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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Effects of Transformational Leadership on Fire Lieutenant Development

by

Angelo DaShun Lamar

MBA, Bethel University, 2010

BS, Bethel College, 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

November 2017

Abstract

Research does not sufficiently address how fire lieutenants in the central United States experience leadership development. Leadership development training, coaching, and mentoring are important processes that prepare followers to become effective leaders in public safety organizations. The intent of this qualitative research study was to explore the lived experiences and stories of fire lieutenants to obtain a clear understanding of how transformational leadership training was perceived to affect their careers. Face-to-face interviews from a purposeful sample of 7 fire suppression lieutenants queried 3 relevant areas derived from the literature, comprising of transformational leadership, critical success factors, and mentoring and coaching. Open hand and axial coding extracted data to identify the emergent themes regarding fire lieutenants' comprehension of leadership development training and was validated with member checking as described in the literature. Findings show that transformational leadership equips leaders to motivate followers to be more creative in their job, influences transparency in decision-making, and affects the transition from lower-level to mid-level management. This research contributes to positive social change by adding to the existing knowledge throughout the United States where fire services can establish mentoring and coaching training programs for their future leaders and establish continuous ongoing training in transformational leadership to increase the overall effectiveness of the organization. The more public safety organizations apply transformational leadership training as part of the development of officers; the better prepared fire lieutenants are to lead their followers, thus helping to build a better and safer society.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to God, who gave me the inspiration, strength, and ability to be the best I could, as well as my ancestors for paving the way and making this possible. To my wife, Fannie C. Lamar, who pushes me beyond my comfort level to reach higher; and my two daughters, Alana DaShun ("First Born") and Alashley DeAndrea Lamar ("Baby Girl"), for keeping me on task and making sure I finish what I started. With all of their love and support for me, I was able to finish this journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Many public safety organizations use transformational leadership developmental programs to help leaders be more effective. Extending leadership training to those aspiring to become future leaders promotes the growth of their organizations. Many researchers shave examined the gravity of transformational leadership and leadership preparation training for public safety organizations (Alyn, 2010, 2011; Brusca, 2013; Bushe & Gilpin-Jackson, 2007; Evans, 2013; FireRescue1, 2011; Geier, 2014; McGuirk, 2010; Revere, 2010; Tapper, 2007). However, development in leadership training and mentoring, for the rank of lieutenant in the fire services, is lacking. The review of literature shows a gap in research addressing the effects of transformational leadership training on the development of fire lieutenants. Training and developing firefighters to become leaders before taking promotional exams could increase the overall effectiveness of their organizations.

Most men and women fire fighters prepare for the next rank level by reading and understanding information from standard operating procedure (SOP) manuals and through informal interaction between peers. These men and women from the rank of private and driver face few to no challenges that require a high level of critical decision-making. Lieutenants in fire departments face many challenges regarding time-critical leadership situations in both pre incident and post incident planning (FireRescue1, 2011). These challenges faced by lieutenants are part of their duties and responsibilities. The only factor that distinguishes lieutenants from chiefs is the extensive administration work required for the role, yet in the central part of the United States, the rank of chief receives transformational leadership training, whereas lieutenants do not.

In today's society, as part of rapidly changing technology, the changes in demographics, culture, climate change, and terrorism have increased the risks for communities during emergencies. The challenges of new threats to communities have led to the need for better-trained leaders in the 21st century. Some of these challenges and threats include the reduction in workers, financial compressions, cutbacks in training and education, and more accountability (Alyn, 2010; FireRescue1, 2011). Because of the challenges lieutenants face, insufficient time is devoted to training and studying their job function.

Background of the Study

Because of the lieutenants' job functions, their day-to-day operations, and limited time of live training evolutions, it is difficult for them to mentor those desiring to become officers. Hargis, Watt, and Piotrowski (2011) and Alyn (2010) posited that owing to the shrinking talent pool of individuals, more resource transfers are needed to develop leaders through training. Many researchers have examined the various types of business management leadership and transformational leadership training for the rank of a fire chief and above (Alyn, 2010; Donovan, 2012; FireRescue1, 2011; Geier, 2014; Guay, 2013; Hargis et al., 2011; McGuirk, 2010; Murphy, 2012; Revere, 2010).

However, research does not sufficiently address the effects of transformational leadership training for the development of fire lieutenants. One of the few studies on the subject (Geier, 2014) showed that first-level leaders (fire lieutenants) who use the transformational leadership style experienced an increased level of effectiveness in both extreme and normal contexts. In a normal context, fire lieutenants operate in a nonemergency setting, whereas in an extreme

context, fire lieutenants engage in an actual emergency scene (Arnold, Loughlin, & Walsh, 2016). It is these in

extreme contexts, however, that men and women are not ordered into emergency situations; rather, they are led by their leader.

Fire lieutenants share the same responsibilities of the chiefs' rank with the exception of administrative functions. This lack of shared training in transformational leadership could leave the first-line officer open for ineffective decision-making for the organization. As a result of this gap in training, there exists a need to inquire further through research on how effective transformational leadership training could be when incorporated within the development of officers in fire departments. This research may have positive effects when transformational leadership training extends to the lower ranks of management. Another possible positive outcome from this research could be an increase in the overall effectiveness of fire departments in the leadership development of lower-level management.

Addressing transformational leadership, through the training of newly promoted officers, could also help the officers to become better prepared to identify and understand their roles as leaders. Bass and Riggio (2006) postulated that the quality of training leads to strong health and long-term job satisfaction. My research could also change how subordinates are taught in the field, resulting in the possibility of self-fulfillment.

Finding the time for training can be challenging when leadership training is not preplanned or given priority. With these challenges, training in transformational leadership beyond the rank of chief becomes necessary for individuals who transition from firefighter to the rank of lieutenant (McGuirk, 2010). The ability of fire departments to meet today's challenges

depends on the leaders' ability to train and develop future leaders (FireRescue1, 2011). Leadership training inspires and teaches future leaders how to identify the needs of the department and to understand what motivates people to want to follow and work as a team (Alyn, 2010). A leader's attitude can be significantly affected by their position within an organization (Bass, 1990). Alyn (2010) stated that an effective transformational leadership training program for fire officers will help to motivate and encourage their subordinates to follow these newly promoted leaders, without the use of rules for compliance. Guay (2013) echoed this notion in his definition of *transformational leadership* as the behavior that motivates, inspires, and transforms subordinates to function and exceed the expectations of their leaders.

Without transformational leadership training, lieutenants lack the ability to employ critical skills, which affects their decision-making during both emergency and nonemergency situations. Personnel issues are also affected through their interactions with the community and their subordinates. The result of little to no training often leads to challenges in employee's morale, disciplinary issues, and conflicts with job functions on emergency scenes.

This research on transformational leadership training is important because it could identify factors of behavior and past practices that hinder the leadership development of lower management, resulting in the failure of fire departments, and it could positively affect the surrounding communities in which they serve. Extending the knowledge and conducting research on transformational leadership training for lieutenants could increase the overall effectiveness of the departments and improve relations with the surrounding communities. This training could also produce better chiefs within the departments and help reduce training time, because they would already be established from the lieutenant rank level. The same leadership training could

help them (a) make better strategic decisions, (b) lead more effectively, (c) improve the overall culture of the fire community, and (d) reduce unwarranted risks through better education and proper training in prevention (Smith and Dyal, 2016). These results could help future leaders in the fire services build better relations with the surrounding communities.

Problem Statement

The average fire department "almost never spends the time conducting training, in role-playing, or on ethical dilemmas" (Alyn, 2010, p.2). Men and women are not being properly prepared for the rank of lieutenant due to a lack of leadership training and development (Alyn, 2010; Hargis et al., 2011). The general problem for this study was that, despite lieutenants having the leadership responsibility of a chief, they do not receive the necessary leadership training as given to the chiefs' rank to be more effective in what they do. The specific problem for this study was that the inability to use the skills of transformational leadership through motivation, coaching, and mentorship at the level of lieutenant affects the decision-making skills and the personnel issues through the officers' interactions with the community and their subordinates.

Purpose of Study

The intent of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences and stories of fire lieutenants to understand the effects transformational leadership on the development of fire lieutenants and how it prepares them to be better leaders. I used the phenomenological approach to help understand, gather, interpret, and analyze their stories and contribute meaning of their lived experiences as leaders of the fire department. The focus of

phenomenological research was the reality of experiences that actually happened in participants' lives experienced from the first person perspective (Kim, 2016).

This study helped bring a deeper understanding to how significant transformational leadership training was to their careers and how much influence this leadership training had in their roles in the fire department, as well as in the community. The phenomenological study design allowed participants to tell their lived experiences to describe their common meanings. I also focused on the character of the one telling the story, as it was reflected and substantiated by their life events (Josselson & Lieblich, 1997). The results of this study could contribute to positive social change by adding to the existing knowledge of leadership. The results could also help bring about improvements in the fire community and within the culture of the fire departments.

Research Questions

I sought to better understand the experiences of both current and former fire lieutenants who obtained transformational leadership training before their promotions. I also examined the effect this training had on the men and women the lieutenants lead and how it affected the surrounding communities. The primary research question was the following:

RQ1: In what ways could transformational leadership training affect the transition from lower-level management to mid-level management in fire departments?

RQ2: What are the critical success factors from the lived experiences that inform skills and competency development of fire lieutenants in the fire department?

RQ3: How does mentoring and coaching influence the advancement of lower-level management to mid-level management?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this qualitative research study included both Burns's transformational leadership theory and Bass's four core components of transformational leadership. Burns (1978), the father of transformational leadership, asserted that transformational leaders are very passionate in what they believe and how they incorporate their beliefs into action; they are energetic and enthusiastic. In addition, Burns's theory explains how transformational leaders are involved in the process of change in helping others to succeed through coaching, motivating, leading, and providing vision. Transformational leaders inspire subordinates to commit to the shared goals and vision of the organization and/or group. Transformational leaders also challenge their subordinates to be innovative and problem solvers, helping them to become leaders through their own development, and they pay attention to each individual need.

Burns's theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) has four core components of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence (II), exhibited by role models whose followers see them as trustworthy, respected, and admired; (b) inspirational motivation (IM), exhibited by role models in a similar way to a coach who motivates, inspires, and provides meanings and challenges to their followers; (c) intellectual stimulation (IS), exhibited by a role model who stimulates the thoughts and imaginations of followers to become creative and innovated; and (d) individualized consideration (IC), exhibited by a role model who gives attention to the need for development and success of each follower. These four core components of transformational leadership are interrelated with the influence of others through inspiration, respect, and encouragement of subordinates to achieve higher goals within the organization. This

expansion of transformational leadership is known by all today as *Bass transformational leadership theory* (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In addition to Burns's transformational leadership theory, Tourish's (2013) study on the "dark side of transformational leadership" highlighted the potential factors that could lead to failures in leadership when used improperly. Tourish's study of the negative side of transformational leadership could help increase the knowledge and bring a deeper understanding to Burns's transformational leadership theory.

This conceptual framework using transformational leadership related well to my research study. Transformational leadership theory could serve as a model for subordinates to develop and become leaders through examples demonstrated by their leaders (II). Transformational leaders could motivate and inspire their subordinates to achieve higher goals within the organization (IM). Transformational leaders could convince their subordinates through IS to increase in their learning. Last, transformational leaders could coach, mentor, and give guidance to their subordinates to continue to grow both personally and professionally (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders can see the ideas and values of others, and they can help people to meet their needs (Revere, 2010). I discuss this theory and its further in Chapter 2.

Nature of Study

I used a qualitative phenomenological approach because my focus was on the lived experiences of the research participants selected to take part in this study. In this study, I interviewed seven participants face-to-face at a neutral site in the central United States. Each fire lieutenant I interviewed had different demographics. I analyzed the data through open coding and

with the use of NVivo11. The results from the study showed how transformational leadership in terms of development and satisfaction influences the rank of fire lieutenant.

The desire to understand the rich meaning of the research participants' lived experiences and to access the subconscious phenomenon supported the use of a phenomenological research study. In addition, anything that presents itself to consciousness with the object being real or imagined potentially is the interest of phenomenology (Chan & Walker, 2015; Patton, 2002). Birchall (2014) posited that a qualitative research approach is recommended when the extraction of personal narratives is the goal.

I chose the phenomenological approach for this research study because it was more appropriate for exploring and describing a specified phenomenon through the lived experiences and stories of seven research participants in a public safety organization in the central United States (Stenfors-Hayes, Hult, and Dahlgren, 2013). My purpose was to explore what these seven fire lieutenants would say about their lived experiences using transformational leadership. Although I had originally planned to recruit 20 participants, data saturation was reached at seven participants.

Definitions of Terms

In the emergency service field, and in the culture of fire departments, jargon is often used as a language to communicate. Some of the terms used throughout this study are:

Accountability: The process of firefighters checking into command, the safety officer, or dispatch, making their presence on the scene of an incident be announced and accounted. With this system, each person is tracked, throughout the entire event, until the incident commander or

safety officer releases him or her. This system used for the security of all emergency personnel (Memphis Fire, 2016).

Apparatus: A term used by fire departments to describe a department vehicle, such as a fire engine, fire truck, or ambulance (Memphis Fire, 2016).

Company: A team of two to four firefighters, led by a company officer, who are equipped to perform certain operational functions and aid in fire prevention (McGuirk, 2010).

Company officer: An officer of the department, usually a lieutenant or a captain, who leads and manages a company made up of four individual (Firehouse, 2014).

Dispatch: The designated place or person where the entire emergency calls dispatch. In turn, they alert the specific resources necessary to handle the call or alarm (Memphis Fire, 2011).

Fire lieutenant: A person who has moved up the ranks from private to the driver to lower-level management. One who operates, at times, as the incident commander at the emergency scene, temporarily, until higher-ranking fire officials arrive on the scene and assume command (Memphis Fire, 2016).

National Fire Protection Association (*NFPA*): A set of publications designed and written by a research group who sets the number of standards and best practices. These practices include firefighting, equipment and fire protection, and prevention in the United States. These publications are also adopted in many other countries (Firehouse, 2014).

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (*NIOSH*): A U.S. agency that handles the investigation of workplace deaths, including firefighters (Memphis Fire, 2011).

National Incident Management System (*NIMS*): This program has been federally mandated for the standardizing of command terminology and procedures. Standardizing

communication, between departments and other agencies, was organized to allow greater ease of communication, should other departments be called in to assist with a natural disaster or emergency (Firehouse, 2014).

Preincident planning: Fire protection strategy, involving visitations to buildings and structures within an area to gather information. This information is used to assist fire personnel in identifying potential hazards. Preincident planning helps target exit access and develop action plans involving equipment, supplies, personnel, skills, and procedures, should an actual incident occur (Memphis Fire, 2016).

Standard operating procedures (*SOPs*): A book of guidelines and procedures used to govern personnel on, and off, the job. The procedures include a detailed description of each job classification in the department, rules and regulations, steps in disciplinary actions, and emergency disaster response guidelines for the surrounding communities (Memphis Fire, 2016).

Training officer: A person who is certified, by their respective state, to teach and instruct individuals in the standards of firefighting, fire prevention, arson investigation, medical emergency response, and coronary pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). All standards are developed and taught in association with the fire departments and the international fire codes (Memphis Fire, 2016).

Transformational leadership: The ability to motivate followers to transcend their self-interests, to accomplish collective goals (Hargis et al., 2011).

Transactional leadership: The ability to identify the needs of followers and engage in exchange relationships, based on the objectives that have to be met (Hargis et al., 2011).

Assumptions

In this research, I assumed that the participants in this study would be honest and truthful in their responses. I assumed that the participants would be highly qualified and knowledgeable in the study of leadership. I also assumed that one of the reasons people take the promotional tests is to advance higher in ranking for the increase in money, reduction in physical labor, and the assumed lesser responsibility. I further assumed that fire lieutenants consider transformational leadership to be more effective for organizational change in the selected organization for this research study. This assumption was based on research that has shown that participants spend more time studying and practicing for an exam than learning about the actual position (Alyn, 2010).

Scope and Delimitations

With regard to transformational leadership in the fire services, a lack of information addresses the rank of lieutenant and how transformational leadership influences their job in the central United States. To bridge this gap, I studied the lived experiences of seven participants serving in the rank of fire lieutenant. From a perspective of public safety, I explored the seven participants' views on how transformational leadership training improves their overall job performance and satisfaction as leaders. This phenomenological research study was delimited to a small population of seven participants with a minimum of 8 years in rank and who had taken the professional leadership development course prior to being promoted.

I anticipate that the readers will draw their own conclusions concerning the transferability of this qualitative research for future studies due to the purposefully small selected sample of seven participants. Because this study is based on a single research facility, transferability of

these findings could be limited to other public safety organizations. This transferability will be up to the readers to decide.

Limitations

A qualitative researcher has to ensure that, when gathering information through interviews, documents, pictures, or stories told, that the information is worthy of study (Kim, 2016). This study took place at a large municipality, which I used as the testing site for fire departments. Collecting some of the necessary information on the overall process was a challenge in keeping some of the participants separate from others while the data collection was taking place. Each group of participants worked certain shifts and at times they crossed over owing to shortages on the job or temporary reassignments without advanced notice. Other challenges included the availability of participants when they were off duty. At the end of their shifts, some participants wanted to go home, having been up all night answering emergency calls. Their responses could have become less truthful if they had the mindset of wanting to go home.

Those participants who stayed and participated in the study had the opportunity to talk to those who were not able to participate. This act could have started a premature data saturation that would have affected the validity of this research study because others would start to answer in the same manner as those participants before them. Another concern of mine was whether lieutenants thought that the questions asked during the interview would affect the department; this may have resulted in fictitious answers.

Giving clear objectives and instructions was essential to the success of the interview process. When conducting the interviews, it is important to make sure that all observations, of

each participant, are recorded in the researcher's report. Another limitation concern was that the boundaries set for this qualitative study were limited in various ways owing to how information was obtained and the interpretation of such said departmental guidelines. These limitations included participants who, at the time of the study, were serving in the rank of lieutenant at their respective engine houses, a review of secondary data recorded and public viewed records at the administrative level. Participants' information read or used for this study will remain private. The interviews, of all participants, took place in a neutral and central location where they were most comfortable and where they were likely to feel free to talk about their experiences.

While conducting this study, I had to document and identify all biases to ensure the validity of the information I was collecting. One of the concerns for potential bias was my personal experience as an officer of the fire department. There are two types of validity threats that could lead to invalid research. The first is the researcher's reactivity or influence on the participants or setting, and the second is the researcher's own bias toward the study itself (Maxwell, 2013).

I also have experience in working as a fire lieutenant, before becoming the training officer, and I have completed the transformational leadership training, before being promoted to the rank. This experience in completing the training had no effect on or bias toward the participants, because I was removed from the department for more than 10 years at the time of the study. During the study, I had to mitigate my bias and remain objective by focusing on, listening to, and recording only what each participant wanted to say. I also had to work hard to report only the facts from the information collected to ensure validity and reliability.

Significance

I conducted this study because there was an opportunity to extend on current research examining transformational leadership development training for newly promoted leaders in the public service. Extending an effective transformational leadership-training program to the lieutenant rank could have a positive impact on the overall effectiveness of future officers. Some of the positive effects could be learning and understanding how to make nonincident decisions as leaders, improved relations in communities, improving the professional status of the lieutenants' respective departments, and the improving overall morale of the personnel serving under them.

In my study, I addressed a gap in the existing literature. Hargis et al. (2011) advanced the knowledge of the various intra-individual causes (e.g., self-actualization, motivation, personality) of transforming behaviors. Previous research, by Revere (2010), examined the four competencies of transformational leadership. One of Revere's focuses was one's ability to influence, inspire, and see ideas and values that could help transform an organization, and to help individuals meet their needs. The results of the current study provide insights on how to improve the organizational culture of fire departments. Men and women are becoming more educated today, which results in their challenging of the traditional ways.

The current culture of the fire department is more of a paramilitary that uses transactional leadership. This allows little room to deviate from daily operations in terms of making decisions. From a historical view, McGuirk (2010) and Tapper (2007) described how previous leadership approaches for fire departments were militaristic and reflected a culture that operated under a command-and-control/rule-bound model. Within this hierarchical level, advancement processes for chiefs were established by political influence, as opposed to leadership quality. Alyn (2010)

and Fire Rescue (2011) acknowledged that developing effective leaders is critical to the future of fire departments. Its success will depend on the ability of the current leadership to prepare its young future leaders to lead the organization. MY study helped to transfer knowledge, extend future research and bring about positive social change. Information from the study could help officers become better equipped to identify and understand their role as leaders. In turn, this could change the way subordinates are taught, in the field, by their leaders. Education, research, and knowledge have always been essential components of positive social change in our global society.

