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Relationship Between Servant Leadership Characteristics and Turnover in Fast-Casual Restaurants

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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Relationship Between Servant Leadership Characteristics and Turnover in Fast-Casual

Restaurants

by

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MBA, Capella University, 2014

MSA, Central Michigan University, 1996

BS, Marygrove College, 1988

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

March 2018

Abstract

In the United States, turnover threatens the economic status of the restaurant industry. In 2016, the turnover rate for the fast-casual restaurant dining industry was 1.8 million people with approximately 3 million people working in the industry. Restaurant leaders struggle with solutions to help reduce the problems of turnover. Guided by the servant leadership theory, the purpose of this correlational study was to examine the relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry. A convenient sample of fast-casual restaurant supervisors (n =58) in the Midwestern region of the United States completed a survey with questions related to empowerment and interpersonal support from the servant leadership survey and questions from the turnover survey. The results of a multiple regression did not predict turnover $F(8, 49) = .976$; $p > .05$; $R^2 = .137$). The effect size indicated that the regression model accounted for 14% of the variance in turnover. Empowerment ($\beta = -.023$, $p = .916$) did not relate any significant variation in turnover. Interpersonal support ($\beta = .066$, $p = .146$) did not relate any significant variation in turnover. Empowerment and interpersonal support could affect social change by enhancing the *well-being* of employees, which can encourage employees to provide better service in the restaurant business. Empowerment and interpersonal support include motivating factors in employee development, leading to volunteer and charitable contributions in the communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate my doctorate degree to my parents, the late Willie Taylor and the late Virginia (Ward) Taylor. My father grew up in Texas in the 1930s, and he did not get the opportunity to complete elementary school because he had to work in the fields. My mother graduated in Alabama with a high school diploma. I continued my education for you, Mom and Dad.

Acknowledgments

First, I am giving honor to God. If not for God, I would not have been able to complete my doctoral journey.

A special acknowledgement is for my husband, Dr. Charles R Needham Jr. We began our journey 33 years ago together when we met at our undergrad college. I was the one who encouraged you to complete your bachelor's degree. At our graduation, I was jealous of the doctoral graduates and wanted to wear the doctoral robe; however, years later, I gave up that fighting spirit towards education. Charles, you never gave up the fighting spirit towards education. You were the one who encouraged me to complete my master's degree and my doctorate degree. You are my best friend, my biggest cheerleader, and the light in my life. Thank you for your love and encouragement.

Thank you to my sons, Charles Needham III, Joseph Needham, and Andrew Needham, for being patient and enduring me during my doctoral journey. I know I did not provide the attention you needed at times; however, I appreciate your encouragement and your patience. As the youngest of 13 siblings, I appreciate the encouragement and the praise I received from my sisters, brothers, and my nieces and nephews. Chelsea White, the future Mrs. Charles Needham III, thank you for your assistance. You are brilliant and beautiful.

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you, Dr. Sean Stanley (second committee), and Dr. Judy Blando (URR). You all are a tough and awesome team who helped me dig deep down inside myself. Thank you to everyone who encouraged me and helped me during the process.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Fast-casual restaurants constitute the largest sector of the restaurant industry in the United States, accounting for 37% of $842 billion in restaurant industry sales (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Turnover is a serious issue facing leaders in the restaurant industry (Ellingson, Tews, & Dachner, 2016). Restaurant leaders indicated that the hardest challenges in the industry include retaining employees. Restaurant leaders struggle with identifying effective leadership strategies to retain qualified employees (Bufquin, Dipietro, Orlowski, Partlow, 2017). To reduce turnover in the fast-casual restaurants, leaders must understand how to empower employees and provide personal support. In this study, I examined the relationship between interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions.

Background of the Problem

The fast-casual segment of the restaurant industry is the fastest-growing segment of the restaurant industry (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Turnover is a serious issue facing leaders in the restaurant industry (Ellingson et al., 2016). Restaurant leaders indicated that the hardest challenges in the industry include retaining employees. Restaurant leaders struggle with identifying effective strategies to retain qualified employees (Bufquin et al., 2017).

Employees voluntarily withdraw from the industry because of (a) lack of training, (b) low wages, (c) limited benefits, (d) limited job opportunities, and (e) a lack of support from management (Bufquin et al., 2017). The cost of turnover leads to increases in direct and indirect costs (Call, Nyberg, Ployhart, & Weekley, 2015). Examining the relationship

between interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions could lead to enhancing the leaders understanding of management improvement strategies and reduce employee turnover.

Problem Statement

The fast-casual dining restaurant segment of the restaurant industry has a problem with unmotivated employees and high turnover (Ellingson et al., 2016). The turnover rate for the fast-casual restaurant dining industry is 1.8 million people, with approximately 3 million people working each year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). The general business problem that I addressed in this study was that fast-casual restaurant owner's experience employee turnover. The specific business problem that I addressed in this study was that some fast-casual restaurant leaders do not understand the relationship between interpersonal support and empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in fast-casual dining restaurants.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between interpersonal support and empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in fast-casual dining restaurants. The independent variables were interpersonal support and empowerment. The dependent variable was employee turnover intention. The target population included a sample of fast-casual restaurant supervisors in the Midwestern region of the United States.

The findings of this study may be helpful to facilitate a friendly work environment for employees, especially typical low-wage workers in fast-casual

restaurants (Call et al., 2015). The followers of leaders who empower and provide interpersonal support for their employees could lead to less turnover (Ellingson et al., 2016). The benefits may improve the quality of food and service that consumer receives in fast-casual restaurants. The stakeholders in the restaurant industry may benefit from decreased turnover, resulting in positive social change. A lower rate of turnover among employees may improve quality service that customers receive.

Nature of the Study

I chose a quantitative method for this study. A quantitative method of research includes measuring variables and obtaining results from the analysis of the data (Baglin, Reece, & Baker, 2015). This method aligned with the needs of this study because the study included hypotheses to examine the relationship between independent variables and a dependent variable. A quantitative study includes a focus on large groups using statistical analysis qualitative study may include a strategy of understanding a specific group or a large population (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Qualitative research comes from the view of participants and their experiences in a natural setting (Marti, 2015). A qualitative study was not applicable to this study because the study did not include subjective opinions. Mixed-method research did not align with this study because mixed-method research includes both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. The study did not include qualitative research methods.

The chosen research design for this study was a correlational design. Correlational designs include the relationship between two or more variables and do not include causation (Marti, 2015). Quasi-experimental research includes the examination of a

casual comparison between one or more independent variables (Baglin et al., 2015). This study did not include comparing variables. Descriptive design research includes gathering information groups, organizations, and people for describing characteristics (Barnham, 2015). This study did not include gathering information groups, organizations and people for describing characteristics. Nonexperimental designs differ from experimental designs because the researcher cannot manipulate the independent variables (Landrum & Garza, 2015). This study was not a nonexperimental correlational study and did not include manipulative variables.

Research Question

The research question of the study was as follows: Is there is a relationship between interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in the fast-casual restaurant industry?

Hypotheses

$H_0 1$: There is no significant relationship between the interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_a 1$: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_0 2$: There is no significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_a 2$: There is a significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

Theoretical Framework

Servant leadership theory includes leaders who meet the highest needs of followers (Greenleaf, 1977). The independent variables in this study included the constructs of servant leadership: (a) interpersonal support and (b) empowerment. The dependent variable was fast-casual restaurant employee-turnover intentions. As applied to this study, the servant leadership theory included the assumption partnerships develop between leaders and followers. The servant leader becomes a role model, and followers become servant leaders (Greenleaf, 1977). Under servant leadership, a decrease in employee turnover could result from a potential increase in employee morale, job satisfaction, and productivity (Chen, Zhu, & Zhou, 2015). My intent in this study was to examine the extent and nature of the relationships (if any) between the variables of interpersonal support and empowerment (Figure 1). The constructs interpersonal support and empowerment applies to examining fast-casual restaurant employee-turnover intentions.
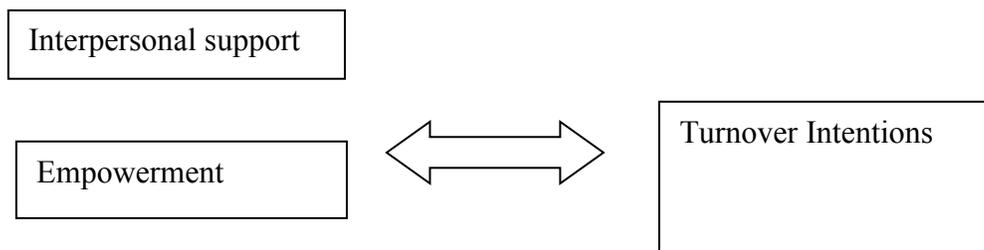
Figure 1. A graphic model of the constructs of the servant leadership theory. The constructs interpersonal support and empowerment applies to examining fast-casual restaurant employee-turnover intentions.

Operational Definitions

Bootstrapping: Bootstrapping is a statistical process of resampling to estimate a population parameter (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014).

Empowerment: Empowerment includes sharing authority and power with employees to assist with daily activities in an organization (Arogundade & Arogundade, 2015).

Fast-casual dining: Fast-casual restaurants are restaurants in the United States that does not require table service and offer higher quality food that is not frozen. (Kurian & Muzumdar, 2017).

Interpersonal support: Interpersonal support includes support from individuals who help a person develop social relationships (Newman, Schwarz, Cooper, & Sendjaya, 2017).

Servant leadership theory: Servant leadership theory is a form of leadership that includes the premise those leaders ensure subordinates achieve their highest needs (Carter & Baghurst, 2014).

Turnover: Turnover is a reduction in the performance of employees (Pan & Chen, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions include factors that can influence the study (Kinn & Curzio, 2005). No hard data exists to prove assumptions. When the population aligns with a priori assumption, the participants are honest in their answers based on the experience and

understanding of their job functions (Bambale, Shamsudin, & Subramaniam, 2013). All participants were honest based on their job experience. Another assumption was that all participants had access to the Internet. All participants had access to the Internet and answered all questions.

Limitations

Limitations include identifying perceived weaknesses in the study (Connelly, 2013). First, the study was limited to fast-casual restaurant supervisors from the Midwestern region of the United States. Second, the sample did not include a random sample, which eliminated the possibility of equal representation. The final limitation came from using a convenience sample. A convenient sample does not represent a generalization of supervisors in the fast-casual restaurant industry.

Limitations may change if a shortage of empirical data exists to show the hypotheses or restrictions exist on casual, descriptive, or correlational data (Bell, DiStefano, & Morgan, 2010). The correlational design included examining of the relationship between two or more variables without causation (Marti, 2015). The limitation included two independent variables from the servant leadership theory. Most research on servant leadership includes seven variables. This study included two variables, which lead to less robust results from the analysis (Jaramillo, Bande, & Varela, 2015).

Delimitations

Delimitations are the boundaries and the scope of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2015). Delimitations are within the control of the person writing the study (Connelly,

2013). The delimitations could include the population, and the objectives of the study (Svensson & Doumas, 2013). The delimitations included the variables interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions. The delimitation of this study included fast-casual restaurant supervisors in the Midwestern region of the United States. The population in the study included supervisors from the fast-casual restaurant industry. Beyond the scope of the study included data from past supervisors from the fast-casual restaurant industry, employees from other industries, and organizations in other geographical areas. Beyond the scope of the study were unidentifiable variables that include participant demographics, and participants' intentions to leave the organization.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The findings of this study may be helpful to facilitate a friendly work environment for employees, especially typical low-wage workers in fast-casual restaurants. Fast-casual restaurant leaders could use the results of the study to determine whether they understand how empowering employees and providing interpersonal support has a positive relationship with reduced turnover. The issue of turnover is significant for managers, employees, and owners (Han, Bonn, Cho, 2016).

Employee turnover is a threat to the economic status of fast-casual restaurants (Ellingson et al., 2016). The benefits of reduced turnover include (a) increased productivity, (b) shared knowledge among employees, managers, and leaders in the restaurant industry; (c) higher employee morale, and (d) a reduction in direct and indirect costs for leaders in the industry (Bulquin et al., 2017).

Implications for Social Change

The social change implications of this study may assist restaurant owners and managers with leadership solutions to maintain qualified employees and provide quality service with the goal of reducing turnover and turnover costs. The results of the study may contribute to social change by influencing customer satisfaction, better quality of food, and job stability (Call et al., 2015). Leaders who provide interpersonal support and empower employees with an emphasis on turnover could have an effect on less turnover in the industry. The benefits include improving the quality of food and service that consumers receive in fast-casual restaurants. The stakeholders in the restaurant industry will benefit from decreased turnover resulting in positive social change. A lower rate of turnover among employees may improve quality service that customers receive.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

A review of the scholarly literature included an examination of the extent and nature of the relationship between servant leadership and employee turnover in fast-casual dining restaurants. The information in the scholarly literature included a minimal information concerning the servant leadership theory as the theory relates to turnover in the restaurant industry. The study aligned with a quantitative correlation study. The study included a comparison of the relationship (if any) of the two selected independent variables, interpersonal support, and empowerment to the dependent variable of turnover in fast-casual restaurants. The hypotheses and the null hypothesis in the study included:

$H_0 1$: There is no significant relationship between the interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

H_a1: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

H_02: There is no significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

H_a2: There is a significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

The strategy for completing the literature review began with a synthesis of servant leadership theory. The thematic literature review included the constructs of servant leadership theory specifically interpersonal support and empowerment. Included were two independent variables interpersonal support, and empowerment, and the dependent variable of turnover intentions. Information containing a comparison and contrast of the servant leadership theory to the transformation theory and ethical leadership exist in the literature.

The literature review also included a review of the independent variables interpersonal support, and empowerment, and the dependent variable of turnover intent, and information concerning the fast-casual restaurant industry. The sources of the literature review information included 126 peer-reviewed references dated between the years 2014 to 2018. Three sources are non-peered-reviewed sources, and seven peer reviewed sources prior to the year 2014, assuring 85% of the 126 publications are within 5 years of the anticipated graduation date. The sources came from the following databases: Thoreau Multi-database, ProQuest, Business and Management, Human Service, Psychology, Sage Publications, and Hospitality and Tourism Complete.

