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Relationship Between Perceived Contribution, Professional Respect, and Employee Engagement

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Abstract

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Disengaged employees are a threat to a company's survival in a highly competitive world. Despite employee engagement benefits, the mediation of interactions between leaders and followers and the specific drivers of engagement remain poorly understood. This correlational study was grounded on leader member exchange (LMX) theory and examined the relationship between 2 dimensions of LMX (perceived contribution and professional respect) and employee engagement. In this study, 68 manufacturing employees from the southern region of the United States responded to 2 surveys to measure the LMX dimensions and the level of employee engagement. Using multiple regression analysis, the existence of a positive correlation, $p < .001$ and $R^2 = .277$, was demonstrated, which explained 28% of the variation in engagement. This research may serve as a roadmap for studying additional variables and providing workable tools for developing strategies to improve engagement in the workplace. The results of this study might contribute to positive social change by helping managers develop strategies to engage employees and reduce turnover, by improving the sense of stability for employees and their families, and by helping companies become more competitive and generate new jobs.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my father Humberto Guarin, who inspired in me the endless need for new and more knowledge.

Acknowledgments

I could not complete the Doctor of Business Administration program without the support of my family. To my wife Alidis, my children Rafael Alejandro, Tatiana Carolina, and Juliana, I apologize for all the time I could not be with them, and I only have words of appreciation for their understanding. Thanks to Dr. Natalie Casale for all the time and willingness to coach, guide, and help me during the process.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Engaged employees have a great impact on a company's performance (Carasco-Saul, Kim, & Kim, 2015; Kumar & Pansari, 2015). According to Gallup (2017), 33% of employees in America feel engaged or somewhat engaged in their job, compared to 70% of fully engaged employees who work for the world's best organizations. A company with a majority of disengaged employees could be at risk in a globally competitive market (Carasco-Saul et al., 2015; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Despite the benefits that employee engagement gives to companies, the elements that drive that engagement and how these drivers relate to interactions between leaders and followers remains poorly understood (Newman, Schwarz, Cooper, & Sendjaya, 2017).

Background of the Problem

Employee engagement is an essential concept in workplace management because employee engagement positively affects the relationship between leaders and followers by promoting communication (Mishra, Boynton, & Mishra, 2014), leadership (Carter & Baghurst, 2014), and trust (Ugwu, Onyishi, & Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2014). Fully engaged employees are more productive and more likely to support their companies' goals, allowing companies to be more competitive (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013; Al-Tit & Hunitie, 2015; Gupta & Sharma, 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Additionally, employee engagement is positively correlated with employee satisfaction and reduced employee turnover (Huang et al., 2016). The positive impact of employee commitment generates new jobs that reduce unemployment and incentive stability in the economy, which is a driver of poverty reduction (Taylor-Gooby, Gumy, & Otto, 2015).

Employees perceive their managers as the company's representatives, which makes the leader's role an essential component to achieving a high level of employee engagement, creating psychological ties between employees and supervisors and, consequently, the company (Anthony-McMann, Ellinger, Astakhova, & Hasbesleben, 2017). The relationship between leaders and members is an area of focus among researchers and business leaders, but most studies related to employee engagement focus on benefits, with little attention given to the drivers that trigger and sustain engagement (Newman et al., 2017). A better understanding of the elements that drive employee engagement may help leaders develop better strategies to manage the workplace. In this study, I sought to contribute an understanding of the leader and member interaction that contributes to employee engagement by identifying the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect and employee engagement.

Problem Statement

Poor employee engagement minimizes profitability (Rana, 2015). In a study of employee engagement performed on 75 companies, Kumar and Pansari (2015) found that low levels of engagement cost an average of 19% of the companies' profit and, in some cases, up to 57%. The general business problem is that some managers do not know the drivers of employee engagement. The specific business problem is that some manufacturing managers do not know the relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect and employee engagement. The independent variables were perceived contribution and professional respect. The dependent variable was employee engagement. The target population contained manufacturing employees in the state of South Carolina. The implications for positive social change include benefits for local communities and society; a better understanding of employee engagement drivers can help companies become more competitive, generating new jobs to reduce unemployment, which incentivizes economic stability and reduces poverty. Also, engaged employees could become a link between the community and the company to encourage corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies and community involvement.

Nature of the Study

For this study, I selected a quantitative method, which researchers use to evaluate the relationship between a measurable variable and other variables (Park & Park, 2016). Because my intention with this research was assessing the relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement level, the quantitative method was appropriate for the study. Researchers perform qualitative studies to understand singularities related to the phenomena studied, and in general, the results of a qualitative study involve words, rather than numbers (Park & Park, 2016). When a researcher needs to explore, find, and evaluate variables, mixed methods is used because it combines the exploration to find variables and the quantitative evaluation of those

found variables (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). My goal for this study was not to explore but to measure a relationship; consequently, qualitative or mixed methodologies were not appropriate to undertake the pursued goal.

I selected a correlational design for this study. Correlation is a statistical tool quantitative researchers use to evaluate the degree of relationship between two continuous variables at one point without weighing dependency, intervening, or manipulating the variables (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2016). Furthermore, using a correlational design, the researcher does not intend to demonstrate a cause and effect relationship but rather works to discover the association between variables expressed in a correlation coefficient (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2016). This was my goal when performing the study. I considered experimental and quasi-experimental designs but discarded them and selected correlational design. Experimental and quasi-experimental designs are best used to evaluate a cause and effect relationship between variables, which requires a manipulation of the variables and measurement at a minimum of two different points (Becker et al., 2017). My intention was to evaluate the relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement level, so the quantitative correlational design was appropriate for this study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

For this study, my research question and hypotheses were as follows:

RQ: What is the relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement?

H_0: There is not a statistically significant relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

H_A: There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

Theoretical Framework

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory provided the framework for this study. Dansereau, Graen, and Haga (1975) developed and introduced LMX theory to suggest that leaders differentiate followers in groups (in-groups and out-groups) with different quality of interexchange. Ten years later, Dienesch and Liden (1986) complemented LMX theory suggesting that the relationship between leaders and followers is not unidimensional but multidimensional, identifying four underlying constructs as (a) perceived contribution, (b) loyalty, (c) affect, and (d) respect. Since the inception of employee engagement theory, many authors have suggested a relationship with the LMX level constructs (Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013; Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Van den Heuvel, 2015; Carasco-Saul et al., 2015). Furthermore, Breevaart et al. (2015) asserted that employees with high-quality relationships with their leaders have access to more resources to perform their jobs, moderating positively on their engagement levels. High-quality of LMX does not drive the levels of engagement, but it is a requirement for a high level of engagement (Breevaart et al., 2015). Because the independent variables considered in this study were two of the underlying constructs of LMX theory, it was the most appropriate framework to evaluate the relationship with employee engagement. The

expectations of the study were identifying a positive correlation between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

Operational Definitions

Employee engagement: The individual's emotional, behavioral, and cognitive state directed toward the achievement of desired organizational outcomes (Carasco-Saul et al., 2015; Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Employee satisfaction: Employees' sense of success and achievement on their assigned roles, as well as their attitudes (negative or positive) toward their functions and state in the organization (Mafini & Pooe, 2013; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

Employee turnover: The voluntary or involuntary departure of employees from organizations emanating from the dysfunctional nature of the work situation and environment (Lee, Burch, & Mitchell, 2014)

Perceived contribution: The employees' attitudes and perceptions toward the balance between effort and the outcomes related to the provision of resources and rewards (Alfes et al., 2013).

Professional respect: The degree to which the members of the dyad have established a reputation inside or outside the organization pertinent to excellence in the line of work (Collins, Burrus, & Meyer, 2014; Shoss, Eisenberger, Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2013).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Leedy and Ormrod (2014) defined assumptions as the uncontrollable or unsubstantiated elements of a study included and accepted as true. The factors often lie beyond the control of the investigator as well as the confounding variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). In this study, I accounted for several assumptions. The first assumption for the study was that all the participants understood the questionnaire included in the data collection tool and offered honest responses to each question. The second assumption was that the data collection methods suited the investigation and provided an appropriate means of acquiring unbiased information regarding the relationship between the components of LMX and employee engagement. The third assumption was that the LMX-MDM and UWES-9 were the proper tools and had the appropriate scale to measure the constructs. The fourth assumption was that the respondents were a suitable representation of the population selected. The fifth assumption was that all the participants included in the survey were actual employees within an organization and that they represented and understood the organizational dynamics and their leaders appropriately.

Limitations

Limitations are the potential weaknesses and impediments that a researcher cannot control and that may hurt the internal validity of the data collected (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). In this study, the first limitation was that the participants in the study were from a limited network that could lead to a geographical concentration. The

geographical concentration could lead to the exclusion of other employees from different areas with different experiences and opinions regarding the effect of LMX on their levels of engagement, considering environmental and cultural factors. The second limitation was the use of an online means of data collection because it could exclude employees who were unfamiliar with the internet, narrowing the pool of participants and leading to overly generalized findings or the exclusion of individuals with low computer skills. The third limitation came from the respondents' honesty in their answers. Essentially, because I did not have contact with the respondents, the answers thoroughness relied only in the questions understanding of the employees who participated in this study. The fourth limitation related to the questions of the study focused solely on perceived contribution and professional respect—excluding other components of LMX—which may have narrowly defined respondents' understanding of employee engagement. The fifth limitation was the correlational design of the study, which did not reveal causal relationships because there was no manipulation of the variables during the surveys. The sixth limitation concerned subordinate bias; the methodology of the questionnaire limited the assessment to the participants' understanding.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the factors that define the scope and boundaries of an investigation (Chinchilla-Rodriguez, Miguel, & De Moya-Anegon, 2015). The first delimitation related to the selected geographical location in the state of South Carolina. Study findings are generalizable only to similar firms in this geographical location. The second delimitation was that the study included employees who have worked for more

than 1 year in their respective organizations to account for the aspects of organizational commitment. The third delimitation was that the study population included only regular employees and staff at the managerial levels to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the LMX dynamics. The fifth delimitation was that the participants represented subordinate and supervisor dyads that voluntarily agreed to be a part of this study.

Significance of the Study

Employee engagement positively affects the relationship between leaders and followers by promoting communication (Mishra et al., 2014), leadership (Carter & Baghurst, 2014), and trust (Ugwu et al., 2014). Fully engaged employees are more productive and more likely to support their company's goals, placing companies in a better position to compete in a global market (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013; Gupta & Sharma, 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2014). This study could contribute to a better understanding of the elements that drive employee engagement and help leaders develop better strategies to manage the workplace.

Contribution to Business Practice

Kumar and Pansari (2015) performed studies that included two years of follow up with multiple companies and found that improvement in employee engagement could increase a business's profitability by up to 175%. Furthermore, AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013), Gupta and Sharma (2016), and Saks and Gruman (2014) agreed that fully engaged employees are more productive, with potential financial benefits for the companies and the economy, making them more competitive. Lee and Ok (2015), Taneja, Sewell, and Odom (2015) and Slack, Corlett, and Morris (2015) suggested that employee

engagement has a positive correlation with employee retention and employee satisfaction as well. With this study, I identified the relationship between some LMX constructs and employee engagement. The conclusions from the study could help managers develop better strategies to engage employees and consequently impact businesses' bottom line.

Implications for Social Change

A better understanding of the employee engagement drivers could provide managers with the necessary tools to strengthen and sustain a high level of employee engagement. The employee engagement is positively correlated to employee satisfaction and employee turnover (Huang et al., 2016), and high engagement brings benefits for the company creating a sense of stability in employees and their families (Rana, 2015). The economic paybacks of employee engagement positively impact the competitiveness of companies, generating new jobs to reduce unemployment and incentivizing stability in the economy, which is a driver of poverty reduction and a benefit to society (Taylor-Gooby et al., 2015). Employees are a critical element of corporate social responsibility strategies because they are a link between the community and the company (Glavas, 2016). Consequently, engaged employees could encourage the CSR policies and community involvement of a business, creating a mutually beneficial relationship between communities and businesses, which is favorable for all stakeholders (Griffin, Bryant, & Koerber, 2015).

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Employee engagement is a crucial topic that has recently gained popularity in organizational settings and organizational research (Anthony-McMann et al., 2017).

Some studies showed that improvement in employee engagement could increase business profitability by up to 175% (Kumar & Pansari, 2015). Despite the benefits that employee engagement brings to companies, the elements driving that engagement and how these relate to the interaction between leaders and followers remain poorly understood (Newman et al., 2017). A better understanding of employee engagement drivers could provide managers with the necessary tools to strengthen and sustain a high level of employee engagement.

