. The 13 questions constitute the three constructs of time, quality, and quantity. Furthermore, the researchers used the EJP scales questionnaire for another 260 sampled workers to gauge the employee's performance along the three performance dimensions.

Additionally, experts have confirmed the content validity. Five qualified experts in management, human resources development, industrial psychology, research measurement, and evaluation confirmed the content validity (Na-Nan et al., 2018). The experts confirmed that each question's index of item-objective congruence was greater than 0.6. Furthermore, to determine the reliability and internal consistency, researchers used the questionnaire on 30 auto-parts assembly line workers in another industrial estate. They found that Cronbach's α coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.952, with a total item correlation of 0.713-0.823 (Na-Nan et al., 2018).

Permissions

I received permission from the authors to employ the SLII® model (see Appendix B) and LBAII®-Other instrument (see Appendix C) with revisions. I communicated with Dr. Zigarmi regarding the permitted revisions to the LBAII®-Other to provide more clarity and maintain the anonymity of the participants (see Appendix D and E). I also communicated with Dr. Na-Nan about revising the EJP questionnaire (see Appendix F) to provide more clarity to the self-assessment. The revised EJP is in Appendix G. There are four corresponding fits of effective situational leadership styles to the development level

on a specific task, and the LBAII®-Other addresses all four SLII® styles, with five questions for each of the four styles.

Administration

The participants took a demographic questionnaire first. Secondly, the participants completed the 20-questioned-LBAII®-Other. The instructions included a definition of the LBAII®-Other and directions to the participants to select one response that best describes the action they perceive their leader would take in each of the 20 situations. Then I asked the participants to consider their everyday tasks or goals, their competence and commitment levels to those tasks or goals, and the leadership styles their leaders were providing them, particular to their competence and commitment to those tasks. Next, I asked the participants to consider solely the leadership styles their leaders provide them specific to their competence and commitment levels (development level) to their specific assigned tasks, then answer the 13-question, five-point Likert EJP scale questionnaire after conducting the LBAII®-Other. The instructions also included the directions to the EJP scale questionnaire where participants could mark 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, indifferent, agreeing, and strongly agreeing. The demographic questionnaire took 3-5 minutes to complete. The LBAII®-Other assessment took approximately 25-30 minutes to complete online through Survey Monkey. The EJP questionnaire took approximately 7 minutes to complete online. Once they completed their assessments online, I collected and will continue to store raw data through Excel and SPSS for 5 years to ensure participant confidentiality. I applied the raw data as the SPSS input data for the correlational study. I stored their responses in a password-

protected computer and an external hard drive that only I could access. Upon conclusion of the 5 years, I will destroy all data.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique included data collection through SurveyMonkey, an online survey development cloud-based software, a service company founded in 1999 by Finley and Finley and went public in 2018 (SurveyMonkey, 2021). Participants volunteered to participate with invitations sent through their work email through company human resources. The participants implied consent upon completing their questionnaires.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to online surveys. Advantages may include an increased response rate, lower costs, real-time access, saving time, access to unique populations, convenience, and design flexibility (Wright, 2017). Disadvantages may include sampling issues such as limited sampling and participant availability, survey fraud, getting false responses, and cooperation problems. Additionally, although having no interviewer may yield more honest answers and have less influence on participants' answers, it may also lead to unreliable data as no one is present to clarify any possible confusion.

In a pilot study, researchers ask whether something is feasible, whether they should proceed with it, and if so, how. The goal of a pilot study is not to test hypotheses about the effects of an intervention but rather to assess the feasibility of an approach conducted on a smaller scale so that researchers may use it in a larger-scale study. The pilot study is significant for the improvement of the quality and efficiency of the main

study. Furthermore, researchers conduct pilot studies to assess the safety of treatment or interventions and recruitment potentials, examine the randomization and blinding process, increase the researchers' experience with the study methods or medicine and interventions, and provide estimates for sample size calculation (In, 2017). It will not be necessary to conduct a pilot study as the authors of both the LBAII®-Other and the EJP scale questionnaires have confirmed the reliability and validity of both instruments.

Data Analysis

The study aimed to understand the relationship between flexible and effective situational leadership styles and employee performance while controlling employee gender, job location, and tenure. I conducted data analysis through the correlational design and the statistical technique of multiple linear regression, specifically hierarchical multiple regression. The research question was, What is the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure? The hypotheses were the following:

H_0: There is no statistically significant relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure.

H_1: There is a statistically significant relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a

technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure.

A correlational design is associated with a researcher describing and measuring the relationship between two or more variables with no influence from any extraneous variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The correlational design was appropriate because a key objective of the study was to predict the relationship between a set of predictor variables, situational leadership styles' flexibility, and effectiveness while controlling for gender, job location, and employee tenure, and a dependent variable, employee performance.

Data were analyzed using two primary methods: descriptive and inferential statistics (Taguchi, 2018). Descriptive statistics summarize the characteristics and provide information about the distribution of a data set, including frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation (Taguchi, 2018). Inferential statistics help the researcher make predictions based on the data and make generalizations about the data involving statistical techniques such as t-tests, correlation, ANOVA, and regression (Taguchi, 2018). A correlation provides information on the strength and direction of the relationship between two scale variables (Taguchi, 2018). Multiple linear regression is a statistical technique that uses two or more independent explanatory variables to predict the outcome of a response variable (Alita et al., 2021). A hierarchical multiple regression analysis adds another piece, in that independent variables are entered in blocks. The first block or model of the hierarchical regression includes control variables that are held constant. Researchers want to account for the variability of the control variables first

before analyzing the relationship between the main predictors and the dependent variable. Using the LBAII®-Other primary scores, leadership style flexibility and effectiveness, and the EJP scores, I was able to address my research question and examine the relationship between flexible and effective situational leadership styles and employee performance while controlling gender, job location, and employee tenure (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

Hierarchical Linear Regression: First and Second (Final) Model

Model 1:

$$\overbrace{EP_{ij}}^{\text{employee } i \text{ self-assessed job performance under direct leader } j} = \alpha + \overbrace{\beta_G Gender_i + \beta_{JL} Job\ location_i + \beta_{ET} Employee\ tenure_i}^{\text{control variable effects}} + e_{ij}$$

Model 2:

$$\overbrace{EP_{ij}}^{\text{employee } i \text{ self-assessed job performance under direct leader } j} = \alpha + \overbrace{\beta_G Gender_i + \beta_{JL} Job\ location_i + \beta_{ET} Employee\ tenure_i}^{\text{control variable effects}} + \overbrace{\beta_E SLSF_{ij}}^{\text{effect of employee } i \text{ perception of direct leader } j \text{ situational leadership style flexibility}} + \overbrace{\beta_E SLSE_{ij}}^{\text{effect of employee } i \text{ perception of direct leader } j \text{ situational leadership style effectiveness}} + e_{ij}$$

Other designs, such as experimental and quasi-experimental, could be used when the researcher seeks to evaluate a degree of cause and effect (Saunders et al., 2019). A researcher may use the quasi-experimental design to determine the causal impact of one variable on another, testing the causal hypotheses while lacking the random assignment element (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Furthermore, a researcher could use the experimental design to examine the causal relationships under highly controlled conditions (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The focus of the study was to recognize an

explanatory relationship; thus, the experimental and quasi-experimental designs are inappropriate for the proposed study.

In quantitative research, it is essential to perform data cleaning to ensure the most possible generalizability from the results researchers are concluding from the data. Data cleaning is the process of detecting or screening, diagnosing and editing, and removing or correcting errors and inconsistencies of suspected data abnormalities in a data set or database due to the corruption or inaccurate entry of the data (Rahul & Banyal, 2021). During the screening process, I screened for lack or excess of data, outliers and inconsistencies, strange patterns in distributions, and other types of inferences and abstractions (Uher et al., 2022). During the diagnostic phase, I diagnosed the data points as erroneous, true extreme, true normal, or idiopathic (no explanation found, but remain suspicious) (Uher et al., 2022). Then in the editing phase of the data cleaning process, I identified no errors, no missing values, and the true values. If there were missing data, I could have determined if the data were Missing at Random (MAR), meaning the data is missing relative to the observed data, or if the data were Missing Completely at Random (MCAR), that is, the data is missing within all observations irrespective of the expected value or other variables (Lee & Huber, 2021). The data could have also been Missing Not at Random (MNAR) or missing with a structure to it (Lee & Huber, 2021). Because I used SPSS version 29.0 to analyze my data, some estimation methods in SPSS provided me with specific statistical techniques to estimate any potential missing data values. These are regression, maximum likelihood estimation, list-wise or pairwise deletion, and multiple data imputations. Rather than deleting data, which may not always be the

effective option because of a significant amount of information I could have discarded, causing an unreliable analysis, imputation methods for the missing data may allow for reasonably reliable results. With SPSS ver. 29.0, I could perform single imputation methods for replacing missing data by calculating the existing observations' mean or median.

A few general assumptions in inferential statistics are normality, homogeneity of variances, and linearity. Normality includes the continuous variables in the data that have a normal distribution (Jupiter, 2017). Homogeneity of variances or homoscedasticity refers to equal variances across different groups or samples in the study (Jupiter, 2017). Linearity signifies that there is independence or a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Jupiter, 2017). A normal distribution is symmetric around the center (mean) to test normality, hence the bell-shaped curve. Normality is typically assessed within mean differences examinations such as the *t*-tests, analyses of variance, and production analyses (Verma & Abdel-Salam, 2019). Two methods in which normality can be examined are the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test and the analysis of skew and kurtosis (Jupiter, 2017). Researchers can complete the KS test with the *z* test statistic. The normality assumption is unmet if the consequent *p* value is less than .05 of statistical significance. If the resulting values are not within normality which researchers may also define as skew below ± 2.0 and kurtosis below ± 7.0, then the normality assumption is not met (Jupiter, 2017). Examining scatterplots can determine linearity. Researchers can also use Pearson correlation and regression analyses to assess linearity (Verma & Abdel-Salam, 2019). Researchers can examine the equality of

variance or homogeneity of variance one assessing for mean differences in an independent group variable, such as the *t*-test and ANOVA. Researchers can use Levene's tests for each continuous dependent variable to assess the homogeneity of variance. Levene's test utilizes the *F* test and if the consequent *p* value is less than .05 statistical significance, then the assumption of the equality of variance is not met.

When there are violations of assumptions in inferential statistics, researchers cannot necessarily rely on the results (Jupiter, 2017). There are a few options available such as using data transformation when normality is not met. If multiple assumptions are violated, or a data transformation does not correct the violated assumption, you may opt to use nonparametric analysis. Suppose the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated in the analysis of the variance test. In that case, I, the researcher, could have used the alternative *F* statistics, Welch's or Brown-Forsythe (Field, 2017), to determine if there is statistical significance. Using SPSS version 29.0, I can calculate the statistics as part of the ANOVA analysis.

Study Validity

Study validity refers to how precise and credible the study's collected data is. There are four major types of validity: statistical conclusion validity and the more common ones are internal, external, and construct validity. Statistical conclusion validity measures the research or experimental conclusion's accuracy (Fabrigar et al., 2020). It is the conclusion or inference drawn about the extent of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables (Flake & Fried, 2020). It was pertinent to discuss

the types of statistical conclusion validity as it indicates the accuracy of an inference concerning a relation between or among variables.