Positive Social Change

The findings from this study could be used to extend leadership learning to the lower management ranks of the fire departments. The findings could also help administration and training address the cultural norm and to tailor the learning suitable for the fire lieutenants. In addition, the information could help to prepare the men and women, by incorporating leadership training into the teaching of the various subjects encountered by the position, before taking the promotional exam. The results could bring about positive social change in the development of fire lieutenants. This change could lead to a stronger organization and a better appreciation and understanding of working with the surrounding communities. Understanding the effects that transformational leadership training has on the development of fire lieutenants could help to promote social change in the surrounding communities. The results from this study build on the existing knowledge of transformational leadership, affording the opportunity for other researchers to expand the knowledge further, creating positive social change for the fire departments throughout the United States.

Summary

In Chapter 1, I addressed the lack of developmental training for the men and women fire fighters transitioning to the rank of fire lieutenant. Within the organization of fire services, the lieutenants share much of the same job function as that of the rank of chief. Transformational leadership development training has been shown through much research to have positive effects on the rank of chief and higher. I attempted to understand how much influence this same leadership training could have on the rank of lieutenants. I also discussed how the influence of transformational leadership could improve the decision-making skills and community relations throughout the organization. Lieutenants are decision-makers for their group, and it can be difficult to formulate new ideas on emergency scenes or in their engine house (Alyn, 2010; Graves, 1966). As the fire departments continue to grow, and more people are retiring every year, filling the vacant positions will be challenging.

In Chapter 2, I will provide a review of the literature on the theory of transformational leadership and related research studies. In Chapter 3, I will include a discussion of the methodological research design approach to the study, the method that I used in the collection of data, the analysis process of data, the study setting, and the sample description.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the effects of transformational leadership on the development of fire lieutenant through the life experiences of seven participants who hold the rank of fire lieutenant. I used in-depth interviews to gain a clear perspective about the influences on the rank of fire lieutenants desiring to become transformational leaders. The objective of the study was to serve as the basis of recommendations for practices and policies in training that prepares fire lieutenants to be better leaders as well as those desiring to become future leaders. The outcome of the research could become the model used nationwide for all fire departments. To date, research has focused more on management levels above the rank of fire lieutenant, whereas other researchers have addressed this research topic with more focus on the components of starting a leadership program for fire departments rather than their effects.

Transformational leadership has been researched and implemented in many organizations such as public safety, fire services, psychology, social sciences, first responders, military, manufacturing, and other areas. Alyn (2010); Bass (1978); Burns (1985); Bass & Riggio (2006); Guay (2013); Hargis et al. (2011); Hockmeyer (2015); Revere (2010); Smith (2015); and Tourish (2013) posited that organizations could benefit from transformational leadership. However, limited data and information exists on how transformational leadership relates to fire lieutenants specifically.

One of my principal goals of this study was to understand, through the participants' lived experiences, how transformational leadership influences lower-level management. My findings may contribute to positive social change by helping to develop young officers within the fire

departments to be leaders and build a stronger organization. Obtaining a more in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of seven fire lieutenants contributed to understanding how leaders obtain training and opportunities to incorporate transformational leadership training, which could benefit future leaders of the fire departments.

Literature Review Strategy

In this chapter, I review literature on transformational leadership. This review will focus on literature within the 5-year search limit of literature (2013–2017). Foundational literature from theorists and previous studies from government agency necessary to build the foundation of this study sometimes fall outside of the 5-year search limit. In this chapter, I will examine the relevant literature associated with effective transformational leadership training, fire officer training, and professional development. In addition, I will review and discuss the literature on the standing operating procedures (SOPs), Volumes 1 through 3; the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) manuals on Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2014 edition; and the State of Tennessee Fire Training Academy (TSFA) literature on Fire Officer 1 and 2.

I started the literature review by conducting a search using the ABI/INFORM Complete database, using search terms such as *transformational leadership, implementing transformational leadership and fire service, fire service, stress and fire service, motivation-hygiene and the fire service, hierarchy of needs, phenomenological inquiry on transformational leadership, fire officer training,* and *transformational leadership training for fire officers.* This initial search yielded more than 8,298 articles. After careful review of the 5-year limit, there was an additional search placed and 128 studies was reviewed. The same keywords were placed in the Business Source Complete database, which yielded 18 peer-reviewed articles. Two articles

were used in this research study. In ProQuest, a more defined keyword of *fire service* was used, which yielded 131 articles, of which 30 was used in the study. A combination of 83 scholarly books, literature from previous college courses, five books ordered from Amazon, and archives from the fire department training centers library and database were collected. These titles include *The Maslow Business Reader, The Motivation to Work, Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods, Understanding Phenomenology, NFPA Fire Officer Professional Qualifications,* and *The Standard Operating Procedures Volumes 1, 2, and 3*.

My search expanded more within the database to Emerald Management where it yielded 1096 articles and 28 case studies when the search term *leadership development for the fire services* was used. One article and one case study was added to the reference database for use. Through the list of references used in the study selected, another article on the theory and application of transformational leadership was added to the reference database. The search term *transformational leadership* yielded 82 articles; *fire services* yielded 16,373 articles and 106 case studies; *fire services and leadership training* yielded 4,806 articles and 49 case studies; and *fire lieutenants and transformational leadership* yielded only 12 articles with no case studies. Of the 12 articles, I found nothing in relation to fire lieutenants and only two articles addressing police departments, which are similar organizations.

The search term *transformational leadership for managers* yielded only 73 articles with no case studies. Only one research study article was placed into a research folder for use. Although there was a wealth of articles and case studies on transformational leadership and training, there was limited information related to the specific rank of fire lieutenant.

Because there was relatively a limited amount of up to date literature found in the database on transformational leadership training for fire lieutenants, the search was expanded to the National Fire Academy through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) database that yielded a combination of over 1,500 articles and dissertations of which 48 were kept after review. From their Executive Officer program, several dissertations were posted and 12 were kept for the study after review. This school was chosen due to the fact that its training and educational background focuses solely on firefighting education for the entire country. Its published work on transformational leadership and training are written by authors from around the country with different perspectives and cultural influence, which limits the bias of thinking.

This information was presented to Walden's library to verify its scholarly validity. The results revealed that it was considered a government source rather than a scholarly source, which means it falls under the 15% rule. Due to this finding, the information was set aside and a new search in the Business Source Complete database was made using the search terms: *transformational leadership, Transformational leadership in public safety,* and *data saturation in research*. This search yielded more than 40,161 articles and dissertations of which 125 were kept after reviewing over 250.

Another search was made in order to capture information that could be used in the study without compromising validity. Under ABI/INFORM, I looked for articles using the search terms: *job satisfaction, decision-making and transformational leadership*. This search yielded over 24,000 articles and after narrowing it down to the last three years, only a little over 1000 articles were found. One hundred of these were reviewed and only 15 articles were kept for use

in the study. From the 15 articles, there were two studies that were very closely related in terms of decision-making influenced by transformational leadership.

Conceptual Framework

Transformational leadership theory provided the conceptual framework for this study. Burns (1978); Bass (1985); Bass (1990); Alyn (2010); Hargis et al (2011); and Guay (2013) concluded that transformational leadership seeks out the needs of the followers as well as their motives by willingly working together in order to meet those needs. Firefighters find that lieutenants who are transformational in nature are the easiest to follow and they inspire them to be better at their job tasks (Alyn, 2010, Guay, 2013).

Bass (1985) explicated on Burns's (1978) previous work and his theory of transforming leadership. Bass (1985) modified the name of Burns's theory from "transforming leadership" to "transformational leadership," stressing that transformational leadership is measured by the influence that a leader has on their subordinates.

Bass and Riggio (2006) posited that the components of transformational leadership called *idealized influence* and *inspirational motivation* are used to create follower commitment and motivation to benefit all.

Transformational leadership connects with the exchange of transactional leadership where followers are rewarded for compliance and punished for failure in compliance with work agreed upon (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leadership involves raising the expectations of both leaders and followers. Transformational leaders motivate followers to perform and do more than they thought possible and at times esteeming them to become better than their leaders. Guay (2011); Alyn (2010); and Bass and Riggio (2006) agreed that

transformational leadership is the expansion of transactional leadership because it accentuates the exchange among leaders, followers and colleagues. Transactional leadership does not help in the personal and professional development of followers (Brusca, 2013). The culture of public safety utilizes and encourages various types of leadership behavior along with transactional and transformational leadership styles.

Bass (1985); Bass (1990); Judge and Bono (2000); and Alyn (2010) agree in their research that transformational leadership includes four areas of leadership behavior: II, IC, IS, and IM. Directing the transformation of an organization is what a transformational leader does because they are committed and this behavior results in a strong commitment of followers (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Revere (2010) further stated that transformational leaders work to increase the level of consciousness in followers by engaging and appealing to higher ideas and values. An efficacious transformational leader develops over time the ability to recognize their subordinates' needs, listen effectively and communicate well, sense how and when to motivate subordinates to go above and beyond what is expected of them, and help to instill confidence in followers.

Bass and Riggio (2006) agrees that transformational leaders stimulate the minds of followers to develop their own leadership capacity and to excel in the things they do by achieving extraordinary levels of success. Transformational leaders also provide vision for the organization and mentoring for their followers, resulting in a positive impact on the working culture (McGurik, 2010). Smith, (2015), Morrison, (2014), and Alyn (2010) agree that a transformational leader will do the right thing and display ethical behavior instead of avoiding the use of authority and power to coerce their followers' compliance and doing what is popular or accepted as the norm.

Bass (1985); Bass (1990); and Bass and Riggio (2006) posited that transformational leadership is the best solution for today's organizations. Organizational managers are becoming more interested in the development and training of transformational leadership, due in part to the economic benefit (Abrell, Rowold, Weibler and Moenninghoff, 2011). In an article written by Bass (1990) on training managers to become transformational leaders, he states:

> Transformational leaders have better relationships with their supervisors and make more of a contribution to the organization than do those who are only transactional. Moreover, employees say that they themselves exert a lot of extra effort on behalf of managers who are transformational leaders. Organizations whose leaders are transactional are less effective than those whose leaders are transformational, particularly if much of the transactional leadership is passive management-by-exception (intervening only when standards are not being met (p. 23).

Transformational leaders seek to inspire, challenge, and empower followers through uncertain environments. Transformational leadership is very similar to charismatic leadership and its broader perspective. Charismatic leaders motivate and inspire and are creative and considerate of others. This results in followers' loyalty and devotion without their own agendas or self-interests. A charismatic and transformational leader influences followers for the health of the organization, but there can be times when a leader influences followers for selfish gain.

This is one of the critical concerns with the theories for both charismatic and transformational leadership. Leaders using their abilities to influence, motivate, and lead followers to destructive ends are often referred to as ones who operates on the dark side of both transformational and charismatic leadership (Bass and Riggio, 2006, and Tourish, 2013).

Charismatic leadership is most noticed during a crisis time or event, when organizations are starting to change and during emotional events (Bass and Riggio, 2006, Tourish, 2013). During tragic events, lieutenants keep everyone focused on the task through constant reminders of their purpose in order to keep them emotionally stable.

Transformational leaders use the component of IM in ways similar to a coach. Both transformational leaders and coaches inspire and motivate their followers (or players) by providing meaning and challenges to their roles. Transformational leaders serve an organization in many capacities, with one being a mentor to those who have needs of growth and development (Bass, 1990; Jyoti and Dev, 2015). Within the organization, the spirit of the team is heightened along with their enthusiasm and optimism (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Inspirational leaders stimulate followers' motivation through the envisioning of future states within the organization through clear communications and demonstration of commitment to each other, and shared goals and vision (Bass, 1985, Bass and Riggio, 2006, Karanabetter and Niessen, 2016, Smith, 2015). Other characteristics of an inspirational leaders' behavior includes their ability to build confidence in their followers, inspire self-motivation, and arouse subordinates emotionally through institutional practices.

Another behavior of a transformational leader is II, which is emulated by their followers. II allows leaders to serve as role models for their subordinates. Transformational leaders are trusted, respected, and admired by their subordinates (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders who use II are seen as risk takers and as demonstrating high moral and ethical conduct. They are counted on by their followers to do the right thing (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Tabassi, Roufechaei, Abu Bakar, and Yusof, 2017). Researcher Rao (2014) added that transformational

leaders make ordinary people do extraordinary things that improve an organization. To the degree to which subordinates consider their leaders to be strong in character, they develop feelings of faith and trust in their leaders (Eliophotou Menon, 2014). From the lens of their subordinates, many lieutenants are tagged as leaders.

Transformational leaders stimulate the thoughts and imagination of followers, encouraging them to be creative and innovative, to question assumptions, think strategically, and be creative. Bass (1985); Bass and Riggio (2006); Alyn (2010); ElKordy, (2013); Eliophotou Menon (2014); and Smith (2015) agreed that IS creates better problem awareness and problem solving among followers. Leaders in the rank of fire chief and above in the Memphis Fire Department use IS to visualize, understand, discern, determine, and express the strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats to the organization (Smith, 2015). Bass and Riggio (2006) agreed and added that transformational leaders use IS to motivate and inspire followers to become problem solvers by seeing problems from different angles. Fire lieutenants are taught and trained to become problem solvers only to a certain level, where the rest resides with the fire chief of the department. Understanding how to give the needed attention to their subordinates has become a bigger concern in the fire service culture.

Transformational leaders afford special consideration and attention to each subordinate's need for development and successfulness. Subordinates are treated individually according to their needs and aptitude. Transformational leaders create new learning opportunities and practice IC for each subordinate along the way (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders are approachable, encouraging and supportive, treat subordinates as equals, give advice, and are helpful and friendly (Bass and Riggio, 2006, Smith, 2015). Transformational leaders act as a

coach and mentor when using IC. They encourage clear and concise two-way communications with their subordinates and the interactions with subordinates are personalized. Effective leaders listen well and are able to remember previous conversations with subordinates and stay abreast of individual concerns (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Eliophotou Menon (2014) agreed that successful leaders understand the needs of their subordinates and focus on them on a one-on-one basis. They encourage the achievement of their personal goals as well as their development of individual needs. Transformational leaders support the improvements and growth of organizations through the creation of their culture (Eliophotou Menon, 2014). Transformational leaders delegate tasks as a way of motivating and developing subordinates. These delegated tasks are observed to discern if any extra support or direction is needed. During a fire ground operation, the fire lieutenant delegates individual assignments to each firefighter and monitors the entire fire ground for additional direction or support to the men and women working.

Transactional leadership acts as a safety barrier for leaders who may lack the necessary leadership training needed to be successful in leading subordinates. In transactional leadership the question of "what a firefighter wants from the job" is not fully addressed because the system uses rewards and punishments to guide subordinates. Transformational leaders develop over time the ability to recognize their subordinates' needs, listen effectively and communicate well, sense how and when to motivate subordinates to go above and beyond what is expected of them, and help to instill confidence in followers (Revere, 2010). For the purposes of this phenomenological research study, Bass and Riggio's Transformational Leadership Theory will be used to help uncover the positive influence leadership training could possibly have on fire lieutenants.

Rationale for Theories

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to reveal the likeness of job functions in both the rank of chief and fire lieutenant from the lived experiences of seven fire lieutenants. Before the theory was selected for this conceptual framework, an analysis was conducted by looking at several psychological theories and leadership models. Bass's transformational leadership theory (Bass and Riggio, 2006) surfaced as the most suitable theory for this study's conceptual framework. This theory played an important role in helping to formulate the research questions and methodology for this study.

First, the transformational leadership theory was the theory chosen because Bass and Riggio (2006) focused on the four areas of leadership behavior as it relates to the fire services, but was not fully implemented in their leadership training. In a study by Li and Hung (2009) the focus was on the same areas of leadership behavior and the influence on performance. The findings of the study revealed that transformational leadership afforded lieutenants additional independence and responsibility that affected subordinates' attitudes at work, organizational commitment, and performance, and led to increased retention, job satisfaction, and overall work health of the organization (Smith, 2015). It is deeply ingrained in a fire lieutenant's thinking that risks will be taken during emergency situations.

Communication is also a big factor when it comes to motivation between the lieutenant and their subordinates. Subordinates are usually upset with their leader when there is no clear communications or when the open door policy of the department is not honored. The biggest cause of communication failure between the lieutenant and their subordinates is the lack of concern towards their subordinates' feelings. Ineffective communication affects the leader's

ability to motivate subordinates. Transformational leadership training could increase lieutenants' communication through the sharing of information, as well as emotional support offered in-line with subordinates' feedback, which could thereby increase job satisfaction. The overall culture of the fire services evolves around transactional leadership due to its Para-military make-up and practices. Burns (1978) stated that under transactional leadership practices, subordinates are motivated to follow by the exchange of positive recognition and are given a form of discipline for mistakes made or not meeting expectations.

Second, Tourish (2013) talked about the dark side of transformational leadership theory (the negative side) by uncovering approaches leaders use that lead to poor decision making practices. This critical perspective of transformational leadership is much needed in order to understand the overall culture of fire services. Some individuals rise to the rank of officer through studying for promotional exams without being prepared to lead through training, mentoring and coaching.

Over the years the roles of lieutenants have been scripted through the use of SOPs and guidelines set by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Promotional exams are subjected based on key words stated during the testing and are awarded points. At the end of the testing these points are added up and a ranking list is made based on who has the most to the least. A person's time in service also plays a critical role in the final ranking. From this perspective, no one has to have the knowledge of leadership to take a test, but after an individual is promoted to the rank of fire lieutenant he/she has to lead based on the example that was placed before them when they were just firefighters. The prior example of leadership could have been right or wrong and ethical or unethical, depending on the person and the system in place at the

time. By understanding the negative side of transformational leadership leaders can avoid the pitfalls of good leadership and turn the good habits through training into behavior.

Most public safety organizations operate in a Para-military style, which uses two elements of leadership. The first one is transactional leadership, which is used as a command and control function of fire services. This style of leadership rewards or punishes based on followers' responses to assigned tasks. The second element is transformational leadership, which is only used at the rank of chief and above, leaving the rank of lieutenants open to finding their own style of leadership based on their interpretations. Therefore, understanding the concepts of transformational leadership and how subordinates are fulfilled could add much needed information to how the leaders of tomorrow are prepared and trained.

Related Studies

There is a limited amount of scholarly research on the specific topic of Fire Lieutenants and the influence of transformational leadership. However, I found numerous research studies on transformational leadership for rank of fire chiefs and in similar fields such as law enforcement, healthcare, and education, showing the importance of establishing leadership programs. In the last decade, we have started to see a focus on transformational leadership development in the fire services from literature such as Fire House's 2010 magazine, *Transformational Leadership in the Fire Services* and Fire Engineering's 2014 magazine, *Transformational Leadership for Fire Officers*.

These studies utilize data gathered from fire services from around the nation, such as disciplinary documentations, training records, promotional processes, and past practices. The limitation of using such data is that there is no one specific leadership style taught, but rather the

type of leadership used is dependent upon the individual not a set written standard. Other limitations include the culture to which the person(s) is exposed to (communities and people). Training opportunities also affect certain educational studies due to the demographics and types of businesses that surround the coverage area of the engine houses.

Seminal research on duty and responsibility issues from the rank of fire chief and above shows the importance that fire lieutenants place on gaining the experience through training to elevate themselves as better leaders (Alyn, 2010; Guay, 2013; Leiper, 2003; McGurik, 2010; Mahaffey, 2013; Revere, 2010; Smith and Pem, 2017). Abrell, Rowold, Weibler, & Moenninghoff (2011) found in their research that leadership development programs produces positive outcomes when it comes to communications and motivation. However, the long-term effects of transformational leadership programs are limited due to budgetary limits and the efforts by organizations. As a result of these limits, many ranks within the fire services are becoming negatively affected by an inability to find well-prepared leaders.

In the promotional process in a city in Tennessee, there was a promotional test given to 15 fire inspectors with a minimum of 3 years of experience on the job. These individuals were testing for the position of Inspector Manager, which is equivalent to a fire chief in rank and pay. Out of a possible 100 points the highest score was 67.6864 and the lowest of the 15 individuals was 39.0765 including the addition of up to 7.5 seniority points. Because of the limited number of people within the department and testing results, fire services are opening up promotional processes beyond their borders in an attempt to attract good leaders to fill positions vacant in both the command staff and fire chief level (Alyn, 2011). Establishing a transformational

leadership-training program for the rank of lieutenant could help utilize the current talent and promote from within the department, saving time and money.