My goal in performing this literature review was to provide a comprehensive framework for the research question that guided this study. I used optimized online search engines, such as Google Scholar and Thoreau, to identify recently published peer-reviewed journal articles and texts related to employee engagement and LMX, the theory used to ground the study. I used search terms including, but not limited to the following: *leader-member exchange theory, LMX, measures of LMX, employee engagement, measures of employee engagement, self-efficacy, leadership embodiment, organizational embodiment, job demands and leadership and LMX, LMX congruence and engagement, professional respect,* and *perceived contribution workplace.*

The literature identified during this search was predominantly published from 2014 onward, making it inherently relevant to the study and current trends in employee engagement conversations and literature. Table 1 is a summary of the sources used in this review. Of the 87 references included in this literature review, 78 have a publication date between 2014 and 2018. The few exceptions published prior to 2014 relate to the theoretical framework and the employee engagement concept. In the following section of

this literature review, I discuss LMX theory, which serves as a guide for the rest of this study.

Table 1

Summary of Sources Used in Literature Review

Reference type	Count	Percentage
Peer-reviewed articles within 5 years of 2019	73	83.91%
Peer-reviewed articles more than 5 years of 2019	7	8.04%
Books within 5 years of 2019	5	5.75%
Books more than 5 years of 2019	2	2.30%
Total	87	100%

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Building on social exchange and role-making theories, Dansereau et al. (1975) developed and introduced LMX theory to suggest that leaders differentiate followers into groups (in-groups and out-groups) with different quality of interexchange, communication, and resources. LMX theory focuses on the dyadic relationship exhibited by leaders and their followers developing an exceptional connection, which tends to influence positive work behaviors and attitudes (Breevaart et al., 2015; Sheer, 2015; Vidyarthi, Erdogan, Anand, Liden, & Chaudhry, 2014). Breevaart et al. (2015) suggested that meta-analytic studies using LMX reveal many positive outcomes associated with the quality of relationships, including task performance, job satisfaction, role clarity, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), engagement, and employee engagement.

The fundamental principle behind LMX is that the leadership processes occur when followers and leaders develop a mature relationship (Dhivya & Sripirabaa, 2015). Two categories of leaders and members coexist: in-group and out-group (Kauppila, 2016). The in-group members have excellent relationships with the leaders and benefit from these relationships through leader encouragement to participate in decision making and accepting additional responsibilities, including repaying the leader trust through extra effort and commitment to the success of the organization (Malik, Wan, Ahmad, Naseem, & Rehman, 2015). The members of the out-group have poor relationships with the leaders, operate under close supervision and within the narrow constructs of the formal employment contract (Malik et al., 2015). Intrinsically, the out-group employees engage in the responsibilities outlined in the employment contract and no more, which frequently leads to loneliness in the workplace (Chen, Wen, Peng, & Liu, 2016).

Although the theory has undergone gradual evolution, the central principles of the theory remain unchanged. Sheer (2015) discussed fundamental arguments, establishing some features of LMX role development including role making, role taking, and role utilization. According to Sheer (2015), the roles stabilize the relationship between the leader and member, and because of the limited resources, the leader develops close relationships with only a few members (in-group members). As a result of this close relationship, the other employees must work as an out-group (Sheer, 2015). Previous studies revealed that groups are stable once established, and the categorization of in-group and out-group is permanent (Graen & Cashman, 1975). The quality of relationship varies across the groups as leaders portray high-quality exchanges with the in-group

members, whereas out-group members have low-quality exchanges with the leaders (Sheer, 2015). The existence of high-quality exchange relationships results in the improvement of employee outcomes (Graen & Cashman, 1975; Sheer, 2015). When presented, the theory outlined a connection between four constructs: relationship quality, role development, performance outcomes, and LMX (Graen & Cashman, 1975; Sheer, 2015).

According to Graen and Cashman (1975), the three stages of LMX (role taking, role making, and role utilization) reveal the quality of the relationship, but according to Park, Sturman, Vanderpool, and Chan (2015), the quality of that relationship depends on positive energy and the liveliness of the individual employees. In-group members have high confidence in the achievement of goals and demonstrate a willingness to contribute because of the opportunities offered by the leaders (Nahrgang & Seo, 2015). Yoon and Bono (2016) suggested that in-group members tend to exhibit more involvement and competencies in the performance of tasks compared to out-group members. Lai, Chow, and Loi (2016) supported Yoon and Bono's (2016) findings, adding that leaders tend to reinforce the energy of the individuals among the in-group members continuously, which magnifies the achievable targets, further enhancing the quality of the relationship (Adil & Awais, 2016; Lai et al., 2016).

Dhivya and Sripirabaa (2015) investigated the different variables that could influence the quality of the relationship and found that subordinates with high levels of communication apprehension develop low-quality LMX relationships (Dhivya & Sripirabaa, 2015). The authors also discovered that high-quality exchange relationships

occur between same gender followers and leaders, suggesting that gender may have a considerable influence on perceptions of professional respect and engagement (Dhivya & Sripirabaa, 2015). In an earlier study, Breevaart et al. (2015) found that the quality of LMX relationships does not drive the levels of engagement, but a high quality of LMX is a prerequisite for improved levels of engagement and contribution. The question that remained was whether specific theoretical constructs, drive the engagement or affect the engagement differently, which confirmed the importance of this study.

LMX theory derived out of several other theories. Li and Ye (2015) introduced the concept of relative leader-member exchange (RLMX), which extends the average LMX in the team to a larger group. RLMX refers to the level of an individual's LMX score from the surveys, as compared to the average LMX score of the team (Li & Ye, 2015). The RLMX concept includes a dynamic dimension to the theory because individuals within a group are not independent or static in their existence, and they will often compare the quality of their relationships with each other (Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee, & Epitropaki, 2016). According to Li and Ye (2015), a scores comparison is a different metric known as a leader-member exchange social comparison (LMXSC). LMXSC refers to the subjective comparison of one's relationship with the leader and the other members of the team (Park & Chae, 2015). Essentially, Park and Chae (2015) found that only self-reports regarding the level and quality of LMX could identify LMXSC. Harris, Li, and Kirkman (2014) raised the concept of LMX relational separation (LMXRS) referring to the calculated degree of difference between an individual's LMX and that of the other team members. The authors found that a high LMXRS implied that

the person's quality of exchange is highly different from that of the other members, and the level of LMXRS has a strong correlation with OCB and turnover intentions (Harris et al., 2014). In the following sections, I discuss the complexities of LMX, the multidimensionality of the concept, and measures, followed later by discussions of the LMX construct's ties to employee engagement.

The multidimensionality of LMX. Many authors operationalized the multidimensional aspects of LMX, including perceived contribution, loyalty, affect, and professional respect (Alfes et al., 2013; Breevaart et al., 2015, Dhivya & Sripirabaa, 2015; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Perceived contribution entails the view of the degree of work-oriented activity expedited by the organizational members toward the achievement of the dyad's mutual goals (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Loyalty characterizes the faith the members of the dyad express toward each other; for example, supporting the character and goals of the LMX dyad is a demonstration of loyalty (Ibrahim, Ghani, Hashim, & Amin, 2017). Affect entails the mutual affection of the dyad members based on their interpersonal attraction instead of professional or work values (Dhivya & Sripirabaa, 2015; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Professional respect entails the degree to which the members of the dyad have established a reputation inside or outside the organization pertinent to excellence in the line of work (Liden & Maslyn, 1998; Salvaggio & Kent, 2016).

A high quality LMX relationship features loyalty, mutual affection, and personal perceived contribution of the members, as well as professional respect toward each other (Alfes et al., 2013; Breevaart et al., 2015). Therefore, according to Alfes et al. (2013) and

Breevaart et al. (2015), LMX requires a multidimensional approach to understanding the complex factors involved in the relationships between the leader and member.

The multidimensionality of LMX theory stems from the social exchange and role theories (Bank, O'Boyle, & Adkins, 2016; Graen & Cashman, 1975; Matta, Scott, Koopman, & Conlon, 2015). Graen and Cashman (1975) built the theoretical foundation of LMX theory on role theory. Based on this approach, the researchers suggested that organizational leaders tend to test their followers with diverse work assignments through different role-making episodes, and compliance with the demands increases leaders' trust in those followers (Graen & Cashman, 1975). According to this early conceptualization, researchers believed that the provision of resources in return for specific task behaviors illustrated a form of exchange (Graen & Cashman, 1975). Social exchange theorists identify numerous materials and nonmaterial goods that leaders and followers could exchange, including workflows, advice, and friendship, which tend to be multidimensional (Epitropaki & Martin, 2015). Horizontal exchanges (social exchanges) occur between members at the same level, and vertical exchanges (LMX) occur at different hierarchical levels (Wu, Huang, Shu, & Jin, 2016).

According to Chiniara and Bentein (2016), leaders evaluate their followers based on the outcome of the delegated tasks and compliance by the follower. Although the theorization of LMX includes discussion about the contributions of both the leader and the members, many authors focus primarily on behaviors related to the tasks among the members (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Kraimer, Seibert, & Astrove, 2015; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Those who portray behaviors that impress the leader will receive

additional support and resources, which further enhances their job performance and work input, creating a cycle that reinforces the in-group and out-group characterization (Kraimer et al., 2015).

Some authors who recognize the multidimensionality of LMX have agreed that loyalty is a critical component, but there is disagreement about the role played in the exchange (Lee et al., 2014; Hanse, Harlin, Jarebrant, Ulin, & Winkel, 2014; Liden & Maslyn, 1998; Rodwell, McWilliams, & Gulyas, 2017). According to Liden and Maslyn (1998), the members with high LMX contribute in duties and tasks that extend beyond their formal employment contract, leading to the perception of loyalty by the leader in their follower. Hanse et al. (2014) approached loyalty differently, suggesting that it entails the extent to which the member and the leader have faith in each other as an extension of the LMX theory through the proposition that loyalty demonstrates high-quality LMX. Hanse et al. (2014) concluded that loyalty is a consequence of LMX, instead of a dimension, becoming a dependent variable. Rodwell et al. (2017) suggested that loyalty plays a crucial role in the maintenance of LMX, with degrees of loyalty observed by both the follower and the leader, and it is a consequence of the other variables' quality. In conclusion, some researchers suggested that when both parties in the LMX are loyal, respect will become a natural side effect, with high employee engagement (Liden & Maslyn, 1998; Rodwell et al., 2017), contradicting Hanse et al.'s (2014) suggestion that loyalty is a consequence of LMX.

Affect entails the mutual liking that members of a dyad portray toward each other through interpersonal attraction, often described as friendship instead of professional

values (Buch, Thompson, & Kuvaas, 2016; Law-Penrose, Wilson, & Taylor, 2015). Affect does not revolve around a physical attraction; it's the understanding that each member of a dyad has a personal commonality with others that is not limited to the employment structure, workload, or professional values (Law-Penrose et al., 2015). This unspoken pact can result in numerous employment benefits for those followers with high levels of affect with leaders but can be limiting for those followers without significant levels of affect (Buch et al., 2016). Because the ultimate objective of this research was helping managers understand variables they can control or drive, exploring the impact of personal liking between leader and members was outside the scope of the study; however, the influence of a professional relationship in employee engagement was within the study scope.

Professional respect entails the degree to which members of the dyad have established a reputation inside or outside the organization pertinent to excellence in the line of work (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Professional respect is a recurrent dimension describing LMX constructs (Liden & Maslyn, 1998; Tastan & Davoudi, 2015; Wang, Sui, Luthans, Wang, & Wu, 2014). Buch et al. (2016) suggested that professional respect tends to increase organizational commitment, a measure that has been associated with the entire organization rather than the supervisor. Other researchers like Yang, Ding, and Lo (2016) observed that ethical leadership is an effective tool for inspiring professional respect under an LMX dyad. The multidimensionality of LMX is a broad subject often moderated by the chosen measure researchers employ to further understand specific exchanges between leader and member (Yang et al., 2016). During my research for this

literature review, I did not find any study that specifically evaluated the professional respect construct with employee engagement. Because professional respect was one of the less studied constructs of LMX, I decided to included it as one of the independent variables in this study to investigate how it correlates to the presence of high levels of employee engagement.

In summary, LMX theory has four constructs that include personal (loyalty and affect) and professional (perceived contribution and professional respect) relationships between the dyads. In this study, I focused on the two dimensions related to professional interaction, including employees' perceived contribution and professional respect from employees to their supervisors. The following section continues with an in-depth look at literature about the development and measures of LMX.

Development and measures of LMX. One of the significant and unique elements of LMX is that the theory includes a structured dimensionality for understanding the quality of a relationship, rather than the specific traits of the chosen leadership style (Liden, Wu, Cao, & Wayne, 2015). Instruments for measuring these links exist outside of the norm of leadership research, which focuses on scaling the exchange in predominantly quantitative means (Martin, Thomas, Legood, & Russo, 2017). Diverse measures have emerged to assess LMX, with examples including meta-analytic reviews (Martin et al., 2017), survey-orientated designs (Moideenkutty & Schmidt, 2016), and recent trends derived from scaling systems (Caliskan, 2015). Those scales range between 7-item, 12-item, 13-item, and 14-item measures of LMX (Liden et al., 2015). Other

studies used a one-item scale ranging from high LMX to low LMX dichotomy (Liden et al., 2015).

