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Motivation Strategies for Improving Consistency in Live-Entertainment Employees' Performances

Anthony G. Ricotta
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Anthony Ricotta

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Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

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Abstract

Motivation Strategies for Improving Consistency in Live-Entertainment Employees'

Performances

by

Anthony G. Ricotta

MBA, University of Phoenix, 2008

BA, Wagner College, 1981

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

July 2018

Abstract

The lack of discrete motivation strategies to improve the consistency of employees'

performances was the problem that instigated this research. The purpose of this single-

case study was to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment artistic directors

(ADs) use to improve consistency in the artists' performances. Data were collected

within an international live-entertainment company to uncover whether artists self-

determined the approach to improving consistency in performance or whether

consistency occurred from strategies developed by the ADs. Data were collected from

face-to-face interviews with ADs and senior ADs and performance evaluations of

employees, and then analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's data analysis

method. The 2 emergent themes indicated that the ADs achieved consistency from

performers through strategies supporting well-being and technical proficiency. Analysis

of employee evaluations indicated the use of alternative motivational strategies for

achieving and improving consistency at the show level. Some ADs rely on artists to self-

determine consistency when working in environments perceived as conducive to

consistent behavior. These findings might result in a mutual understanding between

employers and employees of the role of consistency in employees' live performances,

which may also improve employer-to-employee relationships in the live-entertainment

sector. Such understanding might lead to positive social change by improving cultural

output to the community and improving employees' economic viability and ability to

contribute to society.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wife, partner, friend, and love of my life, Darya.

Without her support and love, this journey would have been impossible. To my son Jack,

who endured my never-ending requests for his understanding and patience that allowed

me to finish this work while he wanted to be with his dad. I could not have done this

without either of you. To Emily and Nicholas, each on your own separate journeys, never

stop striving for ways to improve your lives and the lives of the people you meet. Finally,

to honor my parents Anthony and Marian, who sacrificed so much to give their children

the best education they could. I wish you both were still with us to celebrate this

achievement.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Despite robust research on the subject, the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators on performance remain unclear (Cerasoli, Nicklin, & Ford, 2014). In the live-entertainment industry, as in others, one management function is to find ways to motivate employees to improve consistency in performance. Managers and casting departments in the live-entertainment industry assert that finding diverse, unique, capable, and high-performing creative employees is a challenge (Gateau & Simon, 2016). Employees' motivation, across all industry sectors, waivers for many reasons, such as lack of social and emotional support (Taylor, 2015; Vatankhah & Tanbakooei, 2014), job demand and stress (Van Yperen, Wörtler, & De Jonge, 2016), feelings of competence, rewards (Vroom, 1964), personal interest in achievement (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and leadership styles (Chang & Teng, 2017). The motivation strategies that artistic directors (ADs) in the live-entertainment sector use to motivate workers to improve consistency in performance may reduce the need to replace workers who do not consistently perform well. The findings from this study may inspire managers to explore existing yet untried strategies that influence the improvement of performance consistency.

Background of the Problem

The focus of this study was to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in employee performance. Undesired performance outcomes may arise when creative employees regulate their prescribed actions and decide to deviate from their performance objectives to cope with external demands or to satisfy intrinsic needs (Van Yperen et al., 2016). Artistic directors manage the workplace behavior of artists and non-artists alike. How live-entertainment ADs use motivation strategies to improve consistency in their

employees' performance was at the heart of this study. People act when influenced by an extrinsic motivation or to satisfy an intrinsic need (Deci & Ryan, 1985). ADs may provide performers with many forms of extrinsic motivation. Documenting how ADs use motivation strategies to ensure that employees perform with consistency and improve their performances may provide managers in other sectors with guidance on how to implement motivation strategies to reduce potential employee turnover, potentially lower employee retraining and integration expenses and achieve a consistent quality of their product offering.

Problem Statement

A 10% increase in United States employment opportunities for actors is the Bureau of Labor's forecast between 2014 and 2024 (Sprague, 2017). With 20% of working actors self-employed and work opportunities increasing, a growing challenge for the entertainment industry is to maintain the performance consistency of employees for organizational benefit (Sprague, 2017). The general business problem is that some business leaders do not implement motivation strategies to improve consistency in employee performance, which results in inconsistent and unpredictable employee performance. The specific business problem is that some live-entertainment ADs lack motivation strategies to improve consistency in employee performance.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in employee performance. The target population consisted of six ADs from the division of a live-entertainment company headquartered in the southwest region of the United States who successfully motivated employees to improve consistency in their performance. Interviews, company documents, and

employee evaluation records formed the data used to explore these motivation strategies. Positive social change may result from making these strategies known and available to other people tasked with improving performance consistency within the home, workplace, or community. Implementation of strategies that boost live-entertainment employee motivation may lead to positive social change by improving cultural output to the community and maintaining employees' economic viability from continued employment and, subsequently, their ability to contribute to society.

Nature of the Study

Method

In this study, I applied the qualitative research method. The three research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Conducting studies using the qualitative research method generates words rather than numbers and aims at understanding insights, attitudes, and experiences (Humphrey, 2014; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The word-driven nature of the qualitative method is appropriate when seeking answers to questions of what, how, or why phenomena exist (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The quantitative research method involves using hypothesis testing, examinations of causation, and measurements of variables to study problems surrounding phenomena (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). I did not use the quantitative method for this study because doing so would require measuring the many variables associated with motivation strategies. I did not intend to measure the number of strategies or their effectiveness. Instead, I identified strategies and studied their use and effect on performance consistency. Mixed methods research involves using both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore complex research questions (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015; Patton, 2015). Mixed

methods research was inappropriate for this study because of the limited reasons to conduct the

quantitative portion of a mixed methods study. Answering the qualitative question of how

managers use their motivation strategies was achievable by the qualitative method alone. A

deeper understanding of the strategies would not occur by using mixed methods research.

Therefore, neither quantitative nor mixed methods research was appropriate for this study of

strategies. How live-entertainment ADs use motivation strategies is a question suited for the

qualitative method. The qualitative method is best for exploring what and how questions (Patton,

2015). What motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use and how they use them to improve

consistency in their employees' performance are such questions.

Design

The qualitative method can include several research designs. The research designs are

narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case study design. Researchers

use the narrative design to describe an individual's expression of self (Marshall & Rossman,

2016). Due to the singular perspective of narrative research, the design would not provide

sufficient means to answer the broader research question of this study. I designed this study with

the intent to explore the motivation strategies that a group of ADs uses to improve consistency in

their employees' performance rather than study the story of any single AD. In addition, I did not

explore the live-entertainment ADs' experiences regarding motivation and performance

consistency; I explored only the motivation strategies used by ADs and how they affect

consistency. Therefore a narrative design was inappropriate for this research study. A researcher

conducting research using a phenomenological design seeks to describe or interpret the essence

of experiences (Gill, 2014). I did not explore the ADs' experiences with consistency; rather, I

explored the strategies used to achieve consistency. Therefore, a phenomenological design was not an appropriate design for this exploration. Researchers using an ethnographic design document group culture using the group's point of view in search of the meaning of a phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Understanding organizational culture was not the purpose of this study, therefore, an ethnographic design did not align with the nature of this research. Case study researchers use practical, bounded, and contemporary examples to explore a phenomenon (Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2014). I documented how ADs of a single organization currently use strategies to improve consistency in their employees' performance; therefore, the most suitable design was a case study design.

Research Question

The overarching research question was, as follows: What motivation strategies do live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in employee performance?

Interview Questions

1. What motivation strategies do you use to improve consistency in employee performance?

2. How does the concept of consistency in performance compete with the requirement of artistic innovation in your employees' performances?

3. How have your motivational strategies affected the consistency of your employees' performance?

4. What motivation strategies have you found most effective at improving consistency in employee performance?

5. How do you determine that an employee is inconsistent in their performance?

6. How are you able to determine when performers lack the motivation to perform with consistency?

7. In what ways do your employees' temperaments influence the selecting of your motivation strategies to improve consistency in your employees' performance?

8. How do your relationships with your performers factor when considering your motivation strategies to improve consistency in your employees' performance?

9. What additional information would you like to share about your motivation strategies to improve consistency in your employees' performance?

Conceptual Framework

Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory (SDT) formed the conceptual framework for this study of motivation strategies used by live-entertainment ADs in managing their employees. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations dictate individuals' behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci's (2000) SDT highlights how human needs influence intrinsic motivation and how extrinsic motivation affects the social contract a person enters that initiates or restricts that person's actions. Ryan and Deci proposed through their theory that a continuum of motivation ranging from amotivation at one end to intrinsic motivation at the other end influences a person's action and satisfaction when the action is self-determined. Amotivation is the absence of any interest to act toward goal achievement, and intrinsic motivation is the natural inclination to behave or perform in a specified way, with no external cajoling, to achieve a goal because of self-interest and the personal satisfaction the behavior or outcome brings (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Amotivation may be an intrinsic form of self-determined regulation of behavior.

SDT includes the additional factor of regulating action. The regulation of action occurs along the motivational continuum as well, which indicates that intrinsic and extrinsic stimuli also prevent the actions of an individual via choice (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The SDT served as a guide to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance. Considering that ADs offer extrinsic motivations to employees to achieve prescribed business goals, even though these motivations may become intrinsic to the employee in the future the choice of SDT was appropriate. Therefore, the SDT as the conceptual framework, supported this exploration of motivation strategies to improve consistency in employee performance.

Operational Definitions

Live-entertainment employees: Employees within the entertainment and hospitality industries, specifically those who self-identify as artists; have trained in the creation of live-performance art; are curious, educated, emotional, impulsive, original, sensitive, and social; and labor at live stage shows for paying audiences (Lena & Lindemann, 2014).

Self-determination: An autonomous behavioral profile that guides an individual's social and personal actions independent of stimuli to optimize an intrinsically desirable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Subjective performance evaluations: The rating of performances by managers using nonobjective means in their attempt to correct imperfections in the objective measurement of performance (Zábojník, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are philosophical perspectives researchers use to shape the scope of their research (Moon & Blackman, 2016). The assumptions made for this study were that providing anonymity to the AD participants would help them feel free to respond with honesty regarding their strategies, and that consistency in performance is a desired outcome.

Limitations

A study's limitations are the inherent weaknesses as outlined by the researcher or problem expressing the inability of the researcher to produce absolute transferability or confirmable of the findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). A potential limitation of this study stemmed from its being a case study. Because use of a case-study design inherently limits the statistical generalizability of the findings to a specified group (Yin, 2014), the findings might not be indicative of, or useful to, the larger entertainment community.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the defining parameters that separate and frame some data from all other similar data and help to create the boundaries of a study (Le Breton-Miller, & Miller, 2015). The delimitation of this study was that the geographic boundary used to conduct this study was one U.S. city. This choice limited the study of the problem to one company in one city rather than allowing for exploration across a larger plain such as the United States.

Significance of the Study

This exploration of the motivation strategies that live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance might have value to business leaders by revealing

effective strategies that may bridge the gap between meeting and falling short of organizationally expected behaviors for employees and managers. With the effective use of motivation strategies by live-entertainment ADs, disengaged or undermotivated artists may become more motivated to improve consistency in their performance. The findings from this study may inspire managers in other industry sectors to develop new strategies that improve performance consistency, thereby adding to business success.

The implications for positive social change arising from this study include the dissemination of information about the variety of motivation strategies that, when made available to people for use in their homes, workplaces, or communities, may improve their interactions with others and ability to be consistently successful. By providing knowledge which may be used to improve the consistency in performance and the way people view consistency, this study may provide value to people, so they may better engage with their daily activities and enhance their focus. Motivation is a direction or inclination to learn or work effectively (Martin, Ginns, & Papworth, 2017). Improving motivation may help employees engage, feel more autonomous, and become more effective at their jobs (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks (2015). A more active engagement may facilitate higher productivity and quality and may help align people with social values. An engaged society with a higher focus on the production of quality goods and services may provide increased benefits to the collective economic well-being of the community.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The focus of this literature review is motivational forces and managerial influence through the multiple lenses of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Managerial concepts including emotional intelligence (EI), social needs, leader–member exchange (LMX),

and managerial roles and responsibilities also provide context. The review also contains references to supportive and competing theories of motivation.

This review of the academic and professional literature is the result of searching various databases affiliated with the Walden University Library and books purchased from online booksellers. Business and management databases searched included ABI/INFORM, Business Source Complete, Emerald Management Journals, and SAGE Premier. ProQuest Central and ScienceDirect were the multidisciplinary databases used to locate relevant articles. To verify a journal's peer-review status, I relied on both the notations of the Ulrichweb Global Serials Directory and the peer-review information supplied through journal websites. To guide my searches for relevant peer-reviewed literature, I specified publication dates and topics and used key words such as *motivation*, *performance management*, *performance measurement*, *leadership*, *leadership styles*, *arts management*, *divergent thinking*, *emotional leadership*, *emotional labor*, *control, coping*, *transformational leadership*, *transactional leadership*, and *decision-making*. The searches also included seminal works and the terms *qualitative methods* and *qualitative case designs*, which returned journal articles on topical qualitative studies, as well as seminal works by established experts in the field of qualitative research.

The study contains 180 referenced works, of which 165 (91.67%) underwent peer review. Peer-reviewed references published between 2014 and my anticipated graduation date in 2018 totaled 159 articles (88.33%) with one government document (0.56%). Of the six references published before 2014, five are peer-reviewed articles (2.78%), and one (0.56%) is a government document. An additional 13 authoritative books (7.22%) served as references. The purpose of conducting the literature review was to gather articles regarding the issues surrounding employee

motivation concepts, view them through the lens of SDT, and learn how they relate to performance.

Since 1985, Deci and Ryan's theory has provided a lens through which to explore research problems such as how leaders may understand motivation and improve employee performance (Deci & Ryan, 1985). SDT also provides direction to explore workers' needs of autonomy, control, and relatedness. In SDT, needs are representative of the intrinsic motivations that serve to encourage individuals to fulfill personal growth, well-being, and integrity (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When individuals feel self-determined they are more motivated to continue performing a satisfying behavior.

The SDT emerged from the early 20th-century drive and cognitive theories popularized in the works of notable psychology scholars such as Freud, Maslow, Hull, and White (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The SDT reflects an underlying belief in the use of psychology as a management tool; by changing the behaviors of some employees, managers and employees may find lasting efficiencies, improve performance, and achieve potential performance rewards (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Supervisors in companies sometimes use subjective performance evaluations to measure performance, using the evaluations' feedback as a motivating tool (Zábojník, 2014). Some evaluation tools, which are perceived as unfair or subjective by those who receive the evaluations, highlight the problem with the use of these tools as predictors to or measurements of employee success (Rojon, McDowall, & Saunders, 2015). In this study, I juxtaposed my exploration of ADs' motivation strategies with Deci and Ryan's (1985) framework and its concepts of controlled motivation, competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

Self-Determination Theory

Deci and Ryan (1985) developed SDT to explain the relationship between motivation and behavior and in so doing, helped develop the advancement of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational theories. Self-determination is about decision-making, choice, and motivation, with self-determination being both a capacity and a need (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Self-determination is a theory that people use to understand the psychological causes of actions (Mokhtarian, Salomon, & Singer, 2015). Self-determination places greater control over behavior with the individual in ways that are self-satisfying.

An undermotivated workforce can affect production (Mafini & Dlodlo, 2014). Employees may underperform due to a low motivation (Guclu & Guney, 2017). Some employees may battle organizational expectations when mutual satisfaction and personal interests differ (Guclu & Guney, 2017). With the SDT, Deci and Ryan (1985) stipulated that motivation is the result of intrinsic or extrinsic stimuli and often includes a person's perceived decision-making authority, pursuit of free will, and exercise of control over performance demands. Deci and Ryan constructed SDT to analyze events that stimulate or regulate the motivation of an individual through the concepts of competence, autonomy, or relatedness.