While scholarly literature is limited in the area of fire lieutenants, numerous studies confirm the positives of transformational leadership among leaders. Although Bass (1985) is credited for his identification of the four factors of transformational leadership, ongoing studies continue to contribute to the knowledge base of behaviors. Alyn (2010) and Guay (2013) agreed that there is an urgent need for the development of a strong transformational leadership program to help train and prepare young leaders within the organization. Abrell et al (2011) and Alyn (2011) further stated that the future of organizations relies on the current leaders' ability to train and develop future leaders through mentoring, coaching and training.

In a qualitative research study on skilled transformational leaders, there were seven design guidelines developed to assist leaders in developing transformational leadership programs. These guidelines include involvement and support from upper management, identifying a transformational leadership model to teach, establishing a program design team, and using the program as an intervention (Guay, 2013). Alyn (2010); Hockmeyer (2015); and Revere (2010) posited that it is important to focus on both the inside and outside of an organization when designing a transformational leadership program to give opportunities for subordinates to practice the desired skills and behavior in the field, provide mentors and coaches to subordinates while on the job, and evaluate and modification the program as needed to ensure its design and relevancy. Developing leaders for the future takes time, energy, and commitment by the organization. A leader must be willing to train outside the box (Alyn, 2011; Culver, 2015).

Attempting to lessen the levels of stress often associated with leaders is a very important part of transformational leadership training.

Due to the limit of current literature and study on the influence of transformational leadership training on the rank of fire lieutenants, studies from other similar organizations were used to gather much needed information. Schmidt's (2010) qualitative research study looked into leadership preparation programs to help train school leaders in the new millennium. One of the areas of focus was looking into the causes of emotional stress, role anxiety and professional burnout often experienced by leaders. Information gathered from scholars stressed that the causes of problems experienced among schools' leaders were coming from increasingly conflicted roles (Schmidt, 2010). The limitation of this study was that it was only focused on the teaching profession. However, the fact that the participants were educators makes them a close match to fire lieutenants. One of the gaps in the literature here was the area of leadership preparation programs for public safety personnel.

In Eastern Cape, South Africa, 6 private intensive care units in the health care field were studied to determine the positive outcomes of transformational leadership. The finding was a positive correlation between transformational leadership and a positive organizational culture (Jordan, Werner, & Venter, 2015). This study was effective in answering the research questions. The only limitation to this study was that the study focused only on private organizations, as opposed to public organizations. The results were still valid and relevant to the comparison of the current research in size and people in similar professions.

Carter, Self, Bandow, Wheatley, Thompson, Wright, & Li, (2014) targeted middle level leaders in research on transformational leadership to examine possible positive outcomes in

incremental organizational change. Their question was about how organizations could be improved when this leadership training is passed down from upper level leaders within an organization. The findings in this study did not yield the results that the researchers set out to prove. It did not bring much needed attention to lower-level leaders, but it did for mid-level leaders and how the success of their roles is dependent upon the support of upper level leadership and the acceptance, support, and participation of their followers.

From the academic perspective, Rao (2014) conducted a study on transformational leadership in a private business college where leaders were hesitant to make timely decisions. There was a disconnect between the principal leader and the faculty there. This study was very similar to the culture of fire services in regard to the relationship between fire lieutenants and their subordinates. The solution revealed in this study solution was threefold: followers being empowered to make decisions from within, having confidence to do their job, and clear communications between each other.

This case study concluded with several training programs being implemented along with transformational leadership. The findings from the study revealed that leaders have to act in accordance with the situation with an emphasis on transformational leadership. Although it shared some similarities with fire services, the limitation of the study was the demographics, because where an individual works plays a big role in his or her attitude and behavior. However, the social implications of the study were sound, revealing that transformational leaders serve as an example of one who leads others through visionary leadership (Rao, 2014).

One of the studies that was most related to fire services was conducted by Barth-Farkas & Vera (2014) utilizing the German Police Department in Germany. This quantitative research

examined the relationship between perceived power and transformational leadership. The researchers administered the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) online to 120 master's students attending the German Police University. The findings revealed that police officers with a high perception of power did less than the officers with low perception of power. The limitation of this study was significant as it dealt with leaders' power, how management handles their subordinates. The common theme found in each of the research studies was the different levels of management and how they handled situations and the lack of transformational leadership training in comparison to the rank of fire lieutenants. Other governing bodies in fire services also share similar findings that support past studies in transformational leadership and training.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 1021 (2014) is an international non-profit organization that consummates fire and life safety guidelines to help firefighters prepare for the rank of fire lieutenant, public and life safety educator, fire prevention officer, and fire investigator, by establishing the standards for professional qualifications. These standards and guidelines go through a developmental process that utilizes committees with representatives from all of the listed fields and provides recommendations for codes and standards (NFPA, 2014). International codes and standards are not fully taught traditionally as a class, but are mostly learned through self-paced study and individual betterment.

In a quantitative research study, Armstrong (2004) looked at issues of leadership development training within the fire service to identify strategies for preparing individuals when they are promoted to the rank of officer (Armstrong, 2004). The study took place in British Columbia where the fire service there utilized the NFPA standards for officers, to help address

the deep dissatisfaction among their personnel (Armstrong, 2004). This study was very in-depth and yet by focusing on the standards of NFPA, the research was able to keep the bias to a minimum. The data in this study indicated that there is a need for leadership development training for officers and that there has to be a willingness of personnel within the organization to embrace the knowledge and educate others in order to fulfill this need. The findings in this research also showed how firefighters are willing to embrace new strategies to become more proficient as leaders (Armstrong, 2004).

Two other similar qualitative research studies by Alyn (2010), and Bushe and Jackson (2007) involved the transfer of leadership training skills and transformational leadership. Alyn's (2010) study was centered on the fire services in the United States while Bushe and Jackson's (2007) study looked at fire organizations in Canada. The findings from both studies were similar, showing that one of the biggest obstacles to breaking cultural norms is fear, which is a big inhibitor to leadership training. Limitations were that the research lacked a larger sample size that could hurt the validity to the study.

Results from both studies show that there is a lack of social support from upper management for transformational leadership training and the utilization of skills learned. Future implications of the study include the opportunity for research in the rapid dispersal of training and the societal change undertaking in alignment with leadership development courses (Alyn, 2010; Bushe and Jackson, 2007). The study also revealed that leadership transfer is best supported and can be more visible through mass training of individuals. This finding has been practiced in the fire services for years during in-service training. Here, fire personnel come together to learn about various topics associated with their every day job functions. Although the

transfer of knowledge may be evident based on the study, the ability to retain what was learned one time needs more research in the area of knowledge application.

Transformational Leadership's Influence on Decision Making

The position of lieutenant is one of leadership and authority that carries with it the responsibility of making critical decisions in times of emergencies. Lack of effective leadership qualities is too often associated with bad decision-making during emergency response (Valero, Jung, and Andrew, 2015). Some perceive the position of chief to be a leadership prototype. Bethel (2011) stated that leadership prototype is the behavior that is believed from the mental representation of the behaviors and traits that are possessed by some leaders. Each person who holds the title of lieutenant is different, and the term "one size fits all" does not work given the demographics and personality of each individual. Leaders are not all the same, but share many similar characteristics. If a leader's personality lacks temperament, it could affect leadership if given to emotional outbursts (Bethel, 2011). Leaders who are calm tend to make sound decisions during fire emergencies and when sitting around the engine house.

Because of this difference in each individual lieutenant, the SOPs are designed to help lieutenants make the right decisions. Each emergency scenario is written and categorized to where the steps to handle it and are detailed in writing and each lieutenant is required to know it as soon as they are promoted. Memorization without the applicability of what is learned could create confusion in how each step is applied in an emergency situation.

Because of the traditional system and culture of fire services, creating time to study and mentor others has become secondary to emergency calls, and sitting around the engine houses watching television and/or working on personal projects. The main objective of every lieutenant

is to ensure that each subordinate train everyday while on duty with hands-on techniques as opposed to reading or listening to a lecture.

The behavior of following guidelines and standards as law and not understanding that they are only meant to be a guide has been deeply rooted into the life of every person. Under the National Fire Protection Association (2014) the Fire Officer qualifications state that the standards written are established to help individuals advance and be measured in accordance to what has been accepted as past practices. The association goes on to state that these standards and guidelines are not the final say in the development of officers, but that each prospective fire officer should be encouraged to seek higher forms of education as a part of their educational and professional growth.

Transformational leadership added to fire lieutenants' mandatory training could be utilized in the process to help train each lieutenant in understanding the concept of IC. Bass and Riggio (2006) and Valero et al. (2015) used the term, *individualized influence* to describe one as a role model who is perceived by their subordinates as one who has strong ethical standards. Bass and Riggio (2006) further stated that IC is taken into account during the decision making process of leaders. When a fire lieutenant starts the day at the engine house, he or she takes into consideration individual needs, preferences, and values throughout their shift time.

Coaching

Fire Lieutenants are seen as role models, coaches, and mentors by their subordinates in the organization. The department as a whole encourages its officers to help mold and develop young fire fighters into the next generation of leaders. Alyn (2011) agreed that coaching, training and mentoring firefighters in an organization at various levels and positions becomes highly

beneficial to fire services and firefighters. Learning opportunities with a supportive climate creates an atmosphere where IC can be practiced. Each subordinate's needs and desires are better understood and identified.

Coaching under transformational leadership could be a particularly effective fit due to the way engine houses are set up throughout communities in the perspective cities. A coaching leader is one who is concerned with developing the skills of his or her subordinates. He/she supports the efforts of the team and excels at delegating duties and assignments. He/she helps subordinates to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to see their true potential as professional firefighters. He/she asks open-end questions that encourage participation in solving issues and concerns that affect them or the team as a whole (Chapman, Johnson, & Kilner, 2014). This creates opportunities for firefighters to learn about becoming a leader and reaching back to their fellow firefighters to mentor as well.

A coaching leader also sees underperformance and mistakes as an opportunity to train and learn for the next time (Chapman et al, 2014). Coaching gives a leader the ability to adapt their leadership style to a constantly changing environment by motivating employees to go the distance (Tapper, 2007). Coaching gives fire lieutenants the ability to help subordinates to see their strengths and weaknesses and helps them to build upon the positives towards becoming a successful firefighter. Through quarterly evaluations and continual feedback given both in the field and the engine houses, they are able to promote positive learning opportunities (Chapman et al, 2014). The leader's behavior shows the acceptance of each subordinate from private to driver (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Tourish (2013) agrees with the concept of IC, but warns that leaders who socially create a system of constraint, making it hard for subordinates to challenge or resist, is coercive persuasion. Tapper (2007) added that the biggest error made in coaching leadership is when a leader tries to be everything to everybody. Fire lieutenants experience resistance and setbacks when they try to be everything to everybody by appearing to know it all. Having transformational leadership training could help lieutenants realize that it is okay not to have all of the answers and instead point subordinates in the right direction of those who do know.

Understanding the needs and wants of each individual under his/her command helps a lieutenant delegate and seek others with the necessary experience for the task. Because of the hands-on focus of the fire service, little to no time is available to conduct training in role-playing exercises of conflict-based scenarios or ethical dilemmas that are faced every day on the job (Alyn, 2011). The only time this is actually seen in a practice scenario is during promotional examinations where the candidate sits and watches a video of the dilemma and afterwards recites how they would handle the situation as a lieutenant. The candidate's response comes from memorization as opposed to training and practice.

Alyn (2011) goes on to point out the importance of transformational leadership training and how it could create confidence in an individual firefighter to handle conflict and how to handle counseling subordinates. Without transformational leadership training being deeply rooted in a firefighter or leader, when discipline encounters or dilemmas arise during emergency situations, the firefighters and/or lieutenants will revert back to what they are familiar with, resulting in a bad outcome (Tapper, 2007; Alyn, 2011).

Having the leadership skills, knowledge and trust to lead the men and women under one's command could be an important part of making decisions in both emergency and non-emergency situations. The development of leaders for the fire service takes much effort, energy, time and patience. This requires the willingness of the coach to step outside of the cultural walls and train subordinates in ways that create opportunities for growth and understanding (Alyn, 2011). Transformational leadership development training, as presented by Bushe and Jackson (2007) and Alyn (2011), dictates that people simply cannot be trained only once and be expected to perform at a high level and solve the problems facing fire services today.

Deep-rooted training creates the desired motivation in people to train over and over again. In order for this training to be effective, trainees must practice the skills needed in the field repeatedly until it becomes a natural part of their subconscious. This allows for firefighters to revert positively in times of emergencies and conflict. Remembering guidelines and procedures has been the way of the fire services, but the rapidity of change with technology, people's educational level, changes in procedures, and reductions to training budgets have called for a change in the way the fire services develops leaders. Change in itself can sometimes appear to some as a simple process of establishing training programs for officers, but the reality is that when a culture is built on traditions and has deeply rooted values, leading and managing this change becomes difficult.

Alyn (2011) agreed with Tapper, (2007) and Bushe and Jackson, (2007) when they wrote about the challenges of creating change within an organization:

> Employees are being told to embrace change as a way of life, to move into a future that has no reality yet. It's asking a lot. Much of science and technology has been about

> creating predictability-learning causes and effects, finding out how to influence them and bring them under control of human beings. Now people are being told, "We don't know, we can't know, and you have to be productive while dealing with the uncertainty. Don't get too comfortable; it will probably be all different tomorrow." The major structural changes now occurring in organizations and their accompanying disorder are having a profound impact on the people who work in them (p. 1).

Change is a big part of how the fire services develops and implements transformational leadership training programs for the rank of lieutenants. Leaders of the future in fire services will require the proper guidance, mentorship, training, and coaching in order to become better equipped to lead.

Mentoring

Mentoring is another good fit under transformational leadership for public safety organizations. One of the common elements between mentoring and coaching is that they both establish a relationship between the one who is mentoring or coaching and the one who is receiving the training. O'Toole (2015) posited that coaching supports mentoring when developing someone for the transition to management. In the fire service culture, there are many instances where a leader chooses to mentor a subordinate or whether a subordinate asks a leader to help them through mentoring. This could mean helping them advance to the next promotional level or helping them become more fulfilled or better prepared for the job in their rank.

Although mentoring is often assumed to be a good thing, it can also become a disadvantage to others (Rolfe, 2014). When there are mentors who use different styles of leadership in an organization, they tend to mentor according to their style of doing things as

opposed to the adopted style of their organization. When this happens, the level of disappointment rises in individuals when their expectations are not met or opportunities are missed. This often happens when expectations are not well communicated up front and throughout the process of mentoring (Rolfe, 2014). Adopting the right leadership style for developing, motivating, coaching, mentoring, and training can increase one's adaptability to change and success.

Applying mentoring to the development of fire lieutenants improves the knowledge transfer of leadership. Short (2014) and Rolfe (2014) agreed that mentoring reflects how individuals learn to cope with and understand how to deal with change in their workplace. Mentoring is especially effective for generational groups who experience their world differently and who make up the big part of the management levels, both lower level and mid-level (Sharp, 2014). Using the element of mentoring in transformational leadership in the training development of fire lieutenants could increase their effectiveness in their decision-making, their interactions with their subordinates, and the overall job satisfaction as well.

Transformational Leadership Influence and Job Satisfaction

One of the four major areas of transformational leadership are IM, which focuses on getting others to be better at what they do. Transformational leadership plays an important part in how subordinates view their roles and achieve job satisfaction. Lieutenants are more comfortable working with their subordinate, which correlates to positive outcomes as noted in transformational leadership. The more a lieutenant displays this type of behavior, the more closely the group functions together in emergency situations. Each individual within the group knows all the expectations. "Transformational leadership requires us to create a "lens" that is

based on our purpose, vision, mission, and values and helps to determines what we commit to" (Kreuzer, 2016, p. 12).

Fire lieutenants who have not been exposed to transformational leadership training and have not been mentored by someone using transformational leadership skills tend to pass on behaviors that disrupt the team. As a result, when bad habits are transferred to their subordinates, they tend to accept such behavior as being the way the group is supposed to function. This type of knowledge transfer leads to confusion, bad training habits and often injuries that lead to loss of manpower.

Lieutenants who choose to work separately from the group (those who operate under transactional leadership) lose the closeness of the group operating as one in the field (Menon, 2014). Low job satisfaction is a byproduct of poor leadership, poor working conditions, low compensation, stress, and lack of resources (Smith, 2015 & Hockmeyer, 2015). Low job satisfaction could create behaviors that affect an organization in a negative way, hindering its operation.

Burns (1978) stated that transformational leadership starts when there is an interaction between a leader and his/her followers resulting in the positive creativity and motivation of an organization. Menon (2014) and Stinglhamber, Marique, Caesens, Hanin, & De Zanet, (2015) agreed that a leader who displays transformational leadership behavior has a direct influence on his or her subordinates' perception of job satisfaction. Jayawardena & Gregar's (2013) findings in their quantitative research study of 122 managers employed in the banking industry revealed that transformational leadership training has a positive effect on their employees and their career satisfaction.

Smith (2015) and Hockmeyer's (2015) findings confirmed positive levels of job satisfaction among employees when transformational leadership is used. Belle (2014) concluded from an experimental design of 138 participants that there is a positive correlation between service motivation, extra effort, persuasion, and transformational leadership. In a comparison of leadership styles that contribute to higher job satisfaction, Mujkic, A., Sehic, D., Rahimic, Z., & Jusic, J. (2014) conducted a quantitative research study using 399 participants from three businesses in Germany to find out the dominant leadership style. The research statistics revealed that the majority of the participants agreed that transformational leadership leads to higher job satisfaction. The approach of this study in terms of its relation to the current study was strong because, although it was not conducted using fire personnel, it did use participants from organizations that share similar thought processes concerning leadership. The weaknesses found from numerous other studies were that the organizations did not fit well in comparison with public safety in government.

Despite the positive effects of transformational leadership, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), which sets the national standards for the operations of fire services around the country does not suggest or recommend it or any other leadership styles. Although the use of these recognized standards are an important part of the fire services around the nation, the interpretation is left up to the administrative personnel in the fire services and the direction of the perspective department as a whole. The NFPA only sets the standards of what each individual should achieve in order to move to the next progression within the organization.

Transformational leadership training could help fire lieutenants to achieve their full potential and be inspired by developing their leadership skills and creating an environment of

learning in the workplace. Transformational leadership training could also help lieutenants to transfer the knowledge and skills of leadership to their subordinates while at the same time becoming better prepared to transition to the next progression within the organization, resulting in higher job satisfaction. Positive job satisfaction levels can improve follower retention within an organization given the right work environment and a desirable workplace. This could result in higher levels of morale within the followers as well as the leader (Hockmeyer, 2015; Menon, 2014; Mujkic, A., Sehic, D., Rahimic, Z., & Jusic, J., 2014 & Smith, 2015).

However, inadequate training, groupthink, lack of respect, and increased workloads are the negatives of transformational leadership and often lead to the counter-production of a desirable workplace (Tourish, 2013). This counter production affects job satisfaction, resulting in less desirable workplaces. A well-conditioned work environment is created as a byproduct of the relationship between job satisfaction and transformational leadership. Relationships in the workplace are enhanced through transformational leaders.

The communication of the leader helps subordinates to identify and understand the common practices and identity of the organization and its culture. It is this identity of the fire services culture that helps to motivate and create a strong bond between the lieutenant and his/her subordinates. By understanding the four components of transformational leadership, a lieutenant can build follower commitment (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Follower commitment is an important part of public safety because it builds trust and confidence in the team's effort to handle various emergency situations.

Job satisfaction among firefighters creates a positive atmosphere of learning in which the motivation to do a good job increases. Bartolo and Furlonger (2000) conducted a quantitative

research study on job satisfaction and leadership behavior among Australian Aviation Firefighters. The aim of this research study was to investigate the relationships of aviation fire fighters based on the hypotheses that job satisfaction is based on supervisor leadership behavior (Bartolo and Furlonger, 2000). They discovered that leadership behavior has a positive influence on job satisfaction.