In this study, I used the extended and updated version of the LMX-MDM survey, which is a 12-item measure created by Liden and Maslyn (1998) and designed for nonexperimental designs. Similar research measures are common in various contexts, such as the health care industry (Mansueti, Grandi, & Grazio, 2016). According to Mansueti et al. (2016), the LMX-DMX survey was the adequate instrument to use on observational-correlational design to garner a more profound understanding of the quality of job satisfaction, professional respect, perceived contribution, and employee engagement (Mansueti et al., 2016). The following section continues with a review of the literature by introducing concepts of employee engagement.

Employee Engagement

Kahn (1990) introduced the concept of engagement to explain the full cognitive, emotional, and physical involvement of individuals when performing their roles on the job. Another conceptualization of employee engagement considered the term to be the opposite of burnout (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Based on that conceptualization, researchers considered engagement the opposite of inefficiency, exhaustion, and cynicism, which characterize burnout (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Engaged employees would be those with high levels of efficiency, involvement, and energy (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Later, researchers conceptualized engagement as the application and expression of "preferred self" through task behaviors that encourage connections to work, colleagues, and personal presence, as well as proactive participation on the job (Carasco-Saul et al.,

2015). In the operationalization of employee engagement, this study applied the definition presented by Carasco-Saul et al. (2015) of employee engagement as the individual's emotional, behavioral, and cognitive state directed toward the achievement of desired organizational outcomes.

When employee engagement is high, it can be assumed that communication (Mishra et al., 2014), leadership (Carter & Baghurst, 2014), and trust (Ugwu et al., 2014) are present within the leader-follower relationships. In the following sections, I further debated these trends through discussion of the conceptualization of employee engagement, theories related to engagement, measurement of employee engagement, and antecedent of engagement, followed by a discussion of LMX and employee engagement.

Conceptualization of employee engagement. AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013) identified three groups of employees: engaged employees, non-engaged employees, and actively disengaged employees. Engaged employees include the individuals dedicated to their jobs, citing it as a personal obligation and responsibility and involving themselves in extra activities outside their contract of employment (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). Non-engaged employees are the members of the workforce who demonstrate minimal energy in the performance of their assigned duties (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). According to AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013), interventions in this group can significantly improve their levels of engagement as they have not yet developed dissatisfaction with their role. In their non-engaged state, employees only involve themselves in the roles and responsibilities outlined in their contracts of employment, avoiding any additional effort (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). Actively disengaged employees are workers who

demonstrate high levels of dissatisfaction with their jobs and attempt to express displeasure openly (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). Actively disengaged employees often try to influence other employees to disengage, and interventions for this group of employees may not improve their levels of engagement (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). Actively disengaged employees have been known to express their disengagement through sabotaging their assigned duties and through other actions that can negatively impact the business (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). The scenarios presented by AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013) reinforced the urgency for companies to be proactive in employee engagement and suggested the reasons for substantial improvements in the economic standing of companies that develop strategies to engage their employees, as shown by Kumar and Pansari (2015) in their study of 75 companies.

In conceptualizing employee engagement, Welch (2011) traced the evolution of the concept since its emergence, separating its developments into waves. In the *pre-wave* era, Welch (2011) argued that organizations had an abstract recognition of the need for employee engagement, but it was not directly recognized as employee engagement and referred to cooperative and innovative employee behaviors, many of which are in the definitions described by AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013). During *wave 1* (1990-1999), Kahn (1990) laid the groundwork for the concept of employee engagement, catapulting the practitioners' interest in the field of employee engagement (Welch, 2011). Much of the practical research focused on the placement of the right individuals in the right job roles to drive engagement among employees (Welch, 2011). In *wave 2* (2000-2005), some researchers like Welch (2011), identified engagement as a factor of emotional and

cognitive variables within the workplace. A crucial aspect of this wave entailed the focus on the measurement of employee engagement and the identification of ways to nurture it. During *wave 3* (2005-2010), employee engagement became a core interest, with combined efforts to model and identify the antecedents of the trend (Welch, 2011). Much of the researchers who produced literature during this period consider employee engagement a psychological state that complements behavioral expenditure of personal energy (Welch, 2011).

Based on the literature throughout the evolution of the term, employee engagement is now understood as the emotional, physical, and cognitive role performance that characterizes dedication, absorption, and vigor (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Employee engagement depends mainly on the psychological conditions of availability, safety, and meaningfulness (Saks & Gruman, 2014; Welch, 2011). Researchers do not agree on one standard definition of the concept, considering employee engagement a relative idea (Mone & London, 2014). The lack of a universal definition of employee engagement remains a significant challenge in the existing literature (Mone & London, 2014). However, the lack of a universal definition also leaves room for employee engagement to be further developed and defined through studies like this.

Theories related to employee engagement. While there is no consistent definition of employee engagement, theorists have proposed different models to help understand the concept (Saks & Gruman, 2014). The initial theorization emerged from Kahn's (1990) ethnographic study on engagement and disengagement. Kahn (1990) characterized employee engagement as the attachment of organization members to their

work roles. According to Kahn (1990), members demonstrate their engagement via the physical, emotional, and cognitive effort expended in their performance of assigned roles. The cognitive dimension of employee engagement refers to the opinions and attitudes of members toward their employer, their leaders, and their working conditions (Kahn, 1990). The emotional facet entails the employees' feelings toward the three aspects (their employer, their leaders, and their working conditions), as well as the consideration of whether attitudes are positive or negative (Kahn, 1990). The physical facet of employee engagement entails the physical energy individuals spend in the accomplishment of their roles (Kahn, 1990). Therefore, according to Kahn (1990), engagement requires a physical and psychological presence in the occupation and performance of organizational roles.

According to Anthony-McMann et al. (2017), Kahn's (1990) model presented employee engagement as an outcome of psychological availability, psychological safety, and psychological meaningfulness. Psychological meaningfulness entails the extent to which people develop meaning from their work and the perceptions toward the return on the investment (Anthony-McMann et al., 2017). Those workplaces, led by individuals who value employees' contributions, are more likely to have a workforce with high levels of psychological meaningfulness and, therefore, employee engagement (Kahn & Heaphy, 2014). Psychological safety relates to employees' perceptions of consistency, predictability, and threat levels in the workplace (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Psychological availability refers to the belief that one has the necessary physical, psychological, and emotional resources for the performance of a role (Kahn & Heaphy, 2014). Kahn's theoretical perspective revolves around the concept that employees will have higher

levels of engagement when they have high levels of meaningfulness, availability, and safety (Saks & Gruman, 2014).

According to Saks and Gruman (2014), another approach is interpreting employee engagement as a construct that combats burnout, implying that if a dimension correlates to an increase in employee engagement level, then it decreases burnout and vice versa. With the inclusion of social exchange theory in the development of employee engagement, researchers like Huang et al. (2016) argued that both employee engagement and burnout are mutually exclusive concepts that drive turnout. Job burnout arises when workload, values, rewards, control, perceived fairness, and support are mismatched between the leader and follower (Huang et al., 2016). A divergence between a person and these constructs creates job burnout, but the matching of the constructs with an individual's expectations increases the levels of engagement (Huang et al., 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Measurement of employee engagement. As suggested by Saks and Gruman (2014), the absence of consensus regarding the definition and meaning of employee engagement has created concerns regarding measuring the construct. While most managers understand the employee engagement concept, analysis into it remains problematic (Mone & London, 2014). In explaining the differences, Shuck and Reio (2014) reviewed the literature regarding employee engagement, job satisfaction, and job involvement. The study revealed employee engagement as a behavioral output that could progress forward, whereas satisfaction, in its measurable state, was conceptualized as a final state of fulfillment (Shuck & Reio, 2014). Satisfaction implies fulfillment, but

engagement implies focus, urgency, and intensity (Shuck & Reio, 2014). Shuck and Reio (2014) observed the uniqueness of employee engagement in that it focuses on the in-the-moment expression of emotional, behavioral, and cognitive energies, while satisfaction focuses on the general, static, and global expression of work-related attitudes. As a result, their contention that employee engagement could be a precursor of job involvement is a recent example of how employee engagement has been both measured and further developed as a theory (Shuck & Reio, 2014).

According to Saks and Gruman (2014), none of the existing instruments to measure engagement is perfect. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) created by Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002) is the most recent instrument and the most used in current studies, despite some authors questioning the factor structure (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Saks and Gruman (2014) highlighted the issues raised regarding the independence of the measures because some of the items included in the scale are identical to items used in the measurement of other constructs, including OCB and job satisfaction. Some studies have avoided the absorption dimension and focused solely on the vigor and dedication dimensions to reduce the absorption dimension's overlap with other measures (He, Zhu, & Zheng, 2014). Regardless of the popularity and high-reliability results obtained by Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006), Saks and Gruman (2014) advised against the sole reliance on the UWES in the measurement of employee engagement through the adoption of measures aligned with the original conceptualization of the concept. Because the focus of this study was not to discuss the constructs underlying engagement but to examine the relationship between perceived contribution,

professional respect, and employee engagement, I opted for the most commonly used measurement system: the UWES-9. The UWES-9 is a shorter version of the original UWES questionnaire and is widely used and tested (Schaufeli et al., 2006). I contacted the author and obtained authorization to use the instrument in this study.

Antecedents of employee engagement. The multidimensional approach to employee engagement in conjunction with LMX, as previously discussed in this chapter, is part of the primary focus of antecedents of employee engagement. Initially, according to Kahn (1990), most of the underlying constructs linked to employee engagement relate to psychological conditions, such as meaningfulness of work, psychological safety, and experienced availability. According to Bailey, Madden, Alfes, and Fletcher (2017), there are five main groups of antecedents related to employee engagement: (a) psychological states, (b) job design, (c) leadership, (d) organizational and team factors, and (e) organizational interventions. These antecedents were identified through a strategic search of 214 articles about employee engagement (Bailey et al., 2017). Another instrument available, and often used in the examination of the antecedents of employee engagement, relates to the job demands-resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The JD-R model assumes that all work environments involve job resources, social support, job demands, high workload, and time pressure (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Balancing job demands and the available resources prevents burnout while fostering work engagement (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). Previous studies revealed that job resources, including autonomy, coaching, feedback, opportunities for development, and social support from co-workers, deterred negative attitudes and acted

as a buffer for the adverse effects of job demands, including work overload and role conflicts (Bakker et al., 2014). High-quality exchange relationships between followers and leaders are another resource that reduces the adverse effects of job demands and prevents burnout (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Bailey et al. (2017) and Bakker et al. (2014) focused their studies on the prevention of burnout, but other authors interpreted their conclusions as a suggestion that leaders have a crucial role in ensuring the engagement of the employees (Gutermann, Lehmann-Willenbrock, Boer, & Born, 2016).

Some authors considered leadership to be one of the most significant antecedents of employee engagement (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Bhuvanaiah & Raya, 2015; Gutermann et al., 2016). Specific leadership behaviors have substantial effects on several constructs of engagement, including job satisfaction, motivation, proactive employee behaviors, and organizational commitment (Crawford, Rich, Buckman, & Bergeron, 2014). Mutual trust, the creation of a blame-free work environment, and leader support are components of psychological safety, which lead to the development and increase of employee engagement (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Bhuvanaiah & Raya, 2015). Bedarkar and Pandita (2014) identified three leadership behaviors—performance orientation, employee development, and consideration—as crucial to the development of employee engagement. The lack of a definitive definition of employee engagement leads to the determination that the style of leadership best fitted to a work environment is highly relative and contextual (Crawford et al., 2014).

Strom, Sears, and Kelly (2014) investigated the influence of different leadership styles on employee engagement, comparing the impact of transactional leadership and

transformational leadership styles of engagement. The transactional leadership style entails the exchange relationship in which each party aims at satisfying its self-interests (Strom et al., 2014). Transformational leadership emphasizes the leader's ability to understand, interact, and support the employees beyond the standard employment exchange (Strom et al., 2014). A transactional leader emphasizes employee responsibilities and benefits of compliance, while transformational leaders act as mentors, innovators, or facilitators, depending on the situational conditions (Strom et al., 2014). Strom et al. (2014) found that both transformational and transactional leadership styles had a positive correlation with employee engagement. They emphasized procedural and distributive justice, leading to the conclusion that members experiencing low transactional leadership had more noticeable procedural and distributive justice perceptions toward work engagement compared to those with high transactional leadership (Strom et al., 2014).

Communication could be a leadership behavior that significantly predicts engagement (Ruck, Welch, & Menara, 2017). Ruck et al. (2017) suggested that the communication abilities of a leader within a team predict the performance of the team through the indirect effect on engagement. According to Ruck et al. (2017), the quality of internal communication enhances engagement, which further leads to the concept that followers require clear communication from their leaders to understand where their role fits into the organizational vision of their employers.

AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013) suggested that keeping employees updated through constant, effective, and clear communication could improve their levels of engagement.