There are two types of violations of statistical conclusion validity: Type I and Type II errors. Type I error (false-positive) is when the researcher concludes a relationship between the two variables and rejects the true null hypothesis when there is no relationship between the two variables (Fabrigar et al., 2020). Type II (false-negative) error occurs when the researcher fails to reject a null hypothesis that is indeed false (Fabrigar et al., 2020). In statistical conclusion validity, if the sample size is too small, there is a possibility that the result will not be correct. Using the power analysis correctly helped to determine the correct sample size to avoid incorrect results.

Another threat to statistical conclusion validity is the low reliability of measures, which may result in over or underestimating the relationship size between the variables. Therefore, it is pertinent to determine the reliability of the instruments for my specific sample. In SPSS, I was able to compute Cronbach's alpha, one of several reliability coefficients. A commonly accepted rule is that α of 0.6-0.7 suggests an acceptable level of reliability, and 0.8 or greater is a very good level (Ursachi et al., 2015). Though, values higher than 0.95 are not necessarily good since they might be an indication of redundance (Ursachi et al., 2015). I conducted an internal consistency reliability check of the instrument against my certain sample. For the LBAII®-Other, α was 0.674, which suggested an acceptable level of reliability for my specific sample. For the EJP scale, α was 0.864, which indicated a very good level of reliability for my specific sample.

Statistical conclusion validity is also threatened by the validity of statistical assumptions, which can cause problems of overestimating or underestimating effects.

In this correlational research study, there were two independent or predictor variables, eight control variables, and there was one dependent variable or response variable. The purpose was to examine the relationship between the multiple predicting variables, eight controlling variables, and a dependent variable; therefore, I applied the hierarchical multiple linear regression model (El Aissaoui et al., 2020). Relating to multiple linear regression analysis, there are several key statistical assumptions, including (a) linearity, where there is a linear relationship between the predictor variables and response variables, (b) no multicollinearity, where none of the predictor variables are highly correlated, (c) homoscedasticity where the variance of residuals is constant for any value in the linear model, (d) independence of observation or the value of residuals are independent, (e) multivariate normality or residuals are normally distributed, and (f) no significant outliers (El Aissaoui et al., 2020). It is pertinent to the validity of the statistical conclusion to meet these assumptions. Using SPSS allowed me to check for violations of the hierarchical multiple linear regression model assumptions.

Internal validity refers to the extent to which a relation among variables can be understood as causal in nature. In non-experimental studies, internal validity is comparatively low, and it is generally quite challenging to reach causal conclusions (Fabrigar et al., 2020). However, in the case of experimental designs, which involve random assignment to conditions, internal validity is higher, and the basis for causal

inferences is significantly stronger (Fabrigar et al., 2020). This was a correlational study; therefore, internal validity was negligible.

External validity, one of the most difficult types of results to achieve, implies that the test or result can be applied to other areas and generalized to other situations and populations (Fabrigar et al., 2020). If the research applies to other experiments, settings, participants, and times, then the external validity is high. If the research cannot be replicated in other situations, external validity is low. The research must be effective in other situations.

Construct validity encompasses the extent of accuracy that the measurement represents the construct it is measuring. Construct validity concerns how the constructs in a study are operationalized and are threatened when the essential information to determine this is missing (Flake & Fried, 2020). Low construct validity can result in studies producing deceptive null effects and the development of misleading non-null effects (Fabrigar et al., 2020).

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I have described the project and its purpose, method, and design. Specifically, in Section 2, I have included the purpose, the role of the researcher, the participants, the research method and design, the population and sampling method, the data collection instruments, the data collection technique, the data analysis, and the study validity. As stated, I have analyzed the data I collected using SPSS version 29.0, including reliability testing, descriptive statistics, and hierarchical linear regression analysis. In Section 3, I present the study findings, application to professional practice,

implications for social change, my recommendations for future research, and my study reflections and conclusions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Social Change

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The independent variables were the situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness. The covariates were employee gender, job location, and tenure. The dependent variable was employee performance. I used the 20-item questionnaire, the LBAII®-Other measuring tool. Participating employees responded to questions about their perceptions of how their leaders apply flexibility and effectiveness to specific situations (follower development level). I also used the EJP self-rating scale. Participating employees completed a 13-statement-self-assessment of their job performance to address the dependent variable, employee performance. I conducted a hierarchical linear regression to answer the research question. In the final model, situational leadership style flexibility significantly predicted employee performance while controlling employee gender, job location, and tenure. I rejected the null hypothesis and conversely accepted the alternative hypothesis.

Presentation of Findings

In this subsection, I discuss the testing of the statistical assumptions. I also present descriptive and inferential statistical results, provide a theoretical interpretation of the findings, and conclude the study. I employed bootstrapping, using 1,000 samples, to

address the possible influence of assumption violations. Therefore, I present bootstrapping 95% confidence intervals where appropriate.

Tests of Assumptions

There are several key statistical assumptions relating to hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis. I evaluated assumptions of (a) multicollinearity where none of the predictor variables are highly correlated, (b) no significant outliers, (c) multivariate normality or residuals are normally distributed, (d) linearity where there is a linear relationship between the predictor variables and response variables, (e) homoscedasticity where the variance of residuals is constant for any value in the linear model, and (f) independence of observation or the value of residuals are independent (El Aissaoui et al., 2020). Bootstrapping, using 1000 samples, allowed for combating the influence of assumption violations.

Multicollinearity

I used SPSS Version 29.0 to evaluate multicollinearity by viewing the correlation coefficients among the predictor variables. Multicollinearity occurs when the multiple linear regression analysis contains several variables that are significantly correlated, not only with the dependent variable but also with one another (Shrestha, 2020). Multicollinearity can cause some of the significant variables under study to be statistically insignificant (Shrestha, 2020). This is a concern, as the regression model cannot precisely associate variance in the outcome variable with the correct predictor variable, rendering mistaken results and incorrect inferences. Researchers use the variance inflation factor (VIF) to measure the magnitude of the estimated regression

coefficient variance is inflated if the independent variables are correlated (Shrestha, 2020). A value of 1 indicates no correlation between independent variables. AVIF value greater than 1 and less than 5 specifies moderate correlation (Shrestha, 2020). A VIF value greater than or equal to 5 suggests that there will be multicollinearity among the predictors in the regression model (Shrestha, 2020). Table 3 indicates no conflicts with the VIFs less than 10 for each of the independent variables, with tolerances of >.10 to 1.0 (Alita et al., 2021).

Table 3

Multicollinearity of Independent Variables

		Collinearity statistics	
Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	Gender (Female)	.959	1.043
	Job location (CT)	.869	1.150
	Job location (MA)	.922	1.084
	Job location (NJ)	.887	1.128
	Employee tenure (0 – <1yr)	.740	1.352
	Employee tenure (1yr – < 5yrs)	.580	1.725
	Employee tenure (5yrs – < 10yrs)	.572	1.749
	Employee tenure (10yrs – < 20yrs)	.574	1.742
2	Gender (Female)	.958	1.044
	Job location (CT)	.852	1.174
	Job location (MA)	.875	1.143
	Job location (NJ)	.865	1.156
	Employee tenure (0 – <1yr)	.733	1.365
	Employee tenure (1yr – < 5yrs)	.575	1.740
	Employee tenure (5yrs – < 10yrs)	.571	1.752
	Employee tenure (10yrs – < 20yrs)	.573	1.746
	Style (S1– S4) flexibility score	.965	1.036
	Style (S1– S4) effectiveness score	.909	1.100

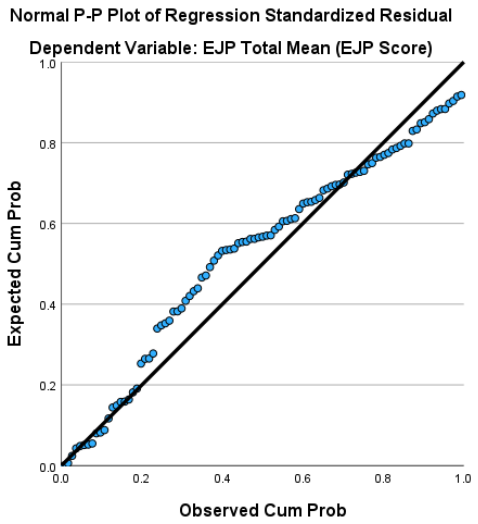
Note. VIF = Variance Inflation Factor.

Outliers, Normality, Linearity, Homoscedasticity, and Independence of Residuals

I evaluated outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals by examining the normal probability plot of the regression standardized residual (see Figure 6) and the scatterplot of the standardized residuals (see Figure 7). The examinations indicated no major violations of these assumptions. The normality test in multiple linear regression is used to verify that the residual value is normally distributed (Alita et al., 2021). There is a good normality test when the distribution of data or plot points are close to the diagonal line, and no data are located far from the data distribution (Alita et al., 2021). The tendency of the points is to form a reasonably straight line (see Figure 6), diagonal from the bottom left to the top right, which supports the normality assumption for the residual value in the regression analysis as fulfilled where the data was normally distributed. The lack of a systematic pattern in the scatterplot of the standardized residuals (see Figure 7) supports the tenability of the assumptions being met. However, with SPSS, I computed 1,000 bootstrapping samples to combat any potential influence of assumption violations, reporting 95% confidence intervals based on the bootstrap where appropriate.

Figure 6

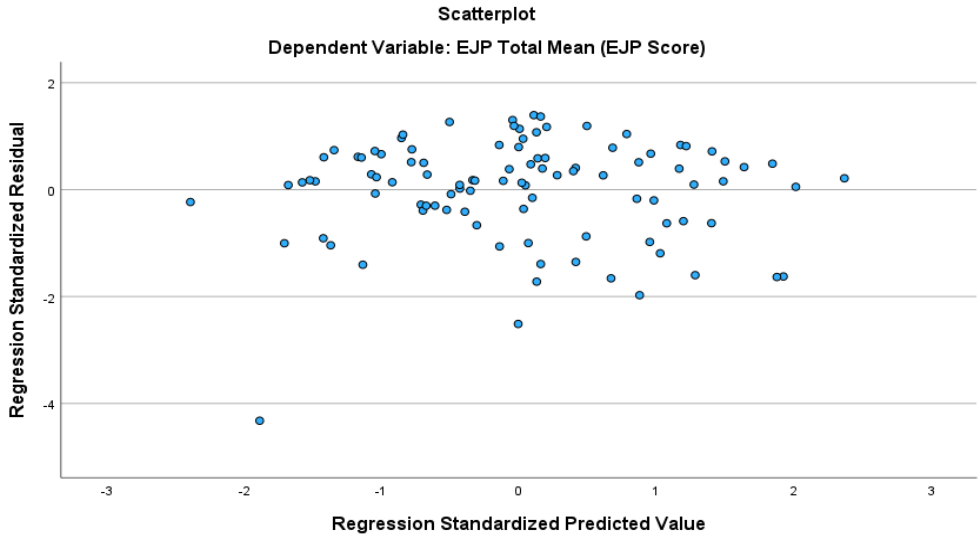
Normal Probability Plot (P-P) of the Regression Standardized Residuals



Note. EJP = Employee Job Performance Scale.

