

THE EFFECT OF GENDER AND LEADERSHIP STYLES ON EMPLOYEE  
SATISFACTION

by

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## **Abstract**

To ensure the success of a company, it is essential for supervisors to interact effectively with the employees they oversee. Effective interactions between supervisor and employee go hand-in-hand with employee satisfaction, which can impact firm performance. The purpose of this thesis is to examine key drivers of employee satisfaction. Specifically, this thesis tests whether or not employees with supervisors of the same sex as themselves are more satisfied than employees with supervisors of the opposite sex. It also compares and contrasts the level of satisfaction an employee has in correspondence with transformational and transactional leadership styles and whether this relationship is contingent on the employee's level of work experience.

A scenario-based survey was conducted with a sample of 160 business school students. Each survey included one of four different vignettes demonstrating a transformational versus transactional leadership style corresponding to a male versus female supervisor. Regression analyses of the results showed positive association between work experience and employee satisfaction. On the other hand, gender and age showed very little significant results. Transformational and transactional leadership styles used by supervisors also showed no significant effect on employee satisfaction or preference.

An analysis of survey respondents' descriptions of ideal managers indicates clear distinctions between female and male preferences in supervisor actions. The conclusions provided in this thesis may assist business managers with becoming more effective leaders in their areas of supervision.

## **Dedication**

For parents who continuously encouraged and supported me

For my sisters and grandmother who motivated and inspired me

For my closest companion who served as my endurance

And for my closest two friends who made me feel like I had an entourage of fifty

## **Acknowledgements**

I express sincere thanks and gratitude to my committee members who took the time out of their busy schedules to help make my project a success. My greatest appreciation goes to my thesis chair, Dr. Michael P. Ciuchta, who was with me every step of the way and kindly offered his wisdom and support.

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## **Introduction**

Many previous studies have analyzed the effects that gender and leadership styles have on production in the workplace. Ortiz-Walters, Addleston, and Simone's (2010) study suggests that the assessment of gender identity and related skills can provide organizations with more effective guidance and matching of mentors and trainees to maximize perceived satisfaction on the part of the trainee. Another study illustrates that "changes in management practices that increase employee satisfaction may increase business-unit outcomes, including profit" (Harter, 2002). It has also been shown that companies tend to be more profitable when employees are more satisfied (Lussier, 2010). And many times, employee behaviors and satisfactions are driven by leadership in the workplace (Podsakoff, 1990).

Therefore, it can be proposed that a key method to improving organizational performance is to establish a better understanding of the influences on employee satisfaction. It is essential for managers, or any business professional holding a leadership position, to know the best way to interact with and satisfy employees they oversee. Though previous studies have examined the effects of leadership styles on employee satisfaction and the effects of gender differences in the workplace, no study focuses on the effects of both leadership style and gender together. More significantly, no study primarily concentrations employee satisfaction and preference when dealing with leaders of a specified gender corresponding with a specified leadership style. Thus, this study examines the influence of supervisor gender and leadership styles (specifically transformational and transactional) on employee satisfaction in an attempt to contribute to a better understanding of overall supervisor effectiveness.

## **Literature Review, Research Question and Hypotheses**

This section provides a review of the literary research used and referenced throughout this paper and the course of this study. It provides relevant information and insight which initiated the investigation and formed the structure of this thesis. This section also includes the research question and two hypotheses that correspond with this experiment, along with individual introductions explaining the thoughts and reasons behind each hypothetical theory.

### **Literature Review**

In one study (Ortiz-Walters, Addleston, and Simione, 2010), the authors found that male apprentices, who strongly identify with their career roles, report being more satisfied with mentors who provide career development support. On the other hand, female apprentices, who measure career success using “socio-emotional-based” (variations that occur in an individual’s personality, emotions, and relationships with others) criteria, report being more satisfied with mentors who provide psychosocial support. Their study implies that the assessment of gender identity and related skills can provide organizations with more effective guidance and matching of mentors and trainees to maximize perceived satisfaction on the part of the trainee.