This research study used information from previous studies conducted in the United States in order to gain a better understanding of how similar the culture was to its own in Australia. At the time of this research study, the accepted practice of fire service effectiveness was seen as being dependent upon supervisor leadership and the positive attitude of the employees (Bartolo & Furlonger, 2000). A total of 56 participants were used in the study along with the Leadership Behavior Questionnaire version 12 (LBQXII) to gather data in the study. This research tool was good in reliability and validity, making the results of this study sound.

The findings of this study were that leadership training leads to improved job satisfaction. The limitations in this research were that although they used various studies from similar organizations in the United States, they were not the most current studies available. In addition there were minor limitations from their own country and the fact that the research tool LBQXII version 12 used yielded validity in its findings (Bartolo & Furlonger, 2000).

In another similar study conducted by Eliophotou Menon, M. (2014), 438 secondary school teachers from the Republic of Cyprus were used in a research study to investigate the link between leadership behavior and job satisfaction from the teachers' perception. This qualitative study utilized the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) with a research finding revealing that there was a positive link to teachers' overall job satisfaction and leadership behaviors. The

limitations of this research study were that the teachers' perceptions were subjective, which weakens the validity of this study. However, much of the information about their behavior could be valuable in other research.

Transformational leadership occurs when leaders interact with followers to enhance creativity and motivation (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership training could bring a much-needed style of leadership that improves the effectiveness of lieutenants, resulting in better mentors for subordinates. During fire school, subordinates are taught the levels of the rank structure and how they are supposed to conduct themselves. They come in with many personalities, habits, thinking processes, education backgrounds and levels of experience.

The ability to measure the effectiveness of training in certain skill sets can only be achieved in the field after graduation as opposed to classroom testing. This is due to the immediate need in the field to replace newly promoted individuals or those who have retired or left their job. Training provides a means for new recruits to bond together as a team in order to respond effectively to emergency situations. The lieutenants' job is to support his or her subordinates in working to achieve the goals of the group and the department itself (Bethel, 2011). Leadership plays a powerful role in their subordinates' lives and job satisfaction.

Implementation of Transformational Leadership Training

Transformational leadership could be an important to the overall success of public safety services. Many leaders within the public safety organizations have been known to operate as transformational leaders. The reason for this is the high levels of success as well as the improved relationships built between the leader and their subordinates. In any organization, the development of personnel is a vital part of providing the value of services to the people. The

overall success of the fire services relies on the leadership training, skills, and knowledge of those leading the organization.

With every implementation of leadership skills and training comes challenges from older veterans and those who resist change. This resistance to change starts with those who hold the rank of Chief and above and those who sit at the administration level of the organization. These are the ones who set the tempo for the department as a whole. Many in this position consider transactional leadership to be the most efficient way of running the organization. They consider other leadership models to be for the individual lieutenants to master and utilize within their own engine houses.

These leadership skills are up to the discretion of the newly promoted or veteran lieutenant under the guide of the SOPs. The NFPA 1021 (2014) standards for Fire Officer I state that the only leadership training required is to know the fundamentals of leadership. There is no mention of a specific type of leadership or training needed in this area. The standard for preparing fire fighters around the country is the minimum requirements, only requiring that those desiring to become a lieutenant understand of the fundamentals (NFPA 1021, 2014).

The required standards and skills are more focused on transactional knowledge, skills, and traits in order to become an officer and not the skills and training required to lead men and women in both emergency and non-emergency situations. Bass (1990) stated, “Transactional leadership is a prescription for mediocrity. This is particularly true if the leader relies heavily on passive management-by-exception, intervening with his or her group only when procedures and standards for accomplishing tasks are not being met” (p. 20). Kreuzer (2016) posited that transactional leadership focuses more on production, budgets and projects for the organization.

Besides the reward and punishment aspect of this leadership style, it is more of a checklist of tasks to be completed.

One problem with transactional leadership is that it can leave a leader in the middle of the things that need to be taken care of. This leadership style lacks the ability to engage team efforts to achieve established goals for the organization (Kreuzer, 2016). This way of thinking holds true from the perspective of fire services both nationally, and internationally based on its rich traditions and adopted standards and policies. Written in the International Fire Code (IFC) (2009) are codes and city ordinances that mirror the SOPs (2016) and the NFPA 1021 (2014) Standards for Officer I concerning fire chiefs and lieutenants sharing similarities in job functions. In Chapter 1 of the IFC, it states:

> *104.11 Authority at fires and other emergencies*: The fire chief or officer of the fire department in charge at the scene of a fire or other emergency involving the protection of life or property or any part thereof, shall have the authority to direct such operation as necessary to extinguish or control any fire, perform any rescue operation, investigate the existence of suspected or reported fires, gas leaks or other hazardous conditions or situations, or take any other action necessary in the reasonable performance of duty. In the exercise of such power, the *fire chief* is authorized to prohibit any person, vehicle, vessel or thing from approaching the scene and is authorized to remove, or cause to be removed or kept away from the scene, any vehicle, vessel or thing which could impede or interfere with the operations of the fire department and in the judgment of the *fire chief*, any person not actually and usefully employed in the extinguishing of such fire or in the preservation of property in the vicinity thereof. (pp. 3–4)

This is what some administrations hold true in their interpretation of what fire fighters should know prior to being promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Once they are promoted they are required to attend a 6-week class on professional leadership development training while working in the field. As for the rank of chief, they are given ongoing training year round in transformational leadership. At the same time it is written that the two ranks share identical responsibilities.

The effect of transformational leadership development on the rank of fire lieutenants has been measured in various ways from studies of organizations similar in management and various levels of leadership. Transformational leadership training has been implemented in several fire services and similar organizations and has shown positive results from middle rank management level and above. Bhandarker, & Rai, (2015) studied the chairman and director, which represent upper management, at a public sector bank in India. Transformational leadership led to a positive organizational climate in the bank.

Evans, (2013); Valero, Jung, & Andrew (2015) studied transformational leadership and organizational resiliency among respondents working in the emergency management department of fire services and police stations located in the Southeastern Economic Region of South Korea and the United States. Transformational leadership has been implemented in the health care sector of Germany (Gregersen, Vincent-Höper, & Nienhaus, 2014); with senior managers in Seoul Metropolitan Government (Kim, & Yoon, 2015); with school principals in school systems located in Israel and the United States (Nir & Hameiri, 2014; McKinney, Labat, Myron & Labat, 2015); in gas and oil companies of the United Arab Emirates government (Al Shamsi, Ali Obaid, Dixon, Hossan, & Papanastassiou, 2015); in fire services in the United States (Alyn, 2010;

Culver, 2015); with aviation fire fighters in Australia (Bartolo, & Furlonger, 2000); and in public services in the United States (Bellé, 2014).

The implementation of transformational leadership by leaders has provided a better working atmosphere among workers. In today's complex working groups and organizations, followers want to be challenged more and be empowered by their leaders who are also willing to help guide them through environments of uncertainty (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Alyn, 2010; Evans, 2013; Eliophotou Menon, 2014; Culver, 2015; Jordan, Werner, & Venter, 2015). The U.S. military was more noted for transformational leadership during Bass & Riggio's (2006) early research.

Now transformational leadership has become the key component in the success of organizations around the world. Leaders are challenged to create positive social exchange among their followers and coach and motivate them into doing extraordinary things that they never thought possible. Fire lieutenants who have been taught the principles of transformational leadership through courses taken off the job are at times seen taking subordinates under their wing to train, coach, and motivate them for the various job functions. Lieutenants coach subordinates through their diverse duties and responsibilities, including understanding the rules and regulations, executing duties and responsibilities during and after emergency calls, mastering fire fighting techniques learned through advanced training, and applying disciplinary actions when warranted. The subordinate soon becomes just as knowledgeable as the fire lieutenant (Tapper, 2007; Hargis et al., 2011; Evans, 2013; Guay, 2013; Alyn, 2010; Alyn 2011).

One of the downsides to this positive influence on followers is that fire lieutenants lack the understanding or are not taught how to handle conflicts from within the organization.

Oftentimes, the perception of showing favoritism causes criticism and makes the fire lieutenant's job very complex. A case study by Franklin (2014) looked at 3 lessons for successful transformational change in organizations. The study took place in London and its focus was the implementation of transformational leadership to increase the value of organizations. The limitation to this study was that the executive coach used was not a full-time employee, but only part-time. This created a weakness in the study because the executive coach was not around to see the various changes within the organization's culture.

However, the findings revealed a lack of support from upper management and no cooperation in the time needed to implement any change initiatives to the organizations. The choice of methodology was good in that it targeted a specific case study to use as its basis for implementing change. The executive coach used in the study was not valid because of his employment level within the organization. This study showed the positives of organizations that buy in to change initiatives when support from the top is well received.

Tourish (2013) stated that when a leader's behavior becomes exaggerated it damages the leader's ability to influence others and could cause harm to not only that leader, but also to the organization itself. "Transformational leadership can be learned and it can and should be the subject of management training and development. Research has shown that leaders at all levels can be trained to be charismatic" (Bass, 1990, p. 27). Transformational leadership programs, along with other leadership strategies, could create a healthy environment (Thorne, 2013). Fire lieutenants are the one level of management in the public safety field where transformational leadership training has been overlooked. Advancing this leadership training to the lower rank

levels of officers could increase the overall effectiveness of the organization in critical decision-making and to better prepare them to ascend to the next rank in progression.

Summary

This chapter delineated transformational leadership as the conceptual foundation of leadership and the motivational aspect as it relates to fire lieutenants. Transactional leaders in fire services utilize rewards and punishments to promote compliance among their subordinates. The focus centers more on the supervisor's role in the organization and his or her responsibility for group performance. This has been shown through the day-to-day operation of the fire services. Transformational leaders on the other hand operate in four areas of leadership behavior: II, IC, IS, and IM. Transformational leaders get their followers to look beyond their self-interests and inspire them to achieve great things by stirring their emotions in positive ways. They set clear goals, are good visionaries, and have high expectations for growth within themselves as well as others.

Transformational leadership, as demonstrated in the research of many different organizations, could be an effective leadership style to be adopted through leadership training by those holding the rank of fire lieutenant. The results of this leadership training could also have positive effects on job satisfaction, decision-making, and job performance in the fire services. The current literature proposes that public safety organizations could improve upon their leadership at the level of lower management by providing transformational leadership training is provided. Transformational leadership could also improve the culture of transactional leadership when the two are combined. Researchers agree that leadership plays a powerful role in

subordinates' lives when their habit becomes a behavior and when leaders motivate subordinates to be successful.

This study filled a gap in literature on the influence of transformational leadership training on fire lieutenants by looking at current leadership training practices for upper management within the fire services and identifying opportunities to implement training. The transformational leadership model has been studied in police and fire services, hospitals, educational facilities, and militaries. Based on the research of transformational leadership, this study produced data that sheds light on whether it is the right fit for the rank of fire lieutenants. Chapter 2 provided the literature review relating to the background knowledge and research questions. To determine the appropriateness of transformational leadership on the rank of fire lieutenants, a qualitative phenomenological study was designed and discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and describe the common meaning of the seven fire lieutenants' lived experiences to understand the effects transformational leadership on their development and how it prepares them to be better leaders. These seven fire lieutenants were the subject matter of sociology and it is the meanings of their stories and experience that are best given by the individuals who experienced them (Kim, 2016; Patton, 2002). For this research, I described, through rich description, the participants' lived experiences as leaders in the fire department and their shared understanding of transformational leadership training.

The lived experience of these seven research participants included their work history, job performance, duties and responsibilities, and job satisfaction. The research questions that I investigated were as follows:

RQ1: In what ways could transformational leadership training affect the transition from lower-level management to mid-level management in fire departments?

RQ2: What are the critical success factors from the lived experiences that inform skills and competency development of fire lieutenants in the fire department?

RQ3: How do mentoring and coaching influence the advancement of lower-level management to mid-level management?

In this chapter, I will clearly and accurately explain the research method design and how I conducted the research itself. I will explain why I chose the phenomenological research design for this study. I will then describe the methodology of this study, the setting, my role as the

researcher; participant selection, data collection and analysis, ethical procedures, trustworthiness, research creditability, and threats to validity. Finally, I will conclude and summarize the chapter.

Study Setting

The research and implementation of a transformational leadership-training program has been a success in various organizations similar to the fire services. Police and educational organizations were the most similar to fire organizations based on management level. Numerous research studies have described the success of transformational leadership training programs implemented in the fire services as well. However, limited research exists on lower-level management, specifically with the rank of fire lieutenants. I was interested in determining how the influence of transformational leadership could improve the job performance of fire lieutenants. If the success of leadership training improves the performance of fire chiefs and those ranking higher in the fire services, and fire lieutenants share similar responsibilities, then this training could prove invaluable for fire lieutenants. I relied on the lived experience and stories of fire lieutenants.

Fire lieutenants I chose for this study were currently employed by the fire department at the time of the study. At the time of the study, each fire lieutenant operated in separate fire and engine houses. The seven lieutenants interviewed separately, and they spoke freely about the responsibilities of the fire chiefs holding hearings, disciplinary procedures, community relations with the fire department, and the enforcement of the rules and regulations and how they as fire lieutenants are held to the same standards of the chiefs for their subordinates as well. Each fire lieutenant is also responsible for drivers, privates, paramedics, and all of the training associated with each personnel.

Research Design and Rationale

In qualitative research, cases are made from the theoretical gap establishing the reasons as to why the research questions are important (Barnham, 2015). Qualitative research does not begin from a predetermined starting point like quantitative research, but rather it involves interconnection and interactions among its components (Maxwell, 2013). Quantitative research builds theory by developing hypotheses to test on the front end of the study, similar to how qualitative research establishes its case on the front end (Barnham, 2015).

The method of inquiry for this research was the phenomenological approach. The phenomenological research approach was the most appropriate for this research because it was a way to access participants' life experiences, focusing on what each of the participants had in common as they experienced the phenomenon (Patton 2002; Kim, 2016). Patton (2002) stated, "First, the researcher must have personal and intense interest in the phenomenon under study" (p. 107). Kim (2016) asked, "Can we really arrive at the essence of the phenomenon studied without any influence from a researcher's own preconceived ideas?" (p. 56) Phenomenology, according to Kim, is the essence of lived experience where "I" is the center of the experience.

A mixed-method approach was not appropriate for this research study because the focus of my research study was to explore and describe the lived experience of the participants. The quantitative part of mixed methods seeks to quantify part of the research, which is not the intent of the qualitative research method. In mixed-method research, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods explores a research problem in several ways. This method of research has significant advantages in its construct, but the qualitative phenomenological research design was the best option for my research study.

Quantitative research was not the best approach for my study because the quantitative approach focuses on a large sampling size of randomly selected participants, using statistical measures to prove or disapprove hypothesis. In my research, the aim was to answer the research questions as opposed to accepting or rejecting a hypothesis. The focus of my study was not to quantify the participants' experiences, but to understand these experiences in greater depth.

Five qualitative approaches exist, of which I determined the phenomenological research study would be the most suitable for this study. The ethnography approach was not considered because its focus is on culture of people. Ethnography is also a collection of behavior patterns and beliefs that makes up a culture. The research aim for this study was to look at seven individuals, as opposed to a group of people, and the results of ethnographical research would not answer the research questions well. Case study is about developing an in-depth analysis of an event or program, whether being one case study or multiple cases. The narrative inquiry approach came close, but it is best at bringing understanding to the experiences told by the participants. A narrative inquiry focuses on the lived experience of an individual in detailed organizational structure of narrative events given through a story.

After looking at the five qualitative research approaches, I determined that the phenomenology approach was the best choice, because this research method is about gaining a deeper understanding of an experience through in-depth inquiry with people who have experienced a phenomenon. It is this method that was best suited to answer this study's research questions. This study was aimed at understanding and describing the lived experiences of persons who have taken part in a transformational leadership program in the fire service and how its influence could affect their subordinates. As a result, the qualitative research method with a

phenomenological research study was the most appropriate approach for me to conduct this research study.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research studies, the role and responsibility of the researcher conducting the study is to gather and recruit participants, obtain their consent to participate in the study, obtain the necessary materials and supplies for the researcher and the participants, and for the collection of data. After the collection of data, the researcher must have the necessary tools to analyze, interpret, and summarize the information. One of the most important steps I took as a researcher was to make sure that the participants and their information are protected and preserved through confidentiality.

I made sure that I avoided collecting any information that could possibly be tied back to any participants in the research study, and I utilized pseudonyms. Pseudonyms were also applied to all identifying research reports to further reduce the risk of breaching confidentiality. For the seven participants who took part in the research, their email addresses and any information of their description as it related to their job title, age, and gender were protected. I only gathered information to help validate the seven participants who were interviewed. All threats to validity were addressed as well as the avoidance of bias in the study that could have been introduced through conclusions drawn from preconceived ideas.

As the researcher I was involved in all stages of the study. Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, & Cheraghi (2014) stated that, “researchers are involved in all stages of the study from defining a concept to design, interview, transcription, analysis, verification and reporting the concepts and themes” (p. 2). In cases of untimely events involving research

participants that might necessitate immediate referral, stoppage of the data collection, responding to breached confidentiality, or the management of a new conflict of interest, the three governing agencies for the City of Memphis: The Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) were informed of my research. This includes only the basics involving the type of study, position of the participants, age range, and the minimum years of service in rank. No names or other pertinent information that could compromise the privacy and confidentiality of the research were or will be shared. These steps were taken to ensure each participant's health, safety, and security.

Each agency has strict confidentiality and privacy standards in place set by both state and federal laws where information is only privy between them and the participant(s). Even I as the researcher was allowed access to any information of any kind. If their intervention had been required at any time during the research data collection any information obtained that was not in direct relation to the study would have been destroyed immediately unless one of the three governing agencies listed above required only the information related to their intervention. As it was, this was not necessary. Any breach of confidentiality, new risks, conflicts of interest, or data collections concerns would have resulted in a stoppage of the research until the concerns were addressed in accordance with the guidelines set by the IRB of Walden University. I kept the IRB up to date on any changes in the research that affected its outcome.

In the phenomenological study, I explored and described the participants' lived experiences, translate them into words, categorize the themes, and put them in writing (Kim, 2016; Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, & Cheraghi, 2014). I served as the research instrument for the collection of primary data. In addition to being the data collection instrument

for this study, I also coded information that I collected, and interpreted, analyzed, and presented the data. I sent an informed consent form to the seven participants, which covered each step in detail as to why and how the study was to be conducted from start to finish. The participants had the opportunity to contact me prior to signing the form. I then handpicked the seven participants (I originally picked 20 but concluded the interviews after seven due to data saturation) using personnel files from training that were opened to the public for review. As an added back-up plan to the selection of the seven participants, the remaining 13 were set aside in case more were needed to ensure that all interviews were completed.

Each participant was given the informed consent form delivered by hand. Once signed, they were able to either scan the form into a PDF file and send it back to me by email or turn it in to me in person prior to the interview. I then contacted the seven fire lieutenants individually and set up an interview with each of them separately. I then asked them the open-ended interview questions (see Appendix B). Once each of the participants completed their interviews with me, I transferred the information from the recordings into hand written notes, organized them, and assign an identification number(s) to all of the notes taken from the interviews. Once this was completed I transferred the notes from the interview results into NVivo11 and organized them by categories, recorded the common themes, and summarized them.

I also maintained a professional relationship with each of the participants and made sure that those participating in the study have not had a direct working relationship or any known contact with me for at least 8 years. This was important because not doing so could have caused bias in the research from participants possibly answering questions thinking that the study would bring corrective change to a situation on the job. There were no participants in this study who

worked in the training department or out of the fire marshal's office where I had been working for the last 11 years.

Each participant in the study participated strictly on a volunteer basis, and they were free to stop at any time before, during, or after with no questions asked. There was no coercion issues or concern with the participants of the research study. Although I worked within the organization of fire services where the study took place, my rank was the same as that of the seven participants. The department that was studied was separate from my department, and I have had little to no communications or interaction with the department being studied. There was no pressure to participate from myself or any supervisors, managers, or chiefs.

One of the most dangerous threats to a study's validity is a researcher's bias. Maxwell (2013) stated that subjectivity of the researcher is known as bias and "understanding how a researcher's values and expectations may have influenced the conduct and conclusions of the study positive or negative can be damaging" (p. 124). Identifying possible bias and addressing how I dealt with it for the research was key to the success of the study (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2002).