Servant Leadership

The scholarly literature included limited information on the relationship between the servant leadership theory and turnover intentions. Servant leadership is relatively new to the study of organizational leadership theories and is the least studied of organizational leadership theories (Jones, 2012). Servant leadership compares to transformational leadership, charismatic, and leadership member-exchange (Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn, & Wu, 2018). Servant leadership is unique from other leadership theories because of the emphasis on leaders prioritizing the needs of followers (Liden, Wayne, Chenwei, & Meuser, 2014).

The servant leadership theory was important to this study because the study included interpersonal support and empowerment. Interpersonal support and empowerment were the independent variables in the study. Putting the needs of others first includes empowering followers to take charge of their own actions (Irving, & Berndt, 2017). Leaders who provide interpersonal support put their followers' needs first before their own needs (Newman et al., 2017). Servant leadership includes leaders who meet their followers' highest needs (Greenleaf, 1977). The servant leadership theory applied to the study because partnerships develop between the leaders and followers in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Jaramillo et al., 2015).

Leaders gain effectiveness by possessing certain proficiency and expertise to help individuals reach their full potential (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leaders are goal oriented, good communicators, situational, dependable, creative, trustworthy, and intuitive. Seven dimensions of servant leadership exist. The seven dimensions include emotional healing,

creating value for the community, listening, and understanding, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting followers first, and behaving ethically (Chen et al., 2015). The seven dimensions of servant leadership inspired Greenleaf to put the needs, goals, and aspirations of followers into the importance of the organization. Servant leaders must listen and understand the problems of others (Greenleaf, 1977). The emphasis on servant leadership is the strategy of wanting to help others. Helping others includes empowering followers and providing interpersonal support (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015).

The customer service industry includes the fast-casual restaurant industry (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). The need for servant leadership is essential for organizational effectiveness (Chen et al., 2015). Empowerment and interpersonal support are essential in the organization because they exemplify servant leadership behavior. The behavior components have a positive association with creating trusting relationships between leaders and followers (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015).

Servant leaders follow a people-centered approach to gain organizational effectiveness (Chen et al., 2015). Achieving organizational effectiveness include servant leaders empowering people to achieve their fullest potential (Schwepker & Schultz, 2015). The followers of servant leaders must have inclusion in the decision-making, which contributes to organizational effectiveness (Chen et al., 2015). Frontline employees under servant leaders have a desire to practice exemplary customer service (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Employees who strive for achievement are satisfied with their jobs; and the intent to leave the organization reduces (Irving, & Berndt, 2017).

Some fast-casual restaurant leaders practice the servant leadership style. The leaders practice the servant leadership style by empowering and providing interpersonal support to employees (Jones, 2012). Organizational leaders who empower employees and provide interpersonal support lead to increased profits, employee satisfaction, less turnover, and customer retention (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Hinkin and Tracey (2010) conducted a study examining the culture of the top *Fortune Magazine* best employers. The focus of the Hinkin and Tracey study was Starbucks. The culture of Starbucks includes a servant leadership culture emphasizing empowerment and providing interpersonal support to employees.

Hinkin and Tracey (2010) indicated the leaders of Starbucks emphasize retention of employees adding success to the organization. Some of the success of maintaining employees include providing interpersonal support through job-training, flexible schedules, awards, and development opportunities for employees. Starbucks has less than 50% of the average turnover of 3 million people employed in the casual restaurant industry (Hinkin & Tracey, 2010). Starbucks is an example of how leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry can develop an understanding of the extent of the behavior characteristics interpersonal support and empowerment to help reduce turnover.

The effectiveness of servant leadership is a demonstration of authenticity portrayed by the leaders of Starbucks and other fast-casual restaurants (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Restaurant employees who work under servant leaders felt valuable to the organization. The leaders at Starbucks gain trust among members of the organizations by forming a sense of community in the organization through empowerment (Greenleaf,

1977). Starbucks's leaders practice empowerment as a behavior component to help employees feel confident concerning themselves that can attribute to less turnover (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). True servant leaders who empower employees spend time with employees while the employees master skills and attain work goals. Once the employee obtains skills and attains work goals, they feel a sense of belonging to the organization and may remain with the organization (Greenleaf, 1977). A positive correlation between the behavior characteristics of servant leadership and turnover derives from the employee's sense of belonging to the organization (Schwepker & Schultz, 2015). Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry can benefit from the servant leadership characteristic empowerment to gain a deeper understanding of the extent of how empowerment can help deter turnover.

Leadership

The term *leadership* is a difficult concept to define. Many definitions exist from different theoretical approaches. The definition of leadership began in the first 3 decades of the 20th century from 1900 to 1929 with emphasis on control and centralization (Mulki, Caemmerer, & Heggde, 2015). During the 1930s, the view of leadership no longer included the focus of domination from one person, but instead personality traits became the main influence of leadership (Northouse, 2015). During the 1940s, behavior of individual's leading groups became the theme of leadership. The group members' focus dominated the view of leadership throughout the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and during the 1970s, the group focus lead to the organizational behavior approach to

leadership. Burns's (1978) definition of *leadership* dominated the subject of leadership (Bowerman & Van Wart, 2014).

Burns's (1978) definition of *leadership* included the premise that leadership is a process of leaders and followers sharing resources that include economic and political resources (as cited in Bowerman & Van Wart, 2014). During the 21st century, scholars determined that *leadership* has no common definition (Mulki et al., 2015). The four approaches of leaders include trait, behavior, power, and situational. Anyone with the temperament, competence, and positive values can lead in an organization (Storsletten & Jakobsen, 2015). Leaders with the trait, behavior, power or situation will not necessarily lead with empowerment or provide interpersonal support to followers.

Employees spend most of their work careers under a leader. Employees spend the majority of their lives working in organizations under leaders that have a strong influence on their daily activities (Palanski, Avey, & Jiraporn, 2014). The relationships between employees and leaders have a direct influence on a person's attitude and intentions to leave the organization. Previous leadership theorists described a positive relationship between employee turnover and leadership style. Carter and Baghurst (2014); Green, Wheeler, and Baggerly-Hinojosa (2015); Jaramillo et al. (2015); Liden et al. (2014); Sokoll (2014); and Zhao, Liu, and Gao (2016) found a positive relationship between the effects of servant leadership and lower turnover. The servant leaders' behavior, which includes interpersonal support and empowerment, can help lower turnover, which supports the need for this study.

The culture of servant leaders influences employees' commitment to the organization by reducing stress (Jaramillo et al., 2015). For example, servant leaders can eliminate stress among employee by empowering employees to work autonomously (Keller Hansbrough, & Jones, 2014). If stress exists in the employee leader relationship, the leader can sometimes cause psychological problems (Plonien, 2015). The characteristics of servant leaders' interpersonal support and empowerment could contribute to the growth of the individual decreasing the chance of the employee leaving the organization. Leaders can learn and understand the extent of how the characteristics of interpersonal support and empowerment, which could help with employees leaving the organization.

Rival Theories

Ethical leaders have characteristics that align with servant leaders. Ethical leaders strive to serve others (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Ethical leadership is a demonstration of the appropriate behavior through personal actions and interpersonal relationships (Waldman, Danni, Hannah, & Balthazard, 2017). The premise of portraying ethical leadership is through communicating to followers, rewarding and punishing followers, and allowing followers to participate in the decision-making process. Ethical leadership exemplifies servant leadership because of the characteristics of interpersonal support through honesty and caring for the individual giving the moral aspect of ethical leadership (Zhu, Zheng, Riggio, & Zhang, 2015).

Abusive leadership is a construct of ethical leadership (Palanski et al., 2014). Some leaders' abusive behavior as envy, vindictive, spiteful, and revengeful (Bormann,

2017). These types of behavior cause employees to withdraw from the organization. Individuals tend to focus on negative ethical behavior, as opposed to positive ethical behavior. Positive ethical leadership is important to help reduce turnover (Liden et al., 2014). Leaders who use ethical leadership create a positive work environment. Examples of positive behavior in ethical leaders include trustworthiness, fairness, and pleasant personality toward followers (Schwepker & Schultz, 2015). Servant leaders create a positive environment by creating an atmosphere of trust, and fairness. The need for servant leadership in reducing turnover is important because servant leaders are ethical and moral (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Followers need constant support to make them consider staying with the organization. Understanding what makes followers want to stay with the organization includes understanding the servant leadership behaviors that could lead to less turnover.

Transformational leadership. Transformational leaders have characteristics of servant leaders. Transformational leadership is the attention leaders give to employees through role modeling, motivating, work task, and encouragement (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational leaders also motivate and stimulate followers intellectually (Ghasabeh, Reaiche, & Soosay, 2015). Transformational leaders demonstrate consideration toward followers by stating goals clearly; transformational leaders may change the attitudes and expectations of their followers (Caillier, 2016). Changing the expectations and attitudes of followers include changing turnover intentions. Servant and transformational leaders are similar because the leaders provide interpersonal support to change the attitudes and expectations of followers.

Transformational leaders positively influence turnover intention because they provide employees with supportive programs (Caillier, 2016). Transformational leaders influence followers by promoting the value of the job, which influences employees to stay with the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational leaders portray charisma that leads to high admiration and trust for their leaders (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). Servant leaders follow some of the same principles of providing support that can lead to less turnover. Servant leaders motivate employees by supportive measures by placing the employee first and gaining trust among employees through organizational commitment and job fit, leading to less turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2015).

Servant leaders gain trust by placing the needs of the followers first, and role model their behavior; therefore, they create servant leaders (Greenleaf, 1977). Leaders, who form relationships with employees by placing the needs of the employees before their needs, may have affect reducing employee turnover (Jones, 2012). The influence of servant leadership is important to the study of leadership and turnover because servant leaders could create other servant leaders through behavior, thereby reducing turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Carter & Baghurst, 2014).

Effects of Leadership and Employee Commitment on Turnover

The employees in the fast-casual restaurant industry must provide adequate customer service. Providing customer service creates a strong connection to how a person connects to their job (Jung & Yoon, 2016). Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on how an employee attaches to their jobs (Chen, Yen, & Tsai, 2014). From a *humanitarian* perspective, people's satisfaction with an organization depends on the

treatment they receive in the organization (Moshtari, 2016). The *utilitarian* perspective of perceived satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the organization affects the function of the organization (Neubert & Halbesleben, 2015). For example, satisfied people increase productivity, and dissatisfied people react by exhibiting negative organizational commitment behaviors. Leaders who provide interpersonal support to followers could create satisfied employees (Jaramillo et al., 2015).

Organizational commitment could have an important influence to understand how employees commit to the organization. Organizational commitment as an affective attachment that denotes a person's effort toward the organization, reflecting on the organizational beliefs, goals, and values (Moshtari, 2016). When an individual feels committed to the organization, they may stay with the organization because of their strong affiliation with the organization. Understanding the extent of how the servant leadership behavior characteristics interpersonal support and empowerment relate to less turnover is to understand the mindset of the employee (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015).

The qualities a servant leader demonstrates may give more credence to followers about organizational support and their willingness to stay in the organization. Followers who perceive support from servant leaders may form an emotional attachment toward leaders (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). A leader's behavior is pivotal in helping a follower perceive organizational support (Sokoll, 2014). Two servant leadership behaviors, interpersonal support, and empowerment, influence how an employee commits to the organization. Servant leaders who provide interpersonal support can help employees feel

satisfied in a fast-casual restaurant. Leaders who strive to understand how employees need support might avoid high turnover in the fast-casual restaurant organization (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015).

Empowering and providing interpersonal support are two organizational variables. Job characteristics is a variable of empowerment and interpersonal support. Job characteristics include job security, advancement opportunities, and fair treatment from leaders (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015). Leaders who provide interpersonal support and empower employees could remain committed to the organization (Pan & Chen, 2014). A need exists for servant leaders to provide interpersonal support and empowerment toward followers. More leaders should practice servant leadership in fast-casual restaurants to create a strong organizational culture (Karatepe & Vatankhah, 2014). Turnover in the restaurant industry is ongoing and supportive leadership reduces the percentage of employees leaving the workforce. Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry should understand the extent of how a supportive environment might create an organizational that includes less turnover.

Understanding Organizational Culture

An organizational culture influences turnover and organizational performance. Many definitions exist to define organizational culture. Organizational culture is behaviors among employees in the organization (Davidson, 2003). Organizational culture is groups learning how to adapt to external threats within the internal organization (Schein, 1990). As groups adopt valid leadership strategies for solving problems in the organization, members inspire new members to obtain new leadership strategies

(Karatepe & Vatankhah, 2014). Organizational cultures revolve around relationships between employees' careers, and personal trait (Hoorn, 2017; Larentis, Simon Antonello, & Slongo, 2018). If leaders adopt the servant leadership behavior of interpersonal support and empowerment, they can teach other employees how to become servant leaders that can lead to less turnover.

Organizational culture reflects the nature of work in the organization (Belias & Koustelios, 2015). The culture in the fast-casual restaurant industry as a normative system where employees work long and irregular hours (Kitterlin, Moreno, & Moll, 2015). Fast-Casual restaurant employees invest psychological and physical energy with a lack of organizational support, which can lead to turnover. Employees in the fast-casual restaurant industry often complain about abusive leaders (Lord-Mattke, 2014). Abusive leaders need an understanding of the extent of how providing interpersonal support and empowering employees can lead to less turnover. Leaders who empower employees and provide interpersonal support do not include abusing employees supporting the need for this study.

Employee abuse from leaders can hinder employees performing their jobs. Employee abuse prevails in the restaurant industry (Kitterlin et al., 2015). During an interview at a pizza chain in Arizona, 150 employees stated their leader forced them to work beyond normal hours and accept low wages (Kitterlin et al., 2015). Employee abuse can lead to lawsuits, which, can also lead to high turnover (Belias & Koustelios, 2015). Despite lawsuits, the behavior of restaurant leaders remain abusive. The restaurant

leaders sometimes retaliate by bullying, using threats, and deporting immigrant workers (Kitterlin et al., 2015).