Informing employees of clear goals to achieve sets the stage for those employees to make good use of the resources provided, including their own time (Jiang & Men, 2017). Mishra et al. (2014) confirmed the effects of communication between leaders and employees, the relationship between internal communication and the levels of employee engagement, in an exploratory study. They contextualized employees as one of the organization's key publics the organization should maintain constant internal communication with (Mishra et al., 2014). They found that effective internal communication between leaders and followers fostered employee engagement in two aspects related to internal communication (Mishra et al., 2014). First, effective internal communication improved the levels of trust and commitment between leaders and followers, linking the effect with positive relationships (high-quality LMX) that emerge from clear communication (Mishra et al., 2014). Second, they found that clear internal communication improved employee engagement through the mediating effects of perceived support. Mishra et al. (2014) revealed that employees tended to perceive their leaders as supportive based on the level and clarity of communication. The perceived levels of support created a sense of belongingness, commitment, trust, and, in turn, engagement in assigned tasks (Mishra et al., 2014). Shuck and Reio (2014) reached a similar conclusion, but they also suggested that effective communication affects employee well-being. In conclusion, communication influences perceptions toward personal accomplishment, perceived emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and psychological comfort, which have a positive effect on employee engagement (Mishra et al., 2014; Shuck & Reio, 2014).

Research also established that individual employee behaviors could influence levels of engagement, suggesting that the intrinsic motivation of employees plays a role in determining their levels of engagement, despite the extent of leadership input and the quality of relationship with the leaders (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). Some studies suggested that there was a close relationship between employee engagement and feelings or perceptions toward the value that leaders place on the employee's input (Albrecht et al., 2015). Positive feelings about the value a leader places on an employee's contribution increases the levels of trust, commitment, and identification with the organization, which could influence engagement positively (Albrecht et al., 2015). The concept of positive feeling perception suggested by Albrecht et al. (2015) is similar to the perceived contribution construct of LMX, which is one of the independent variables measured in this study.

LMX and Employee Engagement

The relationships between employees and their employers are a crucial aspect of organizational life due to their actual and perceived influence on behavioral outcomes and engagement (Albrecht et al., 2015). Therefore, the quality of exchanges between employer and employees has a high chance of determining the level of engagement among employees in their work roles (Albrecht et al., 2015). As previously discussed, social exchange theory is a key theory in developing a further understanding of LMX's role in advancing employee engagement, and under the umbrella of social exchange theory, employees who receive resources from their employers reciprocate with their engagement in their work roles (Garg & Dhar, 2017). The quality of the exchanges

between leader and employees determines subordinates' willingness to expend effort in their work activities (Garg & Dhar, 2017). Leaders cannot force employees to be engaged in their work roles, but leaders can ensure engagement through the provision of trustworthy relationships, which often develop from the provision of resources in the accomplishment of assigned roles (Garg & Dhar, 2017). Therefore, the level of engagement relates to the quality of the relationship from the employee's perspective, regardless of leadership style. The following section continues this discussion by establishing the narrative related to self-efficacy as a mediating link between LMX and employee engagement.

Mediating role of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can be defined as a belief in one's ability to complete or succeed in specific situations and tasks, as developed by Bandura (1977) and extended in the last four decades (Farmer & Tierney, 2017). Some researchers, in the context of employee engagement, have investigated the importance of role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) as a mediating variable in employees' perceptions toward LMX and task performance (Kim, Kim, & Lee, 2015). The notion has a foundation on Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy, but RBSE focuses on a multiplicity of self-efficacy related to the performance of a specific task, including the integrative, interpersonal, and proactive tasks that encompass the expanded roles of employees (Kim et al., 2015). While self-efficacy focuses on a specific task, RBSE focuses on a set of responsibilities, roles, and activities associated with one's job (Kim et al., 2015). The notion of RBSE encompasses proactivity at work with an emphasis on the willingness of employees to "go beyond boundaries" in the performance of their tasks

(Kim et al., 2015). Several studies have shown that RBSE could influence employees' perceptions toward LMX, which in turn could influence their levels of engagement (Kim et al., 2015; Shamsudin, Mohd Radzi, & Othman, 2016). Based on these studies, I concluded that high-quality LMX influences the levels of RBSE, which determines employees' levels of engagement in their work roles.

Previous studies on self-efficacy can help in understanding the proposed role of LMX on RBSE. Bandura (1977) acknowledged four components associated with the development of self-efficacy: vicarious experiences, enactive mastery experiences, verbal persuasions, and psychological state. According to Czaplewski, Key, and Van Scotter (2016), enactive mastery experiences are the most crucial source of self-efficacy, emphasizing the role of past successes that increase an individual's confidence for the performance of tasks in the future. The concept of confidence created by past successes is similar to the perceived contribution construct of LMX, which was one of the independent variables I evaluated in this study.

Czaplewski et al. (2016) used vicarious modeling to suggest that people tend to evaluate their ability to perform tasks based on the performance of their self-identified references with similar knowledge, skills, and abilities. The authors stated that the members of the out-group perceive themselves as equally competent with members of the in-group as they may likely seek entry into the in-group through increased effort (Czaplewski et al., 2016). Additionally, verbal persuasions have a significant effect on employees receiving reassurances and positive feedback regarding their performance.

According to Czaplewski et al., those who receive verbal persuasions will develop high levels of self-efficacy compared to those who do not.

The extant literature shows several ways through which LMX could determine RBSE via social persuasion and vicarious experiences, and the existence of quality leader and member relationships increases the mutual interactions, exchanges, and trust in the dyad (Li, He, Yam, & Long, 2015). As a consequence of RBSE, a leader is likely to become a role model to employees, leading employees to emulate the positive characteristics of the leader in the performance of their assigned tasks (Walumbwa, Cropanzano, & Goldman, 2011). Quality leader and member relationships foster an environment of constant verbal persuasion, as well as continuous encouragement of employees through feedback (Li et al., 2015). In turn, the communication creates an environment for social support, understanding, and awareness of mutual goals; it also creates an environment where employees can meet the expectations of the dyad (Li et al., 2015).

LMX Perception and Engagement

Perceptions of high-quality LMX between leaders and members tend to increase mutual understanding and consensus in the dyad based on expectations, socioemotional roles, resource exchanges, and behaviors (Kuvaas, Buch, & Dysvik, 2014). When the dyad perceives the quality of LMX as low, the dyad will express mutual understanding and consensus based on expectations, transactional roles, resource exchanges, and behaviors (Kuvaas et al., 2014). Conversely, a lack of congruence between leader and members regarding the quality of LMX leads to the accumulation of expectation

discrepancies pertinent to transactional and socioemotional roles, behaviors, expectations, and resource exchanges (Matta et al., 2015).

According to Matta et al. (2015), expectation discrepancies and role consensus have significant implications for employee engagement. The disparities lead to tensions between the leader and the members, which yield diminished effectiveness and competence (Matta et al., 2015). Those employees who feel the tension are likely to disengage from their work roles because they perceive that the leaders do not support their connection and integration in the work processes based on the level of contribution (Matta et al., 2015).

Based on the above arguments, Matta et al. (2015) suggested that employees would demonstrate high levels of engagement when their LMX congruence increases. Riggs and Porter (2017) confirmed that correlation finding that dyadic understanding and synergies emerge as congruence increases, which result in attention, connection, integration, and focus on their roles. Ruiller and Van Der Heijden (2016) explained LMX as a socioemotional increase of the resources the leader rewards to the members proportionally to the members' expectations, but Buch et al. (2016) explained LMX relationships as transactional increases to dyadic understanding, consensus, and consistency, which allow the basic completion of tasks. The two explanations have the same result, which allows the members to devote their cognitive, emotional, and physical resources in their work roles as reflects high levels of engagement (Buch et al., 2016; Ruiller & Van Der Heijden, 2016). Park et al. (2015) suggested that the correlation works both ways to increase or decrease engagement. Disagreement or lack of congruence

creates discrepancies, which may reflect the perceptions of the employees toward organizational justice, resulting in disengagement (Park et al., 2015). Congruence between leader and members' perceptions toward the quality of LMX mediates the self-identification with the leader, and members tend to model their behaviors and expectations after the leader (Cerne, Dimovski, Maric, Perger, & Skerlavaj, 2014).

Research from Buch et al. (2016), Cerne et al. (2014), Matta et al. (2015), Park et al. (2015), and Ruiller and Van Der Heijden (2016) relating to LMX congruence and engagement found significant relationships that transcend leadership styles, pointing to employees' perceived contribution as a critical element in establishing an environment that facilitates full engagement. That relationship is significant as it applies to the study of the effects of perceived contribution improving employee engagement, which has the potential to increase a company's profitability by up to 175% (Kumar & Pansari, 2015).

Outcomes of Engagement Mediated by LMX

Various studies investigated the outcomes of employee engagement on different individual-level outcomes and organization-wide results (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Meng, Tan, & Li, 2017; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Sniderman, Fenton-O'Creevy, & Searle, 2016; Wang et al., 2014; Zivnuska, Kacmar, & Valle, 2017). Bedarkar and Pandita (2014) revealed extraordinary correlations between LMX mediated employee engagement and organizational outcomes. Other authors found a correlation between LMX and engagement through different mediators like motivation (Meng et al., 2017), mindfulness (Zivnuska et al., 2017), authenticity (Wang et al., 2014), and nondefensive communication (Sniderman et al., 2016). All of these mediators have positive effects on

organization-wide outcomes (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Meng et al., 2017; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Sniderman et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2014; Zivnuska et al., 2017). Organization-wide outcomes of LMX-mediated engagement revealed in the studies cited in this review include employee retention, customer loyalty, advocacy of the organization, employee productivity, and overall business success (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014). Similarly, Saks and Gruman (2014) found LMX-mediated employee engagement as positively correlated with organizational-level outcomes, including profitability, customer satisfaction, productivity, safety, turnover, and profitability.

Tastan and Davoudi (2015) disagreed with LMX's role in engagement by revealing conflicting results regarding the extent to which LMX mediates innovative work behavior via employee engagement. They concluded that LMX-mediated employee engagement did not have a significant effect on innovative work behaviors on the sample used in their study (Tastan & Davoudi, 2015). According to Tastan and Davoudi (2015), the innovative work behavior among employees may depend mainly on their professionalism and ability to perform the assigned tasks rather than the existing leader and member relationships. This study established the extent to which LMX could mediate engagement via professional respect and perceived contribution.

Breevaart et al. (2015) linked LMX, work engagement, and job performance, arguing that LMX has a positive relationship with members' job performance because of the enhancement that high-quality LMX relationships provide to employee engagement. According to Breevaart et al. (2015), engaged employees will show high levels of energy and enthusiasm in the completion of tasks, which depends on the resources and support

the leader offers. Based on the conservation of resources (COR) theory, the authors argued that individuals show motivation toward the obtainment, retention, and protection of their resources (Breevaart et al., 2015). Breevaart et al. (2015) concluded that high-quality LMX could foster increased engagement in employees because their leaders facilitate job performance and expect high performance in exchange. Moreover, the study links the increased levels of performance with the intrinsic motivation that stems from high-quality LMX relationships. Breevaart et al.'s study (2015) provided a concluding argument that high-quality LMX relationships offer a platform for intrinsic motivation, such as empowerment and praise, which improves the levels of engagement and subsequent job performance.

Saks and Gruman (2014), found positive relationships between LMX-mediated employee engagement, job attitudes, OCB, health/wellness outcomes, and job performance. In their report, Saks and Gruman (2014) highlighted the effect of LMX-mediated employee engagement on health, performance, commitment, and turnover intentions. On the issue of turnover, Adil and Awais (2016) observed that high-quality LMX relationships lead to dyadic interpersonal associations, which improve engagement. As a consequence of those associations, the levels of mutual trust and respect established in the relationship compel employees to remain in the organization (Adil & Awais, 2016). Adil and Awais (2016) concluded that LMX-mediated engagement improved the levels of employee retention, having positive effects on contextual performance and task performance. Nevertheless, the authors contended that LMX-mediated employee

engagement might also elicit negative consequences, such as work interference with family (Adil & Awais, 2016).

LMX and Manufacturing

The target population of this study was manufacturing employees in the state of South Carolina. The previous sections of this literature review presented an extensive collection of articles and books that discuss the relationship between engagement and the underlying constructs of LMX. With few exceptions, it was challenging to find studies specifically related to the manufacturing environment. For instance, Adil and Bin Ab Hamid (2017) claimed to be the first authors to undertake the topic in Pakistan. In their quantitative study, they found a positive correlation between LMX and individual feelings of energy and creative work involvement that requires employee engagement (Adil & Bin Ab Hamid, 2017). Previously, Agarwal, Datta, Blake-Beard, and Bhargava (2013), while testing the relationships between LMX and innovative work behavior, found a strong correlation between LMX and engagement at the same time that engagement correlates positively with innovative work behavior. Agarwal et al.'s (2013) research was not limited to manufacturing, but 44% of the respondents worked in a manufacturing environment.

According to the literature, LMX is a positive tool that can be harnessed to enhance employee engagement within the manufacturing industry in all stages of development. The research gathered throughout this literature review demonstrated that identifying the drivers of engagement is an area of study still in development. Therefore, this study may add to this growing wealth of data.