Another relevant study (Johnson, Murphy, and Zewdie, 2008), showed that feminine individuals expect leaders to be more sensitive than masculine individuals, who expect leaders to be more masculine, strong, and tyrannical than feminine individuals. Also, sensitivity was more strongly associated with female leadership, whereas masculinity, strength, and tyranny were more strongly associated with male leadership. However, for female leaders to be perceived as effective, they needed to demonstrate both sensitivity and strength while male leaders only needed to demonstrate strength.



Brian Moskal's (1997) article examined whether "women make better managers" is a fact or a myth, and found that studies show women executives to excel chiefly as nurturers and team players in corporate America. He also found studies to show that males primarily excel in left-brain activities such as problem-solving, while females primarily excel in the right brain such as interpersonal relationships.

An article written by Podsakoff and colleagues (1990) mentions that transformational leaders "transform or change the basic values, beliefs, and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization" and transactional leader behaviors "are founded on an exchange process in which the leader provides rewards in return for the subordinate's effort." This research was focused on the impact of transformational leader behaviors on follower satisfaction, and suggests that employee behaviors and satisfactions are driven by leadership in the work place.

MacKenzie and his colleagues' 2001 article mentions that "transformational leadership involves fundamentally changing the values, goals, and aspirations of followers, so that they perform their work because it is consistent with their values, as opposed to the expectation that they will be rewarded for their efforts." This study examined the impact of transformational and transactional leader behaviors on the sales performance of organizations.

Research by Alice Eagly and colleagues (1982 and 2003) suggests that female leaders are more transformational than male leaders. Female leaders also engage in more of the contingent reward behaviors related to transactional leadership and individualized consideration. On the other hand, male leaders more likely possess qualities of the transactional and laissez-faire

leadership style. Male leaders are therefore more active and passive by exception than female leaders.

Patricia Smith (1998) examined the work attitudes of 286 females and 416 males. These employees were employed in 27 female-owned small businesses and 29 male-owned small businesses. These small businesses all fit into the industries of construction, manufacturing, and distribution. This study analyzed the dependent variable, job satisfaction scores with regard to owner-employee gender interactions. Smith mentioned results from previous studies conducted in the 1990s which concluded that same-sex dyads develop early patterns of compatibility that carry over to adult situations. She also points out from these studies that behaviors in the workplace recurrently confirm interaction patterns reflective of essential male and female natures. Smith then concludes that the comfort her respondents had with owners of the same sex suggests a learned pattern.

As introduced, many studies in the past including those mentioned in the literary review, have contributed to the search for efficient leadership in the workplace. Compelling evidence illustrates that the use of specific leadership styles tend to prove more efficient than others in some cases and that gender in the work place has an influence on employee preference and satisfaction. These evidences provide a strong background for the formation and attesting of the hypotheses and research question addressed in the next section.

### **Research Question and Hypotheses**

Johnson and colleagues (2008) explain that feminine individuals expect leaders to be more sensitive than masculine individuals, who expect leaders to be more masculine, strong, and tyrannical.

Brian Moskal (1997) found that women executives excel chiefly as nurturers and team players in corporate America. It also mentions that males primarily excel in left-brain activities such as problem-solving, while females primarily excel in the right brain such as interpersonal relationships.

The results from these articles suggest that employee thought processes and leader expectations vary across gender. Therefore, it is easy to believe that leadership preferences and ideal prototypes will differ between women and men.

***Research Question:*** *Will female employees have a different ideal supervisor prototype than male employees?*

Johnson and colleagues (2008) explain that feminine individuals expect leaders to be more sensitive than masculine individuals, who expect leaders to be more masculine, strong, and tyrannical than feminine individuals. Also, sensitivity was more strongly associated with female leadership, whereas masculinity, strength, and tyranny were more strongly associated with male leadership.

Patricia Smith and colleagues (1998) concluded that “membership in same-sex dyads had unique effects on the relationship between the independent variables (organizational factors and employee demographic and job-related characteristics) and the dependent variable for female employees.” She also mentions that same-sex dyads develop early patterns of compatibility that carry over to adult situations, and that the comfort her respondents had with owners of the same sex suggests a learned pattern.