Figure 7

Scatterplot of the Standardized Residuals



Note. EJP = Employee Job Performance Scale.

Descriptive Statistics

At the time of the study, there were 412 salary and hourly nonunion employees, with no direct reports, within the technological company who fit the inclusion criteria for the study (see Table 4). The company had branches in MA, CT, NJ, and GA. One hundred and fifty participants began to complete the surveys. However, in total, I received 99 completed usable surveys. Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, respectively, depict frequencies and percentages of all the demographic questions that were asked, including employee pay classification, nominal covariates of employee gender and job location, educational background, ordinal covariate of employee tenure, current job position time, and current direct leader time. Table 12 shows descriptive statistics for independent scale variables of style (S1–S4) flexibility score, style (S1–S4) style effectiveness score, ordinal control variable of employee tenure, and dependent scale variable employee job performance. To obtain a mean of employee tenure, I coded the independent ordinal variable of employee tenure time intervals to be 0 = 0 to < 1 year, 1 = 1 year to < 5 years, 2 = 5 years to < 10 years, 3 = 10 years to < 20 years, and 4 = ≥ 20 years. Therefore, a mean of 2.25 for employee tenure translates to 6.25 years.

Table 4

Population Demographics

	CT	MA	NJ	GA
Hourly employees		*N*		
Female	20	2	12	25
Male	25	0	15	31
Salary employees				
Female	10	4	4	75
Male	31	8	30	120
Total Employees	86	14	61	251

Table 5

Frequencies and Percentages of Employee Pay Classification (N = 99)

	n	%
Hourly	13	13.1%
Salary	86	86.9%

Table 6

Frequencies and Percentages of Covariate Employee Gender (N = 99)

	n	%
Female	30	30.3%
Male	69	69.7%

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages of Covariate Employee Job Location (N = 99)

	n	%
Massachusetts	6	6.1%
Connecticut	15	15.2%
New Jersey	21	21.2%
Georgia	57	57.6%

Table 8

Frequencies and Percentages of Educational Background (N = 99)

	n	%
High school diploma	4	4.0%
Certificate program	7	7.1%
Some college	6	6.1%
Associate degree	5	5.1%
Bachelor degree	43	43.4%
Master degree	22	22.2%
Doctorate degree	12	12.1%

Table 9

*Frequencies and Percentages of Covariate Employee Tenure (*N = *99)*

	n	%
0 to <1 year	9	9.1%
1 year to <5 years	22	22.2%
5 years to <10 years	24	24.2%
10 years to <20 years	23	23.2%
≥20 years	21	21.2%

Table 10

*Frequencies and Percentages of Current Job Position Time (*N = *99)*

	n	%
0 to <1 year	18	18.2%
1 year to <5 years	29	29.3%
5 years to <10 years	20	20.2%
10 years to <20 years	23	23.2%
≥20 years	9	9.1%

Table 11

*Frequencies and Percentages of Current Direct Leader Time (*N = *99)*

	n	%
0 to <1 year	28	28.3%
1 year to <5 years	38	38.4%
5 years to <10 years	19	19.2%
10 years to <20 years	14	14.1%

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of Ordinal and Scale Variables

						Bootstrap (Mean) 95% CI	
	n	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	*LL*	*UL*
Employee tenure	99	0	4	2.25	1.272	2.01036	2.49469
Style (S1– S4) flexibility score	99	0	28	17.58	4.601	16.6869	18.3636
Style (S1– S4) effectiveness score	99	36	66	48.32	5.897	47.1927	49.5755
EJP score	99	1.73	5	4.2993	0.523	4.19631	4.40336

Inferential Results

The research question was, What is the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure? I used a hierarchical linear regression, with an alpha equal to .05 (two-tailed), to examine the efficacy of situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness in predicting employee performance, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The independent variables were situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness. The eight covariates were employee gender, job location—

CT, MA, and NJ—, and employee tenure—0 to <1 year, 1 year to <5 years, 5 years to <10 years, and 10 years to <20 years. The dependent variable was employee performance. The null hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The alternative hypothesis stated that there is a statistically significant relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility, effectiveness, and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. I conducted preliminary analyses to assess whether the assumptions of multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals were met; no severe violations were noted.

For the first block analysis, I added and analyzed the control variables, gender with using the male gender as the reference category, dummy variables for job location — CT, MA, and NJ—using GA as the reference category, and dummy variables for employee tenure—0 to <1 year, 1 year to <5 years, 5 years to <10 years, and 10 years to <20 years— using ≥20 years as the reference category. NJ was the only significant predictive (p = .05) job location in comparison to GA in predicting employee performance. Ten years to less than twenty years was the only significant predictive (p < .05) category of employee tenure in comparison to the tenure of ≥ 20 years in predicting employee performance. The results of the first block hierarchical linear regression revealed a model that was statistically significant in predicting employee performance,

$F(8, 90) = 2.545$, $p < .05$. The only significant predictors in the first block to provide information in predicting employee performance were job location that of NJ, ($B = -.255$, $t = -1.978$, $p = .05$), which differed significantly to GA, and employee tenure that of 10 years to <20 years, which differed significantly ($B = .368$, $t = 2.379$, $p < .05$) in comparison to employee tenure of ≥ 20 years. Additionally, the R^2 change value, .184, associated with this regression model suggests that gender, job location, and employee tenure accounts for 18.4% of the variation in employee performance. A similar outcome was found in the second and final block analysis.

For the second and final block analysis, I added and analyzed the predictor variables situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness. The results of the second block hierarchical linear regression revealed a model to be statistically significant, $F(10, 88) = 2.676$, $p < .05$. The significant predictors in the second block analyses, when adding situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness, were job location of NJ ($B = -.251$, $t = -1.968$, $p = .05$) which differed significantly in comparison to GA, employee tenure of 10 years to < 20 years, which differed significantly ($B = .367$, $t = 2.414$, $p < .05$) in comparison to employee tenure of ≥ 20 years, and situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility ($B = -.024$, $t = -2.210$, $p < .05$) with employee tenure being the highest contributor ($B = .367$, $p < .05$) to the model. Additionally, the R^2 change value .049 associated with this regression model suggests that the addition of the situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness to the second block accounted for 4.9% of the variation in employee performance, F change (2, 88) = 2.795, $p > .05$. Although both models as wholes were able to significantly

predict employee performance, adding situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness to the second model did not allow for a significant change in variation between both models (see Tables 13 and 14).

Table 13

Model Summary[c] of Hierarchical Regression Analysis

					Change statistics					
Model	*R*	R^2	R^2_{adj}	SE_e	ΔR^2	ΔF	df_1	df_2	Sig. ΔF	*DW*
1	.429[a]	.184	.112	.49285	.184	2.545	8	90	.015	
2	.483[b]	.233	.146	.48331	.049	2.795	2	88	.067	2.060

a. Predictors: (Constant), ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs), JL (MA), Gender (Female), JL (CT), ET (0 – <1 yr), JL (NJ), ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs), ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs)

b. Predictors: (Constant), ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs), JL (MA), Gender (Female), JL (CT), ET (0 – <1 yr), JL (NJ), ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs), ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs), (S1-S4) SLSF, (S1-S4) SLSE

c. Dependent Variable: EJP Score

Table 14

ANOVA[a]

Model		*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
1	Regression	4.945	8	.618	2.545	.015[b]
	Residual	21.861	90	.243		
	Total	26.806	98			
2	Regression	6.250	10	.625	2.676	.007[c]
	Residual	20.556	88	.234		
	Total	26.806	98			

a. Dependent Variable: EJP Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs), JL (MA), Gender (Female), JL (CT), ET (0 – <1 yr), JL (NJ), ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs), ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs)

c. Predictors: (Constant), ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs), JL (MA), Gender (Female), JL (CT), ET (0 – <1 yr), JL (NJ), ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs), ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs), (S1-S4) SLSF, (S1-S4) SLES

Table 15

Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*
1	(Constant)	4.166	.127		32.768	<.001
	Gender (Female)	.158	.110	.139	1.432	.156
	JL (CT)	.073	.148	.050	.494	.622
	JL (MA)	.114	.216	.052	.525	.601
	JL (NJ)	-.255	.129	-.200	-1.978	.051
	ET (0 – <1 yr)	.333	.200	.184	1.662	.100
	ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs)	-.013	.157	-.011	-.086	.932
	ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs)	.036	.153	.030	.235	.815
	ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs)	.368	.155	.299	2.379	.019
2	(Constant)	4.264	.480		8.886	<.001
	Gender (Female)	.152	.108	.135	1.412	.162
	JL (CT)	.030	.147	.020	.202	.840
	JL (MA)	.037	.218	.017	.171	.865
	JL (NJ)	-.251	.128	-.198	-1.968	.052
	ET (0 – <1 yr)	.310	.197	.171	1.570	.120
	ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs)	-.042	.154	-.033	-.270	.788
	ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs)	.022	.150	.018	.147	.883
	ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs)	.367	.152	.298	2.414	.018
	(S1-S4) SLFS	-.024	.011	-.210	-2.210	.030
	(S1-S4) SLES	.007	.009	.081	.823	.413

The first model as a whole with control variables of gender, job location, and employee tenure was determined to be statistically significant in predicting employee performance ($p < .05$), with the only the predictor variables of job location (NJ) and employee tenure (10yrs – < 20 yrs) providing predictive information in employee performance. The second model was statistically significant ($p < .05$) by adding

situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness to employee gender, job location, and tenure to the model and were able to predict significant variation in employee performance. Job location in NJ was a significant predictive contributor in both models ($p \leq .05$). Although situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and job location in NJ were a significant contributor to the second model ($p \leq .05$), employee tenure was still the higher predictive contributor ($p < .05$) to the model. In the final models, job location of NJ (t = -1.968, p = .05), employee tenure of 10 – < 20 years (t = 2.414, p = .018) and situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility (t = -2.210, p = .030 were statistically significant with employee tenure of 10 – < 20 years accounting for a higher contribution to the model than situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and job location of NJ. Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. Situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness and employee gender did not explain any significant variance in employee performance. The final model predictive equation with p values in parenthesis was the following (see Table 15):

$$EP = \underset{(<.001)}{4.264} + \underset{(.162)}{.152}Gender(F) + \underset{(.840)}{.030}JL(CT) + \underset{(.865)}{.037}JL(MA) - \underset{(.052)}{.251}JL(NJ) + \underset{(.120)}{.310}ET(0\text{–}<1yr)$$

$$- \underset{(.788)}{.042}ET(1yr\text{–}<5yrs) + \underset{(.883)}{.022}ET(5yrs\text{–}<10yrs) + \underset{(.018)}{.367}ET(10yrs\text{–}<20yrs) - \underset{(.030)}{.024}SLSF +$$

$$\underset{(.413)}{.007}SLSE$$

Job Location (NJ)

The negative slope for job location in NJ (-.251) as a predictor of employee performance indicated a .251 decrease in employee performance for each increase in one person having a job located in NJ. In other words, employee performance tends to decrease as an employee with a job in NJ increases. The squared semi-partial coefficient

(sr^2) that estimated how much variance in employee performance was uniquely predictable from an employee having a job location in NJ was .033, indicating that 3.3% of the variance in employee performance is uniquely accounted for an employee having a job located in NJ, when controlling employee gender, employee tenure, and situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility, and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness,

Employee tenure (10 years – < 20 years)

The positive slope for employee tenure of 10 years – < 20 years (.367) as a predictor of employee performance indicated there was about a .367 increase in employee performance with an employee having tenure for 10 years – < 20 years. In other words, employee performance tends to increase as an employee reaches tenure of 10 years to less than 20 years. The squared semi-partial coefficient (sr^2) that estimated how much variance in employee performance was uniquely predictable from an employee having tenure for 10 years – < 20 years was .050, indicating that 5.0% of the variance in employee performance is uniquely accounted for an employee having tenure for 10 years to less than 20 years , when controlling employee gender, job location, situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility, and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness.

Situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility

The negative slope for situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility (-.024) as a predictor of employee performance indicated there was about a .024 decrease in employee performance for each one-point increase in situational leadership flexibility. In

other words, employee performance tends to decrease as situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility increases. The squared semi-partial coefficient (sr^2) that estimated how much variance in employee performance was uniquely predictable from situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility was .04, indicating that 4% of the variance in employee performance is uniquely accounted for by situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility while controlling situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness, employee gender, job location, and tenure.

Correlation Analysis

A Pearson product-moment correlation, which produces the sample correlation coefficient *r*, is the most common method to examine the strength and the direction of the relationship between a pair of continuous variables linearly or the line of best fit. The *r* value is a number between -1 and +1, where -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation, +1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, and 0 indicates no correlation (Obilor & Amadi, 2018; Turney, 2022). The significance of the relationship is determined by probability *p* levels (Obilor & Amadi, 2018). The job location of NJ was slightly more negatively related to employee performance, $r\ (97) = -.245$, $p < .05$, than situational leadership style (S1-S4) flexibility, $r\ (97) = -.204$, $p < .05$. The employee tenure of 10 – < 20 years was positively related to employee performance, $r\ (97) = .248$, $p < .05$. However, both job location (NJ) and situational leadership style (S1-S4) flexibility had a statistically significant negative, weak correlation, $r = -.245$ and -.204, $p < .05$ to employee performance, while employee tenure of 10 – < 20 years had a statistically significant positive, weak correlation to employee performance, $r\ (97) = .248$, $p < .05$. A complete

list of correlations is presented in Table 16. The Pearson product-moment correlation results validate the multiple linear regression analyses.

Table 16

Pearson Correlations for Study Variables

	Gender (Female)	JL (CT)	JL (MA)	JL (NJ)	ET (0 – <1 yr)	ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs)	ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs)	ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs)	(S1-S4) SLSF	(S1-S4) SLSE	EJP score
Gender (Female)	1										
JL (CT)	-0.033	1									
JL (MA)	0.017	-0.107	1								
JL (NJ)	-0.127	-.219*	-0.132	1							
ET (0 – <1 yr)	0.021	0.160	-0.080	-0.164	1						
ET (1 yr – < 5 yrs)	0.070	-0.090	-0.034	0.079	-0.169	1					
ET (5yrs – < 10 yrs)	-0.014	-0.108	-0.045	0.052	-0.179	-.302**	1				
ET (10yrs – < 20 yrs)	0.054	-0.099	-0.039	0.066	-0.174	-.294**	-.311**	1			
(S1-S4) SLSF	-0.006	-0.133	-0.050	0.005	-0.078	-0.035	0.001	0.082	1		
(S1-S4) SLSE	0.061	-0.033	.239*	-0.159	-0.089	0.066	-0.035	0.023	-0.010	1	
EJP score	0.182	0.082	0.048	-.245*	0.168	-0.151	-0.113	.248*	-.204*	0.114	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Analysis Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. I used hierarchical multiple regression to examine the ability of situational leadership style flexibility and effectiveness while controlling employee gender, job location, and tenure to predict

employee performance. I tested the assumptions surrounding multiple regression with no serious violations noted. I also computed the Durbin-Watson (DW) statistic in the final model to be 2.060 (See Table 13). The DW statistic can range between 0–4, with values close to 0 indicating positive autocorrelation, 2.00 indicating no autocorrelation, and 4 suggesting negative autocorrelation (Nguyen, 2021; Turner et al., 2021). An acceptable range for the DW statistic is 1.50 –2.50 (Nguyen, 2021). Therefore, 2.060 is an acceptable value. The first and final model as wholes were able to significantly predict employee performance, p <.05. However, adding the predictor variables in block 2 only allowed for an additional 4.9% of the variance in employee performance, which was not a significant F change between the models, R^2 change = .049, F change (10, 88) = 2.676, p >.05. However, with the Pearson product-moment correlations, both job location (NJ), r (97) = -.245, p < .05, and situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility, r (97) = -.204, p < .05, had a significant negative, weak correlation with employee performance, while employee tenure (10 – <20 years) had a positive correlation, r (97) = .248, p < .05, with employee performance. From the analyses, I concluded that situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility is significantly negatively associated with employee performance, when gender, job location, and employee tenure are controlled.

Theoretical Discussion of Findings

In the current study, although the final model as a whole was statistically significant in predicting employee performance, job location (NJ), employee tenure (10 – < 20 years), and situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility were the only significant predictors of employee performance. Employee tenure of 10 – < 20 years was the largest

contributor to predicting employee. For every increase of employee that had tenure of 10 – <20 years, there was a significant positive correlation with employee performance. Research shows that there may be benefits and drawbacks of establishing employee tenure. Because of their employee acquired experience, tenured employees tend to have increased skills and knowledge (Ng & Feldman, 2013). Therefore, tenured employees may have greater productivity and improved work performance than newer employees. Organizations may spend less on tenured employees because their expertise would not require spending on training. Additionally, tenured employees may share their expertise with the entire team and promote stability within the organization (Ng & Feldman, 2013). However, drawbacks of employees establishing tenure include employees gaining lack of interest in their role within the company because they are becoming stagnant and comfortable in their position and may have less desire to grow (Ng & Feldman, 2013). Furthermore, organizational leaders may not recognize their efforts (Ng & Feldman, 2013). It is important that business leaders establish an employee tenure program to recognize and encourage those who have been with the company and have established significant tenure. In this study, tenure was the only contributor that had a positive relationship with employee performance.

The second significant contributor to predicting employee performance in this study was situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility. However, in their study, Ghazzawi et al. (2017) found that situational leadership as a whole, including flexibility and effectiveness, were positively related to employee performance. Though, in this study, there was a negative correlation between situational leadership flexibility and

employee performance. The more flexible the leader was, the more negatively it impacted employee performance. In this study, if the leader was too flexible, it hindered employee performance. Behson (2014) asserted that some employees are better candidates for highly flexible leaders than others. If high-performing employees can self-manage, they are more suited and can be entrusted with more flexibility. Behson (2014) posited that before a leader expands on flexibility, they need to have the proper support systems in place.

During the recent pandemic, situational leadership flexibility became prominent. Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, many companies have announced that they have planned to embrace leadership flexibility (Kossek et al., 2021) because it is conducive to improving employee performance and creating a harmonious work-life balance. Studies have shown the significance of situational leadership flexibility during the pandemic. As stated in the literature review, experts identified situational leadership as the new normal leadership and management style because of the critical, risky business and educational period that the pandemic presented (Francisco & Nuqui, 2020; Francisco et al., 2020; Kwatubana & Molaodi, 2021; Siregar et al., 2022). Business leaders highly regarded situational leadership flexibility because it encompassed adapting to different critical situations (Azahari et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2021) and being flexible in those critical situations. This study refutes that by revealing that employee performance decreases with too much leadership flexibility.

Finally, in this study, NJ was the only significant contributor for job location in comparison to GA in predicting employee performance. Wheatley (2021) posited that

workplace location could be related to the quality of work and employee performance. With the recent pandemic, for many employees, their workplace has become their home (Wheatley, 2021), which may also impact employee performance. Markowitz (2022) posited that job location relates to organizational or corporate culture. A company's location may conduce a particular corporate culture. Studies have also shown that corporate or organizational culture has a significant positive impact on employee performance (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020; Purwanto et al., 2020; Shahzad, 2014; Tan, 2019). For this study, the location of NJ was the only location of the four branches that presented statistical significance. In the final model, employee performance decreased as the number of employees with jobs in NJ increased. Some factors to consider are the job location, company culture, collaboration, and leadership culture.

Application to Professional Practice

The specific business problem was that some business leaders do not understand the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness and employee performance while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The targeted population consisted of non-union employees with no direct reports of a single optical communications technology company with branches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia. With the assistance of the company's HR representative, I collected survey data to examine the efficacy of situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness in predicting employee performance, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. Through hierarchical regression analysis, in the final

model, the findings depicted a statistically significant negative relationship between job location (NJ) and employee performance, a significant positive relationship between employee tenure of 10 – <20 years and employee performance, and a significant negative relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and employee performance. The addition of employee gender and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness did not have predictive information on employee performance. However, the final model as a whole was statistically significant to the relationship. Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis.

These findings are relevant to improved business practice because they encourage business leaders to consider situational leadership style flexibility in the workplace and how it may impact employee performance. It may encourage leaders to determine an effective level of situational leadership style flexibility where employees, the company's most valuable resource, can reach the maximum performance potential. Leaders may consider how to practice flexibility for different situations and evaluate how it affects employee performance. Business leaders may encourage training on determining effective leadership style flexibility for various situations. For instance, with our recent pandemic, business leaders could have considered how leadership style flexibility impacted employee performance during a critical time when business practices were essential, and businesses were at stake.

Business leaders may also consider their corporate culture at their job locations or sites and evaluate how it affects employee performance. Business leaders may consider the culture and examine if the organizational culture they practice is beneficial to

employees in their performances, which in turn would benefit business profits. They may also consider how leadership style flexibility can be applied to specific job locations or situations. Business leaders can examine how to incorporate leadership style flexibility within their corporate culture pertaining to their job location for maximum improvements in employee performance and business profitability. They must learn what is the most effective corporate culture for their employees at their job locations and apply it. The study findings provide statistical data and recommendations for business leaders to review, evaluate results and focus on strategic efforts to have effective leadership styles to improve employee performance.

Finally, business leaders must consider how to retain their employees and evaluate how employee tenure could improve the relationship with the organizational leaders. Establishing tenure may improve their perception of their leader, provide stability and expertise to an organization, improve the employee-leader relationship, provide knowledge, and in turn improve employee productivity and performance. Leaders may consider corporate culture and situational leadership style flexibility to improve the relationship with their employee, where the employee may establish employee tenure, establish trust within their leader and organization and therefore improve their performance.