Through SDT, Deci and Ryan (1985) conceptualized motivation along a continuum that includes the causes and orientations of a person's behavior. The continuum begins with amotivation, which is the total lack of interest in pursuing a behavior as a response to stimuli (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The continuum advances through controlled motivations, whereby a person responded with varying levels of interest to stimuli out of fear, stress, or reward, and concluded with intrinsic motivation, which refers to a state of interest that is void of effort and is

personally satisfying, bearing no extrinsic reward (Deci & Ryan, 1985). However, Deci and

Ryan did not claim that one motivation type was more efficient than any other but offered that a

self-determined action grown from an intrinsic motivation is more satisfying and lasting for the

individual.

Amotivation. Amotivation is the lack of intention or interest to behave as expected (Deci

& Ryan, 1985). Amotivated employees may underperform or appear to rebel against a manager's

direction but may not in actuality be rebellious because their behavior lacks intention (Deci &

Ryan, 1985). Stress can influence working people across all professions, as it affects mental and

physical health and well-being (Bowen, Edwards, Lingard, & Cattell, 2014; Smith & Emerson,

2014). Dissatisfying forces such as perceived work conditions, adverse interpersonal

relationships, and the perceived amount of professional autonomy can cause stress and reduce an

individual's interest to perform (Anastasiou & Papakonstantinou, 2014). Amotivated individuals

may not show motivation when performing tasks or when perceiving matters to be beyond their

control (Gravel, Pelletier, & Reissing, 2016). Deci and Ryan (1985) claimed that amotivation

may be the result of low employee control or competence in the workplace.

Controlled motivation. Proceeding through the Deci and Ryan (1985) continuum leads

from amotivation to controlled motivation. Controlled motivation is a motivation type in which

external forces influence actions (Kunz, 2015). Controlled motivation leads to various levels of

performance based on the amount of effort required to perform the intended action (Kunz, 2015).

Controlled motivation has a positive relationship on negative performance outcomes, in contrast

to more positive outcomes associated with autonomous motivations (Gillet, Fouquereau,

Lafrenière, & Huyghebaert, 2016). Despite more than 40 years of motivation research,

organizational leaders mostly rely on external or extrinsic motivation to increase or improve performance (Cerasoli et al., 2014; Taylor, 2015). Individuals perceive the external pressure from a controlled motivation as a direction to behave in precise ways, which diminishes the enjoyment that coincides with completing a task autonomously or with intrinsic motivation (Kunz, 2015). The external pressure that diminishes enjoyment may lead to the condition known as *emotional labor*.

Supervisory influence may become controlling, stressful, or a regulator of motivation (Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, Forest, & Vallerand, 2014). Workplace demands manifest as perceived hindrances or as beneficial motivators based on their severity and can become restrictive forces on performance (Edwards, Franco-Watkins, Cullen, Howell, & Acuff, 2014). Stress can cause a loss of motivation, which affects performance (Kushwaha, 2014). Challenging stressors can motivate and improve performance when seen as obstacles and when experienced in moderation (Kushwaha, 2014). When stressors rise to the level that they become barriers the affect performance.

Intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivations are the non-nervous-system reactions to stimuli that propel an actor to act for the sake of participation and not for the perceived outcomes (Cerasoli et al., 2014; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Intrinsic motivations inspire the pursuit of goals that increase and satisfy an individual's well-being (Diseth & Samdal, 2014). When external stimuli promote action, an intrinsic motivation may inspire an actor to complete a task for its own sake or because it is enjoyable (Cerasoli et al., 2014). The acknowledgment of the existence of intrinsic motivations represented a break from traditional drive theories and suggested an independence from the satisfaction of needs-based or tissue-deficit drives as the only motivation

types (Deci & Ryan, 1985; White, 1959). Intrinsic motivation is the essence of self-determination and the center of SDT.

Tissue-deficit drives are those that satisfy the metabolic functions of organisms. Hunger, sleep, and reproduction are tissue deficits and not motivations in the modern sense (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The focus of SDT is behavioral areas where emotional and cognitive volition inspire behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Intrinsic motivations provide ways to explain why organisms will endure pain in certain situations rather than avoid pain to accomplish an interesting task (Deci & Ryan, 1985). A person's need to perform does not satisfy a physical need but instead satisfies a psychological motivation that internally serves the individual.

Motivational Factors

Competence. The concept that competence complements motivation eluded early and middle 20th-century drive theorists such as Freud, Hendrick, and Hartmann, as well as many others who concentrated their work on fully developed behavioral instincts (White, 1959). Competence is an organism's practical ability to interact with its environment (White, 1959). When workers feel competent, they perform freely, engage with less stress, and feel self-confident (White, 1959). Emotional support can enhance feelings of competence and is sometimes a resource that employers use to improve employee well-being, coping responses, performance, and decision-making (Shields, Lam, Trainor, & Yonelinas, 2016). Self-maintaining resources are individualized resources such as coping mechanisms or acquired competencies that buffer stress and preserve psychological well-being (Blanchet & Michinov, 2014). Some other work resources are control, decision-making latitude, and social support (Blanchet & Michinov, 2014). Organizational leaders should concentrate support efforts on enhancing self-esteem and

opportunities that demonstrate the competence of workers (Nahum-Shani, Henderson, Lim, & Vinokur, 2014). Nahum-Shani et al. also posited that coping capacity shapes employees' abilities to handle stress, and workplace stress decreases when heightened levels of support are present. Social support is a connection between humans that promotes some form of assistance for an individual and is an essential factor in stress mitigation (Lambert, Minor, Wells, & Hogan, 2016). Blanchet and Michinov (2014) found that employees made to feel competent performed freely and with an intrinsic motivation to be productive and provide social support.

  Autonomy. The three motivational factors established by the SDT are the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Conceptually and within the SDT framework, autonomy is not an act of independence but a feeling that an action is the result of an individual's volition (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Autonomy is a key factor for self-determining if one's action is without external influence or control (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Autonomy is the need to experience self-directed choice, which can enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Autonomy's importance in the SDT may come from a feeling that perceived control remains undiminished and enhances an employee's sense of volition, accomplishment, satisfaction, and competence, which improves work performance (Olafsen, Halvari, Forest, & Deci, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Employee empowerment closely resembles autonomy, and career progression resembles competence, and both employee empowerment and career progression are motivating factors of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Kahrobaei and Mortazavi (2016) studied Iranian automobile parts manufacturers and noted that job autonomy fostered creativity and job satisfaction through a healthy LMX. Arnaud and Wasieleski (2014) described job control as a manager's discretion and as a person's latitude over the work environment. Exercising job

control includes allowing employees to self-determine processes such as break times and lengths, the pace of work, the personalization of work environments, or affecting workplace changes for others (Bowen et al., 2014). Based on their study of workers in a variety of industries, Van Yperen et al. (2016) suggested a contrasting viewpoint regarding autonomy, which is that those with a high need for autonomy show no adverse effects by increasing their job demands unless they perceive a lack of alternative work opportunities or outlets.

Relatedness. Relatedness is a third motivational factor of the SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Relatedness is the emotional need to feel cared for by others (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Williams et al., 2014). Perceived relatedness represents how people interpersonally relate to others and the quality of those relationships (Harwood, Keegan, Smith, & Raine, 2015). The emotional need for relationships is an intrinsic motivation that is reliant on fulfillment from surrounding sources (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The leader–member relationship affects performance and service quality in work environments such as the hotel industry (Garg & Dhar, 2014). Additionally, artists rely on the support and recognition of others to validate their efforts (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Olafsen et al. (2015) highlighted the positive relationship between managerial need support and intrinsically motivated performance efficiency.

Decision-making. Central to the SDT is the idea that a motivated individual's sense of choice and deciding to do what they find interesting to satisfy an internal need supports the factor of autonomy (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Variant personal values may trigger intrinsic motivations (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Therefore, before deciding upon a response, an actor may filter a direction seen as a task or objective through personal experience and feelings. Influences on decision-making can include fears and anxieties (Lee & Andrade, 2015; Pittig, Pawlikowski, Graske, &

Alpers, 2014). Fear and anxiety may promote avoidance behaviors by restricting actions rather than propelling them (Gillet et al. 2016). Perceived or expected values and emotion influence decision-making (Paulus & Yu, 2012). Cianci, Hannah, Roberts, and Tsakumis (2014) studied the diverse intrinsic motivation of ethics as a catalyst to decision-making. Paulus and Yu contended that the cognitive decision-making process does not always rely on reasoning and that emotion plays an influential role in decision-making. Decisions are dynamic processes intended to improve the value of decision makers' environment through some form of adaptation (Paulus & Yu, 2012). Additionally, Paulus and Yu (2012) noted that emotion influences the values given to potential options that frame the decisions of decision makers.

Psychological states. I do not suggest that managers learn to treat depression, although it is reasonable to expect managers to make themselves aware of emotional changes in employees and consider their well-being. The psychological states of leaders may influence relationships with employees; therefore, it may be of interest to know leaders' psychological states when attempting to motivate employees. Byrne et al. (2014) claimed researchers had insufficiently investigated the psychological well-being of leaders. Leaders frequently regulate their emotions and convey an emotional spectrum in their efforts to motivate others with varied intensity and duration while projecting their leadership style (Wang & Seibert, 2015). Ineffective or destructive leadership behavior affects job satisfaction, employee engagement, and motivations as well as contributes to fatigue and burnout of employees (Woestman & Wasonga, 2015). When a leadership dysfunction exists, concerns regarding trust and managerial discretion may follow. The development of emotional labor strategies might help leaders and employees control their emotional labor, thereby improving the well-being of the workforce and enhancing performance.

Stress. Emotionally intelligent ADs and other managers with healthy employee relationships may be able to identify when individuals are working under stress and develop strategies that performers need to achieve business objectives and perform as desired. The psychological state of a person experiencing stress is not only its result but also a catalyst for other psychological and physical issues (Pinto, Dawood, & Pinto, 2014). Stress is a reaction to various physical or emotional demands and can arise when an employee is uncertain of an expected outcome (Kushwaha, 2014). *Challenge* stress can promote performance proficiency, whereas *hindrance* stress creates barriers to performance (Zhang, Lepine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014). Challenge stress in limited amounts can motivate and positively influence behavior but can become detrimental when experienced in excessive levels (Kushwaha, 2014). *Generic* stress is an individual's psychological response following the depletion of personal resources; generic stress can relate to management or team issues during normal working conditions (Blanchet & Michinov, 2014). *Prolonged* stress may affect an individual's ability to perform, negatively influence health, and lead to burnout (Strack, Lopes, & Esteves, 2015). Stress levels often depend on the perceived loss of control a person feels within a work domain (Kushwaha, 2014). Perceived control reduces the stress associated with goal achievement and relates to self-determination because self-determined action cannot take place without some feeling of control (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The reduction of work place stress can benefit workers and aid productivity.

Prolonged exposure to hindrance stress, depletion of personal coping resources, and reduced emotional energy result in burnout (Strack et al., 2015; Trépanier et al., 2014). Emotional exhaustion is the feeling of emotional overextension or having excess demands placed

on emotional resources (Rutherford, Shepherd, & Tashchian, 2015). When a perceived stress elevates, employees often experience fatigue as an adaptive response to conserve physical or emotional resources (Deligkaris, Panagopoulou, Montgomery, & Masoura, 2014). Those experiencing emotional exhaustion perceive themselves as stretched to the limit of their emotional resources (Rutherford et al., 2015). The conservation of personal resources may present as a lack of motivation or underperformance. Kaplan, Cortina, Ruark, LaPort, and Nicolaides (2014) proposed that the act of working is an emotional experience; therefore, influential organizational leaders have an added responsibility of providing emotional support to their workforce.

Motivation and Engagement

The conflicts of employee motivation and employee engagement are not exclusive to the live-entertainment employee and run parallel throughout the literature. The constant inspiration and emotional labor required to conjure believable, unique live performances from dull routines is also a challenge faced by athletes (Lennox & Rodosthenous, 2015). One paradox for artists and athletes is that each train and rehearse routines under the watchful eyes of coaches and directors until they reach a place of spontaneity and unbridled freedom that breeds authenticity of emotional or physical expression yet leaves little room for choice (Lennox & Rodosthenous, 2015). For performers, managing the struggle between the instruction received and what feels natural is at the heart of their motivation, engagement, and emotional labor.

Live-entertainment employees often asked to be bold and creative may feel betrayed when bold performance choices in the workplace receive negative feedback, which can subsequently cause disengagement. A lack of trust in management can demotivate performers,

disrupt creative processes, and inhibit their desire to perform as needed (Lennox & Rodosthenous, 2015). Kaplan et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of the emotional management literature and claimed leadership affects employees' emotions and touches every area of employee behavior. Emotionally intelligent managers who are cognizant of the conflict this contradiction may create within employees may use their EI accordingly to motivate their employees.

Emotion as motivation. Artists attempt to evoke viewers' emotion at a visceral level. Performance art requires the high-level processing of emotions by creative people to fill an intrinsic need to express themselves (Drus, Kozbelt, & Hughes, 2014). Artists are motivated by and sought after for their creative passions (Moulard, Rice, Garrity, & Mangus, 2014). Emotion can influence motivation, organizational commitment, engagement, and mental and physical health (Garg & Dhar, 2014). Emotion, when expressed as anxiety, can lead to psychological arousal, which can motivate performance (Strack et al., 2015). Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on employee outcomes, and EI relates to successful management practices (Gunkel, Schlägel, & Engle, 2014). Sony and Mekoth (2016) proposed that the display of EI from transformational leaders, who are often high in EI, helps with job satisfaction and performance, motivation, inspiration, and stimulation for employees.

Emotional Intelligence

Defining EI is a challenge. The classic definition of EI is the possession of the ability to monitor personal emotions and the feelings of others, and to guide behaviors using this knowledge (Collins & Cooper, 2014). Emotional intelligence is both a competency and a skill to manage one's emotional states and those of one's associates (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). Emotional

intelligence can be a predictor of organizational outcomes, including performance and the

positive attitudes of employees (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). Emotional intelligence is the perception,

use, management, and understanding of emotion and that emotional support can enhance

cognitive processes (MacCann, Joseph, Newman, & Roberts, 2014). MacCann et al. (2014)

claimed that EI is a measurable construct that is still a controversial form of intelligence due to

its perceived value and the recognition of the benefits of managing one's emotions and those of

others. The challenge for managers may be identifying the motivation behind less desired or

inconsistent behavior rather than just identifying the behavior and issuing corrective guidance.

Leaders demonstrating high EI may acknowledge employee motivations and emotions when a

struggle begins, thereby helping employees improve performance (Lu & Kuo, 2016). The

potential value of EI as a tool for leaders may include ways to identify the extent of emotional

labor felt by employees.

Emotional Labor

Employees experience stress when asked to behave in ways they may not have chosen for

themselves. Portraying the consistent display of positive emotions while coping with stressful

work demands defines emotional labor (Shani, Uriely, Reichel, & Ginsburg, 2014). Emotional

labor is the effort applied to the presentation of publicly observable, yet organizationally

expected, behavior (Shani et al., 2014). Emotional sincerity is a form of emotional labor, as it

applies to employees' willingness to display the desired company behaviors (Shani et al., 2014).

Gabriel, Daniels, Diefendorff, and Greguras (2015) described two forms of emotional labor:

surface acting and deep acting. Surface actors pretend or show an inauthentic behavior as an

outward and observable display of emotion that contradicts their emotional experience (Gabriel

et al., 2015). Surface actors feel internal stress due to the creation of an emotional dissonance (Gabriel et al., 2015). In contrast, deep acting involves altering feelings to match the outward emotional expression and requires a significant amount of emotional labor (Gabriel et al., 2015). Logic dictates that professional actors act; therefore, acting is the expected behavior and should not be stressful to actors. However, it remains unclear how an employer assesses the conflict to motivate and improve the preferred motivational factors when employees feel an emotional toll when in conflict with their intrinsic motivations. Live entertainers may experience an emotional labor because their job is dependent on the presentation of emotion or intention, regardless of personal feelings. Such situations may become stressful for performers and affect their performance.

Social Needs

Articles concerning emotional support, leader-provided support, or the role of emotional support in professional and other business environments abound in the literature. However, literature covering how EI and support influence motivation and the performances of live entertainers were less common. Employees and managers feel vulnerable when they perceive themselves as lacking emotional support (Pinto et al., 2014). Cox, Buhr, Owen, and Davidson (2016) noted that, after studying over 5,000 married or romantically paired people, emotional support was a universal belief of the reliance upon reciprocal care by and for others. Defining support only as comforting or positive reinforcement may result in an incomplete look at encouragement. Nahum-Shani et al. (2014) found when they studied U.S. Air Force personnel that improper or excessive support sometimes undermined confidence.