Summary

The review of the literature related to LMX and its constructs revealed that the theory has a significant role in understanding different organizational dynamics and specifically employee engagement. As discussed in the review, LMX theory relates to the dyadic relationships between leaders and followers. LMX encompasses features—such as loyalty, contribution, affect, and professional respect—that have a significant bearing on employee engagement. The review of the literature showed that leader involvement is necessary to initiate LMX, and employees' emotions and attitudes influence further growth during the role-making stage (Liden et al., 2015; Rana, 2015). LMX has four dimensions, with implications in the personal and professional relationship between leaders and members (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Affect and loyalty appear after the initial existence of high LMX, acting as elements that maintain the relationship, whereas professional respect and perceived contribution are dimensions that build the relationship (Hanse et al., 2014). Because professional respect and perceived contribution are the variables that trigger the process to build strong LMX, and consequently employee engagement, I focused my research on those two dimensions.

The reviewed literature related to employee engagement reveals the lack of consensus regarding the explanation and meaning of the concept. Many factors contribute to the emergence of employee engagement, but most depend on the mediation of other variables. In this review, I linked employee engagement with the quality of LMX relationships that develop over time, finding that leadership styles, communication, job demands, and job resources are crucial antecedents. Moreover, my assessment indicated

that role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE), leaders' organizational embodiment, and the level of job challenges are influential variables in the effect of LMX on employee engagement. The literature review revealed that congruence between the leader and members' LMX ratings would affect the quality of the relationship, which in turn affects the levels of engagement. In the review, I also discovered some of the common and positive outcomes of LMX mediated by employee engagement, including job satisfaction, low turnover intention, increased employee retention, performance, productivity, and profitability.

Transition

The results of this study could provide useful information for managers to encourage employee engagement. In the first section, I provided the foundation for this quantitative study, introduced the background, and identified the problem statement. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect and employee engagement. In the literature review section, I explained the relationship between employee engagement and the connection between leader and followers. The importance of having engaged employees and the consequences of a low level of engagement was extensively explained in the literature review as well.

In Section 2 of the study, I explain the method and design of the research, the descriptions of the participants, the data collection and analysis process, and ethical considerations. In Section 3 of the study, I present the results obtained from the application of the instruments presented in Section 2. Additionally, in Section 3, I discuss the results, confront those results in relation to the hypotheses introduced in Section 1,

and provide some opportunities for future research to complement the findings from this study.

Section 2: The Project

Employee engagement is an essential concept in workplace management because it positively affects the relationship between leaders and followers by promoting communication (Mishra et al., 2014), leadership (Carter & Baghurst, 2014), and trust (Ugwu et al., 2014). In this study, I intended to identify a correlation between specific constructs of LMX and the level of employee engagement. Knowing the correlation between constructs that managers can control could help companies develop strategies for improving employee engagement.

In this section, I explain the method and design of the research, offer descriptions of the participants selected as a representative sample of the population, and discuss the ethical considerations that could impact the study, the data collection and analysis process, and the reliability and validity of the instruments used for the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect and employee engagement. The independent variables were perceived contribution and professional respect. The dependent variable was employee engagement. The target population was manufacturing employees in the state of South Carolina. The implications for positive social change include benefits for local communities and society because a better understanding of employee engagement drivers can help companies become more competitive, generating new jobs to reduce unemployment, incentivize stability in the economy, and consequently reduce poverty. Also, engaged employees could become a

strong link between the community and the company to impact positively on corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies and community involvement.

Role of the Researcher

To avoid any bias in the research results, the researcher needs to account for all data, remain detached from any potential results, and avoid preconceptions created by the researcher's own perceptions of the phenomena studied (Judkins-Cohn, Kielwasser-Withrow, Owens, & Ward, 2014). According to Sutton and Austin (2015), in quantitative studies, the role of the researcher is minimal compared to that of qualitative studies. This study was correlational by design and collected data without regard to the subjects or the data collector. As a practitioner in manufacturing and a South Carolina resident, I am familiar with the environment where I performed the research, which may influence my perception of the participants' culture. To avoid bias in the conclusions, I limited my interaction with the sample selected. My role included (a) developing a sampling strategy, (b) contacting the initial respondents, (c) communicating the purpose and means to the participants, (d) providing and compiling the data from the online survey, and (e) analyzing the results. Because the survey was anonymous, no individual interaction or connection existed with the sample population. I observed the fundamental principles of the Belmont Report, which are respect for the people, beneficence, and justice (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). I present the results of the research in Section 3.

The success of the quantitative approach relies on the integrity of the data collected because it is the primary basis for the research conclusions (Noble & Smith,

2018). As the researcher, I was responsible for the collection and recording of the data. I ensured accuracy while compiling data because I understand that even slight errors in documenting the data could compromise the results. I double checked the data accuracy before running the statistical analysis to prevent any possible unintended mistakes.

Participants

In this study, I focused on manufacturing employees from the state of South Carolina. According to the National Association of Manufacturers (2017), in South Carolina, manufacturers account for 16.8% of the total output in the state, employing 11.7% of the workforce. The total output from manufacturing was $35.16 billion in 2016, generating 239,500 jobs in 2016, with average annual compensation of $71,123 in 2016 (National Association of Manufacturers, 2017). I discuss the minimum sample size later in this section, but it was a factor to consider the length of the study because it continued until fulfilling the minimum sample size. I gained access to the participants using a snowball sampling methodology. The snowball sampling method consists of the researcher contacting some respondents, those initial respondents pass the survey to another person they know who meets the research requirements, and so forth until the sample size goal is reached (Waters, 2015). Every potential participant received communication informing them of the objective of the survey and providing instructions to access the website where they could complete the survey.

According to Anand, Vidyharti, and Park (2016), developing strong LMX could take as little as three days. I was unable to identify previous peer-reviewed research on employee engagement that explained a timeline or sequence in developing engagement

on employees, which is an opportunity for future research but not the purpose of this study. To ensure that participants knew all aspects of organizational commitment, I set participation requirements as follows: (a) a minimum of one year of seniority, (b) full-time employees of the company, and (c) have a direct manager. The demographic data collected included one question related to tenure on the job, ensuring compliance with the requirements and allowing for future analysis of the results segmented by tenure ranges.

Research Method and Design

Three methods are available to conduct studies: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Researchers use quantitative methodologies to evaluate the relationship between a measurable variable and other variables (Park & Park, 2016), which was the case for this study. Therefore, the quantitative correlational method was the selected method and design for this research.

Research Method

Quantitative research refers to research that collects measurable, numeric data and explores relationships between independent and dependent variables (Wells, Kolek, Williams, & Saunders, 2015). Quantitative research helps emphasize numerical analysis of data gathered through surveys or questionnaires (Barnham, 2015). With this type of research method, the researcher collects data and generalizes the results across groups of individuals, which in return helps to understand a given phenomenon (Barnham, 2015). In this case, understanding the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect and employee engagement in manufacturing companies may be important in understanding the productivity of employees. The main role of a quantitative

analysis is to identify if a detailed relationship exists between the specific variables (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Therefore, the quantitative research method was the best option for this analysis.

According to Kalhke (2014), qualitative research focuses on establishing a theory, model, definition, or understanding of a phenomenon, which was not the goal of this study. In essence, a qualitative research method is exploratory; the research helps to understand the underlying motivations, opinions, and reasons behind a given phenomenon (Choy, 2014). Because my goal was to identify the correlation of quantified variables, already identified and supported by theory, I did not use a qualitative method. However, this study was not experimental because experimental research requires the manipulation of the variables or the use of a controlled experimental setting (Thiese, 2014), which was not the intention here.

Mixed method is the combination of the qualitative method to explore and identify variables and the quantitative method to measure and evaluate those variables (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). My goal in this study was not to explore, but rather to measure a relationship; consequently, qualitative or mixed methodologies were not appropriate to address my research questions.

Research Design

The correlational design was the option selected for this study. Correlation is a statistical analysis used in quantitative studies to evaluate the degree of the relationship between two continuous variables at one point without also weighing the dependency, intervention, or manipulation of other variables (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2016; Basar

& Sigri, 2015). A correlational design is particularly important for this kind of research because it is nonexperimental research that helps measure two different variables and their relationships (Becker et al., 2015). The statistical relationship between the given variables helps to understand the phenomenon related to them, without intent to demonstrate a cause and effect relationship, and a correlation coefficient expresses the association between variables (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2016; Basar & Sigri, 2015). By choosing a correlational research design, I analyzed the relationship between the variables without manipulating the independent variables or trying to identify the reasons behind the relationship (Mackey & Gass, 2016).

In selecting the study design, I also considered and discarded experimental and quasi-experimental designs before selecting the correlational design. Experimental and quasi-experimental designs are the best choice to evaluate a cause and effect relationship between variables, which requires a manipulation of the variables and measurement at a minimum of two different points (Becker et al., 2017). A major difference between experimental and correlational research design is how to conduct the research. Experimental research requires specific intervention on the variables and providing detailed instructions to the participants on what they should do and not do (Becker et al., 2015). The correlational design selected for this research was limited to measure the independent and dependent variables in a single point, while experimental and quasi-experimental designs would imply manipulating the variables. Because I measured the variables at only one point, without any intervention to manipulate the variables, the experimental or quasi-experimental designs were not suitable for this research.

Population and Sampling

The population selected for this research was manufacturing employees in South Carolina. The manufacturing sector in South Carolina accounts for 239,500 employees, with some variations depending on new hires and terminations (National Association of Manufacturers, 2017). Because it was not possible to survey the whole population, the appropriate sampling method to reduce the uncertainty of the results was a nonprobability sampling (Jiang, Zhang, Han, & Qian, 2014). I gained access to the participants using a snowball sampling methodology. The snowball sampling method consists of the researcher contacting some respondents, then those respondents pass the survey to another person who meets the research requirements, and so forth until reaching the sample size goal (Waters, 2015). I selected the snowball sampling method because it was cost effective and a good mean to reach manufacturing employees working for different companies, instead of limiting the survey to one company, which could bias the results with the influence of the company's internal culture.

The appropriate sample size was calculated using G*Power 3 setting the *F* test with power (1-β) of .80 and two predictor independent variables to detect a medium effect size of $f^2 = .15$ at 5% level of significance, which determined a minimum sample size of 68 samples (see Figure1).

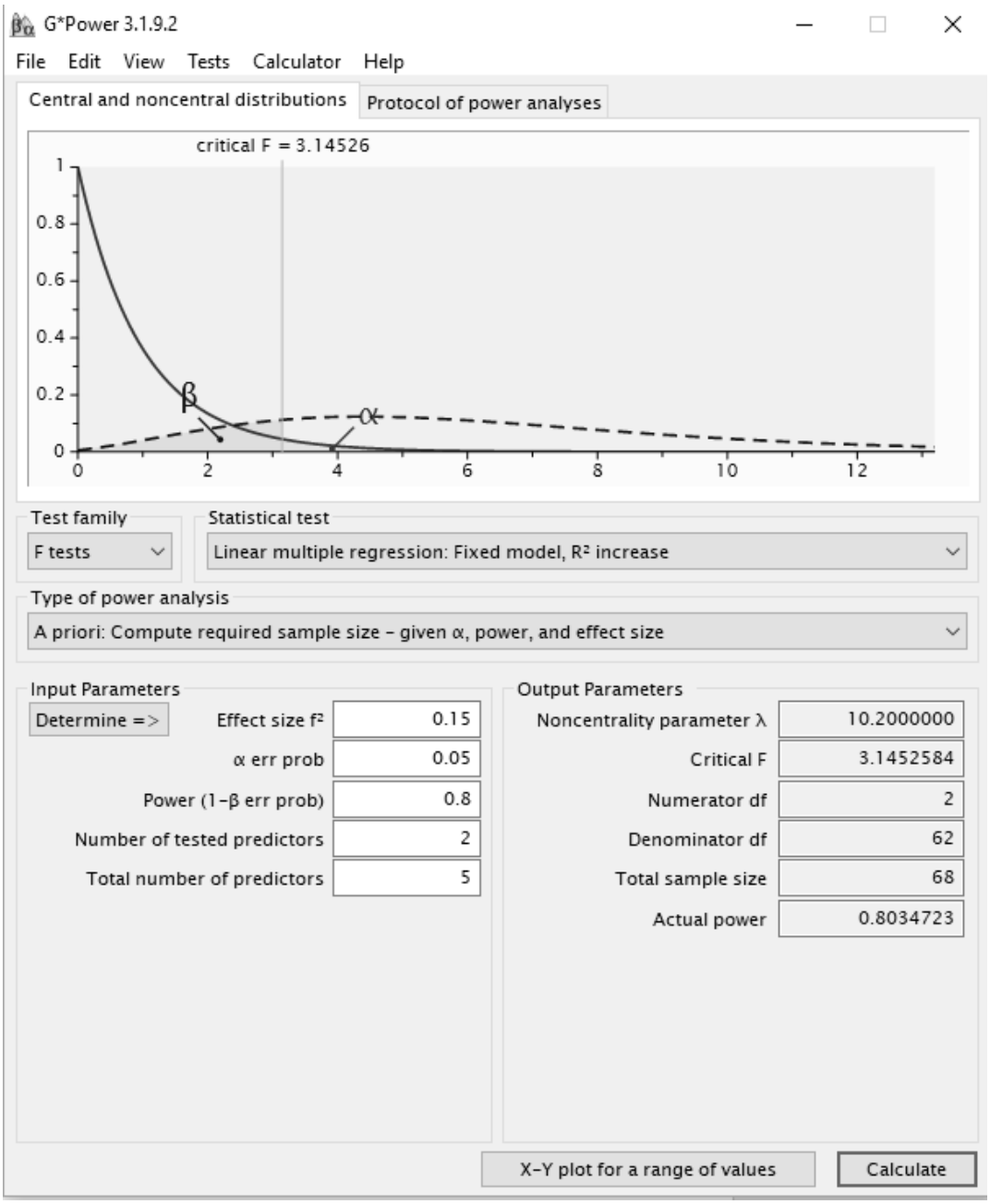

Figure 1. Graphical model of G*Power analysis to determine sample size.