Implications for Social Change

With success in leaders applying effective, flexible situational leadership styles and having effective corporate culture, while establishing tenure, leaders can bring people together for collective action and influence positive social change. Senior leaders can

influence other leaders to work collaboratively and positively influence corporate culture. They can empower their employees in the workplace to change and improve their performance, to influence positive social change. Positive social change leaders can affect relationships for change. The most successful leaders seek collaborators and collaborate to influence positive social change. These leaders are positive agents of change and seek to correct shortcomings in corporations or societies. The most effective social change leaders will value their employees, a company's most valuable resource. They will collaborate with others to correct any deficiencies in the workplace that would hinder an employee from continuously wanting to improve and also wanting to influence positive social change. The implications for social change include encouraging catalytic leadership, where they can effect change in others and spark action in people around them.

Leaders at all levels could benefit from the study's findings by understanding the significance of employee performance to business profitability from an employee's perspective, the most valuable resource. With this, the implications for positive social change include encouraging catalytic leadership. Leaders will want to provoke a significant change or action to understand the employee's perspective further and address any discovered employee concerns. With this study, these catalytic leaders would influence positive social change because they can value the significance of unifying the company employees, including company leaders, to work together toward a shared vision. Collaboration can improve corporate culture, employee performance, work experience, and company profitability. Businesses may also reach their desired goals,

create thriving businesses to provide better jobs in the community, and create an opportunity for a better quality of life and economic stability for employees and their families. With positive work experience and employees empowered by their leaders, where leaders are attentive to their needs, collaborate with employees towards a unified company vision, and provide encouragement, these catalytic leaders can also encourage employees to become catalytic leaders within their own communities. Communities may also benefit from these empowered employees who have evolved into positive social change agents and leaders. They would continue to influence positive social change within their community. Positive change agents can work together to create a unified vision within the community by collaborating with their community organizations and associations. They can encourage tangible change to address community concerns or issues and make a better way of life within their families and community.

Recommendations for Action

The recommendations for actions drawn from this study include recommending business leaders at all levels to be mindful of the current leadership styles leaders employ in their organizations and how they are affecting their employees and business profitability. I recommend that leaders communicate with their employees if there is a decline in their performance. Leaders should voice their concerns with their employees to inquire about the decline in performance. Conversely, employees should communicate their concerns with their leaders. Business leaders should encourage a corporate culture that includes effective communication across the board. Leaders should also communicate with employees when they are completing excellent work. It would

encourage continuous exceptional performance. In employee performance reviews, there should be no surprises. If there is unexpected feedback from a leader to their direct employee at a performance review, then there was no partnership, effective communication, or effective leadership. The most successful businesses have leaders who collaborate and partner with their employees (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000). The leaders and their employees partner for performance (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000). The leader communicates with the follower to reach agreements about the development level and leadership style the follower needs to help them accomplish organizational and individual goals (The Ken Blanchard Companies®, 2000). Therefore, I recommend that business leaders first receive training on the partnering for performance method, fully understand the model (see Figure 3), and then train the lower-level business leaders and their employees. I recommend periodic evaluations on the usage of the model. Both the leader and the follower must understand their position in the partnership. The goal is to have leaders and employees in agreement while effectively communicating and collaborating to reach the organizational goal.

Business leaders and employees need to pay attention to the results. A lack of effective leadership negatively impacts employee performance, costing business profits. To positively impact employee performance and reach company goals, leaders must acquaint themselves with their employees and partner with them to learn which situational style level of flexibility and effectiveness works for them. Business leaders may find the results valuable as a tool to predict employee performance based on leadership styles. Senior-level business leaders should also examine the results and assess

which leadership styles negatively correlate with employee performance, affecting business profits.

Sharing the results with a single optical technology company with branches located in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia is practical since the participants in the study are from the organization. Senior leaders can learn about their employees, their leaders, their leadership style, and the corporate culture. To share the results, I will present a summary of my findings to the HR representative, who will disseminate the results summary to the business leaders and employees of the organization. Business leaders may also share results with other leaders and employees during interactive training or sessions to learn more about their company's leaders, leadership styles, and impact on employee performance. Finally, at some point in the future, I can share the study results through peer-reviewed journals and scholarly publications.

Recommendations for Further Research

Using a quantitative correlational study design, I examined the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees while controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The study was limited to Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia. I focused on one organization, an international technological company. Therefore, applying the results outside these four states may render unreliable generalizations. The study was also limited to the employee's perception as opposed to both employee's and leader's perception. Furthermore, the

study was limited to time constraints, whereas participants could provide different answers later after their leaders gained leadership experience or training.

I recommend that future researchers consider conducting a similar study outside Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia and involving other types of organizations than an international technology. Additionally, future researchers may also consider a qualitative study to gain an in-depth understanding of the situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness and employee performance. The qualitative study may indicate why New Jersey was the only job location with predictive factors among the other job locations in the study. Additionally, a qualitative study may also provide an understanding of situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility being a predictive factor versus both situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and situational leadership styles (S1–S4) effectiveness being predictive factors of employee performance as past literature has depicted. Finally, a qualitative study may provide an understanding of employee tenure and why 10 – < 20 years was the only category to provide predictive factors among the other tenure categories in the study.

I also recommend future researchers consider conducting a similar study including the employees', with no direct reports, perception, and the leader's perception. The data can be cross-validated, and the external validity may increase. Researchers may also consider studying employee performance before and after leaders received training on SLII® and the partner for performance model to examine the impact of the leaders' training on employee performance before and after the training. The study's results can

provide valuable and enlightening information on the partner for performance model and its effectiveness in improving employee performance.

Reflections

I conducted a quantitative correlational study to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. I began this study with the preconceived notion that all independent variables, including covariates, would significantly predict employee performance, particularly situational leadership flexibility and effectiveness, as past literature and the SLII® model depicted. These preconceived ideas were not an influential factor. Any personal biases or risks from personal biases were mitigated by conducting an anonymous online survey introduced to the inclusion criteria personnel by the organization's HR representative. During the survey, I did not interact with the participants. However, a possible effect on the participants of introducing the new topic would allow them to think critically about how leadership styles, flexibility, and effectiveness can impact employee performance. The study's research was motivating, as I advocate for the importance of leadership in an organization and highly value its employees, an organization's most valuable resource, and their needs to complete their jobs successfully. Upon completing the challenging study, it emphasized how significant corporate culture is in the workplace, how employee tenure plays a part in employee performance, and how important a leader's flexibility is in a situation for a specific task or goal.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization as perceived by employees, controlling for employee gender, job location, and tenure. The findings revealed that job location, specifically NJ, employee tenure, specifically 10 – < 20 years, and situational leadership style (S1–S4) flexibility were predicting factors in employee performance. I focused on employees' perceptions, as the employee is the most valuable resource in a business. Employees' perceptions of their leaders are a significant factor in the workplace and have an impact on employee performance and the company's performance (Cheung et al., 2017; Olivera, 2020). Leaders must recognize the importance of the employee's perception of their leaders and how it may impact their employee's work performance. Leaders' poor leadership styles can cost organizations profitability each year due to their negative impact on employee performance (Perna, 2016). They affect business profits by influencing employee performance (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018). Employees are a business' workforce that achieves the tasks required to accomplish organizational goals. Therefore, leaders must ensure the employee's needs are met to complete their tasks according to company goals. Leaders should be flexible, work together, communicate frequently and effectively, and partner for performance to get the job done.

Business leaders are present to positively lead their employees in completing tasks to meet company goals and positively impact company profitability. The leader is responsible for ensuring employees' perceptions of them are conducive to employee

performance, the company's goals and profits, and employee satisfaction. Leaders can create positive social change within the employees' lives and communities. Ultimately, it is always most productive and beneficial when two people, leader and employee, work together or partner to accomplish a goal. An ineffective leader attempting to lead with narrow-minded, preferential, and unbalanced ways will deter an employee, the most valuable resource in a company, from fully shining and creating more opportunities within the company and the community, emerging a positive social change.

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Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Email

Date: [Insert Date]

Re: Request to Participate in a Research Study

Dear Employee:

My name is Merari Cortes, a student currently attending Walden University, pursuing a Doctorate of Business Administration degree (DBA). I am conducting a research study examining the relationship between flexible and effective situational leadership styles and employee performance focusing on the employees' perceptions of their leaders in a technological organization, that has branches located in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Georgia. Poor leadership and lack of attention to employees' needs may affect employee performance. The title of my study is "The Employees' Perspective: Situational Leadership Styles Flexibility and Effectiveness and Employee Performance in a Technological Organization." I would like to help leaders and employees understand the relationship between situational leadership styles flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance to potentially improve employee performance, providing them with contentment in the workplace, and economic stability for themselves and their families while increasing business profitability. I would like to survey employees through anonymous voluntary internet-based surveys, who meet the following criteria:

- The employee must be a non-union employee.
- The employee must **not** have direct reports or work in a supervisory capacity.
- The employee must be employed with a single optical communications technology company within one of its U.S. branches located in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, or Georgia.

Upon completion of my study, I will provide a 1–2-page summary of the research results to the company so that they may distribute it to you and other interested employees. Your voluntary anonymous survey responses will be used for academic research purposes only. If you meet the criteria, please consider contributing to positive social change by participating in the research study and completing the anonymous surveys. You may contact me at my email address [redacted] regarding any inquiries about the study. To access the participant consent form and complete the surveys by 11/13/2022 12noon est., click https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CKW8X7S. Thank you all for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Merari Cortes
DBA Student, Walden University

Appendix B: Permission to Use the Situational Leadership II® Model

From: Briana Kimmel <[redacted]>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 10:34 PM
To: Merari Cortes <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: Requested Follow Up: Contact Us Form --- SLII quantitative correlational study

Hi Merari,

Thank you so much for your patience—I truly apologize for the delay in my response!

We are happy to approve your request to include the SLII Model in your dissertation, provided you follow our guidelines below. Additionally, we will need to see the final work before it is published. The Ken Blanchard Companies reserves the right to review the use of our intellectual property in any published work and to request changes in how our intellectual property is used or referenced in order to maintain the integrity of our trademarks.

When using or referencing our intellectual property, please note the following:

- SLII is a registered trademark of The Ken Blanchard Companies. As such, any use of or reference to SLII® or the SLII® Model must include the ® symbol immediately following the "II."
- Our company name is also a registered trademark; any use of or reference to The Ken Blanchard Companies® (or Blanchard® as a shorthand reference) must also include the ® symbol.
- The following notice must be included on any page, graphic, or reference to our intellectual property as either a footnote (if it's a reference in text) or caption (under any use of the SLII® Model graphic):
  SLII® is a registered trademark of The Ken Blanchard Companies®. Used with permission.
- Situational Leadership is a registered trademark of The Center for Leadership Studies; any use of or references to "SL" or "Situational Leadership" would need prior approval from The Center for Leadership Studies.

Please let me know if you will need any graphics to include in your dissertation, and I will send you a PDF file. Send your final dissertation to my attention ([redacted]) prior to its submission for publication; please allow at least 2 weeks for my review and approval.

We appreciate you respecting our intellectual property and wish you all the best with your dissertation.