Leader–Member Exchange

Leader–member exchange is relevant to this study's research question because the questions capture aspects of the relationships between live-entertainment employees and their ADs by linking each person's relatedness and trust toward motivating improved performances, offering, or receiving of direction, and providing feedback. Leader–member exchange research includes an exploration into the dyadic relationships between leaders and their reports (i.e., individual members) and emphasizes the influence of LMX relationships on attitudes, behavior, and performance (Harris, Li, & Kirkman, 2014). The LMX highlights relatedness to others and the relationships between leaders and followers, which are both vital components of the SDT. A feature of LMX is the influence leaders leverage when providing required context in the form of direction or feedback to employees for success in the work environment (Epitropaki et al., 2016; Kahrobaei & Mortazavi, 2016). Kafetsios, Athanasiadou, and Dimou (2014) claimed a leader's emotional display can influence the behavior of an employee through the LMX. Supervisors often tailor their practices and administrative styles to suit relationships with individual employees and to support their development with LMX (Harris et al., 2014). Leader–member exchange relationships include individual and more complex group-based associations (Harris et al., 2014). Within the LMX dyad, and because of the potential need fulfillment, both persons (AD and performer) receive something they need by forming the relationship.

One assumption of the LMX is that leaders sometimes differentiate their interactions with certain employees from interactions with others due to the quality of the shared relationship (Harris et al., 2014). Employees may perceive this differentiation as favoritism (Chen, Yu, & Son, 2014). Epitropaki et al., (2016) and Kahrobaei & Mortazavi (2016) claimed with their

studies that leader–member exchanges focus energies on relatedness to others, the relationships of leaders and followers, and the influence leaders have toward providing employees the business contexts needed for success in the working environment. Connecting with artists to deliver capable and consistent performance through direction is a standard practice, regardless of the relationship's quality. The goals of an AD are often to convince or encourage a performer to internalize the instruction provided so the performance becomes organic and convincing to an audience.

According to the concept of LMX, unique and varied relationships exist between leaders and their employees, and these relationships promote stronger leader–member relationships and improved conditions external to the dyadic relationship (Harris et al., 2014). Harris et al.'s (2014) findings related to improved relationships and not improved performances. Leader–member exchanges may offer insight into the role a leader plays in providing extrinsic motivation to an employee. Members who participate in higher quality relationships have an altered view of the leader compared to those with lower quality relationships (Harris et al., 2014). Due to the relationship quality, LMX may create a distorted view of a leader's behavior by the followers who receive additional support or benefits, which leads to perceptions of unfair assessments by others outside of the dyad (Chen et al., 2014). A crucial factor of the LMX relationship theory is the interaction between employees and those they view as having a motivating influence (Xu, Liu, & Guo, 2014). Therefore, a leader's awareness of an employee's personal, emotional, and motivational triggers, along with the effort required to provide emotional support, might be a benefit to a leader's influence on followers' performance.

Management Functions

Managers use their skills and discretion to determine employee performance success, akin to organizational guidelines. Performance assessments can be unfair because of inconsistent standards used by managers (Wind, Engelhard, & Wesolowski, 2016). An evaluation of quality, such as the quality of musical performance, is a potentially biased act, where a social connection to the performer or the measurement scale used by the manager should not become an exclusive influence (Wind et al., 2016). The subjective nature of live-entertainment work and using the quantitative approach for measuring consistency may compound the difficulty involved in evaluating the performance of artists.

Managing the work performance of artists is more complex than exclusively evaluating the artistic quality of stage performance because artistic direction also affects stage technicians. In this context, management of performance involves assessing not only actions and how the actions translate to performance outcomes, but also artists' abilities and competence, stress, engagement, and motivation to improve consistency in their performance. Many companies address employee performance through formal review processes with appraisals or evaluations geared toward objectives and competencies. There is uncertainty regarding the effectiveness and validity of the performance review process, ranging from differences in the interpretations of achievement to the fairness of the interpretations and to attributes that fit within national culture (Denisi & Smith, 2014; Dusterhoff, Cunningham, & MacGregor, 2014; Wind et al., 2016). Budworth, Latham, and Manroop (2015) stated that the debate regarding the objectivity of performance goals, the subjectivity of the feedback, those who do the rating, review bias, and the potential damage or value performance assessments have on employee motivation continues.

Performance measurement. Many articles on performance measurement include a focus on ways for organizational leaders to help their organization gain advantage or to improve upon their overall financial output. Companies use performance appraisals to measure performance and determine if employees maximize efforts, thereby providing the company with maximum benefits (Denisi & Smith, 2014). When measuring performance, many organizations use benchmarking to determine goal achievement and identify operational excellence (Meybodi, 2015). Benchmarking is a comparative assessment or an adapted use of the best practices of one entity for another purpose (Meybodi, 2015). Benchmarking maintains flexibility in the pursuit of continuous improvement (Meybodi, 2015). However, benchmarking or establishing scorecards based on prior success and measurement may not be motivational or conducive to individuality, spontaneity, or the creativity of performing artists.

Performance management. In contrast to measuring the competence of performance, leaders regularly use strategies to monitor and manage actions, behaviors, and processes with the goal of increasing organizational success (Budworth et al., 2015). Performance management is a way to measure or evaluate data from all performance areas and couple the key performance indicators with performance goals that define organizational success (Smith & Bititci, 2017). Performance management sometimes ignores an individual's improvement and personal development, although some team dynamics consider this when setting employee objectives (Denisi & Smith, 2014). Kim (2015) states that it is common to customize performance systems for areas and cultures of the world.

Employee engagement. Employee engagement and employee motivation are often synonymous in the motivation literature. An essential function of leadership is maintaining

employee engagement (Byrne et al., 2014). A leader's essential functions include influence on

strategy, culture, commitment, compliance, production, decision-making, employee support, and

development (Byrne et al., 2014). Byrne et al. (2014) investigated depleted leaders and

concentrated on managers' behaviors, not their emotional awareness or their decision-making

quality. Leaders provide direction, are responsible for business success, provide or restore

confidence, and motivate others to behave in organizationally beneficial ways (Baysak & Yener,

2015). The managerial function of maintaining employee engagement relates in part to the

strategies that ADs use to motivate a performing artist.

   Management of live-entertainment employees. Live-entertainment employees include

stage technicians and performing artists who use their abilities to transcend social conventions

and use their talents to elicit emotional responses from others. Research by Lolich, Vaźquez,

Zapata, Akiskal, and Akiskal (2015) supported the belief that a natural artistic temperament

correlates with the creative output of an individual. Brunetto, Shacklock, Teo, and Farr-Wharton

(2014) suggest that keeping highly emotional and otherwise top performers engaged is one

relational challenge for managers.

   Personality traits may require managers to administer rules and policies when free-

spirited artists not actively engaged in the creation of art behave outside of what have been the

established norms. Personality traits such as openness to experience influence behavior,

including creative activities (Christensen, Drewsen, & Maaløe, 2014). Evaluating a free-spirited

artist's performance may become difficult when, for example, the value attributed to the artist's

ability to stand apart conflicts with the necessity of that performer to blend in and conform to the

group. Successful managers use many strategies to inspire employees to surpass the minimum

satisfactory performance expectations when employees cannot improve performance by themselves (Pulakos, Hanson, Arad, & Moye, 2015). Convincing artists to perform in a way that satisfies their intrinsic motivation while providing a level of satisfaction to their audience or customer is the daily challenge for ADs.

Problems and complexity. Problems may arise when employees receive negative feedback for not restraining behaviors and creativity. Live-entertainment employees may become frustrated and demotivated by the routine often demanded by directors. Frustration creates job conflict when higher levels of emotional labor surface (Davidson & Poor, 2015). Performers and athletes train themselves to a peak condition to demonstrate their expertise. Lennox and Rodosthenous (2015) stated that for athletes, the peak may be at an event such as the Olympic Games, but live-entertainment employees have the added challenge of maintaining their performance levels and motivation repeatedly and over time.

Parallels in performance evaluation. The motivation to gain recognition may influence creativity. Creative people can be difficult to motivate and expensive to manage due to high-risk choices, the volatility of emotion on productivity, or the diversity of personalities within a team (Vessey, Barrett, Mumford, Johnson, & Litwiller, 2014). The effects of extrinsic motivators on creativity also remain unclear (An, Song, & Carr, 2016). Performance artists and elite athletes share the problem of having their performance subjectively evaluated (Lennox & Rodosthenous, 2015). To achieve peak performance, artists require competent direction and proper environmental conditions that address physical and psychological well-being (Osborne, Green, & Immel, 2014). Live-entertainment employees may crave recognition of their work to validate their sense of self and add to their self-esteem. Recognition makes some artists famous and

others infamous when viewing behavior as egotistical or narcissistic (Ruiter & Johnson, 2015; Winston, Tarkas, & Maher, 2014). Littman-Ovadia, Zilcha-Mano, and Langer (2014) found that one attribute of creativity is nonconformity.

   Consistency. The concept of performance consistency provides managers a way to assign and project the value of output and the dependability of their employees when measured over time. Output depends on workers' abilities and their ability to adjust to changes in the business environment (Deutscher, Gürthler, Prinz, & Weimar, 2017). Deutscher, Gürthler, Prinz, and Weimar (2017) found limited existing literature on performance consistency and its relationship to wages. Using the smallest standard deviation from the mean is one way to measure consistency (Depken, Hood, & King, 2017). Previous work performance can be an accurate indicator of future work performance but often goes unobserved (Deutscher et al., 2017). Depken et al. (2017) noted that many people think consistency comes from performing (well) on a regular basis, yet in a sport like NASCAR, performing well on a regular basis may not be the most desirable quality to exhibit when premiums on winning and exceeding expectations are common. However, workers can also consistently perform poorly. Deutscher et al. (2017) studied the relationship between compensation and performance consistency of National Basketball Association players. Deutscher et al. (2017) found that the compensation players received following their initial and organizationally regulated contracts showed a positive relationship to performance consistency and may be related to the value organizations placed on regularly meeting expectations. Deutscher et al. (2017) noted that companies that place value on consistent performance provide higher compensation for employees who routinely perform as expected. Deutscher et al. (2017) also suggested that inconsistency reduces the expectation of

output and can affect compensation. Performance consistency from workers provides managers projections toward outcomes from which managers can develop competitive strategies.

Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

Consistency and change are conceptually opposite and paradoxical when managers seek consistent performances from employees amid changing organizational expectations. Being a champion of change or facilitating employee readiness for change is another role of a leader (Kirrane, Lennon, O'Conner, & Fu, 2017). Conflict within a workforce is inevitable and an essential responsibility for leaders to assist workers with coping strategies that propel goal achievement and change acceptance (Kirrane et al., 2017). Kirrane et al., (2017) also claim that leader support for change within an organization can bolster employee motivation, well-being, and engagement.

Managerial discretion. Arnaud and Wasieleski (2014) noted that managerial discretion is the latitude used by managers during strategic decision-making, as related to the set of options available to them as a choice when no clear standards exist. Arnaud and Wasieleski posited that exercising managerial discretion in a humanistic way produces positive business outcomes, creates greater well-being for employees, and produces a more autonomous workforce. The greater the number of acceptable options of which managers are aware, the greater the managerial discretion (Arnaud & Wasieleski, 2014). Arnaud and Wasieleski contended that exercising managerial discretion must involve promoting the acceptance of task completion in a variety of ways. Managerial discretion can create an uneven approach to feedback if ADs do not synchronize certain discretionary matters with each other or follow the governing standards of acceptable performance.

Leadership styles. A theme throughout the LMX literature is that the style that the leader uses with employees affects the way employees behave. Leaders may adapt their management style to fit a situation (Baysak & Yener, 2015). Leadership styles can affect situation awareness, job stress, motivation, and employee engagement (Baysak & Yener, 2015; Fiaz, Su, Ikram, & Saqib, 2017; Popli & Rizvi, 2017; Sandhåland, Oltedal, Hystad, & Eid, 2017). The knowledge of which leadership style incorporates encouragement may be important for knowing how styles motivate performance (Mitchell et al., 2015). Leaders who demonstrate EI create environments that lead to predictable and positive outcomes (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). Fiaz et al. (2017) suggested that creating successful environments helps leaders achieve profitability and prosperity and improve performance when subordinates work under a preferred leadership style. Chang and Teng (2017) proposed that a transactional or transformational leader's style plays a part in maintaining and improving the motivation of employees to perform.

Baysak and Yener (2015) claimed two other types of leadership behaviors namely, task and relationship behaviors but noted that leaders altered their leaderships styles to fit various situations. Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, and Saks (2015), Chang and Teng (2017), and Kanfer and Chen (2016) all proposed that leadership styles experienced by employees have an impact on employees' behavior and performance. Henker, Sonnentag, and Unger (2015) noted that leadership styles affected the perceptions of employees and their feelings of empowerment; when employees feel empowered by leaders, they are likely to have a positive view of their company.

Command and control were popular and characteristic of hierarchical leadership styles, despite sometimes inhibiting creativity and adaptation, until flexible and rapidly changing

organizations became the norm (Walker, Stanton, Salmon, & Jenkins, 2014). (Pinto et al., (2014) suggested the change away from command and control leadership increased control for employees, helped ease the effects of stress, and increased employee productivity.

Primarily two contemporary forms of leadership styles exist: transformational and transactional leadership (Tyssen, Wald, & Spieth, 2014). Transformational leaders motivate subordinates charismatically by inspiring, caring for, and transcending their well-being while building trust and confidence; transactional leaders motivate through basic economic transactions and by exercising authority rather than sharing power (Nguyen, Mia, Winata, & Chong, 2017; Tyssen et al., 2014). Job control, like empowerment, generates a similar positive response from employees (Pinto et al., 2014). Due to empowerment, a transformational leadership style creates a positive, beneficial feeling within employees that leads to positive creativity (Henker et al., 2015). Transactional leadership results in positive attitudes on the part of employees in the short term (Tyssen et al., 2014). Effective leadership promotes positive attitudes for employees, encourages innovation, influences the direct organizational structure, and engages sensibly in problem solving (Vessey et al., 2014). Vessey et al. (2014) also claimed that leaders could measure their efficacy using profits, the development of personnel, employee attitudes, productivity, engagement, retention, and the perceptions of an empowered workforce.

Leaders, possessing a transformational leadership style may demonstrate high EI and may understand how emotions and stressors motivate employee performance and well-being. Transformational leaders address employee needs (both emotional and professional) with support. Transformational leaders help bring about positive attitudes and changes by focusing on employee development and inspiration and by addressing personal needs (Tyssen et al., 2014).

The transformational leadership style contains four main facets: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Byrne et al., 2014). Idealized influence translates as role modeling for followers who look up to and emulate leaders. Inspirational motivation is a leader's ability to provide vision and directional clarity (Byrne et al., 2014). Leaders challenge the intellectual stimulation of teams through creative thinking and innovation (Byrne et al., 2014). Transformational leaders assist in aligning organizational goals with followers' needs (Tyssen et al., 2014). Furthermore, transformational leadership is a leadership style that raises followers' self-confidence and self-worth and increases motivation (Tse & Chiu, 2014). Regarding the concept of individualized consideration, Byrne et al. (2014) proposed that transformational leaders consider followers as individuals who focus on their well-being and personalized development. Transformational leaders influence others through emotional connections and individual identifications (Chatterjee & Kulakli, 2015). Transformational leaders demonstrate their ability to transform workers from identifying only as individuals to also being part of a collective organization (Zhang, Wang, & Pearce, 2014). Transformational leadership may therefore help transform the well-being of the workplace.

Functionally ineffective leadership. The inability of leaders to effectively manage their work environment may be due to leadership dysfunction and not dysfunctional behavior by the leader. Destructive leadership behaviors are counterproductive behaviors that reduce productivity and engagement, despite the level of job satisfaction for employees (Woestman & Wasonga, 2015). Destructive leadership behavior can cause ineffective decision-making by leaders, resulting in strain and eroding morale, follower confidence, and employee performance

(Woestman & Wasonga, 2015). It is clearly advisable to avoid destructive leadership behaviors when seeking to improve motivation and engagement.