Ethical Research

Research ethics provide guidelines to scientists on how they should carry out their research (Rivers & Lewis, 2015). Research that includes humans should pass a review by

an independent entity that ensures the ethical compliance of the study (Gelling, 2016). Before any contact with the sample, Walden's Institutional Review Board determined the study viability, providing approval number 11-29-18-0277758. The Institutional Review Board is the entity that ensures this study complies with the regulation, and requirement of informed consent and ethical standards (Cugini, 2015).

The procedure to collect the data consisted of a survey questionnaire that I prepared and uploaded to SurveyMonkey online. An invitation containing the access information to the survey and the purpose of the research was the initial contact with the respondents. The email or letter also contained a consent form, including information on how the confidentiality and anonymity of participants would remain secure, and the link for the online survey. Once a respondent accessed the survey, the consent form appeared on the screen again. Only participants who agreed to participate in the study were directed to continue to the survey questionnaire. A message on the screen informed participants that they could withdraw from the study at any point, at any time without consequences. This procedure ensured that only participants who agreed to participate in the study could answer the survey questionnaire.

Data Collection Instruments

The instrument to collect data for this study was a survey of 21 questions, combining two existing instruments; the survey was available online to ease accessibility for the respondents. The instrument selected to measure the independent variables—perceived contribution and professional respect—was the LMX-MDM (see Appendix A) questionnaire developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998), which has four dimensions of

LMX relationships labeled contribution (perceived), affect, loyalty, and professional respect. To measure the dependent variable—employee engagement—the instrument used was the UWES-9 (see Appendix B) created to measure employee engagement (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). The questionnaire is a nine-question survey with three subscales: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Regardless the LMX-MDM instrument does not require authorization because it is in the public domain, I contacted the authors of the instruments by email, and the authors provided an answer authorizing the use of the instrument for this study (see Appendix C and Appendix D).

The LMX-MDM questionnaire includes 12 questions, containing four subscales (three items per scale) of LMX dimensions: affect, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Researchers use the questionnaire to evaluate each dimension as follows:

- Affect questions evaluate the friendship and regard the respondent feels toward the other dyad members.
- Loyalty questions evaluate the level of unconditional support the respondent has for other members of the dyad.
- Contribution questions evaluate the respondent's perception of the effort other members of the dyad put toward achieving the group's common goals.
- Professional respect questions evaluate the amount of respect the respondent has for the others regarding job knowledge or competence (Liden & Maslyn, 1998).

Liden and Maslyn (1998) created the LMX-MDM test measurement, using a Likert scale from 1 to 7 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, and 7 = strongly agree). The LMX score is the sum of all individual scores divided by the total participants (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). However, for ease of interpretation, the authors recommend dividing by the number of items (12 for overall LMX and 3 for each dimension), comparing the average against the base Likert scale of seven used in the questionnaire and the statement it represents (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). For this study, I followed the authors' recommendation, dividing the LMX dimensions scores by 3 to obtain a result from 1 to 7.

Liden and Maslyn (1998) validated the LMX-MDM questionnaire's reliability using test-retest correlation in two different populations integrated by students and organizational employees. The Cronbach's alphas for the LMX-MDM instrument at the dimension level was .90, .78, .60, and .92, correspondingly for affect, loyalty, perceived contribution, and professional respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Liden & Maslyn (1998) tested the validity of the instrument for response bias susceptibility, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and criterion-related variability, with satisfactory results in all tests. While the alpha coefficients are acceptable for affect, loyalty, and professional respect, the alpha coefficient for perceived contribution was low. But given that there was no other instrument available to measure perceived contribution, I used the LMX-MDM instrument for this study.

To measure the independent variable, employee engagement, I used the UWES-9 instrument presented by Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006). The UWES-9 measures

employee engagement through three dimensions: (a) vigor, (b) dedication, and (c) absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Vigor relates to the levels of energy, mental flexibility at work, a willingness to devote energy to the job, and perseverance to face difficulties; dedication refers to the level of involvement, maintaining the enthusiasm, high sense of significance, and pride; and absorption represents the ability to be fully concentrated and absorbed in the job functions (Schaufeli et al., 2006).

UWES-9 consist in a 7-point Likert scale, depending on the frequency of specific situations presented on each question (0 = never, 1 = almost never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often, and 6 = always), as a simplification of the original UWES-17 questionnaire (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Schaufeli et al. (2006) corroborated the UWES-9 questionnaire's reliability using test-retest correlation in 10 samples from 10 different countries integrated by nine occupational groups, obtaining Cronbach's alphas between .85 and .92, with a median of .92. Different authors used UWES-9, translated to over 12 languages, demonstrating consistent results in every language and country (Lovakov, Agadullina, & Schaufeli, 2017). Therefore, the UWES-9 was a suitable and reliable instrument to measure engagement on this study.

Data Collection Technique

According to De Bruijne and Wijnant (2014), online surveys are becoming one of the most popular techniques for data collection due to the low cost and convenience. Additionally, collecting data online proved to be more reliable for quantitative studies than interviews and paper questionnaires (Khazall et al., 2014). Another advantage of the online survey was the participants could answer the questionnaire at any time, without

disrupting the workplace, and the participants receive a warning if they are missing a question or section of the questionnaire (Walsh & Brinker, 2015). The data collection technique for this study consisted of 21 questions online survey, using a Likert scale with seven points answers, posted on the SurveyMonkey website. The survey had two sections, the initial section collected the demographic information, without including any personal information, and the second section was the 21 questions survey.

Nonmanagers in South Carolina was the focus for participating in the study. I gained access to the participants using a snowball sampling methodology. The snowball sampling method consists in the researcher contacting some respondents, those respondents pass the survey to another person they know meets research requirements, and so forth until completing the sample size goal (Waters, 2015). Every potential participant received a communication informing the objective of the survey and the instruction to access the website where they entered their answers to the survey. The survey was available for as long as needed until completed the sample size goal. Once the survey was complete, I transferred the information to the SPSS software for analysis.

Data Analysis

The research question that guides this study was: What is the relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement?

The hypotheses tested to answer that question were:

H_0: There is not a statistically significant relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

H_A: There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

Researchers use regression analyses to explore the relationship between dependent and independent variables (Chen et al., 2016). While multiple linear regression evaluates the correlation between multiple predictors and one dependent variable, the bivariate correlation only evaluates the relationship between one predictor and an independent variable (Azadi & Karimi-Jashni, 2016; Green & Salkind, 2014). The multiple linear regression analysis was the most suitable model because this study consisted of evaluating the relationship between two predictors (independent variables) and one dependent variable.

This study had three phases in the data analysis process: the data preparation phase, the preliminary phase, and the primary analysis phase. In the data preparation phase, I checked the data for errors and missing values. I removed any missing values from the analysis. After checking the data, I created new composite variables from individual survey questions to form the independent and dependent variables (perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement). Once created these composite variables, the preliminary analysis began.

In the preliminary phase, I conducted parametric assumptions of the linear regression analysis, which included linearity, the normality of the standardized residuals, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity. To assess linearity and homoscedasticity, I examined plots of the standardized residuals and the standardized predicted values. If the plots are not curvilinear, then there is no violation of the assumption of linearity (Hox,

Moerbeek, & Van de Shoot, 2017). Additionally, if the plots form a rectangular pattern or did not flare out on either end of the distribution, then there is no violation of the assumption of homoscedasticity (Hox et al., 2017). I performed Shapiro-Wilk's test to determine the normality of the data distribution (Hox et al., 2017). Finally, the variable inflation factor (VIF) was calculated for each variable to determine if there was a violation of multicollinearity between any two variables. If VIF scores are below 10, then there is no violation of the assumption of multicollinearity (Hox et al., 2017).

The final stage was the primary analysis. In this stage, the statistical analyses were performed to answer the research question: what is the relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement? I used multiple regression to answer this research question. If the F value is significant, meaning less than .05, this indicates that the regression model has a significant predictor of the dependent variable (Hox et al., 2017), employee engagement. If the model is not statistically significant, then the null hypothesis would not be rejected (Hox et al., 2017).

Finally, the results of the linear regression were reported using the model summary table, which contains the correlation coefficient and the r squared value. The model summary table includes the F value and the p-value, which serves to determine if the model is significant at the $p < .05$ level and the coefficients table, which contains the beta coefficients and the p-value for the beta coefficients. The p-value in the coefficients table tells if the individual variable in the model makes a significant contribution to the model.

Study Validity

Every researcher performing quantitative studies confronts some threats to the validity, depending on the study design and method that could compromise the conclusions made from the statistical analyses (Luft & Shields, 2014). Two main threats need consideration in every quantitative study: internal validity and external validity (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014). Internal validity implies that the researcher could infer the identified causal relationship between different populations at different times and different settings (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014). Because internal validity implies to perform more than one observation on different populations or at different times, also known as experimental and quasi-experimental studies, and this study only includes one observation of the population, the internal validity threats did not apply.

External Validity

External validity refers to the ability of the researcher to correctly identify causal relationships transferable from the sample to a larger population, but the threats come from the bias in the sample selection and the statistical analyses performed from the data (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014). The sample selected for this study was limited to manufacturing employees in the state of South Carolina. Therefore, potentially findings obtained from this study apply only to a population with similar characteristics. Threats to statistical validity include error type I and II, which relate to rejecting the null hypothesis while it is true, or accepting the null hypothesis while it is false (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014). Those threats come from three components: reliability of the instrument, data assumptions, and sample size (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014).

The instruments used in this study were the LMX-MDM and UWES-9 questionnaires. The LMX-MDM questionnaire, during the authors' validation process, showed Cronbach's alphas of .90, .78, .60, and .92, correspondingly to affect, loyalty, perceived contribution, and professional respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Additionally, the authors tested the validity of the instrument for response bias susceptibility, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and criterion-related variability, with satisfactory results in all tests (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). While the alpha coefficients are acceptable for affect, loyalty, and professional respect, the alpha coefficient for perceived contribution is low, becoming a threat to the validity that I checked using SPSS software to confirm the Cronbach's alpha for all variables. The UWES-9 authors tested the instrument using test-retest correlation in ten samples from 10 different countries integrated by nine occupational groups, obtaining Cronbach's alphas between .85 and .92, with a median of .92 (Schaufeli et al., 2006), which dilutes any concern on the reliability and validity of the instrument. However, the Cronbach's alpha for the UWES-9 instrument was monitored using SPSS software as well.

The data assumptions and sample size are interrelated threats (Kratochwill & Levin, 2014). According to Kratochwill and Levin (2014), selecting the adequate sampling size helps to reduce the statistical validity threats. The sampling strategy selected for this study was probability sampling using a random sampling method. The appropriate sample size was calculated using G*Power 3 setting the *F* test with power (1-β) of .80 and two predictor independent variables to detect a medium effect size of f^2 = .15 at 5% level of significance determined a minimum sample size of 68 samples.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect with employee engagement. In Section 2, I provided explanations of the method and design selected for this study as well as descriptions of the participants. I discussed the data collection and analysis process, addressed ethical considerations, and explained the measures to take for ensuring the validity of the study. In Section 3, I show the results of this study and explain the findings obtained from the data I collected and analyzed.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect and employee engagement. The independent variables were perceived contribution and professional respect. The appropriate sample size was calculated using G*Power 3 setting the *F* test with power (1-β) of .80 and two predictor independent variables to detect a medium effect size of $f^2 = .15$ at 5% level of significance, which determined a minimum sample size of 68 samples. I sent over 200 emails to potential respondents, but just 74 candidates answered the questionnaire using SurveyMonkey. Six respondents did not complete all questions, and I did not consider those surveys in the sample. The actual sample size used for the analysis included the remaining 68, which was the minimum sample size suggested by G*Power.