Best regards,
Briana

BRIANA KIMMEL | IP and Contracts Specialist
[redacted]
kenblanchard.com

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Appendix C: Permission to Use the Leader Behavior Analysis II®–Self and Other Questionnaire

Draft 5- 11-3-2015

Leader Behavior Analysis II®, Self and Other Forms-Researcher Permission Form

As the Leader Behavior Analysis forms (LBAII®) and LAP have become more prominent in the research literature and the requests for the use of these assessments increase, we respectfully request that researchers follow certain guidelines. The authors, Ken Blanchard, Drea Zigarmi, and Patricia Zigarmi are willing to provide you with the capability to use a total of **184** assessments as long as you agree to the following conditions.

Criteria for Use	Researcher Initials
1. Researchers may request permission by contacting Dr. Drea Zigarmi ([redacted] or by e-mail at [redacted]) prior to finalizing the research proposal.	MC
2. The permission request should be accompanied by a one or two-page description and explanation of the research to be carried out.	MC
3. Any use of other than the specified use within the explanation is prohibited without prior written authorization by the authors	MC
4. Any papers, monographs, or book chapters written from this theoretical framework and using these instruments must give reference to where the instruments were obtained.	MC
5. Citation should read as follows: "This instrument was used with permission of authors, Ken Blanchard, Drea Zigarmi, & Pat Zigarmi of the Ken Blanchard Companies, State Place, Escondido, CA 92029 USA | Tel: 800 728-6000"	MC
6. Any papers, articles, etc., written using the LBAII® and/or LAP could reference one or more of the following articles: Blanchard, K. Zigarmi, D. & (1993). Situational Leadership® after 25 years: A retrospect. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 1*(1), 22–36. https://doi.org/10.1177/107179199300100104 Benson, J., Zigarmi, D., & Nimon, K., (2012). Manager's emotional intelligence, their perceived use of directive and supportive behaviors, and resultant employee satisfaction. *Journal of Business Administration Research, 1,*(2). 30–50. http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/jbar.v1n2p30 Egan, R., Zigarmi, D. & Richardson, A. (2019). Leader behavior: a partial test of the employee work passion model. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 38,*(3), 311–341. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21346 Zigarmi, D., Edeburn, C., & Blanchard, K. (1997). *Getting to know the LBAII ®: Research, validity, and reliability of the self and other forms* (4th ed.). Blanchard Training and Development. Zigarmi, D., & Roberts, T. P. (2017). A test of three basic assumptions of Situational Leadership II Model and their implications for HRD practitioners. *European Journal of Training and Development, 41*(3),	MC

241–260. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-05-2016-0035	
7. The authors, retain full copyright authority of the LAP and any translations that are developed as a result of granting this permission. Therefore, neither instrument can be copied or reproduced in any fashion without prior written consent. Every copy of the instrument in either paper or electronic form, must carry the following copyright notice: © ***Copyright 2006 the Ken Blanchard Companies. All rights reserved. Do not use without written Permission.***	MC
8. No changes what-so-ever can be made to the instruments without prior written consent of the Authors includes removal or alterations to the copyright statement that is embedded company within the assessment.	MC
9. Do not print or create additional copies of the instrument beyond the quantity granted within this letter and as set forth in the research proposal. If using pen-and-paper format, all printed copies of the instrument must be clearly marked "For Research Only."	MC
10. Copies of the assessment that you use may not be sold, nor may you charge a fee to those individuals or organizations to whom you are administering the instrument.	MC
11. The authors are allowed to make reference to your research (in summary form) to others who might be doing similar research as a way of supporting those were working hard to further the field of investigation.	MC
12. The authors are to be provided with a full copy of any article, book chapter, dissertation or monograph written as a result using the LBAII® and/or LAP through an electronic copy of the final publication. **E-mail electronic versions to:** [redacted]	MC
13. Discussion and presentation of the LBAII® and/or LAP will faithfully reflect the composition of the instrument and will use only original scale names and scale definitions.	MC
14. A copy of all data collected with the instrument must be given to the authors free of charge before publication occurs. This data will only be used for research purposes. The data will be used to contribute to national norms developed by the authors.	MC
15. Users of either instrument may not publish or otherwise disseminate into the public domain the survey items or item groupings.	MC
16. If either instrument is to be translated into a new language as part of this research project, an author appointed representative must be included in the translation process by involving a company representative before translation occurs. The authors will retain the copyrights of the translated instrument.	MC
17. The authors reserve the right to withdraw the instrument from use at any time if the terms and conditions of this agreement are violated.	MC

Draft 5- 11-3-2015

I, **Merari Cortes**, accept and agree to the terms and requirements stated above.

[redacted] 10/22/2022

Signature of Researcher *Date*

Merari Cortes [redacted]

Name of Researcher *Researcher Email Address*

[redacted]

Researcher Phone Number

Walden University, College of Management & Technology

Name of University or Institution

The Employees' Perspective: Situational Leadership Styles Flexibility and Effectiveness and Employee Performance in a Technological Organization

Possible Title of Research Publication

I hereby grant you permission (on behalf of the authors) to use the quantity of **184** assessments outlined within this document following receipt of this letter signed by you, agreeing to the above stipulations.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Drea Zigarmi at [redacted]

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Drea Zigarmi, Ed D.

Director of Research

Appendix D: Permission to Revise the Leader Behavior Analysis II®–Other Questionnaire

From: Merari Cortes
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022S 11:35 AM
To: Drea Zigarmi <[redacted]>
Cc: Mike G. Lavelle <[redacted]>; Briana Kimmel <[redacted]>
Subject: RE: Signed Updated LBAII® Permission Form and LBAII®–Other Changes Requests

Thank you, Dr. Zig!

Merari

From: Drea Zigarmi <[redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 11:32 AM
To: Merari Cortes <[redacted]>
Subject: RE: Signed Updated LBAII® Permission Form and LBAII®-Other Changes Requests

Merari, the proposed changes are acceptable. Please proceed and I wish you much success.

Warmly,

Drea

From: Merari Cortes [[redacted]]
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 1:20 AM
To: 'Drea Zigarmi' <[redacted]>; [redacted];
Cc: Briana Kimmel <[redacted]>
Subject: FW: Signed Updated LBAII® Permission Form and LBAII®–Other Changes Requests

Hello Dr. Zigarmi,

I am undergoing my study's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval phase. I have attached the updated signed LBAII® permission form. I wanted to confirm the changes to the LBAII®-Other that we have previously discussed. I am conducting a study where participants will remain anonymous, and they will not be identifying themselves or their direct leaders. Therefore, in place of the words "this manager" in the LBAII®-Other Questionnaire, please confirm that "your direct leader" is acceptable, as we have discussed. Additionally, we have discussed using the actual noun at times that the pronouns *he* or *she* represents to provide more clarity in the questionnaire. I have attached the LBAII®-Other with the discussed changes in red. Please confirm the suggested changes are acceptable and the LBAII®-Other Questionnaire is acceptable to use as written. A simple email stating that the proposed changes are acceptable will suffice. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Merari Cortes

Appendix E: Leader Behavior Analysis II®-Other Questionnaire With Revisions and Scoring

LBAII®– Other Questionnaire

The LBAII®– Other provides feedback on the participant's perception of their direct leader's leadership style.

Directions

The questionnaire consists of 20 typical work situations involving a leader and one or more direct reports.

Select one of the 4 possible leader responses (A, B, C, or D) that best describes the action your direct leader would take in each situation.

1. A new employee has been asked to write a proposal to buy new equipment for the division. The new employee needs to learn more about this equipment to make a sound decision about options and costs. She feels this assignment will stretch her already full schedule. Your direct leader would...
   A. Tell her when the proposal is needed and explain what should be included. Outline the steps the employee should take to become knowledgeable about the new equipment. Set daily meetings with her to track progress.
   B. Ask her to produce the proposal and discuss its importance. Ask her to set a deadline for completion. Give her the resources she needs. Ask her to provide periodic progress reports.
   C. Tell her when the proposal is needed and discuss its importance. Explain what the report should include. Outline steps the employee should take to learn more about the equipment. Listen to her concerns and use her ideas when possible. Set weekly meetings to track her progress.
   D. Ask her to produce the proposal and discuss its importance. Explore the barriers the employee foresees and strategies for removing them. Ask her to set a deadline for completion and periodically check with her to track progress.

2. Your direct leader's task force has been working hard to complete its division-wide report. A new member has joined the group. The new member must present cost figures at the end of next week, but he knows nothing about the report requirements and format. He is eager to learn more about his role in the group. Your direct leader would...
   A. Tell him exactly what is needed and specify the requirements and format. Introduce him to other task-force members. Check with him frequently during the week to monitor his progress and to specify corrections.
   B. Ask him if there is anything he or she can do to help. Introduce him to other task-force members. Explore his ideas for "getting up to speed" on the report. Check with him during the week to see how he is doing.

C. Specify the report format and required information and solicit his ideas. Introduce him to each task force member. Check with him frequently during the week to see how the report is progressing and to help with any modifications.
D. Welcome him and introduce him to members of the task force who could help him. Ask him to check back if he has any problems.

3. Your direct leader has recently noticed a performance problem with an employee. He demonstrates an "I don't care" attitude. Only your direct leader's constant prodding has brought about task completion. The leader suspects this employee may not have enough expertise to complete the high-priority task that has been given to him. Your direct leader would...
   A. Specify the steps this employee needs to take and the desired outcomes. Clarify timelines and paperwork requirements. Frequently check to see if the task is progressing as it should.
   B. Specify the steps this employee needs to take and the desired outcomes. Ask for his ideas and incorporate them if appropriate. Ask him to share his feelings about the assignment. Check to see that the task is progressing as it should.
   C. Involve this employee in problem-solving for this task. Offer help and encourage him to use his ideas to complete the project. Ask him to share his feelings about the assignment. Periodically check in to see how things are going.
   D. Let this employee know how important this task is. Ask him to outline his plan for completion and send the manager a copy. Ask him to check back if he has any problems.

4. The composition of your direct leader's work group has changed because of company restructuring. Performance levels have dropped. Deadlines are being missed and your leader's boss is concerned. Group members want to improve their performance but need more knowledge and skills. Your direct leader would...
   A. Ask the group members to identify their training needs and develop their own plans for improving performance. Give them the necessary resources. Be available to help them and ask to be kept informed.
   B. Discuss a plan to solve the performance problem. Ask the group members for their input and include their ideas in the plan if possible. Explain the leader's rationale. Frequently check to see how the plan is being carried out.
   C. Outline the steps the group should follow to solve the performance problem. Be specific about the time requirements and the skills they need to learn. Closely monitor their progress on the plan.
   D. Help them develop a plan to improve performance. Encourage them to be creative. Support their plan and periodically check performance.

5. Because of budget cuts, it is necessary to consolidate. A highly experienced department member has been asked to take charge of the consolidation. This person has worked in all areas of your direct leader's department. In the past, the experienced department member has usually been eager to help. While your direct leader feels she is able to perform the assignment, the employee seems indifferent to the task. Your direct leader would...
   A. Reassure her. Outline the steps she should use to manage this project. Ask for her ideas and incorporate them, when possible, but make sure she follows the manager's general approach. Frequently check to see how things are going.
   B. Reassure her. Ask her to handle the project as she sees fit. Be patient and be available to help. Ask for frequent updates.
   C. Reassure her. Ask her to determine the best way to approach the project. Help her develop options and encourage her to use her own ideas. Agree on frequent checkpoints.
   D. Reassure her. Outline an overall plan and specify the steps she should follow. Frequently check to see how the steps are being implemented.