Two examples of fast-casual restaurant leaders that strive to treat employees with respect without abuse are from the team of Sonic and Five Guys restaurants. Lord-Mattke (2014) conducted a phenomenology study regarding the leadership in Sonic and Five Guys restaurants. Lord-Mattke concluded that the leadership culture at both restaurant chains included encouraging creativity, diligence, commitment, and community support. The leadership style of both restaurant owners included a combination of classical, transactional, path-goal, situational, and servant leadership (Lord-Mattke, 2014). The restaurant leaders portrayed the classical and servitude style of leadership when they involved the customer and employees (Chen et al., 2015). The restaurant leaders portrayed situational leadership when they experienced crisis (Torre, 2014). The qualities of the leaders include the characteristics of empowerment and interpersonal support. Compared to other fast-casual restaurant chains, the restaurant leaders at Sonic and Five Guys experienced less turnover from their employees.

The labor intensiveness of the fast-casual restaurant industry can cause a climate of high turnover. The leader in fast-casual restaurants can provide a supportive environment by providing employees interpersonal support, which can lead to a reduction in turnover. Innovative and supportive cultures have a positive effect on job commitment (Dinc, 2017). Group cohesiveness or teamwork in the organization and supportiveness dimensions of organizational culture leads to less turnover (Karatepe & Vatankhah, 2014). Restaurant employment is a high- performance work environment. Leaders in

high-performance work environments who provide interpersonal support, empowerment, and rewards have less turnover. A positive relationship exists between empowerment, interpersonal support and less turnover (Islam, Khan, & Bukhari, 2016). Leaders who empower employees motivate them to react positively toward organizational goals (Irving, & Berndt, 2017).The need for fast-casual restaurant leaders to understand how to empower and provide interpersonal support is important to reduce turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry.

Review of the Independent Variables

Interpersonal support and empowerment are two behavior characteristics of the servant leadership theory. Servant leaders place others first by empowering and putting the other person's highest needs as a priority (Greenleaf, 1977). Leaders who provide interpersonal support toward employees create a trusting environment (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Empowering employees and providing interpersonal support is part of creating organizational effectiveness (Chen et al., 2015).

Empowerment. Empowerment is a psychological state that gives individual control in their work environment (Spreitzer, 1995). Empowerment is a strategy that employees use to make their job decisions (Irving, & Berndt, 2017). For example, employees in the fast-casual restaurants take responsibility for their actions and serve customers adequately. The work tasks in the fast-casual restaurant industry are emotionally and physically exhausting (Jung & Yoon, 2016). The nature of the work in the fast-casual restaurant industry includes serving the customer, which pressures the employees to provide excellent customer service. Empowering behavior in leaders

enhances the intrinsic motivation in followers through creativity, conceptual

understanding, and cognitive flexibility (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015).

Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry need to understand how the extinct

of empowerment must include an analysis of the cognitive dimensions of psychological

empowerment. Psychological empowerment includes four cognitive dimensions (a)

meaning, (b) competence, (c) self-determination, and (d) impact (Lizar, Mangundjaya, &

Rachmawan, 2015). The cognitive dimensions are important in creating a positive

correlation between empowerment and less turnover among fast-casual restaurant

employees. The dimension of meaning is the strategy of placing value on employees,

which enhances the mission of the organization (Gergaud, Storchmann, & Verardi,

2015).

If leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry value the employee, then an

employee might consider remaining with the organization. Competence is the belief an

employee has within himself or herself to perform a task (Irving, & Berndt, 2017). The

more competence the employee has within himself or herself, the less the employee

might consider leaving the organization. Self-determination is the motivation within the

employee that aligns with the ability to work autonomously. Employees in the fast-casual

restaurant industry must work autonomously to gain self-determination. Employees who

have self-determination may stay with the organization.

The fast-paced atmosphere of the fast-casual restaurant industry affects how the

employees perceive change and stability of the job. The influence a job has on an

individual influences how an employee perceives the job outcomes (Ellingson et al.,

2016). Empowerment can have a positive influence on how a person perceives the organization (Irving, & Berndt, 2017). Lizar et al. (2015) studied the relationship between empowerment and employees' willingness to change indicates how empowerment has a positive influence on an employee's readiness to change and accept organizational change. Empowerment results in motivated employees, positive work attitudes, competence, and determination (Gergaud et al., 2015). Employees in the fast-casual restaurant industry need motivation, positive attitudes, competence, and determination to reduce turnover.

The style of leadership a leader may use has an influence on how employees view the organization. The leadership in the fast-casual restaurant industry is bureaucratic, which includes leadership from the top down control (Gergaud et al., 2015). The need for organizational leaders to withdraw from bureaucratic leadership includes empowering employees to perform (Fong & Snape, 2015). Employees gain psychological empowerment by taking the initiative and embracing risk (Islam, Ur Rehman Khan, Norulkamar Bt. Ungku Ahmad, Ali, & Ahmed, 2014). The leadership portrayed by a fast-casual restaurant leader includes the bureaucratic style of leadership. Bureaucratic leadership may lead to employees not taking risks to work independently on the job. Employees in the fast-casual restaurant industry must take the initiative with innovative ideas to perform minimal tasks (Kurian & Muzumdar, 2017). The style of leadership is important because certain leadership styles can influence on employee turnover. For example, empowerment and interpersonal support is an element of the servant leadership style.

The leaders can empower the followers through empowerment to work independently (Islam et al., 2014). Leaders who embrace empowerment behavior encourage employees to take the initiative to increase work engagement reducing turnover, and creating a positive relationship between turnover and empowerment. Creating an empowerment environment is important to the fast-casual restaurant industry to retain employees empowerment has a positive influence on restaurant employees. Restaurant leaders could create an empowered atmosphere by (a) sharing the leadership vision of the organization, (b) sharing goals and directions, (c) rewarding employees, and (d) listening to employees (Jones, 2012). Jones (2012) studied the influence of servant leadership on (a) profit, (b) employee satisfaction, and (c) empowerment. Jones indicated leaders who provide empowerment streamlined the decision-making process enhancing organizational commitment. Empowerment is important for leaders to practice because when their employees empower and not force control on their employees, the employees develop a sense of autonomy that could result in less turnover (de Klerk & Stander, 2014). Interpersonal support is another behavior characteristic of the servant leadership theory.

Interpersonal support. Interpersonal support includes support from individuals who help a person develop social relationships (Newman et al., 2017). Creating trust is an important element of interpersonal support. A leader who shows interpersonal support creates trust among followers (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Trust is an important element of understanding individuals who practice servant leadership. Trust includes showing concern, integrity, and honesty toward followers. Quantitative studies showed a positive

relationship between social support, absenteeism, turnover, turnover intentions, job

satisfaction, organizational commitment, and individual performance (Erez, Schilpzand,

Leavitt, Woolum, & Judge, 2015).

Interpersonal strength involves befriending, love, kindness, and social intelligence

(Newman et al., 2017). The same characteristics of interpersonal strengths exemplify the

virtuous values of servant leadership (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Interpersonal

support exemplifies the core of servant leadership. Interpersonal support is valuing and

forming a close relationship with others (Harzer & Ruch, 2014). The servant leaders who

value and provide interpersonal support to employees can help reduce turnover in

organizations. The characteristic of interpersonal support is important in servant leaders

because these leaders create other leaders who will help reduce turnover.

Review of the Dependent Variable

Understanding turnover. Turnover is an ongoing issue in the fast-casual

restaurant industry. Turnover intention threatens the economic status of the restaurant

industry (Bulquin et al., 2017). Turnover is a reduction in the performance of employees

(Pan & Chen, 2014). Certain factors can sometimes occur before employees decide to

leave the organization. Mobley's (1977) model of turnover reflects a withdrawal decision

from a set of qualifications. The qualifications include (a) job evaluation, (b)

dissatisfaction, (c) intentions, (d) cost, (e) searching (f) evaluating alternatives, and (g)

the intentions to quit or resign. All qualifications can have an individual effect, or some

of the factors can cause an employee to resign from their jobs.

The fast-casual restaurant industry is an example of an industry, which employees leave at a phenomenal rate. The frequency of turnover relates to the type of industry. Service firms, which include restaurants, have the highest turnover rates (Eckardt, Skaggs, & Youndt, 2014). A particular reason the fast-casual restaurant industry has a high turnover is the insufficient skills of the employees. Restaurant industry employees require a particular skill to perform complicated tasks (Bulquin et al., 2017). A shortage of skilled workers could lead to decreased productivity, turnover, and inadequate staffing (Smeets, Lerulli, & Gibbs, 2016).

One of the solutions to decrease the trend of turnover is supportive leadership (Jones, 2012). Servant leaders who have the behavioral characteristics of empowerment and interpersonal support could help reduce turnover and retain qualified staff (Ellingson et al., 2016; Jaramillo et al., 2015). The transformational and ethical theory have characteristics of empowering and providing support for followers, but the leaders who follow these leadership theories put their followers' needs before their needs. The emphasis on servant leadership is to train other leaders to become servant leaders (Jones, 2012).

Many reasons exist for fast-casual restaurant employees who leave the organization. Employee turnover occurs in stages (Pan & Chen, 2014). Employees voluntarily withdraw from the fast-casual restaurant industry because of (a) lack of training, (b) low wages, (c) limited benefits, (d) limited job opportunities, and (e) a lack of interpersonal support from management (Nasyira, Othman, & Ghazali, 2014), Bufquin et al., 2017). Restaurant employee positions carry a negative stigma as a servitude

position that may lead to turnover (Nasyira et al., 2014). The cost of turnover could lead

to increases in direct and indirect costs (Call et al., 2015). Turnover includes influences

from internal factors (Pan & Chen, 2014). Servant leaders who empower employees and

provide personal support can lead through training, job promotion opportunities to

eliminate the threat of turnover intentions. Leaders need an understanding of the extent of

how empowering employees could lead to less turnover.

Strategies to Reduce Turnover

Turnover is costly for an organization; the cost to replace a worker can include a

1.2% to 2.5% of the employee's annual salary (Christian & Ellis, 2014).Turnover can

lead to stress, low morale, low self-esteem, and fear. Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant

industry invested in strategies for employee benefit programs to reduce turnover.

Leadership strategies with an emphasis on empowerment and personal support could help

reduce turnover (Karatepe & Vatankhah, 2014). Servant leaders who provide personal

support and empower employees can provide a solution to the problems of turnover. The

nature of the servant leader includes placing followers' needs first, above self-needs.

When one restaurant leader practices servant leadership, the leader influences others to

follow their pattern of leadership (Carter & Baghurst, 2014).

Interpersonal support through training methods could be a solution to the turnover

problems in the fast-casual restaurant industry. Training is part of a relational contract

between the employers and the employees. Employee turnover relates negatively to

relational contracts between the employees and the organization (Christian & Ellis,

2014). Responding to employees need before organizational needs may help the

employee feel good concerning the organization (Smeets et al., 2016). For example, if employees receive a benefit from the leaders such as receiving training from the managers of the organization, the employees could remain loyal to the organization (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015). When an employee has intentions to leave the organization, they no longer care for the relational contract, which can result in unethical behavior. Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry need to recognize unethical behavior because they need to identify empowerment and behavior programs that may decrease turnover.

Sometimes an employee can become morally disengaged from the organization and attempt to leave the organization. Leaders could watch employees who morally disengage, increase punishment tactics, and monitor turnover intentions (Christian & Ellis, 2014). To assist with monitoring employees, leaders can offer interpersonal support by surveying employees concerning job commitment, satisfaction, attitudes, and seek suggestions from the employees on how to improve operations (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015). Sometimes employees voice their opinions if they morally disengage from the organization (Newman et al., 2017). Employees who voice their opinions might benefit all employees in the organization (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Employees who voice their opinions can force leaders to question the underlying problems. Leaders who practice servant leadership allow employees to voice their opinions and take part in the decision-making process. Allowing employees to take part in the decision-making is part of providing interpersonal support.

Servant leaders can support employees by providing positive feedback, interpersonal support, and develop positive relationships with employees. The rules of leadership include supervisors complying with procedures, which will have a positive effect on trust (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Servant leadership emphasizes trust, empowerment, positive feedback, and interpersonal support that can reduce turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Empowerment includes the influence of motivating and instilling competence in employees that make them want to stay with the organization (Karavardar, 2014). Interpersonal support includes creating trust between leaders and followers that make employees want to stay with the organization encouraging less turnover and problems associated with the cost of turnover (Newman et al., 2017). The leaders of fast-casual restaurants need a better understanding of the servant leadership characteristics of empowerment and interpersonal support. A positive correlation exists between turnover and servant leadership (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Fast-casual restaurant leaders should strive to understand how providing interpersonal support empowerment programs could reduce turnover in the organization.

Measurement of the Variables

The measurement of the variables will begin with questions related to interpersonal support and empowerment from the servant leadership instrument (SLAI) created by Patterson (2003) and updated by Ehrhart (2004) and Liden et al. (2008). The SLAI includes the constructs of Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership theory. The instrument includes the constructs of empowerment and interpersonal support (Reid, West, Winston, Wood, 2014). The SLAI has reliability, interrater, concurrent, and

convergent validity through the scholarly literature concerning the servant leadership theory (Ekinci, 2015). Measuring employee turnover intention will begin with Mobley's 1977 model of turnover intentions. Questions derived from both instruments apply to the study. Multi regression analysis aligns with the study. Multiple regression analysis includes predicting the value of one variable conditioning on two or more variables (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014). The intent of the research includes finding an association between the variables interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover. Multiple findings from the raw data may reveal questions relating to the variables, and the servant leadership theory (Landrum & Garza, 2015).