I took steps to ensure that my biases were identified and handled prior to the selection of participants. My department of fire prevention operates in a separate addressed building and location from all 55-fire houses where each of the participant resided at the time of the study. In my position as training officer, I had very little to no interactions and communication with these firehouses for the last 11 years. No participant selected had a training officer background or any similar job functions as my own. I applied what is called phenomenological reduction (epoche) to ensure that the knowledge acquired in the study was based on nonjudgmental, outer awareness

of the world (Kim, 2016). I withheld all claims and personal judgments and set aside all personal views, knowledge, and assumptions in order to focus on the participants' story, lived experiences, and views.

Ethical concerns in research were an ongoing process that I addressed throughout the research study. Maxwell (2013) believed that every aspect of one's research design should include ethical concerns, such as one's goals, validity issues, and selection of research questions chosen for a study. I made every possible effort to protect participants' identity and information along with the confidentiality agreement. I made sure information was given to each participant outlining the research study in detail and I made sure they understand any and all risks along with the benefits associated with the study. This final role as a researcher continued until the research was completed and will continue until the end of the five-year limit.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

For this study I chose and recruited seven research participants where the phenomenological study focused on their lived experiences. These participants included both engine (10) and truck (10) fire lieutenants who helped to validate the research itself. I purposefully selected the fire services organization as the research site in the central United States to conduct my dissertation research study. This sample size of seven participants helped to improve the validity of this research study and this is where data saturation occurred.

My research purpose for this phenomenological research study was to describe and explore the lived experience of persons trained in transformational leadership and how its influence could affect lower-level management. These seven research participants brought

additional validation, with data gathered from those who have participated in the leadership program and those without participation experience. A criterion was used for the sampling selection of the participants. Before starting this process, a letter was sent to the director of fire services requesting permission to conduct my research in the organization and have open access to training files for the selection of research participants to take part in an interview.

The seven research participants were chosen using public information files kept in the training department of the fire services. Because of the different departments and separate roles within fire services I targeted the suppression department, which has the largest number of fire lieutenants in the organization. From their training records, I picked at random 20 participants 10 of whom worked as lieutenants in the engine companies and 10 of whom worked as lieutenants in the truck companies. The actual number of participants that were interviewed was seven (four engine company and three truck company lieutenants).

The reason for the divided number of participants was to explore, understand, and describe the lived experience and the influence that the leadership developmental program had on their rank in terms of job satisfaction, job functions, relationships with their subordinates and community, and critical thinking behavior during emergency incidents. There was no need to adjust the number of research participants because data saturation was achieved with seven of the initial 20 participants, meaning there is no new emergence of information. During the separate face-to-face interview, I asked each of the seven fire lieutenants open-ended questions carefully designed to allow them to respond openly.

For this study, I set aside my personal views of fire services and I was able to objectively review all of the participants' responses. Patton (2002) and Kim (2016) both agreed that learning

from what we observe with our own lens helps us to better distinguish and describe what is before us. By using *epoche,* from the Greek word meaning "to abstain or refrain from judgment," I was better able to understand the stories from the seven fire lieutenants' perspective on their lived experiences and provide an accepted explanation of the observed phenomenon.

Utilizing the process of epoche, I conducted the interviews carefully by observing the participants' facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice in their response to the questions. This process of observation took place before, during, and after the face-to-face interviews. During the interviews, I took written notes and confirmed their accuracy with the participants. This process was repeated twice until all of the questions were answered and confirmed by the participants. Once I was satisfied that I had reached data saturation at the seventh research participant, I started the organization and coding process of the data collected. Janesick (2016) suggested that, after the interviews, a researcher should analyze and code all transcriptions to reveal what themes emerge immediately. As such, I hand-coded all data from the face-to-face interviews and organized them into categories.

Instrumentation

From a qualitative point of view, data saturation occurs when questions produce the same responses. Saturation is a very helpful tool to use at the conceptual level as guidance in estimating sample sizes. Saturation is necessary when it comes to conducting quality research (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, n.d.). Saurez-Ortega (2013) and Kim (2016) agreed that researchers reach a point of saturation when no new knowledge is revealed from new interview data.

For this research study, I conducted interviews with the seven participants face-to-face to collect the research data. The seven participants were given the informed consent forms by hand

and included a detailed explanation of my plan to use their life story in a research study. I further explained the risks and benefits of being a part of my research study and went over their right to stop the research at any time should they feel uncomfortable with the study or in the direction they feel it was going. I scheduled a meeting with them separately in person two to three days later and went over the informed consent form again with each one in case any additional questions or concerns came up in the meantime.

I also asked each participant if they needed additional time to think it over before signing the form. Once the two participants agreed to be a part of the research study, I scheduled a time to meet with each participant at a location of their choosing to conduct the interviews. I conducted the interview with the questions designed for the study (see Appendix B) and recorded significant aspects of the environment as well as the participants' non-verbal expressions and language.

I used opened-ended interview questions to explore and describe the lived experience of each of the participants and gain the insights of their daily lives. The focus was on transformational leadership and how it influences the transition from lower-level management to mid-level management. This study uncovered enough data to delineate the emerging themes concerning the participants' lived experience of transformational leadership and training.

Adjustments were made from the original sample size from 20 participants to seven due to no new information emerging from the study. As a result data saturation was reached with the seven participants (four from the engine and three from the truck companies). The evidence of data saturation is the lack of new emerging data (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013;

Zhang, 2016). I ended the data gathering from the research because no new knowledge emerged and data saturation was reached.

Pilot Study

Because interpretations of instructions, questions, and responses differ from person to person, it was essential to take the necessary steps to ensure clarity on the part of the interviewer. Maxwell (2013) said, "try to put yourself in your interviewee's place and imagine how you would react to these questions and get feedback from others on how they think the questions will work" (p.101). In order for me to be able to ask interview questions to the research participants, I first had to become the participant myself. I tested out the questions on myself first and anticipated possible responses. I recorded my responses and pilot tested my interview questions with 2 people in the fire services who were not a part of the research study. Each practice participant went through the same process as the real participants by interviewing with me face-to-face, in a neutral location, and one at a time.

The aim was to get a realistic picture of how the study could go. I explained to the participants of the pilot study that this was only a practice session to help me prepare for the research study. They were not given full disclosure of the study or any information that could threaten the study by way of possibly knowing the real participants. I asked the series of the interview questions without bias and recorded their responses by hand only. This pilot study took place at a radius of 10 square miles outside of the research study area. This ensured the research study's validity was maintained. Based on the pilot participants' responses and feedback, I made revisions to the questions to ensure that the directions and questions asked are clear and

understandable, leading to the desired responses (Maxwell, 2013). I obtained my Walden's IRB approval with approval number prior to this pilot study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I first gained permission from the director of fire services to conduct my research in the central United States. I then recruited seven participants who were interested in taking part in the research study. The potential participants had to meet the inclusion criteria before taking part in the study. The prerequisites for the participants to join the study were a minimum of 8 years of experience in the fire services with a rank of fire lieutenant and familiarity with or training in transformational leadership. Next, ten of the participants came from the fire truck side (lieutenants who were responsible for laddering buildings, forming a rescue team for fallen fire fighters, and cutting power for safety) and the other ten participants came from the fire engine side of fire services (who are responsible for the extinguishment of all fires). Each participant needed to be able to answer the interview questions.

I recruited the participants from the fire suppression department using the purposeful sampling technique. The sample size of seven participants helped validate their lived experience. If any of the participants had decided to back out of the study for any reasons, I had a contingency plan in place where I would have been able to pull additional participants from the 360 fire lieutenants within the same department. If all of the 360 possible participants had refused, and then I would have utilized fire lieutenants from the surrounding municipalities until the proposed sample number was achieved. The director of fire services received no specific names as to who I asked to participate other than the rank pool of participants.

The request to conduct a research study within my organization (see Appendix A) was hand delivered to the director of fire services prior to my research. Once I obtained her permission to ask the fire lieutenants to be involved in my research study, I gave each fire lieutenant the informed consent form in person, explaining the purpose of my research, the benefits associated with it, and the risks involved. The request also indicated the duration of the interview, which was approximately 60 minutes. I asked each participant to review and sign and the form before the start of the interview.

Once all of the consent forms and permission to conduct research were completed, I scheduled the appointments with the fire lieutenants. I then gathered all the tools and supplies needed for the interview such as: a portable keyed safe, loose paper, pencils, pens, recorder pen, digital recorder for back-up, iPad tablet, portable hot spot for a secure Wi-Fi connection, highlighters, a folder, interview questions, tissue, extra batteries, and a backpack to hold all of my tools and supplies. I also brought some finger snacks and water to help relieve hunger pains in case the interviews ran over the allotted time. I made sure that I showed professionalism and politeness and was very courteous to all of the participants. After the interviews, I transcribed the information, deriving rich meaning from the lived experiences of both participants.

During the interview I wrote down each of the responses on individual sheets of paper, marked by a colored number so that I could organize them quickly as the interview went on. I also recorded the interviews with a recordable pen and a digital voice recorder as a backup, to ensure that I captured every word spoken in the interview. The audio files were stored so that they could be referenced in case important details were missed during the transcription process.

While taking my notes during the interview, I listened to each of the participants attentively and from time to time repeated back to them what I heard to ensure that I had captured all of the information being shared. My goal was to capture the full story along with all accurate information needed in order to code. Everything that was written down was kept in a folder with a coded identification on it to prevent it from getting mixed up with data from another participant or being accidently misplaced or lost. After conducting each interview, I placed the information in a separate labeled accordion file and locked it up in a secured case prior to leaving the interview.

Once I returned to my residence, I took the information from the interview and coded it immediately with a pseudonym to conceal the identity of the participant. I took off names, addresses, phone numbers, dates and times, and anything that could possibly be used to trace or identify the participant(s). I also informed the participant prior to leaving the interview of my plans to safeguard their identity as well as all the information shared. This process was repeated for all participants in the research study.

As I concluded the interview, I informed the participant(s) that at times information received via recordings and physical writing may miss something that could be an important part to the study or I may need to ask additional questions for clarity at times. I asked the participant(s) whether they would they be willing answer follow-up questions by phone or in person. In cases when I found that there is no need for a second session with the participant(s) then I sent them a copy of the information shared to ensure accuracy. This way, the participants were ensured and understand that were in control of their information all the way to the end, and the integrity of the research study was maintained throughout.

Steps were taken to reduce the threat of coercion concerns and other issues to an absolute minimum before, during, or after the research study, with the collection of data and with the participants. Several measures were put in place to ensure that there were no connections with the director and subordinates, supervisor and subordinates, or my direct supervisor and students, and that there were no relationships between any of the seven participants. This helped to reduce any issues of bias, power concerns, or possible conflicts of interest. The purpose of obtaining written permission from the director to reach out to her people was to first make sure the director understood that the naming of any possible participants would threaten the overall validity and reliability of the research study. The director was also informed of the dangers that bias could create for the research if she talked to anyone or asked questions to the participants about the study before, during, or after the research was completed.

Data Analysis Plan

For my research, I hand-coded the data with the help of the latest NVivo11 program to find the patterns and themes. The NVivo11 program helped me to make sense of the unstructured data collected during the research. Kim (2016) posited that finding the right method for data analysis should be enlightened and contingent upon the phenomenological research design and genre. I read through the data collected several times to summarize what I saw and establish what Maxwell (2013) and Kim (2016) called “chunks of data” into categories. Maxwell (2013) added that open coding in the review of the data allows for themes to emerge naturally.

I also used what Maxwell (2013) described as “axial coding” because it can identify the relationships amid open coding. To ensure that I was correctly categorizing the data in NVivo11, I attended tutorial sessions of NVivo11, stayed in constant contact with their help department,

and reached out to other researchers from the university to assist in my understanding. Once I understood the process, I started to categorize the data and reveal the themes and patterns in the data.

NVivo11 also helped me to mitigate any bias I had or developed during the research because it works specifically with the data that has been uploaded. As a validation step I went over the information several times and had another researcher from a university review the information uploaded for advice, which helped me as a researcher stay objective towards the study.

The NVivo11 program was used after writing out the data from both of the interviews and categorizing them. I looked for the emerging themes prior to looking at the results from NVivo11. For better clarity and understanding, I narrowed down the data gathered from two interview participants into informational data that was relevant to the research questions. I wanted to make sure that there was no misunderstanding about the information the participants shared prior to using the NVivo11 program to look for themes and patterns.

Based on the interviews from the seven fire lieutenants, I drew conclusions about the influence of transformational leadership on the rank of fire lieutenants. Chapter 4 will include the findings of this research data analysis and study, which will consist of the data collected, themes, patterns, and relationships. Chapter 5 will include the discussion of the research findings, its interpretations, recommendations for future research studies, implementation of findings to the studied organization, and implications of positive social change.

Issues of Trustworthiness

When establishing validity in a study, oftentimes the phrase "trustworthiness" comes up regarding the established integrity throughout the research. Patton (2002), Smith & Noble (2014), and Kim (2016) posited that general qualitative strategies such as audit trails and member checks are often utilized to establish trustworthiness in phenomenological research. Beal (2013) saw trustworthiness as a concept of validity in a phenomenological research assuming an objective reality. Zhang (2016) posited that a qualitative study is credible when it is dependable, but is only transferable when it is credible. Maintaining the trustworthiness of this qualitative research study was very important for me. I did this by engaging several methods and tools as detailed below.

Credibility

Credibility is the trustworthiness of the researcher, the views of the participants, and the research data and its interpretation. Patton (2002) and Cope (2014) agreed that credibility is dependent upon three elements: rigorous methods, the credibility of the researcher, and the philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry. In this qualitative research study, I made sure that the methodological method was chosen to fit the problem statement and purpose. Beal (2013) argued that the researcher must make sure that he/she explains adequately the unfold events in the study and that the explanation of outcome has been achieved from the story. Zhang (2016) added that a research study is credible when people outside of study share the same experience. Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013) argued that the enhancement of credibility comes from prolonged engagement and persistent observation. The computer-assisted

data analysis software program NVivo11 helped to increase the overall trustworthiness and credibility of this qualitative research study.

Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy (2013) and (Yilmaz, 2013) posited that credibility gives a broader and deeper understanding of the research issue. Credibility is increased when data collected from multiple sources are found to be consistent (Patton, 2002; Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013; Kim, 2016). Qualitative research can be very complex to researchers and should focus more on the things that matter (Cope, 2014). Zhang (2016) stated, "progressive focusing is considered well suited for qualitative research." Computer assisted-assisted data analysis software like NVivo11 can help with the challenges of trustworthiness in qualitative research studies (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). However, an inconsistency found in the data is an opportunity to see deeper into the inquiry approach and the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2002). The greater the credibility of the research study, the less opportunity there is for bias to show up.

Peer debriefing is another strategy that some authors use to support the credibility of their findings (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). With this strategy, another expert or colleague from outside of the study is used to aid in the support of credibility. This is achieved when research data is taken and the expert or colleague is asked to code the data and look at the logical path taken (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). If the colleague or expert researcher comes up with the same or similar findings, then the credibility is strengthened.

A researcher is cautioned not to have the external colleague or expert to come up with the exact same coding and structure as he or she used, which weakens the research study and its credibility. Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013) and Cope (2014) both pointed out that

there are no two researchers that will see and interpret data the same way. Another challenge to this type of research strategy is finding the expert or external colleague to take the time and help out in a research study, especially one that is being conducted by a doctoral student. Time, availability and the willingness to assist is a big challenge on its own when it comes to this strategy.

The last strategy of credibility involves having the actual participants read and verify the information collected from them. This is called member checking. It is the obligation of qualitative researchers to allow the participants full access to all information that they contributed to the research study (Janesick, 2016). Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy (2013) and Zhang (2016) posited that credibility is increased when the participants read the information from their own interviews and verify the accuracy of the data collected from them. Janesick (2016) added that it is always a good idea to have a copy of the dissertation handy for the participants to read.

Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013) argued that having participants give feedback on the final data analysis could be very challenging. Information that has been abstracted from the participants and synthesized will lead to the confusion of the participants understanding their information. The aim is to have participants read and review their information after the transcription of the data as opposed to the analysis (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). This will help to keep the study simple and less confusing for the participants.

In this dissertation research study, I used member checking as one of my strategies because this helped to strengthen the credibility of this study. I also used rich description, which

helps readers to experience and understand the thinking, emotions, feelings and actions of the seven participants, and this helped to enhance its credibility even more (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). I checked with each participant at the end of each interview to go over the notes written and recorded and my interpretation of each one of their written transcripts.

After the last interview, I followed up with each of the participants and went over all of the information and my interpretation of their stories and the meanings of their answers to the interview questions. I made sure that I captured the meanings of their answers. As part of the process of member checking, I made sure that the interview participants received the transcriptions of the interviews to review and allow them to ask questions. I also asked the participants whether I interpreted their stories and meanings correctly and accurately in order to validate the information collected.

Throughout the entire process of member checking, the interview participants were reassured that the information would remain confidential and that their identities would continue to be protected and that any time they wished to withdraw from the study, that they would be able to do so without any comments or questions. Using member checking and rich description helped in the enhancement of both rigor and credibility of this study. The transparency of this research study created a trusting relationship between the participants and myself that led, as far as I could tell, to participants opening up with honest and true answers in their interviews, which in turn increased the credibility of this study.

Transferability

One of the aims of this phenomenological research study was to achieve transferability. Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013) stated that transferability is determined by original

context so that the findings can be transferred to other groups or settings. Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013) and Zhang (2016) posited that to achieve transferability, the researcher must be able to give readers as much information from the research situation as possible so they can decide if there are similarities to their own. Cope (2014) agreed that transferability is achieved when enough information is given by the researcher to help readers determine if the findings are transferable to other settings or situations. Cope also stated that if the information in the research is relevant in the generalization of the phenomenon or subject, then it has met the criterion of transferability. Transferability was the main construct for this research study due to its applicability for individuals and small groups.

The technique suggested for the phenomenological research study is rich description, the basis for the analysis and reporting of findings. Patton (2002) stated that a good description takes readers into the setting that is being described through rich description. Looking through the lived experience of others requires the type of discipline to write exactly how the story is being told. This creates opportunity for readers to see themselves as the character of the story in such a way that they understand the experience through similarities in their own lives.

Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy (2013) posited that, for judgments to be made the original context of the research, the study must be described as accurately as possible. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Zhang (2016) agreed that phenomenon described in great details using rich description helps to evaluate how research conclusions are transferable to other situations, time, people and settings. By doing this, researchers are able to understand and draw their own interpretations about the significance and meanings (Patton, 2002).

For my phenomenological research study, the readers will determine from the original context if in fact transferability has been achieved. The sample size that I chose and recruit for this study was 20 interview participants, which was reduced to seven after reaching data saturation. This sample size is considered small in relation to generalization, which requires a larger group sample size. The seven participants worked well for transferability in this study. The findings and conclusions from this research study are not expected to make a huge impact on other similar organizations or settings through transferability. However, the limitations are great in larger organizations and settings, but there could be an impact in smaller organizations and settings given the outcome of the study. Zhang (2016) stated that it is unwise to assume that transferability from a research study using a limited small sample size could be achieved in comparison to larger populations in other parts of the world.

For future research studies, I will expect researchers to add to the knowledge taken from this study. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to gain a better understanding of the effects of transformational leadership training on fire lieutenants through the lived experiences of fire lieutenants. This study helped to identify the emergent themes from their interview responses by way of face-to-face contact. The emergent themes from the research bring much needed understanding to how transformational leadership influences the rank of fire lieutenants. The emergent themes and findings from this study could lead to more studies along this topic and could possibly be used to study much larger organizations and settings around the world.

Dependability

Dependability is the process of applying research strategies such as justification and selection to clearly explain the effectiveness, as evaluated by the researcher and confirmed by an auditor (Yilmaz, 2013). Lincoln and Guba (1985) agreed that dependability is the consistency of the research findings. Utilizing computer software helps to increase the level of dependability by running the necessary queries to locate all passages that match the criteria (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). When validating the dependability of the study, a constant check of the data has to be made to watch out for any bias that could come up, as bias could threaten the dependability of the research study.

One of the research components used to lessen the impact of bias is the use of an external auditor or audit trail. Lincoln and Guba (1985); Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy (2013); Yilmaz (2013); and Zhang (2016) described an external auditor as someone who is outside of a research study who looks over the research data, processes, and findings. One of the drawbacks to using an external auditor is the possible difference of interpretation of the research data. The second one is the understanding by the external auditor as it relates to the information collected, which could cause confusion with the data. Zhang (2016) posited that an external auditor may not share the same viewpoints and may not be as engaged in the research as the original researcher of the study, making the process more difficult. Patton (2002) suggested that the use of an audit trail, which will give a detailed account of the study's steps, would help to decrease bias while increasing the accuracy of the research.