In an integrative review of existing literature, Rose, Shuck, Twyford, and Bergman (2015) found that negative leadership behavior or actions overtly taken by managers, and perceived by subordinates as such, result in dysfunctional or counterproductive performance. Rose et. al., (2015) stated that the negative perception of a dysfunctional act will affect a subordinate's willingness to follow and therefore defines functionally ineffective leadership. The perception of dysfunctional leadership is dependent on employee viewpoints and may encompass behavior from simple errors of judgment to the purposefully abusive. Dysfunctional leadership may sway the belief that performance assessments are accurate and offer employees sound critique.

A dysfunctional behavior such as narcissism relates to an artistic need for validation and is a negatively viewed personality trait in the academic literature (Matosic et al., 2017). O'Reilly, Doerr, Caldwell, and Chatman (2014) found narcissism to be a stable psychological personality trait, useful in certain managerial scenarios, and a contributor to narcissists' high self-confidence and willingness to take risks. O'Reilly et al. inferred that a successful narcissist feels little distress when making organizationally unhealthy decisions. O'Reilly et al. indicated that narcissistic behaviors can develop into dysfunctional behaviors. Narcissism often displays as self-confidence, grandiosity, and self-love (Matosic et al., 2017). The emotional needs of narcissists relate to this research in how narcissism may influence the LMX and erode employee motivation.

Relevance of the Literature

The supporting literature for this study covered motivation strategies through an exploration of SDT, decision-making, emotion and emotional support, performance management strategy tools, and leadership functions and relationships. Although Deci and Ryan focused their theory primarily on extrinsic and intrinsic motivational behaviors, their approach represented a way to look at workers' responses to their environment and their leaders. Noteworthy was the influence of performance feedback on autonomous actions and of relatedness with leaders. An individual's response to intrinsic or extrinsic workplace motivation may take many forms that affect performance.

Supporting concepts. Deci and Ryan (1985) featured choice as the centerpiece of the SDT. Motivation, choice, autonomy, decision-making processes, and resolving the options of choice appear in many management theories. Deci and Ryan noted that intrinsic motivations related to the emotion of interest. When a person has an interest in something, that person may become fully engaged with the task and experience no emotional labor or stress. Csikszentmihalyi (2014) called this fully engaged experience *flow*. Managers possess some level of EI if they recognize employee motivational triggers and influence employee behavior. Employees may perceive their cognitive choices as forms of control initiating or regulating behaviors and enhancing feelings of autonomy. Additionally, Deci and Ryan explained that, within the SDT, workers became motivated by feelings of competence and relatedness to other individuals, solutions, or the problems to which they were reacting.

The drive theories that prevailed in the field of behavioral psychology through the mid-20th century addressed the stimuli of tissue deficits as the primary drivers of behavior and not

behavioral responses affected by external influences (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The animalistic drives

that formed the cluster of drives were for survival: food (hunger and thirst), reproduction, and

safety or the avoidance of pain (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Cognitive theories follow the drive theories

and serve to fix the problems that drive theories cannot address, other than as derivatives of the

previously named drives (Deci & Ryan, 1985). An example of this theoretical irregularity is not

being able to identify why a creature known to be hungry would avoid eating but instead explore

the environment. This behavior indicates that higher motivations exist that override baser drives

because of intrinsic, nonphysiological motivation.

The cognitive evaluation theory (CET) was a foundational precursor and eventual

subtheory incorporated into SDT and used by Deci and Ryan to explain intrinsic motivations and

the drives bound by the social and environmental conditions that facilitate or become influenced

by intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The focus of the CET is competence and autonomy

as they relate to evaluation, rewards, and other external factors, thereby influencing the causes of

intrinsic motivation and claiming that competence and autonomy are essential for the satisfaction

of intrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The difference between the

definition of choice within CET and SDT is that, within CET, a choice is a cognitive concept that

a person participates in; within SDT, a choice becomes a motivational force (Deci & Ryan,

1985). Gagné and Deci, (2005) suggest that the fundamental problem with CET as a motivational

theory for workers was that work tasks do not depend exclusively on intrinsic motivation.

Regarding performance, competency is more than just the ability to efficiently complete

tasks; competency is a foundation of evaluation and may become a signal of excellence when

skills increase. White (1959) defined competence as the ability of an organism to effectively

interact with the environment in which it exists. When employees desire competence regarding

objectives, they show motivation to work with more efficiency (White, 1959). Deci and others

have suggested that positive feedback enhances intrinsic motivation and feelings of competence,

while negative feedback contributes to amotivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Evaluations can

diminish a person's motivation when viewed as a form of external control and reduce feelings of

competence (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Qualitative competencies such as showing compassion are

harder to measure.

Competing concepts. The drive theories that preceded cognitive theories and the SDT

represent competing ideas in the motivational theory literature. Deci and Ryan (1985) cited

Freud and Hull, the drive theorists who represented the tradition of psychoanalysis in the early

20th century. Freud proposed two drives, sex and aggression, and Hull, later in the mid-20th

century, examined four drives: hunger, thirst, sex, and avoidance of pain. Deci and Ryan claimed

each was insufficient as a motivational theory because each failed to incorporate free will, each

held the organism a slave to the drives, and each viewed behavior as means to satisfy the drives

(Deci & Ryan, 1985). Each tradition proposed behavioral governance by these sets of drives and

served as the departure point for the SDT.

The expectation of receiving a reward for good behavior can be a motivating factor. For

Vroom (1964), rewards led to an expectation of future reward and were something that he

addressed in his expectancy theory of motivation. Vroom's central argument with the cognitive

expectancy theory was that productive employees perform because of potential rewards derived

from action outcomes. Rewards can include personal satisfaction but are often money or

promotion. Vroom contended that the expectation of a task's outcome and the subsequent reward

influence the amount of effort expended on performing the task to achieve the outcome. Vroom's research showed that a worker's intrinsic motivation lessens when rewards become entangled with the work activity. The reward expectation may demotivate performers who love performing yet receive payment, making them less intrinsically motivated. When the expectation of the outcome is low, Vroom's theory implies that the motivation to achieve the outcome is also low (Vroom, 1964). The SDT is a direct contrast to the expectancy theory, where Deci and Ryan (1985) proposed that self-determined action is the result of intrinsic motivation driving activities from personal interest and not an external reward.

The motivation theories that discount motivations' effect on performance only consider that the external pressure from events or rewards causes employee stress or lessens intrinsic motivation and ignores employees' desires to contribute and be productive (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Compensation-based practices are performance enhancing but sometimes lead to negative behaviors such as workplace bullying, excessive internal competition, and stress (Samnani & Singh, 2014). Samnani and Singh (2014) layered the foundation for their study of the job demands–resources theory on the 2001 work of Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli. In the examples above, productivity has a negative relationship with depression and the mental state of employees, including their stress, strain, and job demands.

The two-factor theory is another competing concept. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1993) authored the two-factor or motivation and hygiene theory. With the two-factor theory, Herzberg et al. considered job satisfaction as motivation, or something to approach, and job dissatisfaction as hygiene, or something to avoid. Herzberg et al. claimed that a satisfied employee was more productive than a dissatisfied employee. Some motivation factors of the

theory were satisfactory career progression, reward and recognition, employee empowerment, a sense of achievement, and challenging work. None of these competing theories placed any cause of productivity on the self-determined actions of employees.

Steindl, Jonas, Sittenthaler, Traut-Mattausch, and Greenberg (2015) authored a detailed review of the psychological reactance theory (PRT), which was in opposition to the premise that authority figures can motivate employees. With PRT, prohibitions to personal freedom spur a reactance of actors to defy authority or move to restore such personal freedoms as control or autonomy (Steindl et al., 2015). Reactance can occur in response to the authoritative demands of controlling figures or other restrictions of free behavior. This theory challenges the idea that extrinsic motivation is effective because it either directs or restricts behavior and requires a reaction. Both PRT and SDT theories feature autonomy as a linchpin to behavior but diverge when considering rules (Steindl et al., 2015). Steindl et al., (2015) stated the SDT allows for decision-making within the context of rules and does not inhibit motivation, whereas PRT rejects rules due to their influence over autonomy.

Transition

In Section 1, I provided the purpose of this study, which is to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs used to improve consistency in their employees' performance. I applied Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT for the conceptual framework. The literature review involved exploring studies that include motivators, performance management, creative and divergent thinking, EI, decision-making, and stress. I also reviewed the roles and responsibilities of leaders, dysfunctional leadership behaviors, leader-follower relationships, the regulation of

actions, and the ways emotional support may influence the transformation of extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation.

In Section 2, I restate the purpose statement and further detail the research design chosen to elicit the motivation strategies that live-entertainment ADs use to improve the consistency in their employees' performance. I describe the means of gaining access to the prospective participants and their eligibility. I discuss the population, sample size, and my methods for achieving data saturation. Also, I explain how I conducted an ethical research study and collected data, as well as the instruments used for data collection. I detail the means of analysis and the ways I ensure the findings are dependable and credible. In Section 3, I report my findings, the business application of this research for professional practice, and the implications for social change. I also make recommendations for action and make suggestions for future research. I end Section 3 with my reflections and my conclusion.

Section 2: The Project

This qualitative single-case study included an exploration of the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance. This section contains a restatement of the purpose, details about the research design and my role in the research process, and an overview of the population. In the section, I also explain the data collection process, the approach used for the ethical treatment of the participants, the methods used for data saturation, and the means for achieving the reliable and valid analysis of data.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in employee performance. The target population consisted of six ADs from the division of a live-entertainment company headquartered in the southwest region of the United States who successfully motivated employees to improve consistency in their performance. Interviews, company documents, and employee evaluation records formed the data used to explore these motivation strategies. Positive social change may result from making these strategies known and available to other people tasked with improving performance consistency within the home, workplace, or community. Implementation of strategies that boost live-entertainment employee motivation may lead to positive social change by improving cultural output to the community and maintaining employees' economic viability from continued employment and, subsequently, their ability to contribute to society.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher for this case study, I was the sole instrument for the data collection, in that I conducted all interviews and data analysis of the employee evaluations. Researchers are responsible for collecting the data, interpreting the data, completing the documentation, and bringing credibility to the findings through personal skill, competence, experience, and empathy (Patton, 2015). Many qualitative researchers agree that the researcher is the primary data collection instrument due to the researcher's observations, participation and interaction with study subjects, and eventual analysis of the data collected (Collins & Cooper, 2014; Hoover & Morrow, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher is also responsible for the integrity of the research. Using an interview protocol outlining the interview questions facilitates consistency across interviews and helps to focus conversations by avoiding a list of multidirectional questions (Patton, 2015; Schultze & Avital, 2011). As I discussed in this section, I conducted semistructured interviews using an interview protocol, follow-up member-checking interviews, and document analysis while protecting participants' interactions, identities, and comments.

I hold a director-level position within the company under exploration, with no direct authority over the participant ADs. Due to my preexisting relationships with some of the current ADs, and previous experience working with former ADs, it was important that I make an extra effort to acknowledge and avoid any potential bias, ensure the highest level of research integrity, and protect the confidentiality of our conversations. I followed the *Belmont Report*'s (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979) established ethical guidelines of (a) respect for persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice regarding my conduct with human participants

throughout the study. I excluded the AD working on my show at the time of data collection to avoid any appearance of conflict or coercion. I possess varied levels of familiarity with each of the ADs and a cursory knowledge of how some of them perform in their jobs. As I expected, my relationships with the ADs did not prevent us from having candid conversations. I cannot say with certainty, however, if the reasons three ADs were unable to schedule interviews with me were due to a reluctance to speak openly about certain topics for fear of reprisal within the company or due to our relationship status.

Bias can occur when a researcher is unable to research a subject without infusing findings or experiences with personal values (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The bracketing technique is an analysis aid that considers preconceived researcher bias and removes it through an acknowledgement of its existence and the subsequent isolation of it (Carpenter & Peña, 2016). Bracketing isolates the researcher's preconceptions of a phenomenon, which allows for a direct analysis on a phenomenon's own merits (Patton, 2015). Therefore, by simplifying the problem to strategy identification and not the strategy I would choose and how the strategies influence consistency in their simplest form I bracket the problem and avoid bias. I did this so that my experience with employee motivation would not become part of the analysis but instead would enable me to understand the participants' meanings. By only exploring the motivation strategies ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance, I focused on the essence of the problem and nothing more. I acknowledged my personal feelings and biases regarding the importance of motivation strategies that improve consistency in employee performance by remaining open to learning that other strategies may also be effective and maintaining a reflexive journal.

Reflexive journals should contain descriptions of a researcher's experiences, errors, concerns, and points of view which the researcher can draw upon in assessing and analyzing data (Yin, 2016). I kept a journal and recorded when I sensed myself broadening my focus as a reminder to keep things as simple as possible and encourage objective analysis. By doing so, I believe that I added rigor and trustworthiness to the research process. I used the bracketing technique to help set aside my preconceptions and opinions that could diminish the study due to personal bias, and I acknowledged my impressions and mitigated any potential bias by using a reflexive journal.

My responsibilities as the researcher required that I collect data ethically and rigorously during semistructured, face-to-face interviews using a set of open-ended questions. Therefore, I used a structured interview protocol (see Appendix A) to enhance and maintain the credibility of this study. The use of interview protocols that focus on the proposed research question may increase the quality of the collected data (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). As the researcher, I interviewed ADs to gather their meanings and strategies, and I reviewed performance evaluation documents to gather information on the implementation of the ADs' practice. I did this to determine if the direction the AD provided the artist in the evaluations matched the responses given during our conversations on the strategies they use to motivate employees.

By conducting interviews at the ADs' workplaces, I minimized their travel and ensured familiar and comfortable surroundings that supported open conversations. Due to my position within the company my presence, at another show, would not be out of place because directors often share workspaces to conduct business. Through the letter of cooperation and other invitations I made individuals at the company aware of the study and my intention to use

interviews to collect data. However, I made a deliberate effort to protect the confidentiality of the participants' interview responses by conducting interviews behind closed office doors and by coding the identities of the ADs and SADs.

In conducting the interviews, I also sought to be flexible, in case the workplace environment proved a distraction to the participants. Interview procedures and locations can become challenging for researchers if the procedures are not flexible (Gagnon, Jacob, & McCabe, 2015). Due to ongoing workplace activities and the natural flow of being in the workplace, workplace interviews can distract participants. The distractions may prevent interviewees from disconnecting from their work and fully attending to the interviews, despite the perception that the location is less disruptive or more convenient for the interview (Cullinan et al., 2015; Lightfoot, Nienow, Moua, Colburn, & Petri, 2016). If interviewing within the ADs offices had presented problems, I was prepared to remain flexible and arrange neutral sites to collect data, but no such efforts were necessary, and I was able to conduct all interviews in the workplaces of the participants.

I also collected data from the individual performance evaluation documents of artists made available to me after receiving permission from the senior vice-president (SVP) of Talent (HR). By using additional sources of data, researchers can locate common themes that potentially answer the overarching research question (Aspfors, Pörn, Forsman, Salo, & Karlberg-Granlund, 2015). In addition to analyzing the archived artists' evaluation records, I also corroborated the interview responses of ADs to their comments in the reviews. The comments in the performance evaluation documents indicated the quality and type of assessments artists received from the ADs assigned to manage their performance.

Participants

Eligibility

Six ADs and two senior ADs, selected as volunteer participants from the shows currently running in the company's southwestern U.S. division, received invitations to sit for face-to-face interviews as part of this case study. The ADs manage the day-to-day operational requirements of the show, such as completing the daily lineup, managing absences, and overseeing the rehearsals and training of the artists. The ADs are also responsible for managing the artistic vision and evolutive nature of the show while enhancing it based on the skills that all new artists bring with them. The participating ADs had previously administered at least one style of performance evaluation to their artistic team. The company also employed two senior ADs with supervisory responsibilities over multiple ADs who shared many of the same managerial challenges with the ADs and their creative staff. The senior ADs work closely with the ADs to develop the evolution of the shows to keep pace with the changing appetites of the audience and to work with director-level managers on contracting and other strategic and operational fronts for artists. The senior ADs participated as a backup measure for ADs who opted out of the study at any point that could potentially leave an insufficient population sample to represent the division for this case study. The organization's performance evaluation tools receive periodic modifications to present a reliable picture of artist performance and the changing business culture. I requested permission from the SVP of HR to obtain a representative sample of de-identified performance evaluations for using in data triangulation. I analyzed the evaluations to triangulate to the self-reported strategies of the ADs.