Points of View in the Literature

Information concerning turnover dominates the literature as restaurant leaders seek solutions on how to help deter turnover. The main objective of this study is to focus on the behavior characteristics interpersonal support and empowerment of the servant leadership theory and determine if a relationship exists with turnover. Nasyira et al. (2014) studied the relationship between perceived organizational supports and perceived supervisory support with employee intent to remain with the organization. The results of the Nasyira et al. study included that a positive relationship between interpersonal support from leaders support, and employee intent to remain employed with the organization. Jaramillo et al. (2015) concluded in the study servant leadership has a positive correlation between ethical work climate, behavior control, and trust among supervisor in sales organizations. Limited studies exist on the examination of restaurants relating to empowerment and interpersonal support (Liden et al., 2014). Liden et al.

studied the influence of servant leadership and serving culture on individual and unit performance in fast-casual restaurants. Understanding the behaviors interpersonal support and empowerment of servant leaders is important to the study of servant leadership, supporting the need for this study.

The results of the Liden et al. (2014) study included a positive relationship between servant culture, restaurant performance, employee job performance, creativity, and customer service behavior. A negative correlation exists between servant culture and turnover intentions between employee identification with fast-casual restaurants (Liden et al., 2014). The Liden et al. study holds importance for the relationship between servant leadership and restaurant employees with intentions to leave fast-casual restaurants. The results of the study also revealed that servant leaders' behavior could deter turnover in restaurants. Turnover remains a critical issue in the restaurant business and servant leaders' behavior could relate positively to reducing turnover (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Jones, 2012).

Carter and Baghurst (2014) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study on the influence of servant leadership on restaurant employee engagement. Carter and Baghurst interviewed 11 employees who worked under a servant leader. Carter and Baghurst revealed servant leadership had a positive influence on the work commitment of employees. The results of Carter and Baghurst revealed a positive relationship between servant leadership and fast-casual restaurant employees. One of the influences of the Carter and Baghurst study was the emphasis on empowering employees. Leaders who practice servant leadership lead the organization toward financial strength, decreased

turnover, increased job satisfaction among employees and increased revenue (Jones, 2012). Leaders who practice servant leadership motivate employees to remain with the organization (Jaramillo, et al., 2015). Servant leadership includes the behavior characteristics of interpersonal support and empowerment. These two characteristics can reduce turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry. The extent of fast-casual restaurant leaders understanding these characteristics may help the leaders understand how to reduce turnover.

Background of the Fast-Casual Restaurant Industry

The fast-casual restaurant industry is the fastest growing part of the restaurant industry. The restaurant industry plays an important role in the economic growth of society. Restaurant classification includes fast food, fast casual, and fine dining (Kurian & Muzumdar, 2017). The fast-casual restaurants include quick service and casual dining. The fast-casual restaurant employees must focus on quality food, service, and customer satisfaction (Cao & Kim, 2015). For example, some of the reasons customers' select fast-casual restaurants include price, healthy meals, and personal loyalty (Cao & Kim, 2015). Fast-casual restaurants also include beer and wine that attracts dinner guests.

Fast-casual restaurants are a 264 million-dollar industry and include the highest profit restaurant segment of the industry (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Some market leaders include Panera Bread, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwich Shop, and Five Guys Burgers and Fries. The risk of restaurant failure occurs within 3 years of opening (Parsa, van der Rest, Smith, Parsa, & Bujisic, 2015). Part of the problem for fast-casual restaurant failure is turnover. Understanding the nature of the work

atmosphere in the industry indicates of why turnover occurs. Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry need an understanding of how to deter turnover through using leadership strategies. Programs that include empowering employees and providing interpersonal support are part of the leadership strategies.

Turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry can occur from the stress of strict government regulations, poor physical environment, and a lack of using effective technology (Gergaud et al., 2015; Madera, Dawson, & Neal, 2014). Fast-casual leaders experience crisis from the problems of turnover causing their employees to exit the restaurant. Servant leaders with an emphasis on interpersonal support and empowerment can offer solutions for excessive turnover by empowering and providing interpersonal support to employees, which includes handling the problems from the conditions that can cause turnover. A positive relationship exists between servant leadership and employee turnover (Jones, 2012). Leaders who practice servant leadership with an emphasis on interpersonal support and empowerment could have success with retaining qualified employees (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Leaders who understand how to empower employees and provide interpersonal support can reduce the turnover problems associated with the nature of the industry supporting the need for this study.

Government Regulations. Government regulations are a part of the problems of turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Brewster, Lynn, & Cocroft, 2014). Fast-casual restaurant owners must abide by the regulatory laws set forth by the federal government (Gergaud et al., 2015). Strict government rules can create high stress and emotional exhaustion leading to high turnover (Gruner, Deweese, Lorts, & Yedidia,

2018). The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials set strict rules and guidelines to protect the public from discrimination. The rules include prohibition on discrimination against race, color, national origin, religion, sex, and gender identity.

Discrimination is treating customers' different based on race, ethnicity that constitutes serving depredating products or denying products to consumers (Brewster et al., 2014). Consumers stay home if they experience discrimination from fast-casual restaurant employees. If employees feel threatened by employees who discriminate against the consumers, they could leave the restaurant. Strict U.S. government regulations add to the problems of high absenteeism in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Kim & Jang, 2014). Illegal immigration is a growing problem in the industry, which can lead to government interference. Minority discrimination occurs with different nationalities and language barriers (Hofhuis, Van der Zee, & Otten, 2014).

Organizational managers tend to hire employees with similar attributes, which can isolate minorities and cause discrimination (Kim & Jang, 2014). Turnover becomes an issue with minority groups because they may feel isolated from other employees who are different from themselves (Brewster et al., 2014). Language barriers present a problem for managers and create job dissatisfaction and turnover among minorities (Hofhuis et al., 2014). Providing personal support and empowering these employees could have an influence on less turnover.

Physical environment. The physical environment can cause a problem with turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Madera et al., 2014). Customers who dine in fast-casual restaurants demand clean establishments and sanitary conditions (Gergaud

et al., 2015). Pleasing the consumer can place pressure on the employees causing high

employee turnover (Madera et al., 2014). Customers can become rude and unpleasant

when they are not comfortable in their physical environment. In 2014, the staff from the

group Human Performance surveyed 438 restaurant employees on how they felt about

customers exhibiting rude and unpleasant behavior. The results of the survey indicated

that employees related stress to unpleasant customer behaviors (Hofhuis et al., 2014).

Fast-casual restaurant leaders who practice servant leadership with the emphasis on

interpersonal support and empowerment can persuade employees to remain with the

organization if leaders offer the right supportive program (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Servant

leaders can teach managers how to train employees through empowerment and provide

personal support. The employees could learn how to work autonomously and gain

confidence in their abilities in associating with customers. Managers in the fast-casual

industry should strive to understand how providing supportive programs could lead to

less turnover in the industry.

Customers can cause stress among fast-casual restaurant employees because

customers have expectations and expect restaurant employees to meet their expectations.

Restaurant employees have body stress because of the high physical workload to keep

pace with customer expectations (Parsa et al., 2015). The high physical workload can

lead to employee's inability and lack of motivation to perform their job appropriately

(Leischnig, Ivens, & Henneberg, 2015). Working in the fast-casual restaurant industry

involves time-consuming work (Wellton, Jonsson, Walter, & Svingstedt, 2017). Tourism

is a part of the culture in the fast-casual restaurant industry. The demands of tourism can create additional stress in the industry for management and employees.

Keeping pace with the competition leads to stress among employees and managers, which may lead to employee turnover (Parsa et al., 2015). The right leadership in fast-casual restaurants can reduce the stress brought by the competitive environment. Servant leaders who practice empowering employees and provide interpersonal support could have a positive effect on stress caused by the competitive environment, which may lead to less turnover. The next paragraph will contain information concerning the economics of the fast-casual restaurant industry and turnover.

Economics. Economics can affect the decision of an employee leaving the fast-casual restaurant industry. For example, when sales decline in the industry, the leaders may need to lay off employees. Sometimes employees may leave the industry voluntarily because of the decline in sales. In 2009, the decision makers in the fast-casual restaurant industry experienced a decline in sales (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Despite the decline, the growth expectation of sales in fast-casual restaurants remains continuous. Between 2007 and 2011, sales in the food service sector totaled $167 billion (Jaramillo et al., 2015; Nasyira et al., 2014).

The restaurant segment is the fastest growing segment of the U.S. economy. In 2015, the revenues in the restaurant sector totaled 244 million dollars (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Experts in the food service industry expect revenue to increase to $292 billion by the year 2019. Despite the growth in revenue, leaders still experience high turnover in the industry (Jaramillo et al., 2015; Nasyira et al., 2014). Restaurant leaders

can save money and time on problems caused by turnover. Fast-casual restaurant leaders who practice servant leadership behavior characteristics could help deter turnover caused by economics.

The food choices of consumers can have an influence on the economy and the employees' decision to leave the restaurant. Consumers seek alternative food choices to avoid eating unhealthy foods and spending unnecessary money (Long, Tobias, Cradock, Batchelder, & Gortmaker, 2015). Restaurant owners should offer a variety of food products to survive in the competitive industry (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). There is a need to differentiate cost and food selection reflects a strong competitive advantage (Nixon et al., 2015). Fast-casual restaurant leaders have the opportunity to remain competitive by lowering food costs. Lowering food costs include negotiating the best price with vendors. Employees and managers in the fast-casual restaurant industry experience fatigue in keeping pace with the competitive environment. The employees and managers can experience emotional stress, exhaustion, psychological stress, which can lead to turnover intentions (Madera et al., 2014). Fast-casual restaurants leaders could reduce turnover by providing interpersonal support through programs and empowerment to employees. Understanding the extent of how interpersonal support and empowerment may save money from the effects of turnover.

Technology. The fast-casual industry leaders invest in technology to keep ahead of the competition. Technology offers the advantage of flexibility in completing work tasks. Technology can lead to stress, burnout, and employee turnover (Wright et al., n.d.). The use of technology offers leaders in the restaurant industry mathematical forecasting

models to determine future production and to maintain competitive advantage (Ruiz-Molina, Gil-Saura, & Berenguer-Contrí, 2014). The forecasting models include point of service (POS) software packages. Leaders used POS systems to assist managers with maintaining inventory, recipes, transfer sales data, and payroll functions (Cobanoglu, Wan, Shatskikh, & Agarwal, 2014).

Leaders use the POS systems to increase customer service while eliminating inaccuracies (Cobanoglu et al., 2014). Fast-casual restaurants managers use the POS systems to help service the customers faster and keep a record of the customers who visit the restaurants. Using the POS systems, the manager can track the customers and offer bonus awards to customers who return to the restaurant. Managers rely on how technology increased and improved in the fast-casual restaurant industry. Consumers use mobile devices to place orders. Mobile payment technology (MP) is the next upgrade from the POS system (Salehi-Esfahani, Hua, Ozturk, & Bilgihan, 2017). Customers pay with their mobile phones and a server transmits the order to a computer device in the restaurants. Errors can happen at any time with the use of technology.

The use of technology links to depersonalized feelings toward customers (Wright et al., n.d.). Leaders from large chain restaurants can afford the best and expensive technology, while smaller restaurant owners may not afford modern technology (Cobanoglu et al., 2014). Leaders from restaurant organizations also use disruptive technology to gain the competitive advantage. Disruptive technology is a new form of technology replacing outdated technology in the industry (Moon, Kim, & Ham, 2014).

Examples of disruptive technology are Web 2.0 or social media, and Netflix (Obal, 2017). Leaders using disruptive technology could cause stress when managers try to contact employees outside of work hours (Wright et al., n.d.). Employee work obligations can interrupt family life, increase stress, increase burnout, employee dissatisfaction, and turnover. The leaders could empower employees to work autonomously with the technology. The technology is less likely to cause stress, which may lead to turnover (Islam et al., 2014). Training is a potential solution to reduce turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry. Leaders can also provide interpersonal support through training programs if technology stresses the employees by lessening their workloads (Newman et al., 2017).

In conclusion, the servant leadership theory includes many positive and unique attributes that are different from other theories because the leaders place their followers' needs before their own needs. Carter and Baghurst (2014); Green et al. (2015); Jaramillo et al. (2015); Liden et al. (2014); Sokoll (2014), indicated servant leaders might help deter the negative effects of employee turnover. Turnover affects most industries. The negative effects of turnover can include stress, low morale, low self-esteem, and negative profit problems (Bufquin et al., 2017). The restaurant industry has the highest turnover rates compared to all industries (Eckardt et al., 2014). Leaders struggle to find solutions to end the negative effects of turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Arogundade and Arogundade (2015); Carter and Baghurst (2014); Green et al. (2015); Jaramillo et al. (2015); Liden et al. (2014); Sokoll (2014) assumed servant leaders use characteristics that can help reduce turnover.

Transition

The focus of Section 1 included an introduction of turnover problems that plague the fast-casual restaurant industry and the relationship of the behavior characteristics interpersonal support and empowerment to turnover. In 2017, fast-casual restaurant sales in the United States reached $264 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Turnover is a serious issue facing leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Ellingson et al., 2016). Turnover intentions threaten the economic status of the fast-casual restaurant industry (Bufquin et al., 2017). Compared to other industries, turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry has a rate of 60% of 3 million employees within 1 year (Ellingson et al., 2016). Employees voluntarily withdraw from the industry because of (a) lack of training, (b) low wages, (c) limited benefits, (d) limited job opportunities, and (e) a lack of support from management (Bufquin et al., 2017). The cost of turnover is high and leads to increases in direct and indirect costs (Call et al., 2015).

A review of the economic literature included professional literature on the servant leadership theory, independent variables consisting of interpersonal support and empowerment, the dependent variable of turnover rate, and a background of the fast-casual restaurant industry. Section 2 continues with inclusion of the description of the data collection process, the research method, and design, information regarding the population, and the data collection methods. Section 3 will include presentations of findings, application to professional practice, recommendations for further research, and final reflections.