For the research study, I used an audit trail (Appendix D) to help establish in place of external auditor dependability. This approach helped me to take the right systematic approach to

the collection and analysis of data. I used seven fire lieutenants, with four being from the engine companies and three being from the truck companies, to take part in the face-to-face interview for the research study. During the interviews with the seven fire lieutenants, I took notes by hand and made an audio recording of each participant. After I collected all of the data, I gave each participant a chance to go over their responses in case they needed to make changes to any of the information collected. Each participant reviewed my interpretation of his or her stories for correctness and validity.

Janesick (2016); Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy (2013) & Zhang (2016) stated that member checking is a way to ensure credibility because it gives participants a chance to see the information collected and how it will be used in the research study. Throughout the research, I stayed aware of the potential bias that could show up during the research study. I worked to reduce bias from the start of the research to the very end to ensure validity of the research study. I went over my research approach prior to beginning the research and made sure that I was watchful of my words and thinking when conducting the interviews face-to-face.

Researcher bias and reactivity are the two biggest threats when it comes to qualitative research. Maxwell (2013) pointed out that researchers should not select data that fits their perceptions, theory, or goals. Throughout each step of the research I stopped to ensure that my mind continued to focus on the information. My research centered on a different department inside of the organization I work for. At the time of the study, I had not been associated with this department for over 10 years. This lack of association alone helped to ensure that the potential for researcher bias was greatly limited.

After the completion of the face-to-face interviews with the two interview participants, I ensured the accuracy of information written and collected. To ensure the dependability and trustworthiness of the research, I made sure that following the research steps throughout the data gathering process controlled research bias. I tried to follow the research process for the phenomenological study the way that Kim (2016) laid out for this research. I also made a conscious effort to keep my opinions and personal feelings about the information and data open and neutral.

Confirmability

In order to have confirmability, the researcher's bias and viewpoints must be controlled and filtered out of the research study. Reporting the findings of research involves the ability of the researcher to ensure that the data matches the responses of the participant(s) without the influence of biases (Cope, 2014). The researcher could show confirmability by demonstrating that the research findings were molded directly from the data. Zhang (2016) stated "The researcher may demonstrate confirmability by describing how conclusions and interpretations are built, and showing that the research findings are originated from the data directly" (p. 84). Using participants' rich quotes to delineate the emerging themes one at a time can increase confirmability.

To achieve confirmability, I focused my attention on the research data that closely related to and/or matched the research questions created for this qualitative study. The audit trail (Appendix D) helped with the comprehensive notes I took related to all decisions made throughout the collection of data and analysis. This approach gave readers as well as other researchers a 'trail' to follow for the examination of the process and trustworthiness. In addition

to this strategy, I incorporated member checking, which is step "E" under data collection in the audit trail in Appendix D. Member checking allows researchers to confirm the accuracy of the information collected and interpretations from participants in the research study. I conducted the member checking utilizing a method called 'epoche' as described by Kim (2016). Kim (2016) stated that epoche would help to ensure that the knowledge acquired from the study would be based on nonjudgmental, outer awareness of the world. Zhang (2016) added that personal views and knowledge of the study must be set aside in order to review one's response in an objective way.

To prepare myself for this method, I set aside all of my personal views, assumptions, and knowledge in order to review the participants' interview responses in an objective manner. To strengthen myself in this area further, I used reflexivity to continuously account for my actions and role as a researcher. Kim (2016) stated that reflexivity means examining oneself and the research relationship. Being reflexive helped me to gain a better grasp of the phenomenon and meaning of the participants' lived experiences and to construct the meaning of these experiences over time. I also maintained a diary throughout the research process, recording observations such as those about environment or the reactions of each participant. In addition to the writing of the things I observed around me I also recorded all of my reactions, experience, emotions, and reflections during the research. My objective was to utilize the interview process to ask open-ended questions, listen to the participants' responses, repeat the answers back to them for confirmation and clarity, and to record and write the responses of the participants. This way, I gained a deeper understanding of the participants' stories in order to construct meaning from them.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical concerns are one of the most important components of the success of research studies. Maxwell (2013) and Huang, O'Connor, Ke, and Lee (2014) argued that ethical concerns should be involved in every facet of the research design, from ones' goals to the selection of research questions to the conceptual framework and validity issues throughout. As a ship that sails through a storm without sinking, so must one's study design take on the ethical concerns of its research. Kim (2016) posited that during the research process, ethical dilemmas and moral concerns will be encountered, and incorporating good ethical practices at every level is critical. It is these standards and guidelines of ethical research that protect both the researcher and the participants (Ignacio & Taylor, 2013). Therefore, I worked to establish a continual checkpoint in my diary for every ethical concern that came up during and after the collection of research data.

Institutional Permission

Before starting the collection of data, I completed the web-based course from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on protecting human research participants. After receiving my certificate of completion, I turned in my NIH certificate along with my Institutional Review Board (IRB) application to conduct research, and all other paperwork requested by the board. I obtained my IRB approval number 03-30-17-0312116 that expires on March 29, 2018 and was given permission to start my collection of data.

Informed Consent

I obtained an informed consent form from each of the participants in the research study. Each participant was informed that their participation in the study was be strictly voluntary and they did so with the clear knowledge and understanding of the process. Any information left out

of the research study process or not given to each of the participants is viewed as deception (Ignacio & Taylor, 2013). It was important to disclose all the information to each participant in order to avoid problems and to ensure that all communications were clear. Documentation of their consent was kept on a password-protected file in a protective locked fireproof safe in my study office. The potential participants were also informed that they were free to decline and/or withdraw from the research study at any time during the process with no concern or fear of any negative reactions, and any information collected would be destroyed. The participants were informed that their information would not be shared with a third party without their written and verbal consent.

If the 20 potential participants had decided to opt out of the research study, 20 other participants would have been recruited from a secondary fire service located twenty miles outside of the city limit. There are a total of 5 cities available for recruiting replacement participants if needed without having to change the intent of the research study. The 20 new participants would have been picked at random using their personnel records from the training department where each file is made available to the public. Their informed consent information would have been obtained, documented and stored in a secure place until the completion of the interview. Once completed, the information would have been retrieved, coded, and stored in a locked fireproof safe in my study office until needed. As it was, data saturation was reached after interviewing seven participants.

Data Management

I gave full priority to the protection of all data collected by assigning pseudonyms to the seven participants to protect their identity. No additional identifying information was attached to

the data and there was no personal information about those who took the survey. I coded by hand as well as with the use of NVivo11 software and stored the information in a password-protected file accessible only by me. The computer was locked away in a study room, password protected, and secured. Data information was also stored on a flash drive and external hard drive, locked and secured in a fireproof safe with a key kept in a special area unknown to anyone other than me. I also emailed a copy of the research study to my Walden University account. This served as an added back up in case of fire or damage to the area where the information is stored. I educated my family members to not touch or go near my research study information because it is confidential and that I am trying to protect the participants. The information will remain secured and locked away for 5 years after the completion of the study before being destroyed and wiped clean from the memory on the computer.

Other Ethical Concerns

I conducted the research study within my organization of fire services. The concern of ethics came up at times with colleagues. My organization is broken up into seven departments, all of which are separate, and the only ones that work with hand in hand are the emergency medical services (EMS) and suppression departments. My department is that of fire prevention, which consists of arson investigations and code enforcement. The research study was conducted in the suppression department, with which I had not been associated since April 26, 2007. Personnel had changed and I was not a part of those departments outside of fire prevention. The threat of researcher's bias was greatly reduced and did not pose a problem in the collection and interpretation of the research data. I continued to keep a careful watch for bias and implemented epoche in the study to ensure the control of bias.

Another ethical concern was the choice of sampling techniques used in recruiting participants. I chose to use purposeful sampling through the use of the e-mail system to solicit the participants for the research study. The second sampling technique called snowballing is a technique used by having participants recruit other participants for the research study (Babbie, 2013). I did not choose this technique because of the unforeseen ethical issues that could arise during the research study. Babbie (2016) stated that this technique could really help in field research, but to avoid the possible setbacks of participants backing out of the study or changing their minds I stuck to the purposeful sampling technique.

Interview Questions and Ethics

I conducted interviews in person at a neutral site where the participants would feel free to talk and share their stories uninterrupted. I asked open-ended questions that allowed them to answer the way they wanted to with no stipulations or feeling of coercion. I informed them that they could stop the interview at any time with no questions asked. I was objective as I wrote down notes and recorded all of the interview responses. I recorded in writing what I saw in terms of their facial expressions and body language when each question was asked and when they gave their responses. Other than the ethical concerns I already addressed throughout the research interviews, I also asked the participants if they had any ethical concerns that needed to be addressed. Once finished, I went over my notes and recordings with the participants to make sure that the information was accurate and that nothing was left out that they wanted to say.

At the end of the study, I gave each participant a $5 Starbucks gift card as a way of saying thank you for his or her time. The amount chosen was due to the fact that I did not want to send the wrong message that I was paying for information. The amount was small enough to

where the participants would not be motivated to give an interview or participate in the study based on money. I informed each of the participants that although they may accept the $5 Starbucks card after the interview, they still had the option to withdraw from the study without the worry of me asking them to return the gift card or display any actions that lead them to believe I am mad or upset with them. The rank structure between the potential participants and myself was not a factor because they all either out ranked me or ranked equally with me.

Summary

In this chapter, I explained my position on the use of a phenomenological approach in qualitative research. A phenomenological approach was used in order to tell the lived experience of seven participants who hold the rank of fire lieutenant. These experiences were gathered and recorded through interviews and observations; the information was transcribed, coded, and analyzed to find the common themes. I conducted member checking with each participant for accuracy and validity. Member checking was used to ensure the participants' information was accurate as well as my interpretations and that I obtained their full approval to advance the study. By using the method of qualitative research, it was able to explore, learn, understand, interpret, and describe through lived experience the influence of transformational leadership in the fire services.

Transformational leadership training has had a positive influence at the level of chief and above, and fire lieutenants share the same duties and responsibilities as chiefs at emergency scenes. The intention of this study was to understand the effect that transformational leadership development training has on the rank of fire lieutenants. This study has the potential to change the level of training that fire lieutenants receive, change policy, change training requirements for

the promotional process, and create the opportunity for mentorship programs. Chapter 4 will detail the research findings and data analysis, and the final conclusions of the research study will be in chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the meaning of seven fire lieutenants' lived experiences at the fire services in the central United States to understand the effects transformational leadership on their development and how it prepares them to be better leaders. Each fire lieutenant shared what I defined as a *phenomenon* of working in the fire services as a transformational leader. Their lived experiences included job performance, leadership training, and job satisfaction. This research study could help administration and training address the cultural norm in the development of fire lieutenants, which could lead to a stronger organization and a better appreciation and understanding of working with the surrounding communities.

Through these lived experiences by the lieutenants three research questions focused on their development using transformational leadership for this study asked:

RQ1: In what ways could transformational leadership training affect the transition from lower-level management to mid-level management in fire departments?

RQ2: What are the critical success factors from the lived experiences that inform skills and competency development of fire lieutenants in the fire department?

RQ3: How does mentoring and coaching influence the advancement of low-level employees being promoted to mid-level?

Included in this chapter are eight sections: Pilot Study, Research Setting, Demographics, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Evidence of Trustworthiness, Results, and Summary. I will address the effects of my pilot study on the research, illustrate my research setting along with any changes made to the setting, describe the demographics of the research participants, describe

how the data was collected and analyzed, address the trustworthiness of my research study, and discuss how the results answered or addressed the research questions. Last, I will summarize the answers to the research questions.

Pilot Study

The purpose of this pilot study was to ensure that the interview questions along with their instructions were clear and understandable to the research participants. I also wanted to ensure that there were no hidden biases that I may not have identified when formulating the interview questions. If there were any concerns or a need to revise any of the questions or instructions, I wanted this process to be corrected before starting the data collection. I began the pilot study with myself first to get a feel and understanding of how the questions would be interpreted and what level of difficulty the participants may have in answering them. After the trial run, I concluded that one of the questions had to be simplified to prevent confusion. Once I completed this, I invited two fire lieutenants from a different municipality 30 miles outside of the research site to take part in the pilot study using the informed consent form to explain the process.

I interviewed two participants for this pilot study at their workplace, which they chose as a place of comfort and quiet. Each participant went through and answered 10 research interview questions on transformational leadership, leadership, training development for fire lieutenants, and the critical success factors they experienced. Each of the participants provided helpful feedback in the areas of clarity and understanding the intent of each question. They both stated that two of the questions would solicit a direct answer and possibly close the door to participants telling a story. I was able to correct this concern by providing a definition to give more clarity to

one of the questions of concern. As a result, the revision allowed the two participants to better understand the second question better.

The two participants understood that the research was not for the purpose of making change in the way an organization operates, but to add to the knowledge that already exists. They both concluded that the interview questions were fine, and they believed the questions would open up participants to tell what they had lived through, seen, experienced, and hoped to see in the future. From their response to the interviews conducted, I believed that they were honest and truthful in their answers. I determined at that point that my research questions did not need to be revised beyond the one concern that was addressed. After the positive feedback from the pilot study, I was motivated and confident to start my actual research.

Research Setting

The comprehension of both personal and organizational conditions that influence participants before, during, or after a research study can be a challenge. I watched for signs of emotional changes or any variances in their responses as each participant was interviewed. This was very important due to the recent ongoing changes in the collective bargaining agreement between the fire department and the city. One of the topics that affect each fire employee is the medical benefit cost, which has increased over the years, resulting in employees postponing their retirement from the job to cover costs. Therefore, I remained very attentive to the conditions that could affect the participants' responses and my interpretations of their responses. To ensure the accuracy of information collected, I conducted member checking with each of the seven participants to obtain feedback and verify my interpretations of their stories.

The member checking process took longer than expected to complete because each response was discussed further to ensure that I was telling their story with complete accuracy. There was no specific time allotted for the member checking process due to the nature of their job (in case they were called out on an emergency call I would have waited for their return). After going over my interpretations of their responses, I asked each participant to carefully go over all of my writings in the interpretations and give their thoughts and feedback. Each of the seven participants that were interviewed all stated after going through the member checking that the information was accurate and agreed with my interpretations. I did not find this strange because I felt as though they were honest in their answers during the interview and they had no fear of anyone knowing that they took part in this research study.

Member checking allows the participant(s) to review their information given to make sure that what has been transcribed is accurate. Seidman (2013) posited that member checking increases the creditability and trustworthiness of the information obtained and transcribed from the participant(s). Cope (2014) agreed and further stated that it's the relationship developed between the researcher and participant(s) that ensures the openness and transparency of the information confirmed to be accurate. Seidman also cautioned that member checking can inform a researcher's judgment and the level of judgment is based on the researcher's experience. I remained open and cognizant of the participants' responses during the interviews and transcription process.

During the member checking process, there was no new data that emerged that led to any additional coding or analysis. Throughout this research process I was very surprised at the excitement the participants had to take part in this research study and how they did not care if

anyone knew that they participated. They were respectful and appreciative of me doing the research study and most importantly they cared about the things they shared. I did not have to reschedule any of the participants' interviews and respected the fact that they took time to participate in the research study.

Demographics

The plan for this qualitative phenomenological research study was to interview 20 research participants (or until data saturation was reached) who worked in a public safety organization in the central United States. The research concluded at seven participants due to data saturation. I selected each participant using the purposeful sampling technique for this research study. The demographic data I collected for this research study included rank, time in rank, age, and years of service for each of the participants. The men were the only ones who responded to the research volunteer request and had an average time in rank of 12 years. There was a total of seven men who made up 100% of the total sample that participated in the research study.

The average age of the participants was 50 years. The criterion for age was set at 29 to 65, but the represented actual age range was 44 to 58. Fifty-seven percent of the participants were in the 40-49 age range, while forty-three percent made up the 50-59 age range. Most of the participants (43%) had a total of 21-25 years on the job; two participants (29%) had a total of 26-30 years on the job, one participant (14%) with a total of 16-20 years, and one participant (14%) with a total of 31-35 years on the job. Each research participant lived in the central United States and spoke English as their primary language. The written interview questions as well as all

documents were written and administered in accordance with their primary language being English.

Data Collection

I collected my data in this research study from a total of seven participants through face-to-face interviews. All seven face-to-face interviews were conducted at the participants' engine houses in a quiet and private area away from the public and employees. I conducted two interviews during the second week after the IRB full approval and five the following week. I recorded each interview with a digital voice recorder and a software program on my protected iPhone. I also collected data by hand in a journal, recording my observations of physical body language and facial expressions to each of the interview questions. Once all of the seven participants' information was transcribed for closer study and understanding, I met with each participant in person to conduct member checking. I went over the information with each participant and they all agreed individually that the information was correct and that I could use it in its entirety for the research study. There was no additional information or data collected during member checking.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and describe the common meaning of seven fire lieutenants' lived experiences in the fire services in the central United States in order to understand the effects transformational leadership on their development and how it prepares them to be better leaders. Before starting the face-to-face interview process for my data collection, I obtained permission to conduct research from the Director of Fire Services (Appendix A). Next, I sent out an approved email from my Walden University account using my private computer soliciting research volunteers. An informed consent form was given

to each participant in person and signed before they answered the interview questions (Appendix B). My private computer and my iPhone were used throughout the research study and are both protected from possible tampering.

There was a total of 10 open-ended interview questions created for the study. I conducted a pilot study with myself as well as two volunteers from a different municipality to make sure that the research questions were understandable and clear and would allow me to predict the possible responses and reactions from the actual research participants. Once the actual study began I assigned a pseudonym to each of the research participant to protect their identity and the confidentiality of the information collected from them before the interview. I used a journal, OneNote, and Microsoft Word to keep track of each participant such as their names, phone numbers, email address, pseudonyms, and any other important information. Each program was locked to increase security and confidentiality of information. My computer and iPhone are both password and fingerprint protected along with a flash drive used as a backup in case of computer failure. I am the only one with access to the information.

I interviewed a total of seven research volunteers face-to-face during the data collection process. There was a total of 60 minutes allotted for each interview and in case I needed more time to conduct the interview the participants were all willing to stay up to an additional 45 minutes if needed. On one occasion the interview took over an hour due to the participant having to answer an emergency call from dispatch. During each of the interviews the participant had as much time as was needed to satisfy the research question. I took my time and listened very closely as they spoke and made sure that I did not interrupt them while they spoke.

The initial data was audio recorded and coded manually by hand. At the beginning of each interview and throughout, I wrote down in a journal each of the participants' body language, facial expressions, voice levels to certain questions, and specific information such as age, gender, time in rank, and years on the job. I assigned a pseudonym to each of the participants in the journal and kept it in a locked fire proof safe until I was able to sit and record the information into Microsoft OneNote on my computer. I transferred the information into a Microsoft Word document then copied it into NVivo11 and saved all of the files after syncing each program. A secondary password was created to increase the security of information stored on my computer.

Data Analysis

Once all of the data was collected through the interviews and observations, I began to analyze the data by using the open coding process to make sense of the data. Maxwell (2013) and Saldana (2016) both agreed that open coding is a prefatory attempt to capture new insights. Coding is used to draw out and categorize alike chunks of data to allow the researcher to quickly find and pull out themes relating to a particular research question (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014). I gave my full attention to the review of each interview and allowed the themes to emerge on their own. Once the themes emerged, I then assigned open coding to each of them to see the reoccurring patterns in the data (Miles et al, 2014). Once the coding was complete, I used axial coding to give greater meaning to the identified themes from open coding.

I was able to expand categories that were suitable to each of the research questions by allowing the themes to emerge on their own. The first theme to emerge from the research question was "Transformational Leadership Training" because five (71%) of the seven

participants responses focused on telling their story about the importance of the leadership training they obtained. This first theme really took shape after participants John and Gary shared how the transformational leadership training helped to prepare them for their roles as leaders in the fire services.

The second theme that emerged was 'Critical Success Factors' when Greg and Tom explained in detail from their stories how they developed their skills of delegating, communicating, and time management in order to be proficient leaders. More time was spent answering question 8 in the interview than any other interview question.

The third and final theme to emerge from the data collected was 'Mentoring and Coaching.' In this theme 100% (7) of the participants discussed and shared through their stories how preparation, development, training to become mentors and coaches for young future leaders were their main focus in answering the final two questions from the interview. Six of the seven (85%) participants mentioned lack of training and five out of seven (71%) included challenges faced.