Strategies for Gaining Access to Participants

My current employment and years of experience working as a director in the company's southwestern U.S. division provided me access to the participant pool. I introduced the study to the corporate leadership with a written communication to the SVP and director of the HR department. In the letter of cooperation, I sent to the corporate officer, I asked her permission to gather data from employees. I forwarded the written agreement I received from the company to contact employees to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for additional approval. After receiving approval from the IRB (Approval Number 02-08-18-0443522), I contacted the individual shows' ADs via e-mail to request their participation in the study.

Notification to potential participants included detailed information about the academic nature of the study, my role as a student researcher, and the informed consent document. To gaining access to the artist's evaluations, I received the company's permission to access the de-identified evaluations of the artists to help me triangulate and analyze the interview data that I collected. For this study, no artists sat for any interviews, and I required the artists' evaluations to triangulate the self-reported data of the ADs' motivation strategies regarding their implementation. After receiving a verbal explanation and finding the study's voluntary model written in the informed consent documents, the participants accepted the personal satisfaction gained from joining the study and becoming contributors to the growth of knowledge regarding motivation strategies that improve consistency in employee performance as their benefit.

Working Relationships with Participants

My professional acquaintances with the division's ADs allowed me to interview them in a relaxed and casual way. In the organizational hierarchy, the participant ADs do not report to

me, but to the senior ADs for the division. The artistic and administrative branches of the shows'

management teams operate in parallel but separate paths. As for authoritative power over the

ADs, I had no direct influence over them. Artistic directors work collaboratively with ADs on

other shows and in concert with their senior AD. For this research, I excluded the AD

responsible for my show from data collection to prevent any sense of coercion or pressure on my

part. When meeting with the ADs before the interviews, during face-to-face conversation or on

video chat, I put them at ease by providing an open rapport and by thoroughly explaining the

purpose of this research.

The use of rapport-building techniques such as speaking with relaxed vocal tones puts

participants at ease during an interview and helps to encourage them to divulge more information

than they would if they did not feel at ease during an interview (Holmberg & Madsen, 2014).

Part of the rapport building involved defining the researcher's role and reminiscing about shared

experiences. Rapport building, which can take as little as 5 minutes, begins by asking neutral

questions to put interview participants at ease prior to asking topic-related questions (Ahern,

Stolzenberg, & Lyon, 2015). I conducted the interviews in surroundings that were familiar to the

ADs, easily accessible, and comfortable for them in my effort to enhance our rapport during the

interview. Because this study was an exploration of ADs' motivation strategies, putting the ADs

at ease was important for robust data collection.

Research Method and Design

Qualitative methods allow researchers to explore phenomena from the participants' point

of view and not from a predetermined agenda (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers who

conduct qualitative case studies collect data from multiple sources to triangulate the data, which

helps to improve the reliability of the findings (Yin, 2014). With this single-case study design, I explored the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in artists' performances within a single unit of an organization. I studied such data sources as the interviews of ADs, the archival records of artists' evaluations, and other written company documents regarding performance evaluation to understand the ADs' strategies.

Research Method

I chose the qualitative method for this study. The qualitative method features designs and design subsets that include phenomenological, narrative design, ethnographic, and case study design (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2014). The social interaction that occurs during a face-to-face conversation in an interview helps researchers witness social and nonverbal cueing, which enhances the rapport and the research (Shapka, Domene, Khan, & Yang, 2016). The qualitative method is a way for researchers to study human behaviors and gain an in-depth understanding of the perceived reasons and motivations their participants give to them (Rosenthal, 2016). Qualitative researchers seek subjective opinions, attitudes, and the importance that people place on their perceptions with their studies (McDermid, Peters, Jackson, & Daly, 2014). Researchers employing the qualitative research method use how and why questions to identify phenomena and organizational processes (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015; Yin, 2014). A qualitative single-case study is a suitable way to explore the motivation strategies used by a specific group of managers to improve consistency in employee performance.

Quantitative research involves measuring the quantities and not the qualities of phenomena. Some researchers use the quantitative analysis of variables to create generalizations, to extrapolate their findings to the broader population, or to gain objectivity from mathematical

relations (Birchall, 2014). The quantitative method was therefore inappropriate for this study because researchers do not use quantitative designs to explore participants' experiences through description and meaning. The quantitative method is a way for researchers for generalizing to larger populations, rather than narrowly describing phenomena as with qualitative case studies, and for measuring the statistical significance of findings rather than exploring them for meaning (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). I explored the motivation strategies used by live-entertainment ADs to improve consistency in artists' performances, and I explored why they have chosen those strategies, but did not explore how many motivation strategies exist.

Researchers who use a mixed methods design employ both qualitative and quantitative methods to focus on discovering new knowledge. A mixed methods design is a research discipline that involves using the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods for investigating phenomena empirically and experientially within a single study (Urban, Burgermaster, Archibald, & Byrne, 2015; van der Roest, Spaaij, & van Bottenburg, 2015). Because of the combined concepts, mixed methods are difficult to execute and require an in-depth knowledge of the methods, but they offer a broader look at a phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Potential problems come from prioritizing one method over the other and may occur because of a researcher's comfort level with one research method (van der Roest et al., 2015). I did not choose a mixed method design because I am a novice researcher and not prepared with the in-depth knowledge needed to take on the rigors of mixed methods research. Further, a mixed methods design was inappropriate because the quantitative component was superfluous to this study's purpose, which was to explore how the motivation strategies in use by ADs improve consistency in their employees' performance. I employed a qualitative analysis of the ADs'

descriptions of their motivation strategies to reach my conclusions and did not measure, rate, or quantify the effectiveness of the motivation strategies used for improving consistency in employee performance.

Research Design

As noted earlier, an ethnographic design is suited for understanding cultural nuance, a phenomenological design is suitable for understanding the essence of phenomena, and narrative is suitable for gathering the experience and recollection of an individual; therefore, none of these designs are appropriate to understand how motivational strategies are effectively enacted or why they are effective. A case study design is appropriate for capturing an integrated view of real-world situations to advance the knowledge of social, group, or organizational phenomena (Lindstedt & Lombardo, 2016; Yin, 2014). This exploration was a case study design.

I selected a qualitative single-case study design because my research goals fit the overarching criteria for case study more closely than the criteria for ethnographic, phenomenological, or narrative designs. A case study design is appropriate when seeking answers to the how and why questions aimed at contemporary organizational practices or decisions, or when having little or no control over a situation under review (Yin, 2014). Case design is suitable for discovering and documenting contemporary strategies (Yin, 2014). In this instance, I explored the motivation strategies ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance. I did this by conducting face-to-face interviews with ADs, asking them about their strategies, and reviewing employee records to understand the implementation of the strategies and to achieve data saturation. As the researcher for this study, I had no direct control over the individuals creating the strategies under exploration. Having no direct control over the

explored events is an essential detail of case study (Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2014). Therefore, a case study design was most appropriate for the research question.

Population and Sampling

Sampling

The purposively selected participants comprised three of the seven ADs and two senior ADs working within the company. I excluded one AD due to my active working relationship with that AD. Three of the six agreed to sit for interviews, as did two senior ADs. Due to timing and the uncertainty of personnel movement within the company, I took care when interviewing and conducting follow-up interviews with the AD working with my business unit to avoid any perceived conflicts of interest, which was important because of the occasional reassignment of personnel to use talent where needed. The participant population included male and female ADs and senior ADs between the ages of 30 and 65. An ideal sample size for achieving saturation follows an inverse relationship to the information power the participants possess (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016). For this study, the ADs possessed knowledge related to their motivation strategies. Hence, my targeted number of six interviews was sufficient based on the power of the information they could provide. Participant ADs had the responsibility to motivate artists' actions, to manage artists daily, and must have previously administered some form of the company's performance evaluation policy. A purposeful sample accurately represents the specified population under study while possessing situational knowledge and information-rich experiences (Barratt & Lenton, 2015; Robinson, 2014). The selected participants worked as ADs and senior ADs for the division of an entertainment company headquartered in a southwestern U.S. city.

Data Saturation

With the repetition of data patterns and the end to the emergence of any new data, a researcher achieves data saturation (Malterud et al., 2016; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Roberts et al., 2014). Data collection reaches saturation when researchers can no longer obtain new knowledge from collecting additional data (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Malterud et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2014). Due to the limited number of participants, I ensured data saturation by continuing to reread the interview transcripts to conduct follow-up interviews and member-checking until no new themes or information emerged that pertained to the research question. Member-checking is one of the ways for participants to verify the completeness of the data captured and analyzed by the researcher and to confirm the data accurately represent the participants' position (Harvey, 2015). Data saturation ensures a thorough exploration and comprehensive investigation have occurred and has become a de facto marker for sample size adequacy (Cope, 2014; Fusch & Ness, 2015). I collected data using face-to-face and in-depth interviews from the ADs within the company's southwest U.S. division. I also reviewed company documents intended to support the company's performance management philosophy and individuals' performance evaluations that reflected the implementation of ADs' motivation strategies.

Interview Setting

Interview settings can affect what takes place during an interview (Patton, 2015). My preference to conduct the interviews at the participants' workplaces created minimal inconvenience to ADs regarding travel and returning to work, yet I remained flexible if the interview location needed adjusting. Because of the power dynamics of a workplace, conducting interviews at participants' workplaces may make some employees feel comfortable and safe

(Gagnon et al., 2015). If the AD's office would have been too small, were in an open space, or were not conducive to an hour-long interview, I would have requested and reserved a small conference room for our interview. If such options were not available at their workplace, I was prepared to relocate our meeting to my office or find a neutral location. None of these concerns materialized. Despite inconclusive findings regarding ideal interview settings, I conducted all but two of the interviews in the participants' workplaces and ensured confidentiality for the participant.

<div align="center">**Ethical Research**</div>

Informed Consent

The purpose of informed consent is to provide participants full disclosure of the purpose of a study, its benefits, and any potential harm to ensure respect for persons and to protect the human rights of potentially vulnerable study participants (Edlund, Hartnett, & Heider, 2014; Knepp, 2014). The aim of informed consent standards is to protect at-risk individuals and ensure voluntary participation (Chen et al., 2015; Eichelberger, Decina, Jermakian, & McCartt, 2014; Hetzel-Riggin, 2017). The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical or Behavioral Research (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979) required that all research participants receive human rights protection; their report became known as the *Belmont Report*. In accordance with the guidelines of the *Belmont Report* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979), individuals who joined this study could withdraw by contacting me and expressing their desire to do so at any time between agreeing to participate and the final publication of the study. Participants have the right to withdraw regardless of reason (Khan, 2014; Melham et al., 2014; Waycott et al., 2015). Participants only

needed to make their request to me, and I would have ceased using their data. Participation

agreement documents explaining the informed consent process typically contain (a) a letter of

introduction; (b) an explanation of the nature of the study; (c) the expected time commitment; (d)

the participants' rights, including their right to withdraw; (e) a statement acknowledging

voluntary participation; (f) an understanding of potential compensation; (g) an identity

authorization; and (h) a statement of the potential risks that may result from participation

(Festinger, Dugosh, Marlowe, & Clements, 2014; Melham et al., 2014; Yin 2014). The

participation documents for this study included information on these topics. The documents are

available in the appendices.

I distributed informed consent materials to the participants with the request for

participation and before scheduling the interviews. In this way, participants had an opportunity to

review the agreement documents and understand the voluntary and noncompensated nature of

the study, realize the confidentiality of our agreement, and ask questions before executing any

commitment to the study. After completion of the study, copies with the Walden University IRB

approval number will be available free of charge to any participant.

Data Security

To ensure participant confidentiality, I masked the participant and organizational names

and generalized the study's location by region. Protecting participants involves safeguarding the

information shared during data collection and shielding individuals from retaliation should

sensitive information not remain confidential (Mealer & Jones, 2014). To do this, I replaced

participant names with codes (e.g., AD1, AD2, SAD1) and removed any names provided in

responses to protect participant confidentiality. Using coded names is a standard for identity

protection (Xue, Hong, & Ma, 2014). To protect human research participants from unwanted exposure, I followed the certified training that I received from the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research. After receiving permission to access the performers' assessments, I requested that the HR department de-identify and obscure the artist names from the performance review documents before I received them. With this information removed, I only knew the show at which the performer worked and the name of the AD who performed the assessment. The name removal helped eliminate potential bias and helped maintain a higher level of confidentiality regarding the participants.

I shall protect the data files, regardless of their format, by keeping them inside locked, fire-resistant containers in my home or office. All data will remain securely stored for no less than 5 years to protect participants' rights, and I will destroy them after the 5-year period following prescribed university guidelines. Keeping the collected electronic data on password-protected external hard drives, encrypted whenever possible and maintained with security software, minimizes the threat of unwanted viewing.

Data Collection Instruments

As the researcher, I was the primary instrument for data collection using semistructured interviews, archival records, and company documents. The six sources of data described by Yin (2014) are direct observation, participant observation, artifacts, archival records, documents, and interview. Making field notes, I documented additional data such as employee demeanor, environment quality, greetings, and other interactions that cannot come from an interview transcript alone. I collected these data both before the interviews began and while actively listening to participants during the interviews. After I received the participants' consent, I

digitally recorded the audio portions of the semistructured face-to-face interviews. Following each interview, I transferred the recordings to my computer for future transcription. I used the software NVivo 11 Starter for Windows to assist in my transcription and analysis process. The transcripts of the interviews and the member-checking of the collected data underpinned the analysis of the conversations.

Company documents included the evaluation records of artists and other company statements or policies regarding organizational expectations and the managing of performance. Using company documents can aid with triangulation, help with assessing established expectations, and corroborate the processes used for accomplishing these expectations (Patton, 2015). I asked the ADs to bring along with them to the interview any documents they felt had relevance to their motivation strategies for consistently improving their employees' performance. Semistructured interviews can produce rich narratives, but when retrieving shallow data, a greater number of interviews become needed for credibility (Patton, 2015). Researchers use semistructured interviews to collect rich and descriptive data about phenomena by capturing self-reported accounts of the related experiences and by asking probing and follow-up questions (Galletta, 2013). I conducted each semistructured interview using open-ended questions and followed the interview protocol (see Appendix A). Probing questions also help both the researcher and the participants focus the interview conversations on the intended area of study (Galletta, 2013). After the interviews, I transcribed the recordings and took my interpreted accounts of the interviews to the participants for member-checking. Follow-up inquiries to the interview questions were purposeful in that they scrutinized participants' intended meanings to reveal a greater understanding of their initial responses.

Member-checking is a qualitative technique used to increase credibility by having the participants review the researcher's interpretation of the data collected (Harvey, 2015; Simpson & Quigley, 2016). Member-checking offers participants an opportunity to provide additional feedback on the accuracy and quality of the transcripts made by the researcher (Widodo, 2014). Thus, member-checking increases the credibility of the research and the accuracy of the interpreted meanings (Simpson & Quigley, 2016). Following the interviews, their transcription, and their interpretation, I sent the interpreted data back to the participants and conducted multiple iterations of review until no additional information emerged and the reconstructed accounts become easily recognizable, which increased the credibility and led to data saturation. Member-checking is a vital process used to establish credibility (Harvey, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used member-checking to verify the interpretations of the interviews and to ensure the intended meanings of the participants' statements were accurate.

Data Collection Technique

For this exploration of the motivation strategies that live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance, I collected data during privately held, face-to-face, semistructured interviews recorded at various workplaces. I also reviewed archived documents of employee performance and other supporting documents. The individual interviews took no more than 1 hour to conduct at locations convenient to the ADs' offices and took place at times that created the least disruption to the ADs' normal working schedule. Face-to-face interviews have greater focus when compared to telephone or video-conferenced interviews (Fischer, Collier-Meek, Bloomfield, Erchul, & Gresham, 2017). In formal interviews, participants may shorten answers and not provide in-depth responses (Patton, 2015). However,

private interview meetings allowed me to create or renew rapport before beginning the interviews.