Ortiz-Walters and colleagues' (2010) study implies that the assessment of gender identity and related skills can provide organizations with more effective guidance and matching of mentors and trainees to maximize perceived satisfaction on the part of the trainee.

These conclusions show that individuals expect to have similar, mutual traits with their leaders; comfort in same-sex dyads seem to be a learned pattern from early childhood; and satisfaction in organizations can be found through the matching of mentors and trainees' gender identity. Therefore, it can be assumed that same-sex dyads will result in a higher employee satisfaction rate than opposite-sex dyads.

*H. 1. Employees with a supervisor of the same sex will be more satisfied than employees with a supervisor of the opposite sex.*

Podsakoff and colleagues (1990) express that the transactional leadership style is demonstrated through contingent reward behaviors. Podsakoff includes the following specific items from the contingent reward scale: "Always gives me positive feedback when I perform well"; "Gives me special recognition when my work is very good"; "Commends me when I do a better than average job"; and "Personally compliments me when I do outstanding work." The author also mentions six key behaviors associated with transformational leaders. One of these key behaviors is "high performance expectations." That is, "behavior that demonstrates the leader's expectations for excellence, quality, and/or high performance on the part of followers." He also mentions that transformational leaders "transform or change the basic values, beliefs, and attitudes of followers so that they are willing to perform beyond the minimum levels specified by the organization" and transactional leader behaviors "are founded

on an exchange process in which the leader provides rewards in return for the subordinate's effort.”

While describing the differences between transformational and transactional leadership, MacKenzie and his colleagues mention that “transformational leadership involves fundamentally changing the values, goals, and aspirations of followers, so that they perform their work because it is consistent with their values, as opposed to the expectation that they will be rewarded for their efforts.”

It can be considered that employees with little experience would prefer to be reward for their efforts rather than being expected to have high performances in the work place. On the other hand, it can be assumed that employees with higher levels of experience would be more acceptable of high performance expectations with little to no reward for efforts in return.

***H.2. Employees with more work experience will be more satisfied with transformational leaders compared to employees with less work experience.***

A graph for the hypotheses can be found in Appendix A.

## Methods

A vignette-based survey was used for this study's experiment. Instructors at the University of Central Florida were contacted for support in finding willing participants to complete the survey. Upon IRB approval, each participant randomly received a paper-printed copy of the survey with one of four hypothetical scenarios. These vignettes/scenarios were constructed based on the transformational and transactional scales developed by Podsakoff and colleagues (1990). The vignettes are as follow:

*Scenario 1: a female supervisor using a transformational leadership style*

- The supervisor is a 40 year old female
- She has a clear understanding of where the group is going
- She leads by "doing" rather than simply by "telling"
- She fosters collaboration among her employees
- She shows that she expects a lot from her employees
- She shows respect for employees' personal feelings

*Scenario 2: a female supervisor using a transactional leadership style*

- The supervisor is a 40 year old female
- She always gives employees positive feedback when they perform well
- She gives employees recognition when their work is very good
- She commends employees when they do a better than average job
- She personally compliments employees when they do outstanding work
- She frequently acknowledges employees' good work performance

*Scenario 3: a male supervisor using a transformational leadership style*

- The supervisor is a 40 year old male
- He has a clear understanding of where the group is going
- He leads by "doing" rather than simply by "telling"
- He fosters collaboration among his employees
- He shows that he expects a lot from his employees
- He shows respect for employees' personal feelings

*Scenario 4: a male supervisor using a transactional leadership style*

- The supervisor is a 40 year old male
- He always gives employees positive feedback when they perform well

- He gives employees recognition when their work is very good
- He commends employees when they do a better than average job
- He personally compliments employees when they do outstanding work
- He frequently acknowledges employees' good work performance

Appendix B of this report provides a copy of each full survey.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were students at the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando, Florida. They were invited to participate in this experiment by their UCF instructors. Some students received extra credit for participation, while others volunteered their support. All participants were students at UCF during the summer 2012 term. Respondents filled out the surveys in class during their summer course class time.