6. For the second time in a month, an employee's weekly progress reports have been incomplete and late. In the past year, he has completed his reports accurately and submitted them on time. This is the first time your direct leader has spoken to him about this problem. Your direct leader would...
   A. Tell him to improve the quality and timeliness of his paperwork. Go over the areas that are incomplete. Ensure he knows what is expected and how to fill out each report section. Continue to track his performance.
   B. Ask him to turn in reports that are complete and on time without pushing him. Continue to track his performance.
   C. Discuss time and completion standards with him. Listen to his concerns but make sure he knows what is expected. Go over each section of the report and answer any questions. Use his ideas if possible. Continue to track his performance.
   D. Ask him why his reports are incomplete. Listen to his concerns and do what can be done to help him understand the importance of timely and accurate results. Continue to track his performance.

7. A senior employee has been asked to take on a new project. In the past, his performance has been outstanding. The project he has been given is important to the future of your direct leader's work group. He is excited about the new assignment but doesn't know where to begin because he lacks project information. Your direct leader would...
   A. Explain why this employee has the skills to do the job. Ask him what problems he anticipates and help him explore alternative solutions. Frequently stay in touch to support him.

B. Specify how this employee should handle the project. Define the activities necessary to complete the job. Closely monitor how things are going.
C. Ask this employee to develop a project plan for approval within two weeks. Give him enough time to get started. Periodically offer support.
D. Outline how the project should be handled and solicit the employee's ideas and suggestions. Use his ideas when possible but make sure the manager's general outline is followed. Regularly check to see how things are going.

8. A staff member is feeling insecure about a job that has been assigned to him. He is highly competent, and your direct leader knows that this employee has the skills to successfully complete the task. The deadline for completion is near. Your direct leader would...
   A. Let the employee know of his or her concerns about the impending deadline. Help him explore alternative action steps and encourage him to use his own ideas. Periodically check with him to lend support.
   B. Discuss his or her concerns about the impending deadline. Develop an action plan for the employee to follow and get his reactions. Include the employee's modifications, if possible, but make sure he follows the general outline. Regularly check with him to see how things are going.
   C. Outline the steps the employee should follow. Specify the reasons for completing the assignment on time. Closely monitor his progress.
   D. Ask the employee if there are any problems but let him resolve the issue himself. Without pushing him, remind him of the impending deadline. Ask him to get back with an update.

9. The staff has asked your direct leader to consider changes in their work schedule due to an expansion in the customer base. Their changes make good sense. Members are very competent and work well together. Your direct leader would...
   A. Help them explore alternative scheduling possibilities. Be available to facilitate their group discussion. Support the plan they develop. Check to see how they implement their schedule.
   B. Design the work schedule and explain the rationale behind the design. Listen to their reactions, ask for their ideas, and use their recommendations when possible. Check to see that the schedule is being followed.
   C. Allow the staff to set a work schedule on their own. Let them implement their plan after the manager has approved it. Check back at a later date to make sure the new schedule is working out for them.
   D. Design the work schedule and explain how it will work. Answer any questions. Frequently check to see that the schedule is being followed.

10. Due to an organizational change, your direct leader has been assigned six new people whose performance has been declining over the past three months. They do not seem to have the task knowledge and skills to do their new jobs, and their attitudes have worsened because of the change. In a group meeting, your direct leader would...
    A. Make them aware of their three-month performance trend. Ask them to decide what to do about it and set a deadline for implementing their solution. Check on their progress at some point.
    B. Make them aware of their three-month performance trend. Specify the action steps they should follow. Give them constructive feedback on how to improve their performance. Closely monitor their progress.
    C. Make them aware of their three-month performance trend. Outline the steps they should follow, explain why, and seek their feedback. Use their ideas when possible but make sure they follow the general approach. Regularly monitor their progress.
    D. Make them aware of their three-month performance trend. Ask them why their performance is declining. Listen to their concerns and ideas. Help them create their own plan for improving performance. Periodically check on their progress.

11. A department member has had a fine performance record over the last 22 months. This employee is excited about the challenges of the upcoming year. Budgets and unit goals have not changed much from last year. In a meeting with him to discuss goals and an action plan for next year, your direct leader would...
    A. Ask this employee to submit an outline of his goals and an action plan for the manager's approval. Tell the employee to expect a call if there are any questions.
    B. Prepare a list of goals and an action plan for the employee to accomplish next year. Send it to him and meet with him to see if he has any questions.
    C. Prepare a list of goals and an action plan for the employee to achieve next year. Meet with him to discuss his reactions and suggestions. Modify the plan while listening to his ideas, but your direct leader would make the final decisions.
    D. Ask this employee to submit an outline of his goals and an action plan for next year. Review the goals and plan with him. Listen to his ideas and help him explore alternatives. Let him make the final decisions on his goals and plan.

12. Your direct leader's unit has had an excellent performance record over the past two years. However, they have recently experienced three major setbacks due to factors beyond their control. Their performance and morale have drastically dropped, and your leader's boss is concerned. In a group meeting, your direct leader would...
    A. Discuss the recent setbacks. Give unit members the specific steps they should follow to improve their performance. Closely monitor performance.

B. Ask them how they feel about the recent setbacks. Listen to their concerns and encourage and help them explore their ideas for improving performance. Periodically check on performance.
C. Discuss the recent setbacks. Clarify the steps the unit members should take to improve performance. Listen to their ideas and incorporate them if possible. Emphasize results. Encourage them to keep trying. Frequently check their performance.
D. Discuss the recent setbacks without pressuring unit members. Ask them to set a deadline to improve performance and to support each other along the way. Continue to track performance.

13. Your direct leader was recently assigned a new employee who will perform an important job in the unit. Even though this employee is inexperienced, she is enthusiastic and feels she has the confidence to do the job. Your direct leader would...
A. Allow her the time to determine what the job requires and how to do it. Let her know why the job is important. Ask her to be in touch if she needs help. Track her performance.
B. Specify the desired results and timelines. Clearly define the steps the employee should take to achieve results. Show her how to do the job. Closely monitor her progress.
C. Discuss the desired results and timelines. Clearly define the steps she can take to achieve the results. Explain why these steps are necessary and get her ideas. Use her ideas, if possible, but make sure the manager's general plan is followed. Frequently check her progress.
D. Ask her how she plans to tackle this job. Help her explore the problems she anticipates by generating possible solutions. Encourage her to carry out her plan. Be available to listen to her concerns. Periodically check on her progress.

14. Your direct leader's boss has requested a seven percent increase in the unit's output. Your direct leader knows this can be done, but it will require his or her active involvement. To free the leader's time, the task of developing a new cost-control system must be reassigned. The person chosen has had considerable experience with cost-control systems, but she is slightly unsure about doing this task on her own. Your direct leader would...
A. Assign her the task and listen to her concerns. Express confidence in her skills to handle this assignment. Help her explore alternative approaches if she thinks it would be useful. Encourage and support her by providing needed resources. Periodically monitor her progress.
B. Assign her the task and listen to her concerns. Discuss the steps she should follow to complete the task. Ask for her ideas and suggestions. After incorporating her ideas, if

possible, make sure she follows the manager's general approach. Frequently monitor her progress.

C. Assign her the task. Listen to her concerns but let her resolve the issue. Give her time to adjust and avoid asking for results right away. Ask her to check in frequently.

D. Assign her the task. Listen to her concerns and minimize her feelings of insecurity by telling her specifically how to handle this task. Outline the steps to be taken. Closely monitor her progress.

15. Your direct leader's boss has asked to have someone assigned to serve on a company-wide task force. This task force will make recommendations for restructuring the company's compensation plan. Your direct leader has chosen a highly productive employee who knows how her coworkers feel about the existing compensation plan. She has successfully led another unit task force. She wants the assignment. Your direct leader would...

A. Give this employee the assignment but tell her how she should present her coworkers' point of view. Specify that she turns in a progress report within two days of each task-force meeting.

B. Ask this employee to accept the assignment. Help her develop the point of view she will take on the task force. Periodically check with her.

C. Give this employee the assignment. Discuss what she should do to ensure that her coworkers' perspective is considered by the task force. Ask for her ideas but make sure she follows the manager's general approach. Ask her for a report after every task-force meeting.

D. Give this employee the assignment. Ask to be given updates as things progress.

16. Due to a family illness, your direct leader has been forced to miss two meetings of a committee he or she directs. Upon attending the next meeting, your leader finds that the committee is operating well and progressing toward completing its goals. All group members come prepared, participate, and seem to be enthusiastic about their progress. Your direct leader is unsure of what his or her role should be. Your direct leader would...

A. Thank the committee members for their work so far. Let the group continue to work as it has during the last two meetings.

B. Thank the committee members for their work so far. Set the agenda for the next meeting. Begin to direct the group's activities.

C. Thank the committee members for their work so far. Try to solicit alternative ideas and suggestions. Make the members feel important and involved.

D. Thank the committee members for their work so far. Set the agenda for the next meeting but make sure to solicit their ideas and suggestions.

17. Your direct leader's staff is very competent and works well on their own. Their enthusiasm is high because of recent success. Their performance as a group is outstanding. Now, your direct leader must set unit goals for next year. In a group meeting, your direct leader would...
    A. Praise them for last year's results. Involve the group in problem-solving and goal setting for next year. Encourage them to be creative and help them explore alternatives.
    B. Praise them for last year's results. Challenge them by setting goals for next year. Outline the action steps necessary to accomplish these goals.
    C. Praise them for last year's results. Ask them to set goals for next year and to define their action plan to accomplish these goals. Be available to contribute when asked.
    D. Praise them for last year's results. Set the goals for next year and outline the action steps necessary to accomplish these goals. Solicit the group's ideas and suggestions and incorporate them if possible.

18. Your direct leader and his or her boss know that the department needs a new set of work procedures to improve long-term performance. Department members are eager to make some changes, but because of their specialized functions, they lack the knowledge and skills to understand the "big picture." Your direct leader would...
    A. Outline the new procedures and his or her plan for implementation. Involve the group in a discussion of alternatives. Use their suggestions when possible but see that they follow the general outline. Frequently check on the use of the new procedures and monitor their results.
    B. Outline and demonstrate the new procedures. Instruct the group on the initial use of the new procedures and closely monitor results.
    C. Involve the group in a discussion to explore new work procedures. Encourage their initiative and creativity in developing the new procedures. Help them examine possible alternatives. Periodically check on the use of the new procedures and monitor their performance.
    D. Ask the group to formulate and implement a set of new procedures. Answer any informational concerns but give department members the responsibility for the task. Periodically monitor their performance.

19. Your direct leader was recently appointed head of the division. Since taking over, there has been a drop in performance. There have been changes in technology, and your leader's staff has not mastered the new skills and techniques. Worst of all, they do not seem to be motivated to learn these skills. In a group meeting, your direct leader would...
    A. Discuss the staff's drop in performance. Listen to their concerns. Ask for their solutions for improving performance. Express faith in their strategies. Emphasize

their past efforts but periodically check on performance as they carry out their strategies.

B. Outline the necessary corrective actions they should take. Explore alternatives and incorporate their ideas. Modify the plan if appropriate but see that they implement it. Frequently check on their performance.