I followed my interview protocol (see Appendix A) and first thanked the participants for their time and reminded them of the purpose of the study. I then reviewed the informed consent documents with them and set up the recording device. Asking the same set of prewritten questions to the participants provided consistency between interviews. Face-to-face interviews were not the exclusive means of data collection. An interpretation of the audio recordings of the interviews underwent member-checking to ensure the interpretation was credible.

Company policies, procedures, and documentation of performance added to the data because these data highlight requirements and expectations for artists, as did the field notes taken during the interviews. Multiple data sources increase credibility through methodological triangulation, which helps researchers interpret a phenomenon (Carter, Bryant-Lukosis, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014; Fusch & Ness, 2015). For this reason, I examined the company's performance documents and practices, the rich verbal accounts of participants' experiences, and transcribed data to further the credibility of my findings. With the written assessments, devoid of performers' names, I knew at which show the performer worked at the time of the assessment and the assessor's name.

Electronic Recording

I used the Olympus VN-722PC digital voice recorder for the interviews to capture the remarks of participants and the unscripted follow-up questions that arose. Prior to starting the interview, I reminded the participant of my wish to record to facilitate the transcription and analysis. When the interview finished, and the opportunity later presented, I uploaded the

electronic recording files to both my laptop's internal hard drive and an external hard drive for additional security and as a backup against file corruption. I used only audio recording during the interviews. Recordings provide a level of freedom for an interviewer, so that during an interview he or she can document nonverbal information as it emerges and can enhance a researcher's adherence to training methods (McGonagle, Brown, & Schoeni, 2015; Yin 2014). I captured nonverbal data with field notes taken during and before the interview sessions.

Some disadvantages to recording interviews are that the recording process might create a sense of unease for the interviewees and result in less productive interviews. With the recording of audio only, an interviewer can develop a false sense of completeness by believing the capture of all relevant data has occurred, when in fact, body language and facial expression are missing (Yin, 2016). I digitally scanned all contemporaneous notes taken during the interviews and stored the paper copies of the written notes within individual file folders with all other nondigital data in a lockable cabinet in my home or office.

Interview Duration

The quality of the data collection experience determined each interview's length. Lynn (2014) found little correlation to survey or interview length and accuracy of data collected but did find that the willingness of subjects to participate may be due to a perceived burden of the process, the subjects' interest in the topic, or the relationship with the interviewer. For this reason, and for the attention and comfort of the participant, I attempted to adhere to 1-hour sessions. Gummer and Roßmann (2015) proposed that interview duration be dependent on the response time and speed of both the interviewer and the interviewee. The hour session excluded the explanation of the process, the discussion and presentation of the informed consent form, the

information identifying the participants' rights, the opportunity to withdraw from the study, and the steps taken to preserve the integrity of the data.

Location and Scheduling

I conducted the interview sessions at various and convenient workplaces for the ADs to minimize any hardship to them and to increase the margin of confidentiality behind closed office doors. I sent all prospective participants an invitation asking for their participation in the study, along with the proposed time and date. Along with the invitation, I provided my contact information so in the event of conflicts or unplanned contingencies at the show, all parties could best use their time until the rescheduling of interviews or follow-up meetings were complete. I scheduled meeting times to accommodate each 60-minute interview and the discussion of ground rules. Scheduling interview sessions close to work times facilitated the ADs' work schedules and lessened the travel time of the participants from an offsite location to their respective workplaces.

<div align="center">

Data Organization Technique

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I cross-referenced the tangible and contemporaneous field notes taken during the interviews to augment the collected data, and I analyzed company documents, written transcripts, and audio recordings following the practices suggested in various publications reviewed about qualitative case studies. Data organization is an early and ongoing stage of data analysis (Galletta, 2013). Researchers promote data organization techniques that involve the precise labeling and storage of collected data records, of transcribed interviews, and of other data along with the creation of meaningful codes for the participants using confidentiality-protecting pseudonyms (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Owen, 2014; Patton, 2015). Through precise coding

and organization, data themes representing participants' meanings emerge (Galletta, 2013).

Cataloging locations of records on password-protected external hard drives, on internal computer

hard drives, and in file folders facilitated the retrieval of records during the analysis, coding, and

transcription phases of the study. I used NVivo 11 Starter for Windows, a computer assisted

qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program, to help categorize the data collected

from interviews. Upon completion of the study, I will move the data from the laptop drive to an

external hard drive for storage for 5 years to adhere to university guidelines.

Data Analysis

For the within-method triangulation for this study's data analysis I relied on the multiple

forms of data collected during face-to-face interviews, the member-checking of my interview

analysis, the analysis of company documents such as performance evaluations, and employee

management policies; all data types were qualitative. Triangulation is a process that supports

reliability and validity by facilitating data analysis using the cross verification of multiple or

different data types to interpret a phenomenon and to achieve data saturation (Drouin, Stewart, &

Van Gorder, 2015; Fusch & Ness, 2015). A goal of triangulation is to corroborate findings and

accomplished by using at least four types of techniques: data source (multiple variants),

investigator (several researchers), theoretical (multiple theoretical schemes), and methodological

(Yin, 2014). Data analysis informally begins upon conducting the first field interview (Yin,

2016). Analysis involves the interpretation of interviews and documents, coupled with the

observation of other data for meaning (Patton, 2015). I ensured credible analysis occurred

throughout the study by using reliable analysis techniques and valid methodological

triangulation.

To achieve methodological triangulation, researchers use different data collection methods and use the collected data to conduct their analysis. Within-method triangulation employs a minimum of two types of data collection within the same methodology, either qualitative or quantitative but not both (Joslin & Müller, 2016). I employed within-method triangulation using qualitative data gained from qualitative methods such as face-to-face interviewing and member-checking and analyzed the written words accessible through company documents. Employing within-method triangulation and using qualitative data collection procedures helped maintain the continuity of the qualitative paradigm and helped me determine where the data related to the motivation strategies that live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance converged.

The recording and notation of spontaneously generated probing questions during the interviews allowed for their immediate use or for their potential use as follow-up questions to other participants when I returned to participants for member-checking. Coding at the beginning of the first cycle of each interview using a shorthand code in the margins can establish the initial attributes of the data as applied to the framework (Patton, 2015). At the end of each interview day, I began the cataloging, transcription, and review of that day's interview. Following the completion of the transcription, I delivered interview summaries to participants for member-checking. Following the member's correction or acceptance of the interpreted summaries, I reread the transcripts several times to interpret the interview data further.

The organization of data before its analysis followed along common themes such as question number or the pseudonym given to the AD. I used NVivo 11 Starter for Windows to assist in my analysis of the collected data and for transcribing and to import any new responses.

NVivo is a popular CAQDAS and served as a single and consistent repository of data. Automated analytical functions such as word counting, coding, and assigning of attributes to textual or multimedia files are functions of CAQDAS and are essential for projects with multiple participant interviews (Saldaña, 2013). Using a CAQDAS helped expedite some of the administrative functions associated with data collection and analysis, but interpretive analysis of data remained the task of the researcher. The completion of data collection and entry into NVivo 11 Starter for Windows prompted several iterations of analysis while searching for emergent themes and trends. Throughout the analysis process, I made reflective notes. Widodo (2014) stated reflective notes aid in the analysis of data and can record the feelings of the researcher regarding what participants say and what body language they use.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

For this study, I used the qualitative terms for reliability and validity to describe the trustworthiness of my data collection and analysis, namely dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Reliability and validity (both internal and external), along with objectivity, are terms used in quantitative research that describe the trustworthiness of studies and designs (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed the qualitative counterparts of reliability and validity and suggested the terms dependability for reliability, credibility for internal validity, transferability for external validity, and confirmability for neutral objectivity.

Regardless of the terms used, dependable and credible research occurs through data saturation and member-checking. To ensure the dependability of information, a researcher must

follow proven methods and techniques for gathering data and a validation process such as

member-checking (Harvey, 2015). To achieve data saturation, researchers must collect enough

data for others to replicate the study, have no additional information emerge from repeated

attempts to find new data, and exhaust data coding (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Member-checking

provides participants the opportunity to address the accuracy of the data interpretation by the

researcher (Harvey, 2015). Dependability relates to the repeatability of data findings when

discovered under matching conditions (Cope, 2014). The frequency and similarity of the

responses from each participant contributed to the dependability of the data findings. Conducting

audits of raw data, analysis, theming, and taking notes reinforce a study's rigor (Lincoln & Guba,

1985). Creating an audit trail is a process for documenting research decisions and collecting

research materials so that future researchers can review the research and arrive at similar

conclusions (Cope, 2014). Audit trails allow for the creation of templates that other researchers

can follow to confirm findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through a careful analysis of the

interview data and artist evaluation I am sure that any other researcher would agree with my

findings.

Validity

Credibility is the truth inherent in data and enhanced by the accuracy of the researcher's

confirmed interpretation (Cope, 2014). When using the case study design, data triangulation and

methodological triangulation are two appropriate techniques to guide the reliability and validity

of the research for the case (Yin, 2014). Achieving credibility for case studies occurs by using

data-collecting processes that use multiple data sources, called data triangulation, or from

multiple methods, called methodological triangulation, and by the relentless pursuit of credibility

(Yin, 2014). Activities such as prolonged engagement, triangulation of data, persistent observation, and member checking increase credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Researchers use member-checking to ensure transcribed interviews reflect participants' meanings, demonstrate rigor on the part of the researcher, promote accuracy, and increase credibility and believability (Harvey, 2015). Member-checking is one way of validating the accuracy of the interpretation of participants' meanings (Harvey, 2015). Conducting multiple iterations of member-checking until no additional information from the participants emerges, and analyzing and reconstructing the data, yields easily recognizable accounts for participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, credibility occurs through careful examination of the data, enhanced triangulation of data, and member-checking. The credibility for my interpretation of the participant responses came from my working alongside this specific group of entertainment managers, which gives me their perspective on the demands these leaders and employees face. My familiarity with the pool of participants also provided enhanced access to information. However, familiarity can raise potential concerns for bias (McDermid et al., 2014). Familiarity does not ensure the existence of biases (Patton, 2015). Strict adherence to interview protocols and methodological guidelines helped maintain the credibility of the analysis.

In case studies, researchers explore unique situations not easily transferred to other applications. How well the research findings from one setting align with those of another defines the transferability of data (Cope, 2014). An additional attribute of transferability is knowing the generalized representation of meanings across a population (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Findings from case studies may be transferable when analyzing and comparing how the unique findings of a case may resemble details useful in similar situations.

Because I cataloged the steps that I took as a researcher, future researchers may be able to reproduce my study's methods and potentially confirm my findings. Confirmability is one method for diminishing research bias by mirroring the objectivity of quantitative studies (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Confirmability represents neutrality within the data because the collection and analysis process are traceable through an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability may occur through the audit trail that documents the methods, analysis, and triangulation techniques used to ensure data accuracy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The audit trail provides a road map of the processes from data collection through analysis and adds trustworthiness to reported research (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I created an audit trail documenting my actions and recording the data collection process in my reflective journal.

Transition and Summary

The goal of this study was to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance. In Section 1, I provided the background, problem, and purpose statements. I also included the conceptual framework for this study and reviewed the relevant literature related to motivators, motivation types, management, and SDT.

In Section 2, I restated the purpose statement, informed readers of the chosen research design, and explained how I explored the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs used to improve consistency in their employees' performance. I also explained the techniques selected for data collection, the approach for the ethical treatment of participants, and the procedures to ensure reliable and valid data analysis.

In Section 3, I report my findings, the business application of this research for professional practice, and the implications for social change. I also make recommendations for action and make suggestions for future research. I end Section 3 with my reflections and my conclusion.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single-case study was to explore the motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs use to improve consistency in employees' performance. To address the research question, I analyzed the collected responses from five semistructured, face-to-face interviews with three experienced divisional ADs (AD1–AD3) and two senior ADs (SAD1 and SAD2). I also analyzed the employee evaluations of artists filed by five of the division's ADs (AD1, AD2, AD4, AD5, and AD6) and one senior AD (SAD2) to gauge the practical nature of their strategies.

The collected data revealed two prominent themes: well-being, which emerged from the interviews, and technical proficiency, which emerged from the evaluations. The theme of well-being contained two subthemes: vision sharing and stabilizing environmental conditions. Regarding the first subtheme, the ADs focused on big-picture communication in their strategies. The ADs stated that open communication channels and transparency created work environments that stimulated well-being and incited artists to discover factors from within themselves. They also conveyed a belief that knowing the organizational vision would consistently provoke intrinsic motivation and performance. The second subtheme related to the creation of environments in which the employees received encouragement and felt secure in their future. In this environment, supervisors did not focus on the employees' performance inconsistencies, rather, the performance attributes which resulted in increased employee self-esteem.

The second theme revealed through analysis of the evaluations was technical proficiency. Although the ADs did not consciously consider consistency as a motivation strategy or a goal to

strive for, they did evaluate their employees' consistency as a technical proficiency. Six

subthemes of consistency, engagement, challenge, autonomy, competence, and relatedness

emerged as themes over artistry, innovation, and other themes one might expect from a live-

entertainment company. Autonomy and relatedness, which are two pillars of SDT (Deci & Ryan,

1985), held lower weight for the ADs than did competence. Commitment, also viewed by the

ADs as engagement, was a valued quality and one worthy of highlighting in the evaluations. For

the ADs, consistency was both a behavioral attribute and a synonym for performance quality.

Artists who performed with consistency, commitment, and competence received positive ratings,

although performers who regularly performed autonomously received slightly negative ratings.

In this context, performing autonomously means that artists who were less predictible tended to

perform based on their personal interest rather than on what was best for the company, and were

less precise by choice when autonomously performing. Thus, autonomy was not a virtue in this

case.

Presentation of the Findings

I sought to explore what motivation strategies live-entertainment ADs used to improve

consistency in their employees' performances. In my interviews, I probed the ADs for their

methods for achieving consistency through motivation strategies and the extent to which the

study's conceptual framework of SDT formed a basis for the strategies intended for their live-

entertainment employees. The analysis of employee evaluations revealed how the ADs

augmented their strategies with (a) positive feedback on consistent performance and (b)

references to the SDT pillars of competence and employees' relatedness to others.

I e-mailed interview invitations to the company e-mail accounts of six ADs and two senior ADs. Three ADs and two senior ADs agreed to schedule interviews while three ADs had conflicts and could not schedule interviews but wished me well in my study. Three women (two ADs and one senior AD) and two men (one AD and one senior AD) formed the participant population. The ADs and senior ADs were between 30 and 65 years old.

Over a 1-week period, I conducted five separate interviews: three face-to-face interviews with two ADs and one senior AD at their workplaces, one live video chat interview with a second senior AD, and one face-to-face interview in my office with a third AD. I also received from the HR department 50 randomly selected performance evaluations from the files of 20 artists supervised by the divisional ADs, which I used for methodological triangulation purposes. Unexpectedly, one AD had zero evaluation files selected. I excluded one evaluation (Artist 2) attributed to AD7 from the data sample. AD7's assignment at the time of the study was with the show under my authority. Even though I was not working with AD7 at the time of the evaluation, I did not include any data from AD7 to avoid the appearance of bias. I analyzed the data from the remaining 49 de-identified performance evaluation records from 19 artists filed by the remaining five ADs in the division and one evaluation completed by SAD2 between July 2009 and July 2017. The labeling convention I used ensured that the files were consistent with the artist records and protected the ADs' identity. As an example, Artist 1's evaluations were in two of the files received from the HR department: 1A and 1B. Within File 1A, two evaluations existed (1Aa and 1Ab). File 1B included a third record labeled 1B. As reported earlier in this subsection, I removed Artist 2's record. Artist 3's evaluations were also in two files: 3A (record

3A) and 3B (containing three records: 3Ba, 3Bb, and 3Bc). I continued with this numbering convention for all the artist records.

The company had modified its evaluation template over the years. Due to the modifications of the yearly evaluations, some evaluations contained 13 criteria (40 records) while others contained 14 criteria (seven records) to evaluate employees. Two records had missing pages and therefore contained only eight of the 13 criteria. The templates rated the artist's performance across four qualitative categories of competency. The competencies were (a) artistic quality of performance, (b) technical quality of performance, (c) attitude, and (d) health care.