There was an original total 167 of participants surveyed from 5 different UCF classes. Of these respondents, there were 100 males and 67 females observed. The first class surveyed was the undergraduate course Training and Development (MAN4350), which contributed 35 participants. The next class was the undergraduate course Organization Theory and Behavior MAN4240, and it contributed 23 survey participants. The University of Central Florida's undergraduate Financial International Management course (FIN4604) provided 29 research participants. The next 57 participants were from the university's graduate course, Strategic Management (MAN6721). And the final 23 students to take the survey were from the UCF undergraduate course Business Ethics and Social Responsibility (MAN4701).

Upon analyzing the results, 7 of the survey responses were removed from the total amount leaving a sample of 160 observations (95 males and 65 females). Two of the surveys were removed due to missing data, making the responses incomplete and unfeasible. Another 2

surveys were removed because they were exact duplicates made by the same participant, but not of the same survey form/scenario. Three surveys removed because they were outliers. These 3 participants had much lower employee satisfaction scores than all other participants. Therefore, it was decided to exclude the data associated with these outlying responses. A scatter plot found in Appendix D, Figure 7 reveals these outliers.

### **Materials**

The materials used to complete this experimental study were printed hard-copies of the vignette-based surveys. Along with the surveys were hard-copies of a cover letter. Each survey handed out included a corresponding cover letter which represented a consent document for each participant. It included the purpose of the study, the research staff involved, and contact information for the principal and co-investigators of this study. It also briefly described what was expected of the participants, the expected amount of time it would take to complete the survey (2 minutes), and other relevant information to establish IRB approval. A copy of the cover letter can be found in Appendix B, C.V.L.

### **Procedure**

Prior to conducting an on-campus study and using student participants, it was required to gain IRB approval. This approval was necessary in order to legally conduct an on-campus experiment using student responses. A human research protocol was constructed revealing all procedures anticipated for the study's process. Once IRB approval was granted, University of Central Florida instructors were contacted for permission to use the students in their summer 2012 classes.



Respondents were randomly given one of four versions of the survey along with a cover letter in a classroom setting, and all respondents were anonymous. Each version of the survey contained a brief vignette describing a potential supervisor. The vignettes varied by gender of the supervisor and the supervisor's management style (transformational or transactional).

Respondents were then prompted to answer a series of questions designed to capture how satisfied they think they would be working for the supervisor described in the scenario.

The students were given the name of the topic and a very brief description of the purpose of the study. Upon distribution, each survey took no more than 2 minutes to complete. After collecting the completed surveys, they were each given an ID number (1-167), and the course name and number of the class being surveyed was recorded for future reference. All responses were then entered into a Microsoft Excel document and carefully analyzed by the researcher; and all hard-copies of the surveys were kept for further reference when needed.

### **Measures**

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION was measured using a scale developed in James B. DeConinck's study *The effect of leader-member exchange on turnover among retail buyers*. These statements serve as a measure for how satisfied employees are with their supervisors. Respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed with each statement based on the explanation provided for the hypothetical supervisor in the survey. The rating scale was from 1-5 with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree". The table used for this measure, including the statements and rating scale, can be found in Appendix B at the bottom of each survey. A scatterplot was constructed in excel to graph the results of the variable EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION. This graph revealed the 3 outliers that were later removed from

the data. These three outliers resulted from 3 respondents choosing the lowest satisfaction level for each question asked. The scatterplot can be found in Appendix D, Figure 7 of this report.

The descriptive statistics tool in excel provided an analysis for the variable AGE. The mean age was 25.1625, the median was 24, and the mode was 23. The age range of the participants in this study was between 19 and 40. Of the total 160 participants, more than half were between the ages of 21 and 24. A table providing the number of participants per age group can be found in Appendix D, Table 1 of this report. Along with this table, a histogram was created using Microsoft Excel to further demonstrate the age range of participants. This graph can also be found in Appendix D, under Histogram 1.

GENDER was another variable analyzed with descriptive statistics. Males were represented by the dummy variable “0”, and females were represented by the dummy variable “1.” Out of the 160 participants used for this study, there were 95 males and 65 females. The descriptive statistics chart and a table for this variable can be found in Appendix D, Table 3.