Section 2: The Project

A quantitative method with a correlational design aligns with the research question of the study. A quantitative research method includes the process of examining relationships between variables (Marti, 2015). The independent variables in this study included two constructs of the servant leadership theory, interpersonal support, and empowerment. The dependent variable was fast-casual restaurant employee turnover. The servant leadership scale combined with Mobley's (1977) employee turnover scale served as the instrument for the study. Turnover affects the economic status of the fast-casual restaurant industry (Jaramillo et al., 2015).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between interpersonal support and empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in fast-casual dining restaurants. The independent variables included interpersonal support and empowerment. The dependent variable was employee turnover intention. The target population included a sample of fast-casual restaurant supervisors in the Midwestern region of the United States.

The findings of this study may prove helpful in facilitating a friendly work environment for employees, especially typical low-wage workers in fast-casual restaurants (Call et al., 2015). The followers of leaders who empower and provide interpersonal support for their employees could lead to less turnover (Ellingson et al., 2016). The benefits could include information for improving the quality of food and service that consumer receives in fast-casual restaurants. The stakeholders in the

restaurant industry may benefit from decreased turnover resulting in positive social change. A lower rate of turnover among employees may improve quality service that customers receive.

Role of the Researcher

The experience of 30 years in foodservice management aligned appropriately for describing the problems with turnover. Following the ethical principles set forth in the Belmont Report of 1979 is important in the study. The writers of the Belmont report indicated researchers must follow protocol and remain ethical during the research (Metcalf, 2016). The Belmont Report includes three basic principles, respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [HHS], 1979). The factors for selecting a quantitative method are to derive an objective viewpoint and eliminate bias from fast-casual restaurant supervisors who experience similar problems (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Avoiding bias opinions necessitated a quantitative method for the study.

Participants

The selection criteria for the study included supervisors with a minimum age of 18 years of age and older, (b) experience in fast-casual restaurants in the Midwestern region of the United States, and (c) male or female with a full-time experience in the fast-casual restaurant industry fits the criteria. The participants came from social media sites; LinkedIn, Facebook, and email. SurveyMonkey employees assisted with the collection of the surveys. I identified supervisors who work in fast-casual restaurants and belong to restaurant groups under their profiles, and I contacted the person by sending a consent

form at the beginning of the survey to each person. I distributed the consent form and the surveys through SurveyMonkey.

SurveyMonkey service is user friendly, flexible, low cost, and population assessable (George, Dreibelbis, & Aumiller, 2013). Participants can answer the survey at a comfortable pace (Brandon et al., 2014). The *G*-power formula through a correlational *F* test and a sample priori analysis yielded a sample of 58 participants (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The given alpha recommended error of probability was .05, the effect size was .0.17, and the power was .80%, yielding a total sample size of 58 participants from an unknown target population.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

A quantitative method fit the criteria for the study. Quantitative research derives from a positivism worldview. A positivism worldview includes the assumptions from an objective point of view (Landrum & Garza, 2015). An objective point of view phenomenon includes statistical samples and generalization to a theory (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). A qualitative method did not fit the study because qualitative research interpretative feelings from the participants (Wagner, Hansen, & Kronberger, 2014). The methods of qualitative research include interviews and observation. I did not include interviewing or observing participants. Mixed-method research did not fit the study because mixed method includes the use of both qualitative and quantitative research. The goal of the research included obtaining a large sample of fast-casual restaurant managers.

Quantitative research includes the testing of hypotheses from deductive reasoning (Wagner et al., 2014).

Utilizing quantitative research includes statistical data that aligns with changing trends to arrive at possible future outcomes (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The raw data analysis from the quantitative research will have less personal influence from participants (Ellingson et al., 2016). Multiple quantitative findings from the analysis can reveal more representation findings into a broader analysis of the topic (Landrum & Garza, 2015). The findings of the analysis could answer the question if managers in the fast-casual restaurant industry understand the extent of the characteristics interpersonal support and empowerment.

Research Design

The research design for this study was a correlational nonexperimental design. Correlational designs include examining potential relationships between two or more variables without causation (Marti, 2015). The correlational design included an examination of the relationship between the independent variables, interpersonal support and empowerment, and the dependent variable, turnover intentions. Correlational designs include evaluating the strength and the relationship between the variables (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). I chose Likert scale data to determine the association between personality traits and a Pearson's *r*.

Quantitative methods include experimental, quasiexperimental, correlational, or descriptive designs (Barnham, 2015). Nonexperimental research includes quasiexperimental, correlational, or descriptive survey research (Marti, 2015).

Quasiexperimental research includes examining a casual comparison between one or more independent variables on a response variable (Ingham-Broomfield, 2014). Descriptive design research includes gathering information groups, organizations, and people for describing characteristics (Marti, 2015). Nonexperimental designs differ from experimental designs because the researcher cannot manipulate the independent variables (Barnham, 2015). In an experimental design, independent variables receive manipulation in the study. The study included a quantitative method with a correlational design. The variables did not receive manipulation in the study.

Population and Sampling

The sampling method was nonprobalistic use of a convenience sampling. Nonprobalistic sampling is necessary when the population is unknown, and a priori population knowledge is not possible (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Nonprobalistic sampling includes a deeper understanding of the sample population. Convenience sampling is a type of sampling technique where subjects are accessible, inexpensive, and easy to recruit (Ingham-Broomfield, 2014). Convenience sampling was appropriate for the study because of issuing the survey through an online instrument.

The disadvantage of convenience sampling is the sample may not represent the entire population (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). Critics state convenience-sampling produces sampling bias, which can cause skewed results (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Another disadvantage of convenience sampling causes generalization to a chosen population, which may cause low external validity (Emerson, 2015). Issuing surveys to a large population could solve the issue of low validity. The sample distribution was from

the Midwestern region of the United States. People in the Midwestern region may not

have the same opinions as people in other regions of the United States. Distributing

online surveys through the services of SurveyMonkey helped eliminate time-consuming

efforts (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Improving response rates requires multiple contact

with the participants (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). I sent a correspondent through email

and social media informing recipients with the actual survey explaining the process. I

sent replacement surveys if the participant did not response 2 weeks after the first

contact. Tracking the respondents included storing the information in an Excel output

data spreadsheet on my computer. Internet surveys were easy to implement, and they

included a less threatening disposition for collecting data (Swanson & Holton III, 2005).

The sample included fast casual supervisors with a minimum age of 18 years of

age or older with experience in the fast-casual restaurant industry. To obtain the sample

size, a power analysis using a G-power analysis version 3.1.9 was appropriate. The power

analysis was applicable to achieve a level of power from the hypotheses and to avoid

non-significant results from the null hypotheses (Poncet, Courvoisier, Combescure, &

Perneger, 2016). A correlational F test and the sample analysis aligned with a priori

power analysis test (Faul et al., 2009). A priori power analysis test includes an alpha and

effect size and a correlation point to eliminate any type 1 error of probability or type 2

error of probability (Glickman, Rao, & Schultz, 2014).

Type 1 error of probability rejects the hypotheses, and the Type 2 error of

probability accepts the null hypotheses (Ly, Verhagen, & Wagenmakers, 2016). I had to

accept the null hypothesis from results of the data analysis. A priori analysis yielded a

sample size of 58 with an effect size of $F(2) = .17$, $\alpha = .05$, with two predictor variables at the .80% level of significance. The population in the study included a minimum sample size of 58 participants at a power of .80 %. A maximum sample of 134 was appropriate to achieve a power of .99 %, which is appropriate for a medium effect size for two predictors (Faul et al., 2009). The strength of the direction between the association between variance ranges from values -1.0 to +1.0. A perfect correlation of +1.0 indicates the relationship between the variables (Barnham, 2015). A negative correlation below - 1.0 indicated a negative relationship existed between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Swanson & Holton III, 2005).

Ethical Research

Ethical research is important to researchers who conduct quantitative studies. Researchers must follow a protocol and remain ethical during research (Bromley, Mikesell, Jones, & Khodyakov, 2015). The Belmont Report created by officials from the Department of Health Education and Welfare include principles for the protection of human subjects (Bromley et al., 2015). The Belmont Report includes three basic principles, respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (HHS, 1979). Respect for a person includes treating individuals autonomously and protecting the individuals' rights (Metcalf, 2016). Beneficence includes treating people ethically by respecting their decisions and protecting them from potential harm. Justice includes treating all individuals equally and fair (Hardicre, 2014). I sent a list of participants from email contacts and social media through SurveyMonkey. The participants received the study letter from the employees of SurveyMonkey inviting the participants to participate in the

study, informed consent forms, survey questions, privacy rights, the rights to refuse participation, and relevant contact information. Participants did not receive incentives for participating in the research.

The person conducting the research must preview the information with the participants and make sure the participants know participation in the study is voluntary (Bromley et al., 2015). The participants in the study received an option to withdraw from the study at any time from the consent form. A researcher must preview the procedure, risk, benefits, and give the participants the opportunity to ask questions (Brandon et al., 2014). The consent form at the beginning of the survey contained information about the risk involved in the study. The minimum age of the participant, based on the stipulations from the officials of the IRB board, is 18 (HHS, 1979). Organizational leaders have policies and procedures in place that require the scholarly researcher to seek out permission to use human subjects in research (Hardicre, 2014). Code numbers replaced the identity of the participants. Consultation with Walden IRB's members occurred during the process, and I received an IRB approval number (0581687) to collect the research. The computer in use has a password-protected server, and the data will remain stored for 5 years. Destruction of the data will occur after 5 years by deleting electronic files.

Data Collection Instruments

Questions pertaining to interpersonal support and empowerment from the servant leadership instrument (SLAI) created by Patterson (2003) and updated by Ehrhart, (2004) and Liden et al. (2008) combined with questions from Mobley's (1977) model of

turnover intentions was the instrument that aligned with the variables of the study. Ehrhart, 2004) updated Patterson's (2003) servant leadership constructs to include forming relationships with followers. Comparing servant leadership to transformational leadership, and organizational citizenship behaviors, Ehrhart named this version of SLAI, general measures of servant leadership (GMSL). Ehrhart entered all items for the GMSL scale into a reliability analysis to a strong reliability of Cronbach's alpha of .98. The object of Ehrhart's study was to create a culture or climate of followers to create organizational citizenship behaviors because managers underestimate the nature of an occupational citizenship behavior (OCB) climate. The scale included the behavior constructs empowerment for subordinates to grow and succeed. Hunter et al. (2013) used the GMSL scale to test the relationship between personality, servant leadership, critical followers, and organizational outcomes.

Hunter et al. (2013) theorized that servant leaders' role model servant behavior and followers mirror their behavior to provide high quality customer service while decreasing turnover. Hunter et al. indicated that the GMSL scale has a positive association with lower followers' turnover intentions. The results of the SLAI and the GMSL applied to the study to reveal whether managers in the fast-casual restaurant industry have the characteristics of empowerment and interpersonal support in reducing turnover intentions. Liden et al. (2008) validated a 28-item seven-item servant leadership instrument (SLAI). Liden et al. (2008) scale received confirmatory analysis through two samples of 298 students and 182 production workers. Liden et al. (2008) scale represented four items from the servant leadership dimensions interpersonal support and

empowerment. Ehrhart (2004) scale is a 14-item one-dimension scale. Each item on

Ehrhart's scale included two-servant leadership dimensions of interpersonal support and

empowerment.

The question to measure turnover intentions came from Mobley's (1977) model

of turnover intentions. The staff of SurveyMonkey in creating and distributing the

instrument. Mobley created the scale to determine how employees relate satisfaction to

their jobs. Mobley's intent was to determine if turnover occurs relates to a person

changing careers with the consideration of the cost of quitting (Cohen, 1999). Employees

compared alternative jobs with their current job to determine if they have the intent to

quit (AlBattat, Som, & Helalat, 2014).

Permission to use the servant leadership was necessary to proceed with using the

instrument (see Appendix B). The original SLAI includes seven constructs to measure

Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership theory. The constructs are (a) serve with love, (b)

humility, (c) altruism, (d) trust, (e) serving, (f) vision, and (g) empowerment (Reid et al.,

2014). The constructs included in the study included only the two dimensions

interpersonal support and empowerment. The measurement of the two dimensions

interpersonal support and empowerment received measurement using the SLAI

instrument. The SLAI received reliability, interrater, concurrent, and convergent validity

through the scholarly literature concerning the servant leadership theory (Ekinci, 2015;

van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015).

Several researchers modified the SLAI to include other personality factors of the

servant leadership theory (Sokoll, 2014). The SLAI has internal reliability (Liden et al.,

2014). Internal reliability occurs when the survey yields consistent results each time a researcher tests the instrument (Sokoll, 2014). The individual leader level yields alpha coefficients are set at .92 for interpersonal support and .92 for empowerment (Liden et al., 2008). The SLAI has 42 items to correlate with seven constructs including interpersonal support and empowerment (Reid et al., 2014). Credibility of the SLAI scale occurs with measuring populations over time to render meaningful results (Reid et al., 2014). Construct validity maintains importance in the fields of psychology and behavioral sciences because of psychometric quality of the measurement of the scale (Reid et al., 2014).

The SLAI instrument has construct validity because of the alignment with the degree of what the instrument intends to measure (Reid, et al., 2014). Calculating the scores of the two dimensions empowerment and personal support require adding the numbers on an ordinal scale treated as interval and continuous data pertaining to questions related to the variables. Strategies to address validity includes issuing the instrument twice to participants to determine whether the correlations were consistent (Liden et al., 2014). To maintain internal consistency measurement of the concept can occur with different questions and running a correlation between the groups of questions. Computing the correlation values includes using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha is a computer program to compute correlations by splitting all the questions on the instrument to arrive at the same correlational value (Sokoll, 2014). Question for the study will occur on an ordinal scale treated as interval and continuous data on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from the number 0 to the number 5, with the number 5 as "strongly agree." The

sum of the numbers on the scale determined the calculations to receive the mean score

relating to empowerment and interpersonal support.

Data Collection Technique

Collection of raw data occurred by issuing surveys for fast-casual restaurant

supervisors who received the SLAI instrument combined with questions from Mobley's

1977 model of turnover intentions instrument. I issued a consent form with the surveys

through SurveyMonkey to participants who identified themselves on their personal

Facebook account and LinkedIn account as supervisors in the fast-casual restaurant

industry. The consent form served as the introductory letter. The consent form included

detailed information about the study, ethics, and information regarding volunteering in

the survey. The participants did not need return the consent forms because issuing an

online instrument does not require consent (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014). I emailed

participants who preferred not to take the survey through their social media account.