Each competency held four ratings of expectation: *needs improvement*, *partially meets expectations*, *very good*, and *superior*. The performance ratings were qualitative and subjective, and, although the templates were a creation of the organization, the rating of the individual employee was the responsibility of the AD. The rating *needs improvement* highlighted areas of artists' performances not meeting the expectations of the employer. A *partially meets expectations* rating highlighted the areas of performances requiring some improvement by the artists. A rating of *very good* was for artists who fully met the expectations of the organization. An artist received a *superior* rating when the performance exceeded the performance expectations as established by the AD.

Evaluations required marking either 13 or 14 rating boxes across the four competencies of the evaluation to rate artists' performance relative to each criterion. Some evaluations provided a place to mark the overall score of the competency. This mark was an average score for the competency whereby an employee could score a *partially meets expectations* on one or

more criteria and still receive a *very good* overall rating. I did not tabulate the overall ratings of the competencies because the overall rating did not possess written justification that clarified the score. I focused my analysis on the different criteria relative to the practical application of the strategies. The evaluations contained no quantitative values. All but two of the 49 files contained the entire evaluation. One record was missing the first page, which held five results (of a potential 13), and a second record was missing the second page of the evaluation, with another five (of 13) missing results. One evaluation had a double score on one criterion; another had two criteria unmarked.

Six hundred thirty-two of a potential 643 boxes received marks. The difference of 11 being the 10 missing criteria scores from the two missing pages, the two criteria with blank check boxes, and the additional score from one criterion marked with two ratings. Of these boxes, there were zero ratings of *needs improvement* in any category. A *partially meets* rating received 32 mentions in 11 of the 49 files. A *very good* rating appeared in 514 boxes. A *superior* appeared in 86 boxes. Qualitative comments from the reviewers supported the scoring for each criterion. The purposes of the reviewers' comments were to motivate, provide clarity, address areas of concern, suggest remedies to the artists, and support the scoring.

The findings from the combined data revealed that, although the ADs did not consciously deploy discrete sets of strategies to motivate their employees to perform with consistency, patterns in the evaluation comments indicated that consistency in performance held value for ADs on a subconscious level. When questioned about strategy, the ADs responded with a variety of answers citing the conditions they felt were conducive to positive and productive work environments, things that kept employees engaged, and challenges that motivated employees

from within their environment. The ADs did not offer discrete motivational strategies used to direct employees to perform consistently within a live-entertainment setting. Each AD and senior AD provided their unique strategy to prompt consistency from their workers.

Several coding paths emerged when I considered the research question and the conceptual framework of SDT. I used NVivo 11 Starter for Windows and coded the evaluations and interviews guided by the research question and the SDT. For the evaluations, codes were (a) artistic qualities, (b) autonomy, (c) challenge and change, (d) competency, (e) consistency, (f) engagement, (g) improvement, and (h) relatedness. For the interviews, the codes that emerged were (a) autonomy, (b) challenge, (c) competence, (d) consistency, (e) emotional intelligence, (f) engagement, (g) improvement, (h) individual descriptors, (i) job satisfaction, (j) motivation (extrinsic), (k) motivation (intrinsic), (l) need for support, (m) relatedness, (n) strategy, and (o) temperaments.

The evaluation template listed the competencies of a generic performer and the relationships with coworkers. Within their evaluations' comments, ADs mentioned the SDT's three concepts of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, with words associated with these concepts. Interview responses from the ADs only offered concepts they employed and believed improved consistency but did not express consistency as something pursued directly with the artists.

I found no discrete strategies to motivate consistency or improvement, as they were not competencies on the company's evaluation template and therefore not established in plans for the ADs to improve consistency. The concepts of consistency, competence, and relatedness (how

employees relate to other employees) are concepts the ADs use to determine performers'
behavior or the quality of a performance.

Theme 1: Well-being as Motivation Strategy

When asked about their motivation strategies in use to improve consistency in their
employees' performances, all ADs responded that their strategies depended on the type of
employee, artists who performed on stage, or members of the non-performing support staff. The
ADs shared a common belief that performers, compared to other entertainment employees,
required different motivational strategies because of differences in temperament between the
groups. The ADs felt the differences between performers and non-performers merited separate
motivation strategies because performing tended to be more sensitive and less emotionally
mature than their non-performing coworkers. AD1 claimed that because artists were self-aware
of their uniqueness and have different circumstances governing the ends of their careers, ADs
needed to be diplomatic in their handling of the artists. The circumstances required a type of care
that maintained the artists' emotional well-being for as long as possible. SAD2 corroborated that
sensitivity was a primary reason for the differences in the motivational strategies the ADs use.
Quoting AD2, non-performers employees had "thicker skins," were "more experienced," and
were more accepting of direct critique. AD1 commented that the artists, despite their prowess,
needed constant reassurance and support. Due to the artists' sensitivity to direct or negative
criticism, the ADs, as caretakers of show quality, manage their employees with strategies that
maintain well-being. The ADs' strategies supported two subthemes: vision sharing and a desire
to stabilize environmental conditions.

Subtheme 1: Well-being from vision sharing. AD1 and SAD2 articulated support for vision sharing, as they felt that after giving employees opportunities to understand the bigger picture and internalize it, recommitted employees would use their intrinsic motivation to put the vision into a personal context and achieve the collective goals, thereby improving and generating more consistent performances. A study by Joung, Goh, Huffman, Yuan, and Surles (2015) noted that, without other factors such as appropriate training and performance rewards, an organizational vision did not influence employee commitment. The ADs' statements on vision sharing were perplexing because they lacked a connection between understanding the vision (of a company) and performing with consistency. Unless reinforced as part of the vision, the message of consistency seemed unrelated to sharing of the vision. Visions statements are broad and call workers to action and achievement through a variety of means. Visions are rallying points to begin a journey but often provide no clear philosophy on how to stay and thrive when employees arrive at the envisioned destination.

Subtheme 2: Well-being from stable environmental conditions. AD3's strategy indicated that consistency and overall performance improved when the work environment was conducive to job satisfaction. AD3 commented, "So for me, I get the most consistency when people are satisfied and work and want to be here, because if they are not satisfied, they will not give it their all, and they will probably cut corners."

More than one AD noted that employee engagement and performance consistency improved after establishing work environments that employees considered safe, encouraging, and respectful. SAD1 suggested that consistency could be determined by viewing the personal engagement of the individual and by the quality of the work output. Interview responses revealed

the ADs gave little if any forethought to the concept of consistency. The responses revealed that consistency was a by-product of the well-being strategy. The annual evaluations corroborated this and included mentions of employees performing consistently or as individuals encouraged to resolve issues of their inconsistency. Consistency was a prominent indicator of employee success, receiving 161 mostly positive comments throughout the assessments.

Theme 2: Technical Proficiency

A motivation strategy that focused on technical proficiency and positive feedback emerged from the analysis of the evaluation documents. A comment made by AD1 regarding the artists' need for constant reassurance and support raised the possibility that the evaluations did not accurately reflect the skills of the artists and that the positive evaluations formed part of the strategy of managing well-being. This was in addition to the absence of any *needs improvement* ratings in the evaluations.

Subtheme 1: Consistency. Artistic directors viewed consistency as a descriptor of expected behavior. Consistency is a term used to describe the repetition of behavior, traits or results, quality, or success. The data did not capture how ADs calibrated for consistency. The keywords used to describe consistency were *always, consistency*, *consistent*, *constantly*, *continue(s)*, *counted on*, *daily*, *each night*, *every night*, *fluctuate*, *inconsistencies*, *inconsistent*, *kept on*, *maintaining*, *maintains*, *meticulous*, *more consistent*, *my rock*, *never compromising*, *nightly*, *rarely*, *regularly*, *reliable*, *solid*, and *steady*. Questions remain regarding whether the assessments of artists' behaviors were relative to previous behavior or the behaviors of others. Hence, it is difficult to determine a baseline for the use of consistency, despite its frequent mention on the annual performance evaluations. The evaluations registered 161 references to

consistent behavior in the comment sections of the evaluations. This number of mentions is slightly more than 91% greater than the next highest comment of competence, with 84 mentions.

I chose the ADs as study subjects because the ADs are the caretakers of each show's quality. Subsequently, the ADs have the responsibility of extracting consistent yet innovative performances from artists in their effort to maintain the show quality as established by the original creative team while motivating employees to improve and perform with consistency. Research exists that shows employees, to be effective and engaged, seek and benefit from job autonomy (Akbari, Pilot, & Simons, 2015; Mackay, Allen, & Landis, 2017). However, SAD1 described the ADs' jobs: "The target is not to say, 'Okay, you're bored, you don't know what to do, change the show. Create a new show with what you have.' No, we have to maintain the same show." These statements reinforce the notion that the expectation of consistency is prevalent and that the ADs cannot autonomously change the show because the ADs have the motivation to do so.

Subtheme 2: Engagement. A second and recurring subtheme in the analysis of the evaluations was employee engagement. For ADs, employee engagement included the artists' commitment to the organization. Bakker and Demerouti (2014) created their job demands–resources theory to contend that when employees disconnect from their work due to various demands, there is a decline in their performance and consistency. For managers, determining if their employees are fully engaged is not easy. SAD1 claimed, "I'm sensitive to this. I can determine if they are only tired or if it is something else, and when I probe them I usually get to the real problem." SAD2 reported, "It's through body language. It's a lack of engagement. It's a feeling that things are not right. When their behavior that is out of character." AD3 remarked that

an employee is likely disengaged "when I don't know what I am going to get from that person from one day, or one moment, to the next. You can tell if people are off or something else is going on with them." ADs claimed to have elevated their senses to read body language and claim they can "feel" when something is not right with their artists.

Subtheme 3: Challenge. The commentary contained in the evaluations offered challenges to the artists in areas that required some form of improvement. The language used was positive, upbeat, and intended to encourage rather than discourage artists. None of the reviews had *needs improvement* scores and 79 of the total 632 boxes (12.5%) received a *partially meets* across all reviews. Few of the ADs' comments directly addressed the performers' areas of weakness. The comments stated which criterion needed correction, but with a softened tone written to avoid offending the artist. An example of such a comment stated that it was the "wish" of the reviewer for the artist to attend more exercise classes, which was much less than a directive from the reviewer. Comments such as these might be due to the temperament of the artist or the AD or due to the relationship between the artist and the AD. The technique was consistent throughout the reviews filed by both male and female ADs. If the intended focus of the review was to improve the consistency of the performance, the language to achieve consistency lacked clarity.

Subtheme 4: Autonomy. Autonomy is the amount of volition exercised to make independent choices (Akbari et al., 2015). The ADs claimed they believed in autonomy for the performers but what they described as artist autonomy was the artists taking initiatives to complete predetermined tasks, not what the artists necessarily wanted to do. Autonomy was the least mentioned in the comments by the ADs as they related to the SDT, despite autonomy's

position within the theory. The key words and phrases that indicated autonomy were *accountability*, *a lot of creative freedom*, *as long as you get to your mark*, *as much as you want*, *authority*, *ball back in their court*, *continue to work on*, *different projects*, *empowered*, *enable*, *expect from themselves*, *freedom*, *freedom to enjoy*, *give them a minute*, *help yourself*, *I just do it*, *I want*, *in their hands*, *it's their idea*, *kind of lead them*, *let them talk*, *make own efforts*, *more power*, *offers ideas*, *ownership*, *proactive*, *responsible for themselves*, *take some action*, *that's on them*, *their own thing*, *their own way*, *they can*, *they have their own*, *they work themselves forward*, *train themselves*, *up to them*, *we did our thing*, *willing to work independently*, *what works for them*, *what do you*, *what inspires you*, *what interests me*, and *where do you want*. Artists' autonomous behavior took many forms such as scheduling wardrobe fittings and filling, with personal creations, the blank spots within artistic performances. Autonomy in these instances did not include freely creating on stage or developing the backstory for their character. Artists received encouragement to promote well-being but expected to motivate themselves in areas needing improvement. Artists also received compliments when they were "willing" to work independently or for offering ideas. Some artists received criticism for making proactive attempts at managing their conditioning and injury prevention and not seeking help. One AD acknowledged a minor conflict with a pair of artists over their desire to maintain their previous autonomous behaviors, taking control over their regimen under the guise of creative performance improvements even though the artists had successfully performed and behaved in this manner for many years. AD3 stated the following on consistency and creativity:

> There is a fine line here. We don't want to stifle creativity and artistry, but there is a
> difference between delivering a consistent performance and staying inside the box. The

box should indicate what's acceptable, including going right to the edges. Give clear

boundaries and allow [the employees] the freedom to work within these boundaries. With

my stage managers, I give them a certain amount of autonomy to find creative solutions.

For artists as well, you have a mark, be on it, how you get there is less important. As long

as you hit your marks, or stay inside the box, you are allowed some creative freedom

within those boundaries.

Most times, autonomy was a reward, doled out as freedom, as something to motivate the artist to

prove or for proving commitment. This approach is in opposition to Deci and Ryan (2000), who

posited autonomy as a preferred way of working, not a reward but a need. It seemed in this

context, when employees and artists worked with autonomy, the behavior was upsetting to ADs.

Autonomous behavior, at least in this operation, could produce flashes of brilliance but often

created inconsistent activity frowned upon by managers.

Subtheme 5: Competence. A competence can be interpreted by others by matching the

person's perceived ability against some prior behavior and also be perceived by the morality of

the person being judged (Stellar & Willer, 2018). The evaluating ADs provided artists positive

reviews when the performers demonstrated competence. During my analysis, I coded for

competence when ADs commented that artists performed with aplomb and deserved special

recognition from the AD. The ADs' comments in the evaluations included "Very nice work and

contribution on all partnering elements of the show," "[Artist 17] is a great trampoline artist,"

and "[Artist 1] demonstrated his high-level of professionalism and attitude." The results reflected

that some level of competence was worthy of noting and appeared at least one time in 48 of 49

(97.9%) of the evaluations. Comments signaling competence alerted artists when they had

mastered their discipline, or it was clear from the reviewer's viewpoint that the performance was the right quality. The keywords indicating the appearance of competence from the artists included *ability*, *able*, *aplomb*, *beautiful quality*, *can be put in many different positions*, *can work on*, *competence*, *confidence*, *enrich*, *excellent*, *experience*, *fantastic shape*, *good, good skills*, *good technique*, *great*, *high level*, *his experience is valuable*, *in good condition*, *knowledgeable*, *move with freedom*, *natural*, *needs more attention*, *nice job*, *nice work*, *professional*, *proven*, *put in the work*, *raise his level*, *see the change*, *skillful*, *strong*, *talented*, *versatile*, and *wide variety of abilities*. The positive feedback encouraged artists to continue at their current levels or accept the challenge to see how much further they could advance. Artists' competence may be the by-product of the evaluators' feedback (an external motivation) to the artist, or due to an abundance of natural skill.

Subtheme 6: Relatedness. Relatedness as defined by SDT is the feeling of connection and belonging to others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Artists received feedback about their behavior and performance relative to interactions with their supervisors and support staff. Feedback was meant to communicate the desired behavior and motivate the artist to continue forging positive work relationships. Sebire et al. (2016) noted that teachers provide the required structure for academic competence; similarly, ADs provide the needed structure for artistic success. Key words attributed to relatedness were *a fine line*, *appreciated*, *around her*, *attitude*, *awareness of fellow artists*, *can you help me*, *cares about co-workers*, *closer*, *collaborating*, *communicate differently*, *different lifestyle*, *distance*, *enjoys her*, *ensemble*, *familiarity*, *from me*, *get to know the other person*, *good standing with cast*, *good relationship*, *group*, *helpful*, *I know him*, *in my shoes*, *I want to work with you*, *liked*, *loose*, *mutual respect*, *open up*, *people*, *person they work with*,

professional, *providers*, *rapport*, *respect and friendship*, *respected relationship*, *respectful*, *sensitive*, *solid relationship*, *support*, *switch to serve talking down*, *them*, *team*, *that I'm interested*, *they don't like the way I am*, *trust*, *undistinguished*, and *work with*. Relatedness, or a mention of how the artist related to coworkers, also appeared 48 times across the 49 evaluations. Comments indicated where the artist "has a good relationship and awareness of fellow artists" or "was appreciative of the wardrobe team" or when the AD recognized "he was a sensitive leader of the group and a pleasure to work with the artistic team." These types of comments pointed out to artists' how cooperation and collaboration could create positive results. The tenor of the comments did not indicate that the employee was under any duress to positively relate to fellow employees. Relatedness reflects the support exchanged between coworkers when the interest in their success is genuine (Sebire et al., 2016). The interview responses of the ADs covered the strategies to create stable environments, but few mentioned the closeness or strengthening of the relationship they have with the team that might help them overcome some of the instability in the environment.