C. Tell them about the drop in performance. Ask them to analyze the problem and draft a set of action steps for approval. Set a deadline for the plan. Track their performance.

D. Outline and direct the necessary corrective actions they should take. Define roles, responsibilities, and standards. Closely monitor their performance for improvement.

20. Your direct leader has noticed that an inexperienced employee is not properly completing certain reports. These reports are inaccurate and incomplete. She is not enthusiastic about this task and often thinks paperwork is a waste of time. Your direct leader would...

A. Let the employee know that she is submitting inaccurate and incomplete reports. Discuss the steps she should take and clarify why these steps are important. Ask for her suggestions but make sure she follows the manager's general outline. Frequently check her paperwork.

B. Let the employee know that she is submitting inaccurate and incomplete reports. Ask her to come up with a plan to improve their quality. Give her more time to do the job properly. Check her paperwork.

C. Let the employee know that she is submitting inaccurate and incomplete reports. Ask her what she plans to do about it. Help her develop a plan for solving her problems. Periodically check her paperwork.

D. Let the employee know that she is submitting inaccurate and incomplete reports. Show her how to complete the reports. Specify the steps she should take to improve their quality. Closely monitor her paperwork.

LBAII *scoring*

Determining Style Flexibility

DIRECTIONS

GO TO ▶ (A) Style Flexibility Grid

1. *Circle the letter that matches your response for each of the 20 situations on the LBAII® Self.*
2. *Add up the circled letters in the S1, S2, S3, and S4 columns and record the sums in the Totals boxes at the bottom of the grid.*
3. *Subtract 5 from the S1, S2, S3, and S4 column totals and record the difference in the shaded boxes at the bottom of the grid. Disregard the plus or minus sign.*

   Example: If the total of the S2 column is 2, 2 subtracted from 5 is 3. Record a 3 in the shaded box below the S2 column.
4. *Add the four numbers in the shaded boxes and record the sum in the Subtotal box.*
5. *Subtract the subtotal from 30 and record this number in the Style Flexibility Score box.*

GO TO ▶ (B) Style Flexibility Graph

1. *Draw a horizontal arrow pointing to your Style Flexibility Score.*

(A) Style Flexibility Grid

	S1	S2	S3	S4
1	A	C	D	B
2	A	C	B	D
3	A	B	C	D
4	C	B	D	A
5	D	A	C	B
6	A	C	D	B
7	B	D	A	C
8	C	B	A	D
9	D	B	A	C
10	B	C	D	A
11	B	C	D	A
12	A	C	B	D
13	B	C	D	A
14	D	B	A	C
15	A	C	B	D
16	B	D	C	A
17	B	D	A	C
18	B	A	C	D
19	D	B	A	C
20	D	A	C	B
Totals				

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

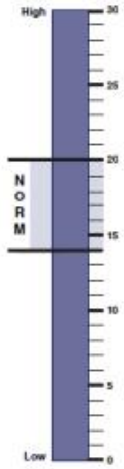
5 5 5 5 Subtotal

□ + □ + □ + □ = □

Subtract the Subtotal from 30 to get your

Style Flexibility Score = □

(B) Style Flexibility Graph



Identifying Leadership Styles

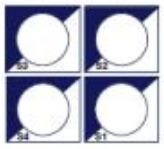
DIRECTIONS

Primary Leadership Style

Record the highest total from the Style Flexibility Grid in the appropriate circle on the matrix.

Example: If the highest total is 8 in the S3 column, record an 8 in the S3 circle. (If you have a tie for your primary style, record the totals in the appropriate circles.)

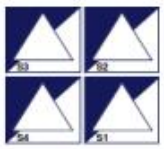
Primary Style Matrix



Secondary Leadership Style

Record totals of 4 or more, other than your primary style, in the appropriate triangle(s) on the matrix.

Secondary Style Matrix



Developing Leadership Style

Record totals of 3 or less in the appropriate square(s) on the matrix.

Developing Style Matrix

Determining Style Effectiveness

DIRECTIONS

GO TO ▶ C Style Effectiveness Grid

1. *Transfer your answers from the Style Flexibility Grid by circling the matching letter in each of the 20 situations.*
2. *Add up the circled letters in the P, F, G, and E columns and record the sums in the Totals boxes at the bottom of the grid.*
3. *Multiply each total in the P, F, G, and E columns by the number directly below it and record the results in the shaded boxes at the bottom of the grid.*
4. *Add the four numbers in the shaded boxes and record the sum in the Style Effectiveness Score box.*

GO TO ▶ D Style Effectiveness Graph

1. *Draw a horizontal arrow pointing to your Style Effectiveness Score.*

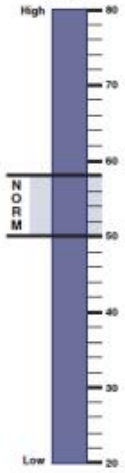
C Style Effectiveness Grid

	P	F	G	E
1	B_4	D_3	A	C
2	D_4	B_3	C	A
3	D_4	C_3	A	B
4	A_4	D_3	B	C
5	D_1	B_4	A	C
6	A_1	C_2	B	D
7	C_4	A_3	D	B
8	C_1	B_2	D	A
9	D_1	B_2	A	C
10	A_4	B_1	D	C
11	B_1	C_2	D	A
12	A_1	C_2	D	B
13	A_4	D_3	C	B
14	D_1	B_2	C	A
15	A_1	C_2	B	D
16	B_1	D_2	C	A
17	B_1	D_2	A	C
18	D_4	C_3	A	B
19	C_4	A_3	D	B
20	B_4	C_3	D	A
Totals				

MULTIPLY BY 1 1 3 4

□ + □ + □ + □ = □ Style Effectiveness Score

D Style Effectiveness Graph



INTERPRETATION

Style Flexibility Scores

Style flexibility scores range from 0–30. The mean score is 17.

Below 14—Low Flexibility (You tended to select the same one or two styles for every situation.*)

Above 20—High Flexibility (You tended to select all four styles more or less equally.*)

Style Effectiveness Scores

To score high on style effectiveness, you must not only show a high level of flexibility in style selection, but you must also choose the most appropriate leadership style for the situation. The totals at the bottom of the style effectiveness columns indicate how often you chose a poor, fair, good, or excellent answer.

Style effectiveness scores range from 20–80. The mean score is 54.
Below 50—Low Effectiveness (You selected more fair and poor leadership style choices.*)

Above 58—High Effectiveness (You selected more good and excellent leadership style choices.*)

* ... compared to others taking this assessment. Norms fall between the low and high scores.

LBAII *scoring*

Improving Style Effectiveness

DIRECTIONS

GO TO ▶ **C Style Effectiveness Grid**

The number in subscript next to each letter in the P and F columns indicates the leadership style of that response.

Example

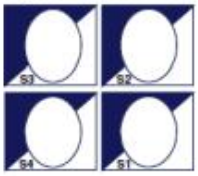
C Style Effectiveness Grid

	P	F	G	E
1	B_4	D_3	A	C

Style 3
Style 4

1. *Add the number of times you selected a fair and poor response for Style 1 and record the total in the S1 quadrant on the matrix.*
2. *Repeat this process for Style 2, Style 3, and Style 4.*

Style Diagnosis Matrix



INTERPRETATION

Four or more fair and poor answers in one style indicate that you may not be diagnosing development level before choosing a leadership style.

Review the situations on your LBAII® Self to determine why you may be using those styles inappropriately.

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Appendix F: Permission to Use the Employee Job Performance Scale

From: Associate Professor Dr. Khahan <[redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 9:59 PM
To: Merari Cortes <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: permission your require

Good morning Merari

You can use the tables and figures from EJP paper with my permission.

Have a nice day

Regards
Khahan

รับ Outlook for Android

From: Associate Professor Dr. Khahan
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 11:26:18 AM
To: [redacted] <[redacted]>
Subject: Permission you require

Dear Merari Cortes,

It was great to hear your message and thank you so much for your interest in my EJP scale. Once again your idea such a great knowledge contribution to the OB field, I hope one day I or you, or whoever can develop a leader or manager scale or after you graduate we can co-operate this scale and compare with my country and your country which widely contribution.

Regarding asking for my permission to use the EJP scale, I am very appreciative to give you use my EJP scale with permission and hope you succeed in your research.

Regards,
Khahan Na-Nan, Ph.D.

Appendix G: Employee Job Performance Self-Assessment, Original and Revised

Question	Notation	Description
1	Per 1	Tasks are performed attentively and correctly
2	Per 2	Tasks are completed as per the specifications and standards
3	Per 3	Materials and tools meet the set criteria and standards
4	Per 4	Quality inspection is conducted prior to the delivery of goods or services
5	Per 5	Products or services meet the expectations of customers
6	Per 6	The units of output are in sync with the number of employees
7	Per 7	The units of output meet organizational expectations
8	Per 8	The units of output under my responsibility correspond to my skills and ability
9	Per 9	The quantity assignment is always fulfilled
10	Per 10	Tasks are normally completed on schedule
11	Per 11	Tasks are carried out within a reasonable amount of time
12	Per 12	The delivery of goods or services is conducted in a timely fashion
13	Per 13	Workers achieve time-related organizational goals

From: Associate Professor Dr. Khahan <[redacted]>
Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Merari Cortes <[redacted]>
Subject: RE: EJP Questionnaire Corrections

Good morning Merari,

The corrections are correct and acceptable.

Kind regards,

Dr. Khahan

From: Merari Cortes
Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 7:42 AM
To: Associate Professor Dr. Khahan <[redacted]>
Subject: EJP Questionnaire Corrections

Good morning Dr. Khahan,

To be clear, the corrections we previously communicated about, which would be incorporated into the Employee Job Performance Questionnaire, to provide more clarity, are as follows:

1. I perform t~~T~~asks ~~are performed~~ attentively and correctly.
2. ~~Tasks are completed~~ I complete tasks as ~~per the specifications and~~ specified and up to standards.
3. ~~Materials and tools~~ The products I work on meet the set criteria and standards.
4. I conduct a quality inspection ~~is conducted~~ prior to the delivery of ~~goods~~ products, ~~or~~ services, or the completion of a task.
5. My p~~P~~roducts, ~~or~~ services, or completed tasks meet the expectations of internal and external customers.
6. My ~~The~~ units of output (productivity) ~~are in sync~~ align with the total units of output (productivity) expected from the total department ~~number of~~ employees.
7. My ~~The~~ units of output (productivity) meet organizational expectations.
8. My ~~The~~ units of output (productivity) ~~under my responsibility~~ correspond to my skills and ability.
9. My productivity expectation or assigned ~~The~~ quantity ~~assignment~~ is always fulfilled.
10. I ~~Tasks are~~ normally complete~~d~~ tasks on schedule.
11. I carry out t~~T~~asks ~~are carried out~~ within a reasonable amount of time.
12. I conduct t~~T~~he delivery of ~~goods~~ products, ~~or~~ services, or completion of tasks ~~is conducted~~ in a timely fashion.
13. ~~Workers~~ I achieve time-related organizational goals.

Please advise me if all corrections, as I understood them, are good to implement in my study.
Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Merari Cortes