The participants received no incentives for participating in the survey. No pilot

test existed before sending out surveys because the questions were from previous

surveys. The selection sample of the population included a minimum of 58 participants

from the fast-casual restaurant segment of the industry. The scale included an ordinal

scale treated as a continuous and interval data 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from the

number 0 to the number 5, with the number 5 as the most agreeable. The creation of the

scale occurred by creating a SurveyMonkey account. The SurveyMonkey site included

templates on various survey creations with the option of radio buttons or boxes. I chose

the radio button option. I was able to revise my survey at any time, and issued the surveys

through email, and social media. The SurveyMonkey site included the process of collecting, storing, organizing, and totaling the survey results. The data totals occurred on charts and summaries. The site included output data for easy transfer to SPSS statistical program.

Maintaining formal protocols and following ethical procedures during the research is necessary to use an online web-based instrument (Bromley et al., 2015). Using online web-based instruments has an advantage and disadvantages. The advantage of using an online web-based instrument allows the participants more time to complete the survey and avoid bias (Brandon et al., 2014; Reid et al., 2014). I gave the participants two weeks to respond to the survey. When the participants did not complete the survey after the first 2 weeks, I sent a reminder with the consent form and survey. I received a sufficient amount of survey responses to analyze the data.

Data Analysis

The analysis tool for the study was a multiple linear regression. The purpose of multiple regression was to examine the association between two or more variables and a dependent variable (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014). Regression analysis is an analysis tool when the independent variables are continuous. Multiple regression analysis aligned with the independent variables to predict the variance or the square of the standard deviation $[R^2]$ in a dependent variable with a degree of accuracy (Barnham, 2015). Multiple regression analysis was appropriate to determine the relationship between the independent variables (Brandon et al., 2014).

The goal of the analysis in this study was to determine if the behaviors empowerment and interpersonal support predict the turnover rate in fast-casual restaurants. If the $p < .05$ the results are significant that the null hypotheses are false. Inferential statistics align appropriately with measuring the association between variables. The process of testing the data included using an x and y-axis scatter plot. The results from a scatter plot could reveal a trend in the analysis (Brandon et al., 2014). The results of the analysis comprised of ordinal data with the use of dummy codes. The nature of the scale in the study included interval and continuous data. The servant leadership theory served as the theoretical framework for the study. The assumption of the servant leadership theory is partnerships develop between leaders and followers (Greenleaf, 1977). The servant leadership theory applied as the framework for the data analysis. The variable empowerment and interpersonal support came from the questions from the servant leadership instrument. The research question and the hypotheses served as the statistical guide for the analysis to examine the relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover intentions.

The research question of the study: Is there a relationship between interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in the fast-casual restaurant industry?

$H_0 1$: There is no significant relationship between the interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_a 1$: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_0$2: There is no significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

H_a2: There is a significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

Ordinal data from a Likert type survey treated as interval with continuous data was necessary to analyze the predictor variables empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover. Treating ordinal data as interval and continuous is the appropriate scale for a study because of the standard survey rating (Brunsdon, 2016). Interval and continuous data is appropriate when the scale has five categories (Hope, & Dewar, 2015). Interval and continuous data are appropriate for parametric statistical techniques predicated on a population from a probability distribution (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2016). Multiple regression linear analysis aligns with an interval scale to obtain a powerful analysis of the data. Each scale element has equal distance in all directions, whereas an ordinary ordinal scale has differences in order (Hope & Dewar, 2015).

Multiple quantitative findings from the raw data can reveal factors associated with the research question, theory, and the hypothesis (Landrum & Garza, 2015). Missing data can occur because of low response rates and participants not understanding the questions (Brandon et al., 2014). Addressing missing data included eliminating incomplete surveys and issuing more surveys through SurveyMonkey until enough participants submit completed surveys to obtain a statistically valid sample. The sample included 58 participants from an unknown population of fast-casual restaurant supervisors. To avoid a response rate of less than 100%, all participants must complete

the entire survey. I sent out reminders every 2 weeks to receive a response from the

participants. The strength of the direction between the association between variance

ranges from values -1.0 to +1.0. A perfect correlation of +1.0 indicates the relationship

between the variables (Barnham, 2015).

A negative correlation below -1.0 indicates a negative relationship exists between

the independent variables and the dependent variable (Fantahun, Demessie, Gebrekirstos,

Zemene, & Yetayeh, 2014). The goal of using correlations determines if a relationship

exists, but not causation when no manipulation of the variable exists. Correlational

analysis relationships include coefficients Pearson's r, Spearman's p, and the correlation

ratio (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014). Tools that show causation do not fit the analysis of the

raw data. The study includes a correlation between the two independent variables

interpersonal support and empowerment with no causation. The tools for causation

include structural equation modeling, hierarchical regression, and path analysis.

Structural equation modeling includes determining the relationship between latent and

observed variables (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). The study did not include controlling

variables. Path analysis includes a diagram determining causation between variables. The

study did not involve causation between the variables. Avoiding measurement errors

requires all variables related to the theory in the research.

I used International Business Machines (IBM) statistical package for social

sciences (SPSS) version 24.0 statistics in the analyzing the data. SPSS 24.0 was the

statistical package in the analysis process that included planning, data collection,

analysis, and reporting (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014; Fantahun et al., 2014). The SPSS

statics assessed missing data by putting discrete values data into codes (Fantahun et al., 2014; Scott, Lu, Ngai, 2017). I recommend the statistical package SPSS to all scholars. Walden University administration supports and provides SPSS 24.0 for doctoral students. Using SPSS statistics allowed me to enter the data, interpret the data and chart out the data.

The statistical package was excellent in addressing the assumptions of multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, non-linearity, normality, and independence of residuals. No issues occurred with the data assumptions. The tools also included correlational analysis to determine the strength between the variable empowerment and interpersonal support. Analysis of the data in SPSS 24.0 included entering the data into a data editor to arrive at a statistical function (Fantahun et al., 2014). After completing the analysis of the data, I was able to obtain scatter plots and charts. The files from the SPSS program included organizing the data files under the name output file for the analysis of the data. I used the SPSS program to address missing data by performing data screening using a frequency table. The frequency table includes a detailed picture of missing information (Scott et al., 2017). The frequency table includes counts, percentages, percentile values, dispersion, distribution, and central tendency. Replacing missing values during a frequency test includes calculating the mean value of the data (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014).

Study Validity

Validity

Threats to internal validity can come from experimental procedures, treatments, or the participants (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). Internal validity threats occur because of changes the researcher make from the participants or the tools in the experiment (Reid et al., 2014). This study was not an experimental study. External validity threats occur when the researcher draws incorrect inferences from the population (Bezzina & Saunders, 2014). I used the statistical program SPSS to address threats to external validity. The SPSS program allows an individual to enter the raw data. The SPSS program includes an analysis of the data with statistical tests and scatter plots. Bezzina and Saunders stipulated outliers may exist and may distort the strength of Pearson's *r*. No outlier existed on the scatter plots.

Three types of validity exist. The three types include content, criterion, and construct validity (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). Content validity includes the strategy of how the instrument will apply to measure what the researcher intends to measure. The SLAI instrument in the study aligned with the servant leadership study. The constructs in the study came from the servant leadership theory. The servant leadership instrument includes validation from several scholarly researchers (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005). Criterion validity indicates the predictability of the dependent variable (turnover). If the results from the instrument prove the criterion validity, then all correct variables were in the servant leadership instrument (Ronau et al., 2014).

The SLAI included the independent variable interpersonal support and empowerment. If a relationship exists between interpersonal support, empowerment, and turnover, the instrument has criterion validity. The study included two variables from the servant leadership theory. The instrument included a shortened version of the original instrument. Construct validity includes the credibility and measurement of populations over time to render meaningful results (Reid et al., 2014). Construct validity indicates the degree of what the instrument includes for the measurement (Reid et al., 2014). The SLAI instrument aligned appropriately for the measurement of the exact constructs from the servant leadership theory (Ekinci, 2015). Ehrhart's 2004 instrument has validation through the literature for a positive relationship between turnover and servant.

External validity could occur from a sampling strategy (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). The sample size is important in correlational research. The size of the sample may affect the statistical power. The sample must come from a large population of participants to reach a statistical significance. A researcher using a random sample through online survey could narrow the sample down to a generalized sample of the population (Landrum & Garza, 2015). This study included a nonprobalistic convenience sample. Disadvantages of using convenience sample includes sampling bias, generalization to a certain population that may not represent the total population (Ekinci, 2015). Issuing surveys to a large population could help to generate a larger sample.

Threats to statistical validity can occur during the analysis. Low statistical power can occur if the sample is too small or the alpha set is low (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). Low statistical power could occur in a type two error or the probability of accepting the

null hypothesis (Faul et al., 2009). Type 1 error of probability rejects the hypotheses and the type two error of probability accepts the null hypotheses (Ly et al., 2016). The study included two hypotheses with an alpha level of .25 or below (.5/2 = .25) and a formula derived from the Bonferroni adjustment. A priori analysis reflected a sample size of 58 with an effect size of $f^2 = .17$ (a medium effect size) at 80 power with at the .17% level of significance. The population in the study included a sample size of 58 participant, which was appropriate for a medium effect size for two predictors.

Violations of the data assumptions could occur if statistical tests are not effective leading to less meaningful interpretations (Scott et al., 2017). Biasness in the data analysis includes the effect size in the parameter estimates, the confidence intervals in the bias standard errors and test statistics and p-values. Outlier can lead to bias estimates of parameters in multiple regression linear analysis (Barnham, 2015). The sums squared can lead to bias if outliers exist. If the sums squared appears bias, the standard of errors and the confidence intervals associated with the mean estimate becomes biased (Oosterhuis, van der Ark, & Sijtsma, 2016). No outlier exist in the data analysis. Assumptions in a multiple linear regression analysis include heteroscedasticity, non-linearity, normality, and independence of residuals (Scott et al., 2017). Checking for heteroscedasticity and non-linearity included a residual statistics test using the IBM SPSS statistics program.

The residual statistic test applied to improve the regression model with the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The test appears as graphs. Scatterplot diagrams can reveal Z scores within the range of 0 plus or minus 3 and revealing extreme values (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). Determining

normality includes verifying skewness and kurtosis coefficient values (Oosterhuis et al., 2016). The regression model reveals a straight line with no patterns along the plots of regression of standardized residuals. The analysis of variance is an F_2-ratio test, which is an option to test if a linear model fits. Testing for multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, non-linearity, normality, and independence of residuals include a scatterplot of variance inflation factor test (VIF) and a normal probability (p-p) standardized residual (Barnham, 2015).

Verifying skewness and kurtosis assure ranges within +/-1. Bootstrapping and applying logarithmic transformation was appropriate to correct violations of homogeneity, of variance and more robust test results (Barnham, 2015). The VIF test indicates rather a strong linear relationship exist between predictor variables (Scott et al., 2017). A strong linear relationship existed between the predictor variables. Bias may exist in the regression model if the VIF is greater than 10. If the VIF value is less than 10, no multicollinearity exists in the regression model. The VIF in the study fell under 10. No multicollinearity existed in the data results.

Violation of linearity or outliners in scattered diagrams necessitates excluding those data points from the analysis (Barnham, 2015). A Pearson's correlation coefficient (PCA) measured the strength of the relationship between the two variables (Scott et al., 2017). A change in one variable created a change in another variable in the opposite direction by the same amount. To test the data assumptions of the analysis and determine if a high degree of a relationship exist between the two independent variables or multicollinearity, a normal probability plot (P-P) of the regression standardized residual

test was necessary. The P-P of the regression standardized residual test of raw data was appropriate to plot the means and the mediums of raw data (Fantahun et al., 2014; Scott, et al., 2017). This test was also necessary to check for linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of the residual. Performing bootstrapping was necessary for addressing data assumptions by computing 95-percentile confidence level. Bootstrapping occurs by taking a sample from the sample to determine the means to obtain a 95% percentile confidence level (Scott et al., 2017).

Validity issues could occur during the data collection process (Swanson & Holton III, 2005). The goal of conducting the research in this study was to determine if a relationship exists between personal support and empowerment to assist leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry to reduce turnover through an online instrument. The issues of validly may include low response rates from participants answering the survey, and participants not understanding the survey questions (Pan et al., 2014). A low response rate did not occur. Using an online web-based instrument was appropriate for the participants in using more time to complete the survey, and avoid bias (Brandon et al., 2014). In addressing missing data, I issued the survey through SurveyMonkey and doubled the amount of the missing surveys until enough participants completed the survey to reach an 80% confidence level.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 included the method, design role of the researcher, participants, population, ethical research, and analysis of the data. The method selected for the study included a quantitative method and a correlational design. A quantitative method with a

correlational design aligned with the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study

included a comparison between the independent variables of interpersonal support and

empowerment. The dependent variable was employee turnover intentions. The

participants were supervisors from fast-casual restaurants. Each participant received

questions from the servant leadership survey combined with questions from Mobley's

turnover instrument issued through SurveyMonkey. Ethical consideration must occur

while doing research (Bromley et al., 2015). All participants' received equal treatment

required by the IRB board of Walden University. The data analysis included a multiple

regression analysis with IBM SPSS version 24.0. Section 3 will include the presentations

of the finding from the raw data application to professional practice, implications for

social change, recommendations of action, further research, and personal reflections.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The fast-casual segment of the restaurant industry is the fastest growing segment of the restaurant industry (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Turnover is a serious issue facing leaders in the restaurant industry (Ellingson et al., 2016). Restaurant leaders indicated that the hardest challenges in the industry include retaining employees. Restaurant leaders struggle with identifying effective strategies to retain qualified employees (Bufquin et al., 2017). Empowering employees and providing interpersonal support is part of creating organizational effectiveness (Chen et al., 2015). Interpersonal support exemplifies the core of servant leadership. Interpersonal support is valuing and forming a close relationship with others (Harzer & Ruch, 2014). In this study, I examined the relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover. In Section 3, I present the findings of the correlation if any between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover and how the findings may apply to professional practices, implications for social change and recommendation for further research.