The next variable was SAMESEX, which measured all surveys containing participants and supervisors of the same sex. This was created by comparing the gender of the respondents to the gender of the supervisors in their vignettes. The SAMESEX variable was represented by the dummy variable “1” and all surveys with participants who were of the opposite sex of the supervisor in the survey was represented by the dummy variable “0.” There were 77 surveys containing participants and supervisors of the same sex, and 83 surveys containing participants of the opposite sex of the supervisor. The descriptive statistics chart and table can be found in Appendix D, Table 4.

TRANSFORMATIONAL was the last variable measured using a scale developed by Podsakoff and colleagues that provided specific leadership traits for transformational versus transactional leaders. This scale was used to create a transformational supervisor prototype and a transactional supervisor prototype for the surveys. Dummy variables were used for these as well: “1” being transformational and “0” being transactional. Descriptive statistics indicated that there were 81 surveys containing the transformational leadership style, and 79 containing the transactional leadership style. The table and chart for these variables can be found in Appendix D, Table 5.

Work experience was measured on a scale from 1-5 as well. “No experience” was scored as 1. “A limited amount of experience” was scored as 2. “Some experience” was scored as 3. “A fair amount of experience” was scored as 4. And “a lot of experience” was scored as 5. Descriptive statistics showed that no participant illustrated having “no experience” and the majority of participants expressed having “a fair amount” of work experience. A detailed chart and table of participants’ survey responses for this variable (WORK EXPERIENCE) can be found in Appendix D, under Table 2. The histogram for this variable can also be found in Appendix D, under Histogram 2.

Respondents provided a brief description of their personal perception of an ideal manager. Upon reviewing these responses, results were placed into 5 categories of the most commonly mentioned supervisor characteristics preferred by employees. The categories are as follow: empathetic attributes, competency and knowledge, communication skills, motivational and inspirational attributes, and fairness and integrity. All of the attributes listed by respondents that fall under each category can be found in Appendix C, Figure 5. The attributes are listed

using exact words and phrases provided by respondents. The percentages of each category were observed across gender to determine variations in gender preference for supervisors. A table and bar graph of these results can be found in Appendix C, Figure 6. Ideal supervisor prototypes describe by participants were measured on a percentile base. So, the amount of female responses for each of the 5 categories was divided by 65 (total number of women). And the amount of male responses for each of the 5 categories was divided by 95 (total number of men). These calculations provided the percentage of men and women who provided descriptions that fit into each specified category for ideal supervisor traits.

EXPXTRAN was an interaction variable used later in the study created by multiplying TRANSFORMATIONAL by WORK EXPERIENCE. This variable was needed to test hypothesis 2. It reflects the influence of work experience, conditional on the leadership style. A positive sign on this variable indicates that workers with high levels of experience will be more satisfied working for a transformational leader than they will for a transactional leader.

### **Statistical Analysis**

Data analysis for this project was done in Microsoft Excel. This program enabled the use of scatterplots, bar graphs, descriptive statistics, data tables, regression analysis, and the computation of variables.

Regression analysis enables the use of control variables that may account for relationships between the variables of interest and the dependent variable. Thus, regression analysis was used to examine relationships between the independent and dependent variables in this study. One-tailed tests were used to analyze the significance levels of the regression p-value results. The first regression consisted of the dependent variable – EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

– and the independent variables – GENDER, AGE, and WORK EXPERIENCE. The second regression model used the dependent variable – EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION – and the independent variables – GENDER, AGE, WORK EXPERIENCE, SAMESEX, and TRANSFORMATIONAL. And the last regression model included the dependent variable – EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION – and the independent variables – GENDER, AGE, WORK EXPERIENCE, SAMESEX, TRANSFORMATIONAL, and EXPXTRAN. EXPXTRAN was an interaction variable created by multiplying TRANSFORMATIONAL by WORK EXPERIENCE. This variable was needed to test hypothesis 2. These three regressions can be found in Appendix E as Models 1, 2, and 3.