With their discussion of strategic approaches intended to improve the consistency of performances, ADs proposed that consistent performances would occur when the improvements made to work environments supported employees' well-being. However, the evaluations did not offer to artists ways to improve the environment but pointed out the recognition of consistent performance and technical proficiency. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), feelings of autonomy may occur when perceiving the feeling of control over one's environment. Perceived feelings of control increase with feelings of high competence. Competence is a personal attribute viewed through the appearance of confidence and execution. The ADs highly rated competence

as an attribute within the comments section of the evaluations. Competence is foundational to well-being because competence provides individuals with perceived control. The frequencies with which conceptual mentions related to (in)consistency, autonomy, competence, and relatedness appear in the evaluations are in Table 1. The frequencies with which the ADs mentioned these concepts show that autonomy (one of the defining concepts of the SDT) was the least mentioned by the ADs, and (in)consistent behavior (not a concept of SDT) had more comments throughout the employee evaluations. Based on the evaluations reviewed, each AD had a potential number of criteria in which to mention consistency, autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the comments section of the reviews. For example, AD1 filed eight of the 49 evaluations included as data for this study. Each of those eight evaluations contained 13 criteria for 104 opportunities to mention one or all concepts.

Table 1

Percentages of Conceptual Mentions in Evaluations by Artistic Director Participants

Reviewer	% of mentions				n of criteria per AD
	Consistency	Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness	
AD1	15.4	1.9	8.7	4.8	104
AD2	18.7	0.0	6.5	3.6	139
AD3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
AD4	41.8	2.2	30.8	8.8	91
AD5	17.2	0.9	8.6	4.3	116
AD6	35.7	1.2	16.1	14.3	168
SAD1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
SAD2	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	14

Note. AD3 and SAD1 had no randomly selected evaluations but did sit for interviews. n = number.

Applications to Professional Practice

The ADs indicated that consistent performance was preferable over autonomous behavior. The ADs also indicated that artists chose to improve or achieved their consistent

performances when strategies conducive to stable work environments and technical proficiency fostered well-being and feelings of competence. To create these environments, ADs provided positive evaluations and used their emotional intelligence to sense employees' disengagement, lack of focus, or needs for new challenges. The ADs did not, however, release control to employees, which, as Deci and Ryan (1985) suggested, would allow for self-determined behavior and lead to satisfaction. It was not clear from the data analysis whether artists felt unsatisfied or requested greater control. The AD strategies contrast the position taken by Perreault, Mask, Morgan, and Blanchard (2014), who proposed that when people conducted activities with a sense of autonomy, they positively responded to emotion-laden information and experienced greater psychological well-being.

In the organization studied in this case study, joint efforts on the part of the ADs and the performers made to increase the wow factors of the shows might help enhance the shows' appeal to the audience. A greater artist involvement in fostering the creative ideas with ADs can accomplish two things. First, greater artist involvement can provide autonomous feelings to the artists and the perception of more control over their contribution, thereby deepening their engagement and shortening the time artists require to develop intrinsic motivation and consistent behavior. Second, greater artist involvement can provide ADs with a direct influence on the behavior of the artists as they exchange ideas and make the creative effort work for all parties. A greater AD involvement fits with the incremental improvements SAD1 spoke about. Small improvements do not substantially change a show. As SAD1 said, minor changes were a way for artists and ADs to leave their mark while remaining faithful to the mandate given "to maintain the quality of the show."

How much control to cede to employees to improve consistency remains unclear. Managers can instill a sense of well-being in a workforce in many ways and then benefit from more engaged and self-determined workers. However, employees may respond to the trappings that support their well-being and lose sight of business objectives. Employees already satisfied with the operational paradigms might question change they perceive counter their well-being resist the changes and become de-motivated. Managers should not rely solely on the intrinsic motivation of employees to develop their competencies or to accept the value of consistent performance. Therefore, being involved with the employees and keeping them appraised of the changing organizational goals along with the benefits consistent behaviors create can benefit many industries.

Making the ADs' strategies more applicable for other businesses would require these other businesses to evaluate how well they value consistency. Business applicability would also depend on companies' reinforcement of the virtue of consistency to self-determined employees, and by highlighting consistent behavior over employees' control. There also exists a need to review the relational bond between managers and employees to evaluate the levels of control required by each party to achieve the consistent performance required for success. The joint efforts of managers and employees would bring the parties together, foster commitment, promote competence, engender relatedness, and agreement upon a value for consistency.

Implications for Social Change

The findings from this research may contribute to social change by inspiring individuals who lead teams to develop discrete motivation strategies that influence, improve, or reinforce consistent performance. Social change may also develop from alternative strategies that achieve

more stable environments and contribute to consistent interactions community wide. Research showed that when employees felt more in control of their contributions, their motivation to succeed, job satisfaction, productivity, and work quality increased (Vander Elst et al., 2014). A lack of consistency can affect the economic well-being of individuals and companies. Without consistent behavior from companies, product support may suffer, altering customers' views of companies (Wei, Kim, Miao, Behnke, & Almanza, 2018). This may also be true for academic settings where isolated or remote learning students can exercise more control over classroom participation by establishing consistent log in and posting times to address their education needs.

Establishing a culture where consistency has value may elevate minimum standards everywhere, boosting business, political organizations, and other social exchanges. Consistency may also reduce the perceived complexity of unknown experiences making people more inclined to learn from others in social settings. Consistency helps people make sense of the various environments they are in and helps people develop their proficiencies and competence. These environments would include the working, social, spiritual, and physical settings a person interacts in each day. Local community leaders that consistently share their vision for the community may inspire their constituents to participate in civic activities, helping to increase satisfaction with elected officials. I believe there are social benefits that can grow out of the ADs' strategies of well-being and stabilized environments. These strategies help improve competence and results, making expectation matching and satisfaction achievement real for individuals and thereby contributing to social change.

Recommendations for Action

I recommend that ADs begin sharing their vision consistent performance behavior and its value so artists can incorporate consistency among other valued behavior. I also recommend that the ADs conduct discussions with their employees and learn the employee motivations. Possessing this information may help the ADs conduct their periodic exchanges with employees, shortening the time to improvement and helping ADs develop other effective strategies to improve performance consistency.

I recommend investigating the virtues of consistency and the value that consistency provides to an organization. After establishing the value of consistency, I would follow with communicating how consistency fits into the bigger picture, how consistency contributes to well-being and safe environments, and how it builds trust to reinforce excellence for both customers and employees. In this way, consistency can extend benefits to all. Within the culture of excellence, consistency becomes the touchstone for all innovation, creativity, and job satisfaction. Communication regarding consistency can follow the communication paths through an organization in much the same way messages regarding the importance of profitability would. Passing the message of consistency and its importance to the workforce using internal newsletters, department meetings, training, and performance dialogues seems appropriate. From on-boarding employees to pre-shift meetings, acknowledging the consistent performance of individuals throughout the organization can serve to inspire and motivate a workforce to excel and explain why, when inconsistent performance is evident, corrective action should follow.

Recommendations for Further Research

There are several ways to further this research. The logical course would be to expand the case study to include an exploration of the technical managers within this organization. Another option would be to explore another side of the research question by asking the employees reporting to ADs about the origins of their motivations and if those origins are internal or external. By exploring this research question from these two points of view, the expanded research might offer a holistic view at the approach to deploying motivations geared at providing consistent output within an organization. Another way to continue exploring this topic may be to ask comparable questions but expand the delimitations and follow other artistic or technical managers, or by adding artists from other companies first within the city and expanding until generalizations are viable. In this way, the research would provide enough information from the broader live-entertainment community regarding methods designed to improve consistency in performance to create a formal theory. Another expansion of the scope would be to explore how motivational strategies undergo development within organizations, as it appears that formal strategy development, in this case, is lacking. This study may be the first to include an exploration into how performers in the live-entertainment industry find their motivation to perform by using the origin of the motivation as its purpose.

Many questions still exist regarding the concept of consistency and the extent to which SDT forms a basis for motivation strategies. For example, how are autonomy and consistency connected as behaviors? Does self-determination play any role in the operational realities of the AD, or, once achieving a behavioral or technical competency, how does competence support consistency of that behavior or technique? These additional research questions may provide

value for business leaders, and the transferability of these finding may produce qualitative and quantitative benefits for them.

Reflections

My doctoral journey was a circuitous one, and I learned that it is difficult to explain problems to others when they have little or no frame of reference regarding the problem's significance. Although the statement sounds simple, that discovery might be the very essence of any doctoral journey. Researchers study and strive to explain phenomena to others exposed to problems but unprepared to handle them. That is my purpose, and why I chose this path. My journey began because I felt it was time to give back to others in response to what I have received from others, which is the honor to lead people in an organization with lessons I have learned along my way. A Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree will provide me the credentials to teach people these lessons. I started at Walden University with an attempt to explore how managers could be more effective at getting employees to accept change. I was unable to articulate this well and languished for some time as I sought ways to address change management with a fresh approach. My topic appeared too broad and was not interesting enough to me to fight for. Things improved for me after I realized that an essential part of the doctoral experience was taking ownership of my research and understanding that if teaching others about leadership was my goal, I needed to find a way to communicate my business problem without excuses. Upon this realization, I retooled with a new idea, and, with my mentor, built a focused study. Only then could I articulate how strategies missing from daily duties might benefit society. I realized that this problem, narrow as it is, is a universal problem not isolated to an entertainment industry. While I formulated how this example might help others, I also realized

that my challenges made me a better student. The challenges opened my eyes to my doctoral

pursuit. My DBA journey ends with a case-study about getting employees to improve

consistency, which may be the antonym to change. The doctoral journey was one of the more

challenging achievements of my life, and although I am satisfied with its accomplishment, I

wonder if I would do it again. The DBA will offer me new opportunities to care for my family in

return for the support they have given me over these past few years, but it is not without

sacrifice. My exploration of the management of the artistic side of the live-entertainment

business was an exciting departure from my current activities. As I began to discuss my study

with colleagues and became more immersed in the academic requirements of this study, I

realized that the topic of improving consistency in performance was a silent problem that many

managers faced, but few knew where to find success.

Conclusion

The findings of this single-case study revealed that, although the ADs of this live-

entertainment company lacked discrete strategies designed to improve the consistency of their

employees' performances, they enabled consistency by using alternative strategies with a focus

on maintaining well-being and creating stable work environments. The ADs encouraged

consistency in employee performance by providing positive feedback on competence and with a

reliance on relationship quality. The findings showed that, although none of the ADs worked

using a preconceived strategy to improve consistency in performance, consistency was a highly

regarded attribute. Consistency was the most noted of the performance evaluation comments and

a contributing factor for the ADs in determining employees' value to the show. Performance

consistency was a factor reinforced by the ADs for its desirability, and it superseded innovation

as the primary desired outcome across the selected evaluation records. The ADs' strategies do support two pillars of the SDT, competence and relatedness, but autonomy, another pillar of the SDT, had a lesser role. Employees who responded to the extrinsic motivations of ADs and who performed with consistency, competence, and relatedness received more positive evaluations than those who did not. When I began this study, I wondered if consistency would undermine innovation and creativity, and whether autonomy and freedom of choice would dominate the strategies of the ADs. I found that autonomy is not the virtue in this setting that it is in SDT that the control some workers seek is difficult to achieve, and that consistent performance is highly valued.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Action	Time	Text
1. Welcome to participant	1.5 min	Welcome and thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. With this study, I am exploring the motivation strategies used by artistic directors (ADs) to improve consistency in employee performance. I will also be speaking with other ADs that manage employees to achieve performance objectives. I assure you that I will do everything in my power to maintain your confidentiality and that the information you provide is not directly attributable to you. I will share the collected information with only those at my university that I must to complete my study, your identity however, will remain confidential to all others. If, you have no reservations about having your identity known, please make sure that you indicated that on the informed consent form. Neither your name, nor the organization's name, will appear anywhere in the study. I must point out that because my name will be on the study it may be reasonable to assume which company was the company studied and therefore your inferred identity could surface through this association. I assure you that no specific answers will be attributable to you.
2. Review, collection, and distribution of previously uncollected informed consent forms	5 min	Before we begin I ask that you review the informed consent forms that you have received. If you have not yet given these forms to me, you may do so now. Informed consent is an ethical requirement for researchers when their studies involve human subjects. This requirement is to ensure the subject understands their rights, that participation is completely voluntary, and in this instance, without compensation. The document states: a) my requirements (as the researcher) to keep all information confidential and in secure storage for a minimum of five years, b) that your participation is voluntary, and you may stop and withdraw from the study at any time, and c) that you will have limited or no exposure to any known or intentional risk by participating in this research.
3. Explain the purpose of the study	0:40 sec	The purpose of this study is to explore motivation strategies, that ADs use to improve consistency in their employees' performance. The decision to select you was because you are an expert in your field. This study's purpose is not to make judgments about your skill as a

		manager. It is only to understand what your current strategies and practices are, and to gain your perspective of each strategies' effectiveness to achieve established goals.
4. Explain decorum and data collection	1-2 min	I will record our conversation today using a digital voice recorder. I will transcribe my interpretation of our conversation, and once finished I will ask you to review it for accuracy, and that I have understood your meaning correctly. Are there any questions so far? Today's interview should take an estimated 60 minutes but that will depend on you. I hope to get through all the questions in this allotted time, so I may ask that you conclude some of your answers to keep moving ahead. I understand that you are busy, but I ask that you turn off your cell phone ringer to avoid both distraction and the need to reschedule another large block of your time if we do not make it through my questions. If you need to use the restroom, let me know and we can take a few minutes now. I have some supplies if you wish to make your own notes. Specific questions, following the order of the interview protocol will preserve the interview integrity and facilitate the analysis. While these questions may seem similar, they contain subtle differences that matter to the research. I think that is everything, do you have any question before we begin?
5. Remind participants that moderation of the discussion will happen throughout when answers begin to stray from topic Begin interview and prepare to ask for clarification on answers and inform participant regarding any	45-50 min	I have prepared 9 questions. Please provide as detailed an answer as possible. I will do my best to keep you on the topic. 1. What motivation strategies do you use to improve consistency in employee performance? 2. How does the concept of consistency compete with the requirement of artistic innovation in your employees' performances? 3. How have your motivation strategies affected the consistency of your employees' performance? 4. What motivation strategies have you found most effective at improving consistency in employee performance? 5. How do you determine that an employee is inconsistent in their performance?

future follow up questions. 6. When the answer to the question is complete offer a synthesis of what you heard.		6. How are you able to determine when performers lack the motivation to perform with consistency? 7. In what ways do your employees' temperaments influence the selecting of your motivation strategies to improve consistency in your employees' performance? 8. How do your relationships with performers factor when considering your motivation strategies to improve consistency in employee performance? 9. What additional information would you like to share about your motivation strategies to improve consistency in your employees' performance?
7. Request for additional data.		What other documents (company or otherwise) besides the employee performance evaluations do you suggest I review to determine strategy effectiveness?
8. Concluding remarks, my congratulations, and thanks. Remind participants of requests for more time in the future and for their help with member checking.	5 min	These are all the questions I have for you right now. I want to thank you for your time and assistance in this study. If you get home, and think of something that you forgot to say, you can reach me on my cell number which I have included with the informed consent forms and I can include that additional information. I may also have some follow-up questions for you, therefore, I may need to get in touch with you again to ensure that I have accurately understood what you have said here today. Let me remind you of the confidentiality that I will keep, you have no such obligation. Once again, thank you for your time today. On completion of the study I will make a copy available for you if you are interested.