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between interpersonal support and empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in fast-casual dining restaurants. The independent variables were interpersonal support and empowerment. The dependent variable was employee turnover intention. The target population included a sample of fast-casual restaurant supervisors in the Midwestern region of the United States.

A correlational analysis was appropriate for the study to gain an understanding of variable relationships. Multiple linear regression analysis calculations did not predict turnover, $F(8, 49) = .976$, $p > .05$ $R = .137$. The effect size accounted for 14% of the variance in turnover. Interpersonal support, ($\beta = .266$, $\beta = -282$) and empowerment, ($\beta = -.023$, $\beta = -.009$) did not provide significant variation in turnover intention. The null hypotheses did not receive rejection, and the alternate hypothesis did receive rejection. Empowerment and Interpersonal support did significantly predict turnover.

Presentation of the Findings

In this section, I include the statistical test, descriptive statistics, statistical assumptions, and inferential statistical analyses results. The design for the study was correlational to examine the relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover intentions. The independent variables were empowerment and interpersonal support. The dependent variable was turnover intention. Multiple regression analysis aligned with the independent variables to predict the variance or the square of the standard deviation [R^2] in a dependent variable with a degree of accuracy (Barnham, 2015). Multiple regression analysis was appropriate to determine the relationship between the independent variables (Brandon et al., 2014). To address assumption violations bootstrapping using 2000 samples at a 95% confidence level was appropriate.

The research question and the hypotheses served as the statistical guide for the analysis to examine the relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover intentions. The research question was the following: Is there a relationship

between interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in the fast-casual restaurant industry?

Hypotheses

$H_0 1$: There is no significant relationship between the interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_a 1$: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal support and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_0 2$: There is no significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

$H_a 2$: There is a significant relationship between empowerment and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

Test Assumptions

Bootstrapping was appropriate to test the assumptions multicollinearity, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals. Testing for multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, nonlinearity, normality, and independence of residuals occurred in a scatterplot of VIF and a normal probability (p-p) standardized residual (Barnham, 2015). Bootstrapping using 2000 samples was appropriate to correct violations of homogeneity of variance and more robust test results (Barnham, 2015). Bootstrapping is necessary to render meaningful results (Scott et al., 2017).

Multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is appropriate for testing the data assumptions of the analysis and determine whether a high degree of a relationship exists between the two independent variables (Barnham, 2015). A VIF test is appropriate to

indicate whether a strong linear relationship exists between predictor variables (Scott et al., 2017). Bias may exist in the regression model if the VIF is greater than 10. If the VIF value is less than 10, no multicollinearity exists in the regression model. When I conducted the VIF between the independent variables, the value was 2.9 indicating no multicollinearity exists.

Table 1

Coefficients values for skewness and kurtosis

Variable	Skewness	SESkewnesss	Kurtosis	SEkurKurtosis
Empowerment	-.028	.618	-.010	.213
Interpersonal support	-.004	.618	-.657	.213
Turnover	.191	.618	-1.25	.213

Note. N = 58.

The normal probability plot (Figure 2) and scatter plot of standardize residuals (Figure 3) supported my conclusion that no violations of the data assumptions, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, or independence of residuals occurred. The results of a regression model reveal a straight line with no patterns along the plots of regression of standardized residuals (Oosterhuis et al., 2016). I did not observe deviations from the straight line in the normal probability plot (Figure 2). A systematic pattern in the scatterplot of residuals (Figure 3) indicated no serious assumptions violations existed.
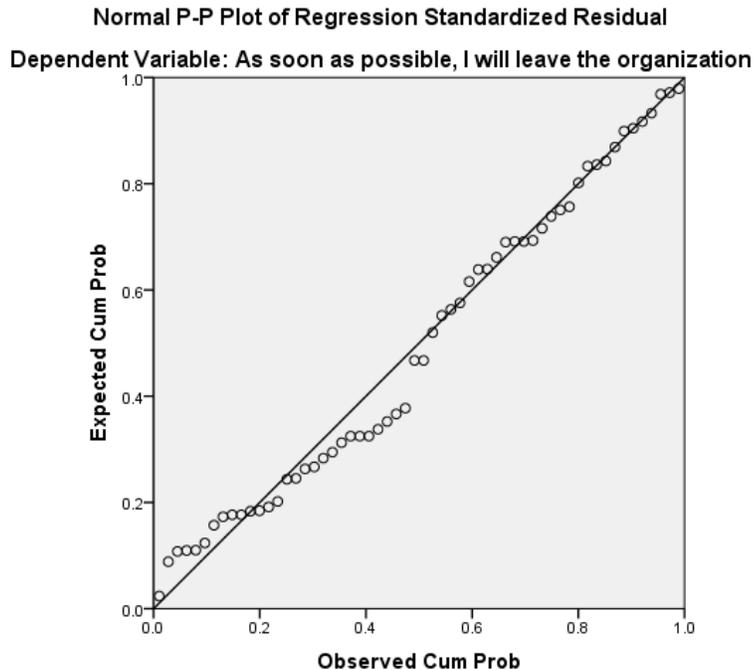
*Figure 2.* Regression plot of standardized residuals for the dependent variable.
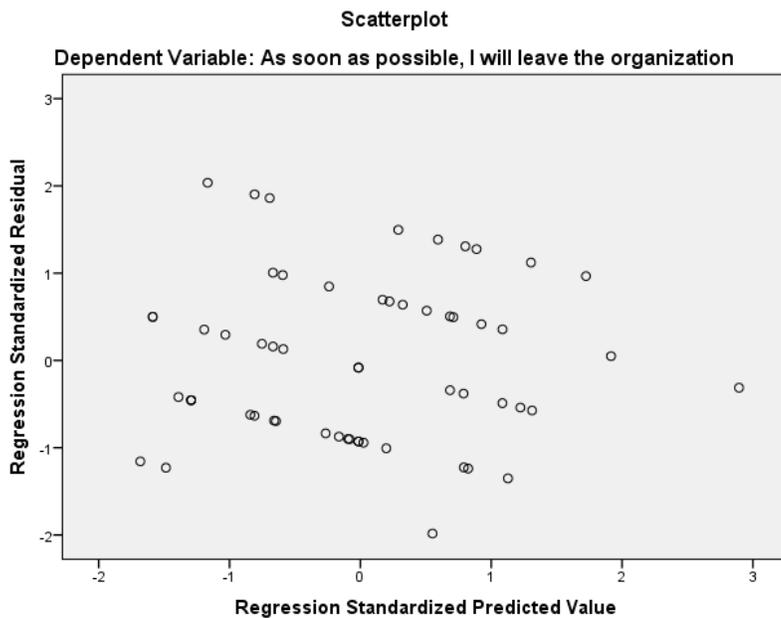
Figure 3. Scatter plot of regression standardized residuals.

Descriptive Statistics

I sent surveys to people through SurveyMonkey to social media sites Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as email. From 101 surveys, cleaning and screening was necessary to check for completed surveys from participants in the Midwestern region of the United States. I removed 43 records to include the minimum amount of 58 surveys. Most supervisors selected agreed to answer the questions pertaining to empowerment and interpersonal support with a mean of 2.1. The mean score ranged from 1.8103 to 2.4138. Ninety-five percent of the value fell between these values. The standard deviation for empowerment was 1.28 and 1.32 for interpersonal support. Most of the supervisors that answered agreed to leave the organization. The average mean for turnover was a score of 3.0 and a standard deviation of 1.18 score. Bootstrapping using 2000 samples addressed assumption issues. Table 2 includes the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and descriptive statistics of the study variables.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Quantitative Study Variables (N = 58)

Variable	*n*	*M*	*M* 95% Bootstrap CI	*SD*	*SD* 95% Bootstrap CI
Empowerment	58	2.3	[1.0, 1.05]	1.1	[.89, .1.3]
Interpersonal support	58	2.3	[2.1,206]	2.3	[.74, 1.2]
Turnover	58	3.0	[2.7, 3.3]	3.0	[.99, 1.3]

In the surveyed population of 58 participants, the average response on empowerment was at 40%. An average of 30% of the respondents selected strongly agree, 18% of the respondents selected neutral, and 6% of the respondents selected disagree, and 6% selected strongly disagree. From the question on interpersonal support averaged 47% agree, 38% of the respondents selected strongly agree, 5% of the respondents selected neutral, 4% selected disagree, and 6% selected strongly disagree. From the question pertaining to turnover intentions, 25% of the respondent selected strongly agree, 27% selected agree, 16% selected neutral, 19% selected disagree, and 13% selected strongly disagree.

Inferential Results

Determining the strength between variables aligns with correlation coefficients. Controlling the effects of the strengths and understanding relationships between specific variables or constructs aligns with a partial correlational analysis (Oosterhuis et al., 2016). I conducted a correlational analysis to determine the strength between at α .5 to examine how well the independent variables empowerment and interpersonal support related to turnover. The null hypothesis was: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal support, empowerment, and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover.

The alternate hypothesis was: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal support, empowerment, and fast-casual restaurant employee turnover. I conducted a preliminary analysis to assess whether no violations exist in the assumptions. No serious violations emerged. The regression model, as a whole, did not significantly predict turnover $F(8, 49) = .976, p > .05, R^2 = .137$). The results of the effect size

indicated that the regression model accounted for 14% of the variance in turnover.

Interpersonal support with (β = .266, p = .146 and B = -.282, p = .187 did not relate to a

significant variation in turnover. Empowerment with (β = -.023, p = .916) and β = -.009,

p = .959) did not relate to a significant variation in turnover. Interpersonal support related

more significantly toward turnover than empowerment. I failed to reject the null

hypothesis (Table 3).

Table 3

Bivariate of Correlations With Independent Variables With Turnover (N = 58)

Variable	B	$SE\ B$	β	t	p	B 95% Bootstrap CI
Empowerment	-.023	0.009	.959	-.106	.916	[1.81, 2.39]
Interpersonal support	.266	.146	.-282	-.172	.187	[2.18, 2.79]

Note. Test level for bivariate correlations were not significant $p \geq .05$.

Analysis summary. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship

between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover intention in fast-casual

restaurants. Standard multiple regression analysis was appropriate to determine if a linear

combination exists between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover. Bivariate

correlations analysis was appropriate to assess if each independent variable made a

significant contribution to the regression model. The assumptions of standard multiple

linear regression received assessment, and no violations occurred. The regression model,

as a whole, did not significantly predict turnover, $F(8, 49)$ = .976, p >.05, R^2 = .137). The

value indicated that a combination (empowerment, and interpersonal support) indicated

that the regression model accounted for 14% of the variance in turnover. In the final

regression model interpersonal support with (β = .266, p =.146 and (B = -.282, p = .187 did not relate to a significant variation in turnover. Empowerment with (β = -.023, p = .916) and (β = -.009, p = .959) did not relate to a significant variation in turnover intentions.

The results indicated that interpersonal support related more significantly toward turnover than empowerment. The research results indicated that a negative correlation exists between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover intentions. The study results correspond with the serious issues with turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry. Employees voluntarily withdraw from the industry because of (a) a lack of training, (b) low wages, (c) limited benefits, (d) limited job opportunities, and (e) a lack of support from management (Bufquin et al., 2017). The cost of turnover leads to increases, direct and indirect, in costs (Call et al., 2015). Employees leave for reasons unrelated to empowerment, and interpersonal support. Along with other mitigating factors, organizational leaders who empower employees and provide interpersonal support lead to increased profits, employee satisfaction, less turnover, and customer retention (Carter & Baghurst, 2014). Hinkin and Tracey's (2010) indicated, in their study results on Starbucks, some of the reasons for maintaining employees included interpersonal support and empowerments. The study did not include other factors that may have an impact on turnover intentions. The results show that stretching the perception of interpersonal support and empowerment along with other factors may lead to less turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry.

Theoretical conversation on findings. I hypothesize less turnover could occur if employees are empowered and provided interpersonal support. The theoretical framework of the servant leadership theory is the assumption partnerships develop between leaders and followers. The servant leader becomes a role model, and followers become servant leaders (Greenleaf, 1977). Under servant leadership, a decrease in employee turnover could result from a potential increase in employee morale, job satisfaction, and productivity (Chen et al., 2015). The servant leadership theory is important to the study because the study included interpersonal support and empowerment. Putting the needs of others first includes empowering followers to take charge of their own actions (Irving, & Berndt, 2017). Leaders who provide interpersonal support place their followers' needs first before their own needs (Newman et al., 2017). Servant leadership includes leaders who meet their followers' highest needs (Greenleaf, 1977). Partnerships develop between the leaders and followers in the fast-casual restaurant industry (Jaramillo et al., 2015). The emphasis on servant leadership is the strategy of wanting to help others. Helping others includes empowering followers and providing interpersonal support (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Frontline employees under servant leaders have a desire to practice exemplary customer service (Carter & Baghurst, 2014).

In the current study results, I did not indicate a significant relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support and turnover. People leave the organization for reasons other than empowerment and interpersonal support. Constructs from the servant leadership theory have a positive effect on turnover. True servant leaders who empower

employees spend time with employees while the employees master skills and attain work goals. Once the employee obtains skills and attains work goals, they feel a sense of belonging to the organization and may remain with the organization (Greenleaf, 1977). A positive correlation between the behavior characteristics of servant leadership and turnover derives from the employee's sense of belonging to the organization (Schwepker & Schultz, 2015). Leaders in the fast–casual industry can benefit from the servant leadership characteristics empowerment and interpersonal support to gain a stronger understanding of the extent of how empowerment and interpersonal support can help deter turnover.

Previous leadership theorists described a positive relationship between employee turnover and leadership style A positive relationship between the effects of servant leadership and lower turnover (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Green et al., 2015; Jaramillo et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014; Sokoll, 2014; Zhao et al., 2016). The servant leaders' behavior, which includes interpersonal support and empowerment, can help reduce turnover.