## Results

Respondents provided a brief description of their perception of an ideal manager. The results from these descriptions suggest that on average, the following occurs: female employees have a higher preference for supervisors with empathetic attributes than male employees; male employees have a higher preference for supervisors who are knowledgeable and competent than female employees; female employees have a higher preference for supervisors with good communication skills than male employees; female employees slightly have a higher preference for supervisors with a high sense of integrity and fairness than male employees; and both female and male employees equally prefer supervisors who motivate and inspire his or her employees. For the male observations of an ideal supervisor, 24% emphasized empathetic attributes, 24% emphasized competency and knowledge, 26% emphasized communication skills, 31% emphasized motivational and inspirational attributes, and 23% emphasized fairness and integrity. The observations for women showed that 42% emphasized empathetic attributes, 17% emphasized competency and knowledge, 43% emphasized communication skills, 31% emphasized motivational and inspirational attributes, and 31% emphasized fairness and integrity. A table and bar graph including these figures can be found in Appendix C, Figure 6.

Respondents' brief descriptions of an ideal supervisor further suggested that the communication preferences across men and women vary. Results showed that 37% of women mentioned being heard and listened to as well as being understood by supervisors while only 20% of men mentioned these traits. The final conclusion has been that on average, more female employees than males prefer supervisors who listens, understands, empathizes, and communicates well with employees. More male employees than females prefer supervisors who

are competent and experienced in their field of work. And all employees equally prefer supervisors who motivate and inspire employees.

The variations found across the descriptions provided by men and women answers yes to the research question addressed in this study. Female employees do have a different ideal supervisor prototype than male employees.

Model 1 reveals a significant relationship between the dependent variable EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION and the independent variable WORK EXPERIENCE. The p-value for WORK EXPERIENCE is 1.23%. The variables GENDER and AGE show no significant value. The insignificance of the GENDER variable concludes that there's no distinct preference of leadership styles across gender. This Model can be found in Appendix E, Model 1.

Model 2 also shows a significant relationship between the dependent variable EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION and the independent variable WORK EXPERIENCE. The p-value for WORK EXPERIENCE in this model is 1.08%. All other variables used in this model, GENDER, AGE, SAMESEX, and TRANSFORMATIONAL were found to be insignificant, and therefore, have little to no effect on employee satisfaction. The high level of insignificance in the 53.69% p-value of the variable TRANSFORMATIONAL illustrates that there's no leadership effect on employee satisfaction when comparing transformational with transactional leadership. Individuals seem to have no preference for the transformational style over the transactional style. The insignificance of the SAMESEX variable suggests that hypothesis 1 is not supported; same-sex dyads in the workplace do not have an effect on employee satisfaction. This model can be found in Appendix E, Model 2.

Model 3 portrays no significance for any of the variables used (GENDER, AGE, WORK EXPERIENCE, SAMESEX, TRANSFORMATIONAL, EXPXTRAN). This model's output suggests that employee work experience has no effect on an employee's satisfaction with a transformational leader compared to a transactional leader; therefore, hypothesis 2 is not supported. This model can be found in Appendix E, Model 3.

Regression models 1, 2, and 3 illustrate that less than 10% of satisfaction among employees can be explained by the following: the gender of supervisors and employees; the age of employees; the amount of work experience employees have; employees and supervisors being the same sex; the use of a transformational leadership style; and the use of a transactional leadership style. The remaining 90+% can be explained by other factors that were not included in these models. The regression outputs for these models can be found in Appendix E.



## **Limitations**

The surveys used for this study could have been better constructed for the purpose of this research. Each vignette individually came off as desirable, acceptable supervisors when standing alone. Therefore, there was not much variation in the dependent variable (employee satisfaction). It may have been better to allow respondents to view all 4 of the vignettes simultaneously in order to compare the variations. Upon comparing the differences in these vignettes, respondents would have had a better, clearer idea of his/her preferences for a supervisor. By having the respondents choose their preferred supervisor from the 4 vignettes, more accurate results may have been provided.