Allowing themes to emerge on their own helps to develop categories of these patterns (Maxwell, 2013). Patton (2002) asserted that reading the data over and over allows the identification of themes to emerge naturally. Themes are more easily identified through the lens of the researcher than with the use of a computer program (Patton, 2002). I made sure that all data collected was recorded and given the same attention. As I used the bracketing process to control any biases towards the open coding of this research study, I started going over the data several times and started the coding process twice. This gave a more concise picture of what I was seeing in the data and how consistent I was in coding the information. NVivo11 was also

used in helping me to see how the themes aligned with my coding by hand and to see the word frequency of each participant response to the interview questions.

The data analysis was a very challenging process given that I had the task of transcribing the audio information and linking the notes from my journal in order to get a clear picture of the information. I coded each of the participant interviews and notes before the start of the next interview. I wanted to read and listen to the audio over and over again and make sure that the questions asked were appropriate for the research questions. I also began to write additional notes as I read the transcript while listening to the audio. With each transcription, the results were the same being that the questions were appropriate. I then began the data condensation process by focusing on the chunks of coded data. Miles et al (2014) stated that data condensation is a process by which data is made stronger and that this process is continual throughout the research from start to finish.

After transcribing the audio, I laid out each of the responses with the notes taken during the interview and during the transcription to try and identify the similarities before using NVivo11. I was able to target several similarities with the first four interviews that led to data saturation because no new information was emerging. The participants' responses were related to their lived experiences regarding training development, coaching, mentoring, and transactional leadership.

Data saturation can be either beneficial or confusing depending on which research approach is used and the perception of the researcher (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The understanding of data saturation takes on a different meaning to researchers, which could lead to inconsistencies (Morse, Lowery, & Steury, 2014). Although I reached data saturation, I wanted

to keep going in case new information would emerge from other interviews and to make sure that data saturation was clearly obtained. After three additional interviews with three participants, I was satisfied that no new information existed at this time and that data saturation was reached. This concluded my analysis of the data collected from the interviews, notes, observations, and coding and theme results.

I was able to reduce and eliminate discrepant cases that were not relevant to the intent of the research study. As I went through this process I continued to bracket my own biases to remain objective and focus only on the data as I coded the themes that were related to the research questions. Two of the participant's responses were discarded because they chose to pass on one of the interview questions. Other answers were discarded because they did not address transformational leadership or training development. The intent of this research study was to explore the lived experience of fire lieutenants related to transformational leadership development. This research was not about riding out of rank (in a position as an officer when one is sick) or teaching to pass a promotional exam.

The real names of each of the participants in the study were changed using a pseudonym to protect their privacy: David, Gary, Greg, John, Mark, Sam, & Tom. According to Seidman (2013), when assigning pseudonyms to a person, a researcher should take in consideration their ethnicity, age, geographical location, and other issues that could make them vulnerable. For this, I took additional steps to ensure that no information could be used by anyone to track back to the participants. I also increased their years of service by a number only known to me to keep others from trying to narrow down their identity.

I visited each of the participants in person to conduct member checking to ensure that my transcription of their stories was accurate and interpreted correctly. Participants read over all of the information, pausing at times to gain clarity about my words to make sure they understood them the same as they conveyed during the interview (David, personal communication, April 24, 2017; Gary, personal communication, April 25, 2017; Greg, personal communication, April 25, 2017; John, personal communication, April 25, 2017). One participant thought about adding to his story, but decided not to because he stated that he would be saying the same thing in a different way (Tom, personal communication, April 27, 2017). Two other participants agreed with my interpretation of their stories and thanked me again for allowing them to take part in the study to tell their stories (Mark, personal communication, April 26, 2017; Sam, personal communication April 27, 2017).

In summary of the responses made by each of the participants, they agreed with my interpretation of their responses to the interview questions and that they did not have anything new to add to what they conveyed at the time. After coding the data by hand and inputting all of information into NVivo11 prior to the member checking, my discovery of no new information emerging from the results were confirmed when each of the participants agreed and added no new information to what I already had. After member checking, I went back over the data one last time to confirm no new information.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

When it comes to issues of trustworthiness, there are four criteria in a phenomenological research study that must be met. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in qualitative research reflect the rigor, integrity, ethics, and accountability of my research findings

(Miles et al, 2014; Patton, 2002). Submitted here are the steps I took in this research to ensure every facet of trustworthiness.

Credibility

Member checking helps to verify the accuracy of participants' descriptions, explanations, and interpretations (Miles et al., 2014). It enhances the credibility and the rigor of research for data collections and analysis (Miles et al., 2014; Saldana, 2016; Cope, 2014). Patton (2002), Houghton et al. (2013), and Kim (2016) posited that credibility increases when data collected from multiple sources are consistent. I met with each of the participants in person to conduct member checking by going over the transcription of their interview questions. They informed me after looking over the information that my interpretations were accurate and they did not have anything to add or take away from the results shared. Each participant was allowed to speak uninterrupted during the actual interview and during member checking. No new information emerged from the interview, transcription of data, or member checking. Member checking, according to Miles et al (2014), increases the credibility of my data results.

Transferability

Transferability for a qualitative research study means that the results could be applied to other situations (Miles et al., 2014 and Saldana, 2016). Findings are transferable to other settings or situations when the research presents enough information to the readers to make the judgment (Cope, 2014). Patton (2002) stated, "transferability is a direct function of the similarity between the two contexts, what we shall call fittingness" (p. 584). Transferability assists with future studies when the information obtained from the study guides or compliments utilizing different methodologies.

Establishing transferability requires the use of rich description, which I used in this qualitative research study. Rich description establishes the foundation for qualitative analysis (Patton, 2002). I used rich description to be detailed in my description of the research in every aspect and careful in how the information is written for the readers to understand and be a part of the story told. Lincoln and Guba (1985) agreed that rich description should be used in qualitative research to establish transferability. Rich description creates opportunity for readers to see themselves as the character of the story being told in such a way that they understand the experience through similarities in their own lives (Lamar, 2016). I expect the emergent themes from this research study to assist in the future research by those who inquire from this research study.

Dependability

Dependability in a qualitative research study is the application of research strategies to clearly explain the effectiveness through justification and selection when evaluated by the researcher and confirmed by an auditor (Yilmaz, 2013). I utilized the NVivo11 software to help increase the level of dependability for my qualitative research study. I ran all of the queries that were necessary to help me locate all passages that matched the criteria (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Dependability is the consistency of the findings in the research study (Lincoln and Gruba, 1985). I kept a constant check on the data to ensure that no bias came up to threaten the dependability of the research study. I utilized an audit trail (Appendix D) to make sure that I stayed on track with my research process and handling of data and interview participants.

As I conducted my research study, I remained alert and aware of the dangers related to the validity of research. Two main enemies of dependability are reactivity and researcher bias.

Reactivity deals with the actual influence of the researcher while researcher bias focuses on the beliefs, perceptual lens, and researcher's theory (Maxwell, 2013). I conducted my research with seven participants and spent time suppressing my bias and influence in order to capture the raw data through their lived stories. I continued to suppress my bias as I coded the data and uncovered the emerging themes. All data collected were coded by hand and with the use of NVivo11 to analyze the data and to confirm my accuracy. I transcribed the information from the interview and met with each participant to go over the information through the member checking process. Each participant confirmed that the information was correct and accurate. No new information was added to or taken out of what was transcribed.

Confirmability

As a researcher, eliminating one's bias is not possible given the beliefs, influence, and perceptual lens of the researcher (Maxwell, 2013). In order to achieve confirmability in this research, I had to control and filter all of my biases and viewpoints from the study. Focusing more on reporting my findings and ensuring that the responses of each participant matched without any influence of biases (Cope, 2014). Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that to obtain confirmability the researcher must focus more on the objectivity of the writing. To prepare myself to be objective in my writing I continued throughout the research to keep out all of my personal views, assumptions, and knowledge in order to review the data collected from the participants' interview responses. Utilizing the audit trail created (Appendix D) helped me to stay on track and reminded me of the dangers if biases were to surface in my findings.

I also used my journal to take notes and not only write about the facial expressions and body language of each participant, but to write about my own reactions to their questions. This

was very important to me as a researcher because what I wanted the participants to see was no facial reactions by me, which could cause an alteration of some kind in their responses. This preparation came as a result of the pilot study used to test the interview questions and responses before starting the main research study. I used *epoche* in addition the journal writing to help me in controlling my reactions and potential hidden bias. I used member checking to verify and confirm the accuracy of my results. All seven participants in the research study confirmed that the information transcribed was accurate and true concerning the stories shared. This helped me to achieve confirmability in my data analysis and conclusions drawn from the study.

Once I completed the data analysis of the seven research participants, there were no new information or themes emerging from the study and nothing new to code. Fusch and Ness (2015) pointed out that data saturation is not dependent upon a certain sample size, but where no new information, themes, or ability to code new information exists any further in the study. From this I concluded my data analysis of this research study.

Study Results

To achieve thematic analysis, I used the constant comparative method during and after the data collection to identify the common themes. Each participant response was categorized based on the themes emerging from the readings (Arghode and Wang, 2016). I identified three themes that were related to the research questions. I ignored all discrepant data that were not associated with the research questions. The results of the study were organized by the themes that surfaced from the data analysis. I used hand coding to identify the themes and assigned suitable names to each one.

Theme 1: Transformational Leadership Training

Increasing the effectiveness of transformational leadership training beyond the rank of upper management increases the organization effectiveness. In an organization that is built on transactional leadership style, transformational leadership serves as an extension and is viewed as superior to transactional (Bass, 1990). Barth-Farkas and Vera (2014) pointed out that transactional leaders utilize rewards to foster desired work behaviors. This development requires little skills to lead while transformational development focuses more on the continual growth of the individual as well as training opportunities for improvement. The efforts of employees are heightened to a level where both personal and organizational goals are achieved (Bass, 1990; Barth-Farkas and Vera, 2014). Extending transformational leadership training to lower levels reinforces the foundations that public safety organizations are built upon in an ever-changing society.

Interview questions one through six contributed to Theme 1. The main nodes under this theme were influence, perception, and training. I delineated the percentage of the participants' influence, perception, and training in Table 1 (see Table 1). Each participant was passionate about what they understood and perceived about transformational leadership. My result findings of this research revealed that 57% (four) of the participants understood transformational leadership as a leadership style that transforms a follower into a leader who influences and motivates others to become better at what they do, and who communicates the values and beliefs of the organization in a way that others accept and follow.

My findings further indicated that 42% (three) of the participants received transformational leadership training from prior education and believed that it should be

implemented in the organization. Two (29%) out of the five participants read about transformational leadership from books at one time. All five participants expressed their understanding and thoughts about transformational leadership. David stated, “To me transformational leadership is that you are more open to your own adjustments you have to make in handling situations.” Gary said, “My understanding of transformational leadership is that one is self-motivated.” Greg said, “To me transformational leadership is transforming and guiding individuals.” Mark stated, “Transformational leadership to me is tailoring one’s style to meet the need of the employee.” Tom said, “Transformational leadership forces you to bounce back and forth depending on the need of each individual whether it’s motivation, influence, or coaching.”

After conducting member checking with each of the research participants, I found that there was no new information to add or take away from transformational leadership development. The findings from these five out of the seven participants increased the knowledge of leadership development. Leadership development is an ongoing process that continues to improve as new knowledge is discovered and added (Delmatoff and Lazarus, 2014). When organizations are transformed as a result of followers being challenged to develop themselves and influencing others around them to the same, they are considered as successful (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

The research findings yielded new understandings on transformational leadership development and the ongoing process of improving training and education, the leader’s ability to adapt the right strategy when training others, and the leader’s ability to influence and communicate well with others. I list the main nodes, number of participants, and the percentage of each node together with the seven research participants in Table 1.

Table 1

Theme 1: Transformational Leadership Training

Nodes	Number of participants	Percentage
Training	2	29%
Perceptions	4	57%
Influence	1	14%

Note. Perception refers to the participants' understanding of transformational leadership development. Influence refers to the participants' understanding and belief of a leader's impact on the character and development of others.

Theme 2: Critical Success Factors

Interview questions seven and eight contributed to Theme 2 of the research study. These two questions alone were asked twice during the interview because I wanted to be sure first if the participants understood the question. I wanted to capture the raw data without any influence or possible distortion of the answers given by the participant. Four (57%) participants understood the questions and had no issues as they shared their answers through their stories while two (29%) were educated on question seven and one (14%) passed on question seven in its entirety. For the two participants who needed clarity on question seven, I was able to educate them by having them to read some information that simplified the question further allowing them to feel more comfortable in answering. After understanding better about the skill sets and practices of each participant to share they became very excited to finally share their history of training development.

At the start of interview question seven participants, Tom, Mark, John, Greg, Gary, and David, responded by saying that their critical success factors of delegating, motivating, communicating, and time management skills were gained through watching, learning, and mimicking their leader throughout their careers before becoming lieutenants. When interview question seven was asked to participant Tom, he leaned back in his chair, smiled and stated, "I learned how to use time management as my biggest skill set along with communicating effectively with my subordinates and others." Participant Mark said, "Delegation and motivation of the men and women is what he considered as the biggest skill set he learned from his former lieutenant before being promoted." Participant Gary stated when question seven was asked, "To be a great motivator you have to be a better communicator with your followers." Participant John had similar feelings to Gary's response stating, "A good motivator has to be able to effectively communicate with their men and women under their command." Participant Greg said delegation and time management were his two biggest takeaways from learning how to be a lieutenant. Participant David stated, Delegation was his strongest skill set that he uses to motivate and empower his followers. Participant Sam passed on this question during the interview.

Interview question eight yielded the same responses from each of the seven participants when asked about the challenges they faced during their skill set development and other training opportunities. The most interesting behavior that was observed during this question was that each participant spent more time answering question eight of the interview than any other question. Their comments came out without pausing to think about how they wanted to sound or choice of words to use. As each one gave their answers I listened without interrupting their thoughts. Participants David, Gary, Greg, John, Mark, Sam, and Tom all stated, the biggest challenge they

face on the job as it relates to critical skill development is time, lack of training, difficulty of online training for those who want to learn while working, and how precious time is in their organization.

A week after the interviews, I sat down and conducted member checking with each participant. There was no new information from the member checking to add to the data or theme. The finding from the results above validates Bass and Riggio (2006) four elements of transformational leadership. Under *Individualized Consideration,* a leader attends to each follower and listens to his or her concerns while keeping communication open. Under *Intellectual Stimulation,* leaders develop people who think independently and stimulate and encourage creativity in the followers. *Inspirational Motivation* is where leaders challenge followers with high standards, purpose and meaning to dive a group forward. Lastly, under *Idealized Influence,* a leader instills pride in followers, is a role model of ethical behavior, and gains the respect and trust of his or her followers (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Tourish, 2013). Furthermore, these findings add to the body of knowledge in transformational leadership.

Participants described some of the critical success factors experienced that led to the competency development of fire lieutenants. Participants also described the challenges and problems experienced by leaders in the development programs of critical skills and competency. I list the detailed descriptions of the main nodes, the number of participants, and the percentages in Table 2.

Table 2

Theme 2: Critical Success Factors

Nodes	Number of participants	Percentage
Time management	2	28%
Effective communications	2	28%
Delegation	3	42%
Motivation	3	42%

Theme 3: Mentoring and Coaching

Interview questions nine and ten contributed to Theme 3. Mehrabani and Mohamad (2015) stated that one of the best ways to increase organizational effectiveness is through the development of leaders. Organizations of all sizes must be able to develop and prepare leaders for an ever changing and unstable environment (Mehrabani and Mohamad, 2015). Mentoring is the ability of leaders to mentor and coach followers into developing the will and aspiration to self-develop and possess intrinsic motivation to complete tasks (Bass and Riggio, 2006). The study findings from questions nine and ten confirmed the perspective of Mehrabani and Mohamad (2015) and Bass and Riggio (2006). I list the main nodes, number of participants, and the percentages in Table 3.

Seven (100%) participants (David, Gary, Greg, John, Mark, Sam, and Tom) stated that mentoring and coaching plays a critical role in the development of young followers. All seven participants were passionate in their responses stating that the organization has changed and is becoming younger and more educated. Therefore, the need for inclusion in the leadership

development programs given at the chief level and above is becoming more important to the organization and should be a part of the lieutenants' level moving forward. The responses of the seven participants are in line with Mehrabani and Mohamad (2015) research findings of leadership development and Bass and Riggio (2006) IC element of transformational leadership.

Although questions nine and ten involving mentoring and coaching were separate, each participant answered them together as they told their stories. For example, participant David stated, "The more you are trained to coach and mentor your subordinates who work around you the better they become as a whole." Participant Gary said, "To effectively train subordinates to become better at what they do you have to be taught to coach them while mentoring them on a daily basis." Participant Greg stated, "Without coaching and mentoring you feel like you have been thrown out there to do a job." Participant John stated, "With coaching you have the opportunity to build your team, relationship, and others wanting to succeed and advance. Mentoring should be adaptable to one's learning style seeing that each individual is different." Participant Mark, Sam, and Tom said, "Without a mentoring and coaching program pointing a follower in the right direction and obtaining feedback as a measure of knowing if you are being effective would be a failure."

Each participant also shared in their stories how their leaders before them prepared them through mentoring and coaching to be the leaders they are today. They also shared how this leadership development has declined at the lieutenants' level from their experience over the last 15 to 20 years, and more and more people are being promoted based on test scores as opposed to ability to do the job. DeGrosky (2013) and Alyn (2011) stated that emerging leaders within the fire service assume leadership positions without being prepared for the role. "Under-prepared

leaders represented an issue of significant importance to fire service organizations, given the high risk nature of their work" (DeGrosky, 2013, p. 59). Bass and Riggio (2006) stated that the core element of transformational leadership is developing followers to lead. Each participants' story ended with uncertainty of the direction for their organization.

During member checking, participants were satisfied with the transcription and offered no new information or additional comments to the research. The information collected added to the body of knowledge. I felt as though the information shared was truthful and honest and that the participants were happy to be able to share something of knowledge before leaving the job one day. The findings from these two research questions (9 & 10) confirm the perspectives of Bass and Riggio (2006) in that developing effective leaders is the core of transformational leadership, and those of Mehrabani and Mohamad (2015), in that organizations must be able to prepare and develop leaders for the changing environment. They also align with Alyn (2011), and DeGrosky's perspective (2013), in that under-prepared leaders are assuming roles within the organization given the high-risk nature of their work.

Table 3

Theme 3: Mentoring and Coaching

Nodes	Number of participants	Percentage
Training to mentor others	7	100%
Training to coach others	7	100%
Preparation	7	100%
Development	7	100%
Challenge	5	71%
Lack of training	6	85%

Note. Development refers to the lieutenant being under developed for leadership role.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and describe the common meaning of the seven fire lieutenants' lived experiences at the fire services in the central United States in order to understand the effects transformational leadership on their development and how it prepares them to be better leaders. Bass and Riggio (2006) identified one of the core elements of transformational leadership as the development of followers, enhancing their capabilities and capacity to lead. Through previous research, Bass and Riggio (2006) concluded that there are similarities between mentoring effectively and transformational leadership. From the perspective of both Alyn (2011) and Mehrabani and Mohamad (2015), leadership development plans for training are optimized when they are put in place to target the specific needs of organizations. The success of the leadership development is the result of how well the process is solicitous with the leader's ability to influence learners to reflect the learning

experience and to apply this knowledge in the organization (Mehrabani and Mohamad, 2015). Transformational leadership training, critical success factors, and mentoring and coaching were the three key themes that emerged from the research demonstrating the core of the fire lieutenants' lived experiences related to leadership development as lower-level management.

The participants' responses revealed that their preparation for leadership was dependent upon transformational leadership development training. Participants described how their rise to their current position of leadership was the result of past leaders who mentored and coached them, but they desired more training to become a better leader and to transfer the knowledge to their subordinates. Participants also indicated that the overall morale and effectiveness of the organization could be optimized with transformational leadership and leaders promoted could be better prepared to handle the many changes of the organization and society if provided transformational leadership training. Chapter 5 consists of my interpretation of the findings, the limitations of the research study, my recommendations, implications for future research and practice, and the conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and describe the common meaning of the seven fire lieutenants lived experiences at the fire services in the central United States in order to understand the effects transformational leadership on their development and how it prepares them to be better leaders. The research yielded information on transformational leadership as it relates to the level of fire lieutenants in the public safety organization in the central United States.