The regression model showed that the model was statistically significant, $p < .001$, which supported rejection of the null hypothesis, accepting the alternative hypothesis: There was a statistically significant relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement. However, the coefficient of determination was weak, indicating that the independent variables only explained 27.7% of the variation, which was supported by the results of the correlation analysis. Therefore, there were likely additional or alternate independent variables not examined within the scope of this research that could help explain much more of the variation.

Presentation of the Findings

In this section, I discuss the reliability of the variables and testing of the assumptions. To support the interpretations according to the theoretical framework, I present descriptive and inferential statistics and conclude with a concise summary. Because the sample size was the minimum required, to address the possible influence of assumptions violations, I used bootstrapping with 2,000 samples at 95% confidence intervals, where required.

Reliability Statistics for Study Constructs

When I selected the LMX-MDM tool to measure perceived contribution, the low Cronbach's alpha of the perceived contribution variable was a concern, becoming a threat to the validity. Hence, Cronbach's alpha was the first test I did to confirm the validity of the tool used. The results, presented in Table 2, show that all three questionnaires have an acceptable level of reliability. Perceived contribution shows a Cronbach's alpha of .785, which is an acceptable result.

Table 2

Reliability Statistics for Study Constructs

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Professional respect	.664
Perceived contribution	.785
Employee engagement	.919

Test of Assumptions

According to Kratochwill and Levin (2014), selecting the adequate sampling size helps to reduce statistical validity threats. The sample size used in this study was 68 respondents, the minimum required to ensure the reliability of the results. I assessed the assumptions of normality, multicollinearity, outliers, linearity, and independence of residuals. I used bootstrapping with 2,000 samples at 95% confidence intervals where required.

I performed a normality test in all variables. If the significant value is less than .05, the data follow a normal distribution (Hox et al., 2017). The results shown in Table 3 suggest that the independent variables do not follow a normal distribution, whereas the independent variable, employee engagement, does. However, because the normality assumption does not apply for the independent variables, I did not need to transform the independent variables data and use the raw data as is.

Table 3

Normality Test

	Statistic	df	Sig.
Professional respect	.944	68	.004
Perceived contribution	.929	68	.001
Engagement	.97	68	.102

Note: Shapiro-Wilk Test.

The VIF score is used to determine if there is a violation of multicollinearity between any two variables. VIF scores below 10 indicate no violation of the assumption

of multicollinearity (Hox et al., 2017). I tested for multicollinearity, obtaining a VIF of .657 for perceived contribution and professional respect, as shown in Table 4. Both values were lower than 10, so the assumption of the absence of multicollinearity was not an issue in the model.

Table 4

Multicollinearity Test Using Engagement as Dependent Variable

Model		t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
				Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.645	.010		
	Perceived contribution	4.266	.000	.603	.657
	Professional respect	–.289	.773	.603	.657

To asses for outliers, I created a box plot graph for each of the variables. The box plot graph (Figure 2) did not show any outlier on any of the variables. The last assumption tested was linearity. As observed in Table 5, the perceived contribution shows a deviation from linearity of .325, which is higher than .05. Therefore, the independent variable does not violate the assumption of linearity. However, professional respect shows a deviation from linearity of .048, which is lower than .05. Therefore, professional respect does not show a statistically significant linear correlation with the dependent variable.

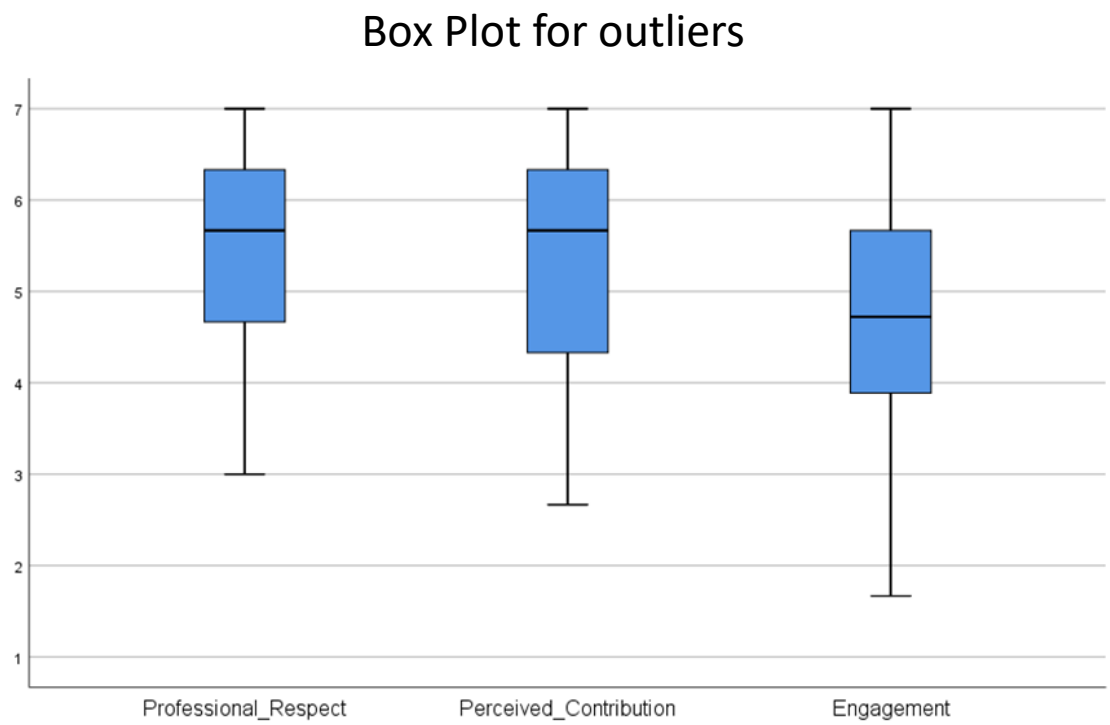

Figure 2. Box plot for outliers.

The violation of the linearity assumption means that professional respect behaves randomly against employee engagement, having low to no impact in the model. To address the issue of violating the linearity assumption, I performed the correlation analysis including professional respect in the model and another analysis including only perceived contribution as an independent variable. I am presenting the results of these analyses in the inferential statistics chapter.

Table 5

Linearity Test

			Sig.
Engagement * Professional respect	Between groups	(Combined)	.010
		Linearity	.004
		Deviation from linearity	.048
Engagement * Perceived contribution	Between groups	(Combined)	.001
		Linearity	.000
		Deviation from linearity	.325

Inferential Statistics

To answer this study's research question, I ran a multiple regression analysis using perceived contribution and professional respect as independent variables and employee engagement as the dependent variable. As shown in Table 6, according to the analysis of variances (ANOVA), the significance level, or p-value, is less than .05. Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis, accepting the alternative hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement.

Table 6

ANOVA

Model	SS	df	MS	*F*	Sig.
Regression	30.925	2	15.462	13.862	.000
Residual	72.505	65	1.115		
Total	103.429	67			

Dependent variable: engagement

Predictors: (constant), perceived contribution, professional respect

The model included perceived contribution and professional respect as independent variables and engagement as a dependent variable. The model fit analysis shows that the R^2 value was .299, and the adjusted R^2 value was .277. Based on those results, shown in Table 7, perceived contribution and professional respect account for 28% of the variation in the dependent variable of employee engagement, suggesting that more underlying constructs were interacting with perceived contribution and professional respect, which were the scope of this study.

Table 7

Model Fit Summary

Model	*R*	R^2	Adj. R^2	SE
1	.547	.299	.277	1.05615

Predictors: (constant), perceived contribution, professional respect

Dependent variable: engagement

Due to the violation of the assumption of linearity by the professional respect variable, I analyzed each independent variable against employee engagement to identify the individual contribution of each variable. The contribution of professional respect was weak with just 9% contribution to the variability of the employee engagement, while perceived contribution contributes by 29% to the variation in employee engagement, as shown in Table 8. The results suggest that professional respect follows perceived contribution but does not impact in engagement as perceived contribution alone impacts on engagement.

Table 8

Independent Variables Fit Summary

Variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Professional respect	.321[a]	.103	.089	1.18580
Perceived contribution	.546[b]	.298	.287	1.04879

a. Predictor: (constant), professional respect

b. Predictor: (constant), perceived contribution

Dependent variable: engagement

Study Results Related to Information from the Literature Review

Various authors have studied the relationship between LMX and employee engagement, obtaining mixed results, but none of the studies I found tackled individual dimensions of the LMX theory (Adil & Awais, 2016; Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; Breevaart et al., 2015; Meng et al., 2017; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Sniderman et al., 2016;

Wang et al., 2014; Zivnuska et al., 2017). This study contributes to the discussion by evaluating the relationship between employee engagement and some individual dimensions of LMX, which could explain the underlying reasons for the mixed results found in the literature. The results suggest that professional respect follows perceived contribution but does not impact engagement as much as perceived contribution alone. However, because the model including both dimensions accounts for 28%, while professional respect only accounts for 9% and perceived contribution for 29%, the conclusion is that both dimensions interact between them as well.

Adil and Awais (2016), Bedarkar and Pandita (2014), Breevaart et al. (2015), Meng et al. (2017), Saks and Gruman (2014), Sniderman et al. (2016), Wang et al. (2014), and Zivnuska et al. (2017), discovered positive correlations between LMX and employee engagement, which is confirmed by the correlation found between the model including the combination of professional respect and perceived contribution and the correlation of perceived contribution and employee engagement. The low contribution of professional respect (adjusted R^2 = .089) could explain the conflicting results found by Tastan and Davoudi (2015) as well.

With this study, I found a statistically significant correlation between the model and employee engagement, and statistical significance between each independent variable and engagement. Nevertheless, the correlation only explains 28% of the independent variable variation, suggesting that more underlying constructs were interacting with perceived contribution and professional respect, which were the scope of this study.

Applications to Professional Practice

Some authors suggest that there are great benefits to having highly engaged employees (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013; Gupta & Sharma, 2016; Kumar & Pansari, 2015; Lee & Ok, 2015; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Slack et al., 2015; Taneja et al., 2015). Kumar and Pansari (2015) performed studies that included two years of follow up to multiple companies and found that improvement in employee engagement could increase the business's profitability by up to 175%. Furthermore, AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013), Gupta and Sharma (2016), and Saks and Gruman (2014) agreed that fully engaged employees are more productive, with potential financial benefits for the companies and the economy, making them more competitive. Lee and Ok (2015), Slack et al. (2015), and Taneja et al. (2015) suggested that employee engagement has a positive correlation with employee retention and employee satisfaction as well.

Despite the benefits that employee engagement brings to companies, the elements that drive that engagement—and how these relate to the interaction between the leaders and followers—remains poorly understood (Newman et al., 2017). With this study, I analyzed the correlation of two specific dimensions of LMX theory with employee engagement. Narrowing the drivers of employee engagement to more controllable variables could help managers develop better strategies to engage employees and consequently to impact businesses' bottom line.

I found a statistically significant correlation between the model and employee engagement. Nevertheless, the correlation only explains 28% of the independent variable variation, suggesting that more underlying constructs were interacting with perceived

contribution and professional respect to moderate employee engagement. More research is necessary to understand the underlying constructs of employee engagement fully, but this study contributes to that understanding.

Implications for Social Change

Employee engagement not only impacts the companies' bottom line but individuals as well. Employee engagement is positively correlated with employee satisfaction and employee turnover (Huang et al., 2016), and high engagement brings benefits for a company, creating a sense of stability in employees and their families (Rana, 2015). According to Gallup (2017), 33% of employees in America feel engaged or somewhat engaged in their job. A better understanding of the drivers of employee engagement could provide managers with the necessary tools to strengthen and sustain a high level of employee engagement. The economic paybacks of employee engagement's positively impact the competitiveness of companies, generating new jobs to reduce unemployment and incentivizing stability in the economy, which is a driver of poverty reduction and a benefit to society (Taylor-Gooby, Gumy, & Otto, 2015). Also, employees are a critical element of corporate social responsibility strategies because they are a link between the community and the company (Glavas, 2016). Consequently, engaged employees could impact positively in a company's CSR policies and community involvement, creating a mutually beneficial relationship between communities and businesses, which is favorable for all stakeholders (Griffin, Bryant, & Koerber, 2015).

Recommendations for Action

Fully engaged employees are more productive and more likely to support their company's goals, allowing companies to be more competitive (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013; Al-Tit & Hunitie, 2015; Gupta & Sharma, 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Additionally, employee engagement is positively correlated with employee satisfaction and reduce employee turnover (Huang et al., 2016). However, only just 33% of employees in America feel engaged or somewhat engaged in the job (Gallup, 2017), leaving 67% of the employees disengaged or somewhat disengaged. Despite the benefits that employee engagement brings to companies, the element that drives that engagement, and how these relate to the interaction between the leaders and followers, remains poorly understood (Newman et al., 2017).

If managers do not have a clear understanding of the variables that drive engagement, they base any strategy to improve the level of engagement in the workplace on nonfactual information. In this study, I found a statistically significant correlation between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement, which provide more workable variables for managers in improving the level of engagement. The goal of this study was not to provide specific guidance for improving the level of engagement, but the findings suggest that if employees value their contribution to the company and respect the professionalism of their supervisors, those employees tend to be more engaged. Perceived contribution and professional respect are two specific and actionable variables to consider in developing communication strategies between supervisors and employees.