Along with a better method for conducting the experiment, a change in the time-frame that the study took place would have allowed this study to be more precise. Because the experiment was held on a college campus during the summer B term, not many participants were available as most students are on vacation and classes are much smaller during this time. Having a sample of less than 200 may have been the cause of the very low R-square values found in each regression model. Conducting this experiment during a fall or spring semester or carrying out throughout the entire summer term (A, B, C, and D) would have probably provided more participants and more observations for this experiment. As a result, the regression models may have been more accurate with higher R-square values, and more significant results may have been discovered.

The final issue found with this study was the lack of clarity for hypothesis 2. Upon completion of the study, it was realized that hypothesis 2 “employees with more work experience will be more satisfied with transformational leaders compared to employees with less work

experience” does not specify what is meant by “more” and “less” work experience. This lack of specification may have also had an effect on the results of this study as the classification of “more” and “less” work experience was solely up to the opinions of the respondents, and was not a measure of any specific scale on experience levels.

## Conclusions

This thesis examined key drivers of employee satisfaction in an attempt to provide a better understanding of overall supervisor effectiveness in the workplace. Effective interactions between supervisors and employees can impact firm performance and serve as a key method for more efficient productivity. More specifically, this thesis tested the effects on employee satisfaction across the following factors: gender, age, employee work experience, transformational and transactional leadership, and same-sex dyads.

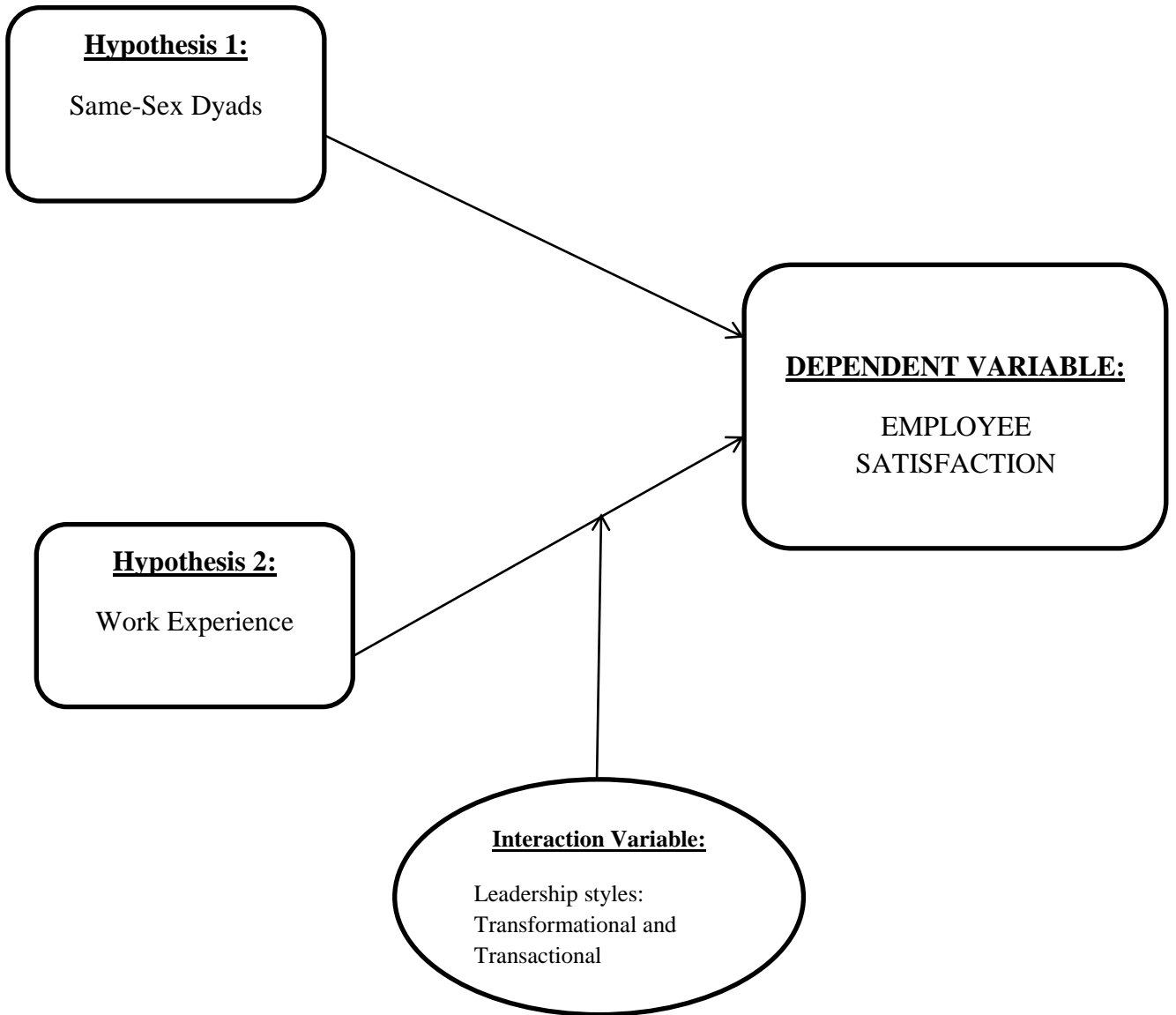
Primarily, this experiment sought out to answer the following 3 questions: Will female employees have a different ideal supervisor prototype than male employees? Will employees with a supervisor of the same sex be more satisfied than employees with a supervisor of the opposite sex? Will employees with more work experience be more satisfied with transformational leaders compared to employees with less work experience?