Applications to Professional Practice

My findings were that empowerment and interpersonal support are not significant predictors of turnover intention. The turnover rate for the fast-casual restaurant dining industry is 1.8 million people with approximately 3 million people working each year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Employees voluntarily withdraw from the industry because of (a) lack of training, (b) low wages, (c) limited benefits, (d) limited job opportunities, and (e) a lack of support from management (Bufquin et al., 2017). The cost of turnover

leads to increases in direct and indirect costs (Call et al., 2015). Restaurant leaders struggle with identifying effective leadership strategies to retain qualified employees (Bufquin et al., 2017)

The issue of turnover is significant for managers, employees, and owners (Han et al., 2016). Employee turnover is a threat to the economic status of fast-casual restaurants (Ellingson et al., 2016). The implications of surveying employees thought on how empowerment and interpersonal support relates to turnover is to include these characteristics as solutions to reduce turnover. The study results from the participant indicated that in the surveyed population of 58 participants the average response on empowerment was agree at 40%. An average of 30% of the respondents selected strongly agree, 18% of the respondents selected neutral, and 6% of the respondents selected disagree, and 6% selected strongly disagree. From the question on interpersonal support averaged 47% agree, 38% of the respondents selected strongly agree, 5% of the respondents selected neutral, 4% selected disagree, and 6% selected strongly disagree. From the question pertaining to turnover intentions 25% of the respondent selected strongly agree, 27% selected agree, 16% selected neutral, 19% selected disagree, and 13% selected strongly disagree.

Interpersonal support correlates with turnover than empowerment. Interpersonal support includes support from individuals who help a person develop social relationships (Newman et al., 2017). Creating trust is an important element of interpersonal support. A leader who shows interpersonal support creates trust among followers (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Quantitative studies showed a positive relationship between social support,

absenteeism, turnover, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and individual performance (Erez et al., 2015). Interpersonal strength involves befriending, love, kindness, and social intelligence (Newman et al., 2017). Interpersonal support through training methods could be a solution to the turnover problems in the fast-casual restaurant industry. Training is part of a relational contract between the employers and the employees.

Employee turnover relates negatively to relational contracts between the employees and the organization (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Responding to employees need before organizational needs may help the employee feel good concerning the organization (Smeets et al., 2016). For example, if employees receive a benefit from the leaders such as receiving training from the managers of the organization, the employees could remain loyal to the organization (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015). When an employee has intentions to leave the organization, they no longer care for the relational contract, which can result in unethical behavior. Leaders in the fast-casual restaurant industry need to recognize unethical behavior because they need to identify empowerment and behavior programs that may decrease turnover.

The study results on empowerment showed no significance with turnover. The work tasks in the fast-casual restaurant industry are emotionally and physically exhausting (Jung & Yoon, 2016). The nature of the work in the fast-casual restaurant industry includes serving the customer, which pressures the employees to provide excellent customer service. Empowering behavior in leaders enhances the intrinsic motivation in followers through creativity, conceptual understanding, and cognitive

flexibility (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Fast-casual restaurant leaders can use this information to understand how empowerment and interpersonal support relates to turnover. Restaurant leaders can combine the findings of the study with other mitigating factors that lead to less turnover to retain qualified employees.

Implications for Social Change

The social change implications of the study may assist restaurant owners and managers with leadership solutions to maintain qualified employees and provide quality service with the goal of reducing turnover and turnover costs. The results of the study may contribute to social change by influencing customer satisfaction, better quality of food, and job stability (Call et al., 2015). Leaders who provide interpersonal support and empower employees with an emphasis on turnover could have an affect turnover in the industry. The benefits include improving the quality of food and service that consumer receives in fast-casual restaurants. The stakeholders in the restaurant industry may benefit from decreased turnover resulting in positive social change. A lower rate of turnover among employees may improve quality service that customers receive.

The benefits of reduced turnover include (a) increased productivity, (b) shared knowledge among employees, managers, and leaders in the restaurant industry; (c) higher employee morale, and (d) a reduction in direct and indirect costs for leaders in the industry (Bufquin et al., 2017). Along with other factors, business professionals can embrace the results of the study introducing programs that include interpersonal support and empowering employees as a way of helping employees increase productivity and increase morale in the industry.

Recommendations for Action

Business professionals in the fast-casual restaurants should develop training programs to include training on interpersonal support and empowerments. Restaurant leaders should develop programs for managers in the industry. The training programs include some of the success of maintaining employees with providing interpersonal support through job-training, flexible schedules, awards, and development opportunities for employees (Hinkin & Tracey, 2010). In this study, most of the participants agree that their managers empower them and provide them with interpersonal support. On the empowerment was agree at 40%. From the question on interpersonal support, 47% agree.

I recommend that business professionals embrace the results of this study to determine if they are empowering their employees and providing interpersonal support. Turnover becomes costly each time a person leaves the industry. Leaders have to spend money on advertising, training, and uniforms. Restaurant managers should routinely survey employees on reasons why they leave the restaurants and determine a strategy to encourage employees to stay with the organization. Some of the questions should include questions concerning empowerment and interpersonal support.

The findings can disseminate through meetings, network sources, and training. The network sources include social media platforms, Facebook, LinkedIn, the American Restaurant Association, and other social media platforms. The study findings are appropriate for professional meetings given by the restaurants and food professional associations and conferences professional associations. The findings can lead to more

discussions in discovering a better understanding of how businesses can empower their employees with interpersonal support.

Recommendations for Further Research

The assumptions in this study included people that answered honestly based on their experiences and job functions. Evidence of this assumption did not exist based on the lower response rate received by the participants. Another assumption was that all participants had access to the internets. No issues existed with the participants that received the survey. The limitations included fast-casual restaurant supervisors in the Midwestern region of the United States. Other fast-casual restaurant supervisors in other areas might have a different insight into employees leaving their organization. Including supervisors from other areas of the United States could have given the study a higher response rate. Other limitations included a correlational design and a convenient sample using a nonprobabilistic technique. Bias and limited generalization could occur from a nonprobabilistic technique (Bell et al., 2010). Limited generalization to a certain area may not serve the greater need of society. The delimitations included the boundaries and the scope of the study. The variables, empowerment and interpersonal support came from the servant leadership theory. The other constructs may have added more relevance to the study, producing results that are more robust. Other factors besides empowerment and interpersonal support can have a more positive effect on turnover.

Organizational commitment and other variables combined with empowerment and interpersonal support could have a more significant effect on the results of the study. Servant leaders motivate employees by supportive measures that place the employee first

and gaining trust among employees through organizational commitment and job fit, leading to less turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2015). A review of the literature indicated a lack of studies exist on the relationship between empowerment and interpersonal report concerning turnover.

I recommend other quantitative studies to include other variables along with interpersonal support and empowerment to get a better comprehensive understanding of all potential variables that correlate with turnover intentions. A qualitative study may reveal subjective feelings of the participants to understand why empowerment and interpersonal support is not enough for the participants to remain in the organization. A mixed may reveal objective data and subjective opinions regarding solutions to reduce turnover and the effects of turnover.

Reflections

As a foodservice supervisor for over 30 years, I began my research with the hope of finding a solution to turnover in the industry. My intentions for the research was to find a relationship between empowerment, interpersonal support, and turnover in the fast-casual restaurant industry. Empowerment and interpersonal support are characteristics of the servant leadership theory. Most of the literature reflected information on how servant leadership relates to turnover. Leaders struggle to find solutions to end the negative effects of turnover. Servant leaders use characteristics that can help reduce turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2015; Arogundade & Arogundade, 2015; Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Green et al., 2015; Jaramillo et al., 2015; Liden et al., 2014; Sokoll, 2014).

Frustration occurred because of limited information on just empowerment and interpersonal support related to turnover. Eliminating my frustration occurred by learning how to research the library, communicating with my committee members, and communicating with my classmates. The research was challenging and interesting. The committee members and classmates helped me to stay focused toward the goal of completing the study. The completion of this study was difficult. The results of the study were not what I expected. Writing the results made me realize that research must continue in the fast-casual dining restaurants regarding turnover intentions. This study was one potential part of the solutions. Communicating with peers in this program was one of the most memorable experiences that will last for a lifetime.

Conclusions

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between interpersonal support, empowerment, and employee turnover intentions in fast-casual dining restaurants. The independent variables were interpersonal support and empowerment. The dependent variable was employee turnover intention. The target population included a sample of fast-casual restaurant supervisors in the Midwestern region of the United States.

Utilizing multiple linear regression analysis, I concluded that empowerment and interpersonal support were not significant predictors of turnover. The results of the bivariate correlational analysis using Pearson's r did not indicate a significant relationship between empowerment ($\beta = -.023$, p = .916), interpersonal support ($\beta = -.282$, $p = .187$). Interpersonal support was a more significant predictor than

empowerment. I concluded that businesses should invest in training programs to include

interpersonal support through flexibility schedule, awards, and developmental

opportunities. The implementation of social change includes assisting management with

leadership solutions to reduce turnover and provide quality service with the goal of

reducing turnover and turnover costs. The results of the study may contribute to social

change by influencing customer satisfaction, better quality of food, and job stability (Call

et al., 2015). Leaders in the restaurant industry can embrace the results of this study to

continue to seek solutions to the problems of turnover and to gain an understanding of

how empowerment and interpersonal support can contribute to the solutions.

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Appendix A: Instrument for the Study

Servant-Leadership Scale
Mark G. Ehrhart

Read each of the following manager descriptions and tell us how well it describes your manager. Please read each description carefully, and try to give as accurate a rating as possible for each individual description. Use the following scale to make your ratings:

1 = To a very small extent
2 = To a limited extent
3 = To some extent
4 = To a considerable extent
5 = To a great extent

_____ 1. My manager spends the time to form quality relationships with employees.

_____ 2. My manager creates a sense of community among employees.

_____ 3. My manager's decisions are influenced by employees' input.

_____ 4. My manager tries to reach consensus among employees on important decisions.

_____ 5. My manager is sensitive to employees' responsibilities outside the work place.

_____ 6. My manager makes the personal development of employees a priority.

_____ 7. My manager holds employees to high ethical standards.

_____ 8. My manager does what she or he promises to do.

_____ 9. My manager balances concern for day-to-day details with projections for the future.

_____ 10. My manager displays wide-ranging knowledge and interests in finding solutions to work problems.

_____ 11. My manager makes me feel like I work with him/her, not for him/her.

_____ 12. My manager works hard at finding ways to help others be the best they can be.

_____ 13. My manager encourages employees to be involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.

_____ 14. My manager emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.

Revised Survey for the study with Questions Pertaining to Interpersonal Support and

Empowerment and Turnover

1. Do you have experience in as a supervisor in a fast-casual restaurants in the
Midwestern region of the United States?
Yes
No
2. Are you 18 years old or older
Yes
No
Please check one of the boxes started with number one strongly agree to number five
strongly disagree.

Questions related to empowerment
Interpersonal Support, Empowerment and Turnover Survey
3. My manger give me the responsibility to make important decisions about my job
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

4. My manager encourages me to handle important work decisions on my own.
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

5. My manager gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is
best.
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

6. When I have to make an important decision at work, I do not have to consult
my manager first.
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral

4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Please answer from 1. Strongly agree to 5 Strongly Disagree
Questions pertaining to Interpersonal Support

Interpersonal Support, Empowerment and Turnover Survey
7. I would seek help from my manager if I had a personal problem

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

8. My manager cares about my personal well-being.
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

9. My manager takes time to talk to me on a personal level.
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

10. My manager can recognize when I'm down without asking me.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Please answer from 1, Strongly Agree to 5 strongly Disagree
Questions pertaining to turnover
Interpersonal Support, Empowerment and Turnover Survey
   1. I often think about leaving the organization

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree

3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

12. I am actively searching for an alternative to the organization

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

13. As soon as possible, I will leave the organization

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Appendix B: Permission Letter to Use the Instruments for the Study

(a) **Maria Needham** **<maria.needham@waldenu.edu>**   Oct 25 (3 days ago)

to mehrhart

October 24, 2016

██████████████████████

██████████████

Dear Dr. Ehrhart

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my dissertation titled "Relationship between Servant Leadership Characteristics and Turnover in Fast-Casual Restaurants"
under the direction of my dissertation committee chaired by Dr. Scott Burrus

I would like to request your permission to use an existing survey instrument (General Measures of the Servant leadership) in my research study. I would like to use and print your survey instrument under the following conditions:

- I will use this survey instrument only for my research study
- I will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will include a copyright statement on all copies of the instrument.
- I will send my research study and one copy of reports, articles, and the like that make use of these survey data promptly to your attention.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate by signing one copy of this letter. Kindly return it to me through postal mail or e-mail: either Maria Needham 6283 Briarwood drive, Belleville MI. 48111 or maria.needham@waldenu.edu

Sincerely,

Maria R. Needham
Walden University-Doctoral student

Signature

_____
Expected date of completion _3/16/2018

Excerpted from Simon, M. K. (2011). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success* (2011 Ed.). Seattle, WA, Dissertation Success, LLC.

Maria Needham, DBA student

(b) Mark Ehrhart

Oct 26 (2 days ago)

to me

Hi Maria,

Thanks for your email. The servant leadership measure I created is published without a copyright, so anyone is free to use it in their research without permission. However, if your chair or university requires something more formal, I would be happy to send something.

Best of luck on your dissertation,

- M.E.

--

619-594-4439
619-594-1332
mehrhart@mail.sdsu.edu

Turnover Intention Scale
Version Attached: Full Test
Note: Test name created by PsycTESTS
PsycTESTS Citation:
Cohen, A. (1999). Turnover Intention Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from
PsycTESTS. doi:
http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t10116-000
Instrument Type:
Rating Scale
Test Format:
Turnover Intention Scale responses are rated on a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).
Source:
Cohen, Aaron. (1999). The relation between commitment forms and work outcomes in Jewish and Arab culture.
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