The correlation model studied, including perceived contribution and professional respect as independent variables and employee engagement as the dependent variable accounted for 28% of the variation in employee engagement, suggesting that exist more variables not considered in this study that impact on employee engagement. Additional research is necessary for identifying the variables that could account for the remaining 72% of employee engagement. For future researchers, this study could become a roadmap to evaluate those unknown variables, providing more practicable tools to develop strategies for improving engagement in the workplace and capitalize on all the benefits that include more competitive companies, employee satisfaction, sense of stability on employees and their families, and jobs generation.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study had five limitations that could impact the results: geographical limitation, online environment for the surveys, self-reporting, focus on only two independent variables, and the correlational design. The geographical concentration could lead to the exclusion of other employees from different areas with different experiences and opinions regarding the effect of LMX on their levels of engagement, considering environmental and cultural factors. For future researchers, I would recommend broadening the geographic boundaries of the study so that the results could apply to a broad population, covering different cultural backgrounds.

Using an online mean to collect the information was convenient and necessary to overcome logistic limitations. The communication with most participant was via email including a link to access the survey. However, the use of SurveyMonkey to collect the

data could exclude employees who were unfamiliar with the Internet, narrowing the pool of participants, leading to overly generalized findings or exclude low computer skilled individuals. For future researchers, I would recommend combining the online environment with paper and pencil surveys, when necessary.

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between perceived contribution and professional respect with employee engagement. To achieve the purpose of the study, I did not manipulate any of the variables during the span of the surveys; therefore, the correlational design was appropriate. However, the correlational design of the study was a limitation because it did not reveal causal relationships. For future research I would suggest an experimental design, applying the same survey to the same population in two or more different times, but manipulating the independent variables. The results from experimental design research could provide a better understanding of the cause and effect impact of the independent variables in engagement.

Regardless of the study limitations, the findings obtained in this study is one step ahead to a better understanding of the engagement drivers. My findings with this study partially explained the drivers of employee engagement. Nevertheless, this study could become a roadmap to evaluate those unknown variables, providing more practicable tools to develop strategies for improving engagement in the workplace. I recommend further qualitative and quantitative research to uncover and measure those unknown variables.

Reflections

According to the National Association of Manufacturers (2017) in South Carolina, manufacturers account for 16.8% of the total output in the state, employing 11.7% of the workforce. The total output from manufacturing was $35.16 billion in 2016, generating 239,500 jobs in 2016, with average annual compensation of $71,123 in 2016 (National Association of Manufacturers, 2017). Therefore, manufacturing is a significant sector for the economy in South Carolina, impacting a big part of the population, directly or indirectly. The main reason to focus my study on engagement in the manufacturing sector was that in my professional life I witnessed the importance of engaged employees and the lack of knowledge of the engagement drivers by managers. A better understanding of controllable variables that drive engagement could help managers to develop actionable strategies to improve the employees' engagement.

At a personal level, the journey to becoming a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) was difficult. Combining the roles of student, full-time employee, father, and husband was challenging, but looking back this journey changed the way I perceive the world, leaving on me the scientific mentality of making conclusions based on facts, trying to circumvent the natural biases that we all as human beings have. The results of this study are an example of how that bias could impact our perception of the world, which could be different when confronted with the facts. I was expecting the independent variables contributed at least 50% of the dependent variability, but perceived contribution and professional respect only accounted for 28% of the engagement variation. However, I

do not feel disappointed with the results, but proud of contributing to the understanding of a crucial topic that impacts almost every individual.

Conclusion

Fully engaged employees are more productive and more likely to support their company's goals, allowing companies to be more competitive (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013; Al-Tit & Hunitie, 2015; Gupta & Sharma, 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Additionally, employee engagement is positively correlated with employee satisfaction and reduce employee turnover (Huang et al., 2016). The relationship between leaders and members, which in this case is between supervisors and employees, is an area of focus among researchers and business leaders, but most studies related to employee engagement focus on benefits, with little attention given to the drivers that trigger and sustain engagement (Newman et al., 2017). A better understanding of the elements that drive employee engagement may help leaders to develop better strategies to manage the workplace.

If managers do not have a clear understanding of the variables that drive engagement, they support any strategy to improve the level of engagement in the workplace based on nonfactual information. In this study, I found a statistically significant correlation between perceived contribution, professional respect, and employee engagement, which provide more workable variables for managers in improving the level of engagement. The statistical analysis demonstrated that exist a positive correlation that explains 28% of the variation in engagement, but more research is necessary to identify some other variables that interact in the workplace to drive

engagement and account for the remaining 72%. Those findings obtained in this study is the first step to a better understanding of the engagement drivers. This study could become a roadmap to evaluate those unknown variables, providing more practicable tools to develop strategies for improving engagement in the workplace.

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Appendix A: LMX-MDM Questionnaire

LMX-MDM*

In the following set of questions, think of your immediate manager (or team leader),

_____. *[If this is NOT the person who rates your performance, please write in the correct name and contact one of our research staff.]*

Please select your response from the 7 presented below and enter the corresponding number in the space to the left of each question.

Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

___1. I respect my manager's knowledge of and competence on the job.

___2. My manager would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake.

___3. My manager is the kind of person one would like to have as a friend.

___4. I do not mind working my hardest for my manager.

___5. My manager would come to my defense if I were "attacked" by others.

___6. I like my manager very much as a person.

___7. I do work for my manager that goes beyond what is expected of me in my job.

___8. I admire my manager's professional skills.

___9. My manager defends (would defend) my work actions to a superior, even without complete knowledge of the issue in question.

___10. My manager is a lot of fun to work with.

___11. I am willing to apply extra efforts, beyond those normally required, to meet my manager's work goals.

___12. I am impressed with my manager's knowledge of his/her job.

*For scale development details on this scale, please refer to Liden, R.C., & Maslyn, J.M. (1998). Multidimensionality of leader-member exchange: An empirical assessment through scale development. ***Journal of Management***, *24*, 43-72. Be sure to read the "Addendum" on page 68 of this article.

Item #7 was modified because some respondents no longer have or know about formal job descriptions.

Scoring

Unit weighting should be used. So simply add all 12 of the scale scores for each respondent if you wish to have an overall LMX value. If you plan to analyze each dimension separately, add the 3 items for each dimension together. For ease in interpretation, we recommend dividing by the number of items (12 for overall LMX, and 3 for each dimension). Doing this allows direct comparisons of the means with the scale anchors (1 to 7)

Professional Respect: 1, 8, 12

Loyalty: 2, 5, 9

Affect: 3, 6, 10

Contribution: 4, 7, 11

Appendix B: UWES-9 Questionnaire

Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) ©

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the "0" (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times month	Once a	A few times week	Every day

1. _____ At my work, I feel bursting with energy
2. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
3. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job
4. _____ My job inspires me
5. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work
6. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely
7. _____ I am proud of the work that I do

8. _____ I am immersed in my work

9. _____ I get carried away when I'm working

Appendix C: UWES-9 Authorization Email

SW

Thu 9/7/2017 12:03 PM

Schaufeli, W.B. (Wilmar) <w.schaufeli@uu.nl>

RE: UWES-9 Questionnaire permission to use

To Rafael Guarin

Action Items + Get more

Dear Rafael,

Thank you very much for your interest in my work.
You may use the UWES free of charge, but only for non-commercial, academic research. In case of commercial use we should draft a contract.
Please visit my website (address below) from which the UWES can be downloaded, as well as all my publications on the subject (including those about reliability and validity of the UWES).
Good luck with your research.

With kind regards,

Wilmar Schaufeli

Wilmar B. Schaufeli, PhD | Distinguished research professor | *Work, Organizational, and Personnel Psychology* | KU Leuven | Belgium | Mobile: (31) 6514 75784 | Site: www.wilmarschaufeli.nl |

Van: Rafael Guarin [mailto:rafael.guarin@waldenu.edu]
Verzonden: dinsdag 22 augustus 2017 2:11
Aan: Schaufeli, W.B. (Wilmar) <w.schaufeli@uu.nl>
Onderwerp: UWES-9 Questionnaire permission to use

Dr. Schaufeli:

I am a Doctor of Business Administration candidate at Walden University, and I would appreciate your help with two questions.
For my doctoral degree, I am working on a study to evaluate the correlation between some of the LMX theory constructs and the level of employee engagement, using the UWES-9 questionnaire. For that purpose, I need permission to replicate and use the instrument. Additionally, the data that I am finding for validation and reliability of the instrument is from 2008, but I know that the instrument is widely used in scholar research.
My questions are:

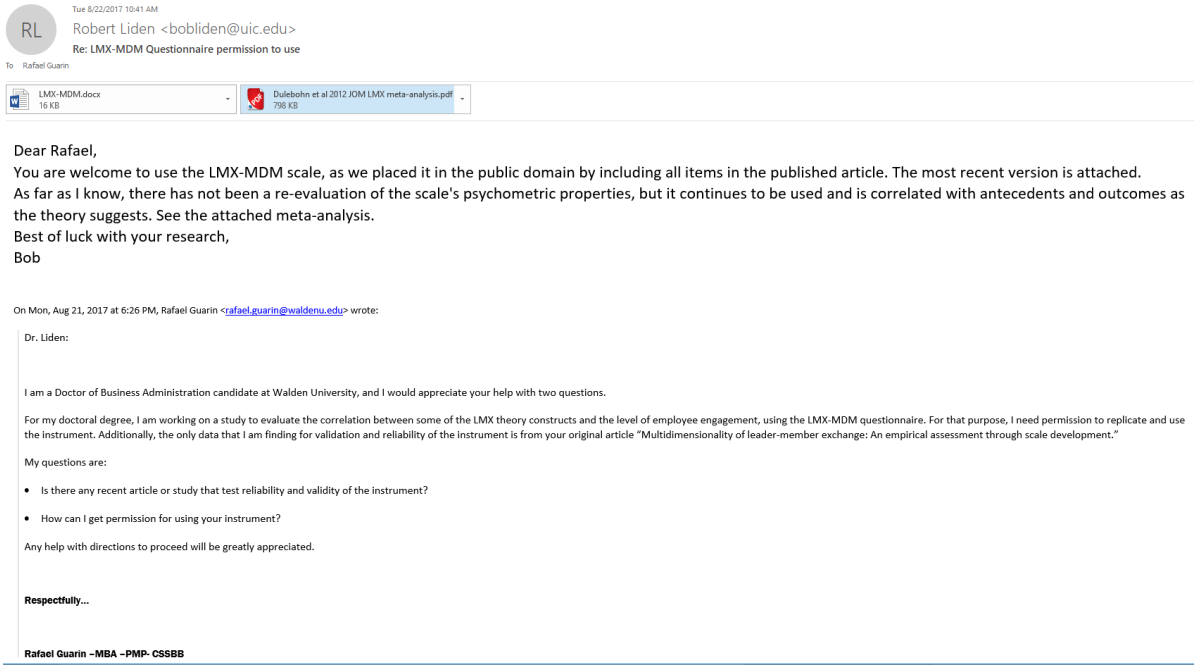
- Is there any recent article or study that test reliability and validity of the instrument?
- How can I get permission for using your instrument?

Any help with directions to proceed will be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully…

Rafael Guarin –MBA –PMP- CSSBB

Appendix D: MDM-LMX Authorization Email



Tue 8/22/2017 10:41 AM

RL

Robert Liden <bobliden@uic.edu>

Re: LMX-MDM Questionnaire permission to use

To Rafael Guarin

LMX-MDM.docx
16 KB

Dulebohn et al 2012 JOM LMX meta-analysis.pdf
798 KB

Dear Rafael,
You are welcome to use the LMX-MDM scale, as we placed it in the public domain by including all items in the published article. The most recent version is attached.
As far as I know, there has not been a re-evaluation of the scale's psychometric properties, but it continues to be used and is correlated with antecedents and outcomes as the theory suggests. See the attached meta-analysis.
Best of luck with your research,
Bob

On Mon, Aug 21, 2017 at 6:26 PM, Rafael Guarin <rafael.guarin@waldenu.edu> wrote:

> Dr. Liden:
>
> I am a Doctor of Business Administration candidate at Walden University, and I would appreciate your help with two questions.
>
> For my doctoral degree, I am working on a study to evaluate the correlation between some of the LMX theory constructs and the level of employee engagement, using the LMX-MDM questionnaire. For that purpose, I need permission to replicate and use the instrument. Additionally, the only data that I am finding for validation and reliability of the instrument is from your original article "Multidimensionality of leader-member exchange: An empirical assessment through scale development."
>
> My questions are:
>
> - Is there any recent article or study that test reliability and validity of the instrument?
> - How can I get permission for using your instrument?
>
> Any help with directions to proceed will be greatly appreciated.
>
> **Respectfully...**
>
> **Rafael Guarin –MBA –PMP- CSSBB**