In this phenomenological approach, I conducted the study to explore how transformational leadership affects the development of fire lieutenants. Three important themes emerged from the research study. Under the first theme of transformational leadership training, participants described their understanding of a transformational leader as one who transforms followers through training to influence and motivate others and one who effectively communicates the values and beliefs of the organization.

Under the second theme of critical success factors, participants described the critical success factors of transformational leadership training through their lived experience as time management, communication, motivation, and delegation of others. Participants noted that transformational leadership training could empower the organization to build leaders from the lieutenants' rank up and increase the organizations effectiveness.

Under the third theme of mentoring and coaching, participants identified the roles of mentoring and coaching and how they play an important role in the development of young leaders and how transformational leadership training could help in achieving a change within the organization to make it better.

Interpretation of Findings

This section is organized by the three important themes. Participants explained transformational leadership as a style of leadership that transforms followers through training to influence and motivate others and one who effectively communicates the values and beliefs of the organization. Participants expressed their thoughts on how a leader who has been trained, supported, and developed to influence others to follow increases the effectiveness of the department as a whole.

These thoughts, ideas, and perceptions by the participants validate the views of both Alyn (2011) and Brusca (2013) that extending transformational leadership training to future leaders promotes growth and strengthen the organization. However, Alyn (2011) and Brusca (2013) do agree with Tourish (2013) who argued that when the quality of a leader's decision making does not align with the vision and goals of the organization, then the training experiences negative results. Participants did not confirm Tourish's perspective because they feel that their organization has a strong brother and sisterhood culture that trusts and that their focus was on the training and development of leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Bass and Riggio (2006) contended that transformational leadership is a better fit for leading today's complex organizations where followers look for a leader to inspire and help guide them through an uncertain environment. Smith, (2015), Morrison, (2014), and Alyn (2010) noted that a transformational leader displays ethical behavior instead of avoiding the use of authority and power. They will do the right thing when it comes to leading their followers' and not try to coerce compliance or do what is popular or accepted as the norm. Bass (1985) argued

that transformational leaders motivate followers to feel empowered and increase loyalty among followers. Pradhan and Pradhan (2015) argued that transformational leaders motivate followers to exert more effort in their job roles and arrests the commitment of their followers. The seven research study participants conveyed their thoughts on transformational leadership as a leadership style that transforms a follower into a leader who influences and motivates others to become better at what they do, and one who communicates the values and beliefs of the organization. The essence of these perceptions from the research participants is consistent with the conceptual framework of Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory discussed in Chapter 2.

Teoh Kae and Rashad (2015) argued that transformational leadership equips leaders to motivate followers to be more creative in their job efforts. Burns (1978) contended that transformational leadership is a process where leaders and followers help each other to attain a higher level of motivation and morale. Schuh, Zhang, and Tian (2013) posited that transformational leaders behave in ways to achieve higher results using one or more of the four elements: IC, IS, IM, and II.

My findings on this topic confirmed Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory. Participants expressed that they were not given the training to guide their followers effectively in both emergency and non-emergency situations. They wanted to increase the overall morale through motivation and empowerment of their followers to be better at what they do and become the future leaders. These findings confirmed the knowledge from the literature and agreed with the perspectives from Bass and Riggio (2006), Bass (1985), and Pradhan and Pradhan (2015). Participants conveyed that transformational leadership helps to develop and transform followers

into leaders who will influence and motivate others to be better and effectively communicate the values and beliefs of the organization to others.

These findings confirmed Teoh Kae and Rashad's (2015) perspective about how transformational leadership equips leaders to motivate followers to be more creative in their job functions. Burns (1978) argued that the transformational leadership helps both followers and leaders attain a higher level of motivation and morale. All of the research participants expressed that they wanted to incorporate transformational leadership more into how they lead their subordinates every day and help to strengthen and improve the organization.

Furthermore, my research findings filled a gap in the literature by identifying how influence and motivation play a big role in the transformational leadership development of fire lieutenants in the central United States. Schuh, Zhang, and Tian (2013) previously distinguished that transformational leaders behave in ways to achieve higher results from their followers. My research study broadened this previous knowledge by addressing some of the abilities of transformational leadership when added to the development of fire lieutenants. Participants indicated that incorporating transformational leadership development in their training improves their net worth to the organization and empowers them to do more.

Critical Success Factors

My findings on this topic shows that slightly less than half of the participants described what they felt as critical success factors that aided them in their careers to become the leader they are today in the fire services. They felt that their past leaders trained them in transformational leadership through examples displayed every day on the job. Their takeaways shared were effective time management skills, communication skills in both emergency and non-emergency

situations, delegation of duties as though they were the leader in charge (inclusiveness), and motivation of the men and women around them to reach beyond their comfort zone. Other participants expressed the use of transactional leadership as their training background and that as a leader today they see how this style does not fully address the concerns of every individual and that its place is more conducive to answering emergency calls. Participants shared that the critical success factors found in transformational leadership during their development as leaders helped them to make a positive impact on their subordinates.

Gathii (2015) argued that it is critical to develop knowledge-oriented cultures in which the exchange of knowledge is provided. Bass and Riggio (2006) and Valero et al. (2015) argued that the term "individualized influence" describes a leader as a role model whose behavior is perceived by their subordinates as one who has strong ethical standards and IC is taken into account during the decision making process of each followers' needs. Shao, Feng, and Hu (2016) argued that upper management support is one of the most critical success factors in transformational leadership development.

Mentoring and Coaching

From the four elements of transformational leadership, IC had the most positive effect on the fire lieutenants' job function and personal growth. From the perspective of Bass and Riggio (2006), the degree in which a leader attends to each of his or her follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach, and listens effectively to their needs and concerns strengthens the leader-follower relationship. Swensen, Gorringe, Caviness, and Peters (2016) argued that coaching is an integral part of leadership development that helps leaders to climb the learning curve of rapid changes in the day-to-day operations. Coaching increases the focus on developing others and

their performance. Coaching also increases the sharing and utilization of knowledge and influences more transparency in decision-making (Swensen, Gorringe, Caviness, and Peters, 2016). Chapman et al. (2014) identified a coaching leader as one who sees followers' underperformance and mistakes as an opportunity to train and learn for the next time.

Mentoring and coaching both share a common element that establishes a relationship between the one who is mentoring or coaching and the one who is receiving the training. O'Toole (2015) argued that coaching supports mentoring when that follower is being developed to transition to the level of management. According to Hussain, Wan Ismail, Rashid, and Nisar, (2016) a transformational leader who is considerate and continuously provides mentoring to their followers improves their followers' job related knowledge and skills. Oladipo, Adebakin, and Iranloye, (2016) argued that mentoring is a powerful tool in personal development and empowerment. It is an effective way of helping followers to advance in their careers.

The majority of the participants in this research study conveyed that there is a need for more mentoring and coaching programs in the fire services. They expressed that the lack of training that is offered to their level hurts the organization as a whole and that what was once a strong tradition of "do as I say" no longer works. The participants also described how in today's fire services more people are studying to pass a promotional exam to advance in rank motivated by money, power, and perception of fewer responsibilities, as opposed to simply learning the job itself. These participants were satisfied with their current jobs and thanked their previous leaders who prepared them ahead of what changed over the past 15 to 20 years. These findings confirmed the perspectives of Bass and Riggio, (2006), Swensen, Gorringe, Caviness, and Peters

(2016), Chapman et al. (2014), O'Toole (2015), Hussain, Wan Ismail, Rashid, and Nisar, (2016), and Oladipo, Adebakin, and Iranloye (2016).

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this research study included a purposeful sample of seven fire lieutenants from one organization of fire services located in the central United States. My choice for collecting data from one fire service organization was due to its being one of the biggest departments nationwide and the limitations of financial resources and my time, which made advancing the research study to include other similar organization too costly. The study was also limited due to its qualitative structure and field knowledge of participants' limited availability.

Other limitations to this research study may be the participants' holding back of information they felt could identify them, inaccurate responses from some of the research participants in answering the interview questions, and the researcher's experience as an officer and bias. Maxwell (2013) described two types of validity threats that could lead to invalid research. These threats are the researcher's reactivity or influence on the participants or setting and the researcher's own bias in the study. I focused on being as objective as possible during the research study and incorporated Maxwell's concept of reactivity to only report the participants' stories and the things they wanted to share in this qualitative research study. The readers would need to decide if the findings from this research study are transferable to their own future studies.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Research

Because of the limited number of seven selected research participants in this qualitative research study, more research may be required to make a firm decision on the validity of the key

themes that surfaced from this research study. Future researchers may apply a quantitative approach to examine the same phenomenon by utilizing more participants of different ages, years in rank, ethnicity, gender, and age. Future researchers may also want to apply a different qualitative approach by increasing the number of participants in examining the same phenomenon, utilizing a case study approach to yield more data, and increase validity and transferability.

This research study may serve as a guide for future research to examine the influence of transformational leadership on newly promoted officers of the fire services. My findings from this research came from seven research participants in one fire organization located in the central United States. I recommend that a larger sample size of participants be selected covering a wider area of demographics, utilizing a qualitative case study to explore this phenomenon for future researchers. For a larger sample size, I suggest that future researchers use purposeful sampling as opposed to snowball sampling because with the snowball technique, you must rely on other participants to do the recruiting (Babbie, 2013).

Studying the effects of transformational leadership through the lived experiences of fire lieutenants and how it influenced their development can be done through the lens of newly promoted officers from different age groups, genders, and educational levels. The research participants in this study were from the following age groups: ages 40-49 (72%), and ages 50-59 (28%). There were no participants that represented the age groups of 20-29, 30-39, or 65 and over. Five of the participants (72%) had 8-15 years of experience as a fire lieutenant and only two of the participants (28%) had 16-20 years of experience as a fire lieutenant. These research participants were a group of well-trained and educated professionals who were passionate about

their jobs and their followers in the fire services in the central United States. I would recommend that future studies include the age groups that were not a part of this study to see if there is a different outcome from the research findings.

As expressed in the literature review section of Chapter 2, there is a gap in research regarding the effects of transformational leadership on the development of fire lieutenants in the central United States. Consequently, I recommend that future research should be explored in the area of fire services and fire lieutenants' experience in their demographic region. I also recommend that future researchers use different research approaches to explore and examine this phenomenon. Such research approaches could include quantitative or case studies with larger sample sizes and inclusion of other fire organizations. I hope that these study results help to bring more understanding of how transformational leadership aid in the development training of fire lieutenants.

Recommendations for Practice

The first recommendation is for newly promoted fire lieutenants to attend transformational leadership training with a focus on the four elements of transformational leadership. I recommend that each fire lieutenant continue to learn transformational leadership after the initial training to continue to improve and develop his or her skills further. The aim of this training would be to create an atmosphere where learning is encouraged throughout the department. As a result of implementing this training, other fire services in the central United States as well as around the country could follow the training model created to incorporate more training programs on transformational leadership in their departments.

Second, I recommend that transformational leadership training be included in the curriculum of the fire science programs in universities, in every fire-training academy for new recruits, state educational incentive programs for fire service, as well as ongoing training for all departments. This way, new recruits and those aspiring to become a fire lieutenant one day are exposed and educated about the effect transformational leadership has on the motivation and success of the organization. This will better prepare future leaders to apply the knowledge and skills learned in transformational leadership.

Third, I recommend that all transformational leadership training made available to the rank of chief and above be provided for the fire lieutenant rank as well to help increase the overall effectiveness of the officers' impact on the department. Transformational leadership has proven to prepare individuals for leading at the next level through exposure, learning, mentoring, coaching, and influence. Transformational leadership training improves the transition from one rank to the next when similar duties are shared in the organization.

Fourth, I recommend that transformational leadership be included in the annual employee performance review process for current leaders in the fire services. It is very important for current leaders to learn and understand fully the theory of transformational leadership and its effect on the organization. Through such tools of measurement, the current leaders could measure their leadership practice and learning as much as needed. I recommend that senior management in the fire services incorporate ways of acknowledging those who excel and exemplify excellence in the knowledge and practice of transformational leadership.

Lastly, I recommend that a leadership mentoring and coaching program be set up and evaluated on a monthly basis to make adjustments to the program as needed. This program

would not only be set up for young leaders in the fire services, but for senior management as well. Fire lieutenants should coach and mentor subordinates aspiring to become a future leader and senior management should coach and mentor fire lieutenants for the next level of leadership and to be a better coach and mentor for their followers. The senior leaders could help guide and lead future leaders in pursuit of excellence in their transformational leadership development.

Implications

There have been a lot of research studies in transformational leadership development on the rank of chiefs and above in the fire services. These studies range from quantitative to qualitative, but there has been very little research that addressed transformational leadership and the rank of lieutenant in the fire services. There was no previous research study found that looked at the effects of transformational leadership on fire lieutenant development. This research study was an attempt to fill that gap. Its findings offer theoretical and practical implications for the transformational leadership development of officers.

Implication for Practice

The findings from this research study have implications for the practice of developing transformational leaders in the fire services. First, transformational leadership development involves the four elements as described by researchers Burns and Bass and Riggio (2006). This type of developmental training process cannot be limited to the classroom alone, but must also be done in the field and among their subordinates. For the interview participants, their process of leadership development took a good part of their careers to mold them into what they are today. The training officers who will train and facilitate this process of transformational leadership will

benefit greatly from the four elements of transformational leadership provided by theorists Burns (1985) and Bass and Riggio (2006).

Second, training officers trained in transformational leadership must guide the leadership development program and continuously incorporate the leadership experience in both the classroom and in the field. The participants in the research conveyed their ideas about transformational leadership and how they experienced it from their previous senior leaders and from taking the professional leadership developmental program of 6 weeks. There were no opportunities to practice what was learned in the field. Each individual learns different and not every individual is ready to learn transformational leadership at the same time. Developing future leaders in the fire services takes effect when perspective leaders are trained and showed how to apply what is learned into action and the practice of leadership continues long after learning.

Third, mentoring and coaching emerged in this study as an important part of leading and training others to be better leaders among their followers. Coaching aids in the personal growth and the building of relationships while mentoring gives empathy and support for followers. Mentoring and coaching, according to Bass and Riggio (2006), instill the will and aspirations for self-development and also keeps communications open and places challenges before their followers. When mentoring and coaching leaders, trainers must be careful in teaching and facilitating from the training of transformational leadership and not a different leadership style, which they may have learned first.

Implications for Theory

This research study adds to the body of knowledge of how transformational leadership affects the development of fire lieutenants. Burns (1978) conducted research on transforming and

transformational leadership. In his research, he argued that transformational leadership occurs when both leaders and followers interact to raise their shared levels of motivation (Burns, 1978). Bass and Riggio (2006) argued that transformational leadership creates an ideal environment for followers to become moral leaders. Transformational leaders may use IC to help mentor, coach, and train fire lieutenants in their pursuit of self-development and job satisfaction. Additionally, transformational leaders may incorporate IM to help motivate fire lieutenants to provide the meaning to the mission of the organization and to communicate a clear and captivating vision (Bass, 1985).

How transformational leadership affects the development of fire lieutenants in the central United States is a very upstanding topic. It is very important to understand Burns (1978) and Bass and Riggio's (2006) theory of transformational leadership and the most recent research in the last few years on the training and development of officers in public safety organizations utilizing transformational leadership. This research dissertation may contribute to positive social change by helping fire services around the country apply comparable approaches to help improve the training and development for fire lieutenants in fire services. Transformational leadership development may help to build a better society through the promotion of positive social change.

Implication for Positive Social Change

The implications for positive social change in practice are important for the development of fire lieutenants in transformational leadership. This study revealed the need for more research about the training and development programs for fire lieutenants of the fire services in the central United States. Increasing the knowledge about the effects of transformational leadership on fire lieutenant development could increase its optimal outcome for both lieutenants and the

organization as a whole. Leaders and upper level management must be willing to adjust their training efforts to extend training in order to address the challenges they face in the future of fire services. These findings could help to extend leadership learning to the lower management ranks of fire services to help the men and women prepare for the promotional exams as aspiring future leaders. This research also affords the opportunity for other researchers to expand the knowledge further, expanding positive social change for the fire departments across this nation.

Conclusions

The purpose of this research study was to explore and describe the common meaning of fire lieutenants' lived experiences at the fire services in the central United States. I conducted face-to-face interviews and coded the data both by hand and with the use of NVivo11. Three key themes emerged from the research study: (a) transformational leadership training, (b) critical success factors, and (c) mentoring and coaching.

Findings validated the four elements of transformational leadership in addressing leadership development in the fire services. Through the analysis of the interviews, new understanding emerged about incorporating transformational leadership development training for the rank of fire lieutenants. The results of this research can be used to help improve the promotional process of employees, raise social awareness, influence future leaders, and improve the transfer of knowledge from current leaders in fire services. Findings from this research contributes to positive social change by helping fire services around the country establish a mentoring and coaching training programs for fire service future leaders and a continuous ongoing training in transformational leadership to increase the overall effectiveness of the organization. The more public safety organizations apply transformational leadership training as

part of the development of officers; the better prepared fire lieutenants are to lead their followers, thus helping to build a better and safer society.

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Appendix A: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Date

Director Gina Sweat

Memphis Fire Department

76 South Front St.

Memphis, TN 30103

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Director Sweat:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your organization. I am currently enrolled in the Management Program at Walden University in Minneapolis, MN, and I am in the process of writing my Dissertation. The study is entitled "Effects of Transformational Leadership on Fire Lieutenant Development". I hope that you will allow me to recruit 20 participants (fire lieutenants) at random to complete a face-to-face interview with follow-up interviews if necessary. Interested participants, who volunteer to participate, will be given a consent form by hand to be signed by them (copy enclosed) and returned to the primary researcher at the beginning of the interview process.

If approval is granted, participants will complete the face-to-face interview in a quiet setting on the site chosen. The interview process should take no longer than 60 minutes. The results of the interviews will be recorded and transcribed for the research project and individual results of this study will remain absolutely private and confidential. Should this study be published, only the results from the research will be documented. Either your organization or the individual participants will incur no costs.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time.

You may contact me at my email address: angelo.lamar@waldenu.edu

If you agree, kindly sign below. Alternatively, kindly submit a signed letter of permission on your organization's letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this survey/study at your organization.

Sincerely,

Angelo Lamar

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Tippins,

Research Chair, Walden University

Approved by:

Print your name and title here: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Interview Questions 1 to 6 are derived from the Research Question 1. Interview Questions 7 to 8 are derived from Research Question 2. Interview Questions 9 to 10 are derived from Research Question 3.

1. What is your understanding of the current leadership style of the fire department?
2. What style of leadership have you adopted? Why?
3. What is your current understanding of transformational leadership?
4. How do you compare the current leadership style of the fire department with transformational leadership?
5. Do you feel that transformational leadership training development should be given to lower-level positions?
6. Has your job satisfaction been the results of transformational leadership? If yes explain? If no explain?
7. What are some of the critical success factors you experienced that led to the skills and competency development of fire lieutenants?
8. What were some of the challenges and/or problems experienced if any in the skills and competency development program?
9. Do you think that mentoring could influence others to advance and succeed?
10. Do you think coaching plays an important part in the influence of fire fighters aspiring to advance up the rank? Why?

Appendix C: Pilot Study Feedback Form

1. Any thoughts or changes that need to be made to the informed consent form?

2. Any thoughts or changes that need to be made to the interview questionnaire?

3. Any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make concerning your experience with this pilot study?

Appendix D: Audit Trail

The purpose of this audit trail is to show a transparent description of all the steps taken from the start of the research collection of data, data analysis, and the interpretation of data process. By cohering to the described steps taken below, I will be able to ensure that all issues of trustworthiness in the research study has been addressed along with credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings and conclusions.

1. Data Collection
    A. Hand deliver and obtain permission request to conduct research within the organization
    B. Hand delivers or Email informed consent forms to research participants and follow-up to ensure that they understand the information in the form.
    C. Receive the participants agreement to participate in the research study
    D. Conduct live face-to-face interviews with participants
    E. Conduct follow-up if needed
    F. Manage data in a secured fire proof safe in home study office
2. Data Analysis
    A. Start hand-coding data and identifying emergent themes
    B. Assure open and axial coding processes
    C. Remain attentive and dismiss all illogical, unacceptable, and inconsistent data
3. Data Description and Interpretation
    A. Focus on the themes relevant to research questions
    B. Categorize themes beyond scope of research questions

C. Interpret only those themes related to the research questions

D. Conduct final data interpretation report to identify key themes

E. Present data interpretation conclusions and findings