The results found from this study provides the answer “yes” to question 1, and “no” to questions 2 and 3. Results also demonstrated a significant relationship between employee satisfaction and employee work experience. No other significant results were concluded.

Because employees have reported having different ideal supervisors, but don't seem to be more satisfied with having same-sex or transformational/transactional leaders, it can be concluded that variations in preference are based more on specific characteristics of leaders. As found in the results of this research, female employees emphasized specific leadership traits more than males, and vice versa. Overall, the discovery that male and female employees have a different ideal supervisor fulfills the purpose of this study by contributing to supervisor effectiveness in the workplace. Supervisors should have an understanding that his/her

interactions between male and female employees should slightly vary according to the findings in this study. Women and men do tend to not pay as much attention to the gender and leadership style (at least in terms of transformational versus transactional) of a supervisor as much as they pay attention to the supervisors' overall character and personality traits.

## **Appendix A: Hypotheses**



## **Appendix B: Vignettes/Surveys**

C.V.L.:



### **EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH**

Title of Project: The effect of management gender and leadership style on employee satisfaction  
Principal Investigator: Michael P. Ciuchta

Co-Investigator: Brittany Williams

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

- The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not women or men are more preferred in leadership positions by employees in every day work places.
- We intend to publish results of this research in an Honors Thesis in Fall 2012.
- We do not foresee any risks or direct benefits associated with your participation in this research. However, we hope that our results will be able to assist businesses in better satisfying employees by making better management decisions.
- If you are a student in Professor Robert Porter's MAN6721 course, you will be given 1% extra credit upon completion of this survey. If you do not take part in this survey, you will be given an alternative extra credit assignment of equal effort to also earn the 1% extra credit point in the course. If you are not a student in Professor Porter's MAN6721 course, you will not be compensated for your participation in this survey.
- If you decide to participate, completion of this survey will constitute your consent.
- This survey should take about 2-3 minutes to complete.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

**Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem:** If you have questions, concerns, or complaints: Dr. Michael P. Ciuchta, Assistant Professor of Management at the University of Central Florida College of Business Administration at 407/823-3209 or by email at [mciuchta@bus.ucf.edu](mailto:mciuchta@bus.ucf.edu); or Brittany Williams, Undergraduate Student in the College of Business Administration at the University of Central Florida at 904-576-2904 or by email at [bcw82890@gmail.com](mailto:bcw82890@gmail.com)

**IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint:** Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.



**Figure 1: Female Supervisor/Transformational Style**

**Form 1 (Female supervisor / Transformational style)**

1. What is your gender?           \_\_Female                   \_\_Male
  
2. How much work experience would you say that you have?  
    \_\_None            \_\_A limited amount            \_\_Some            \_\_A fair amount            \_\_A lot
  
3. A supervisor is someone who is responsible for the performance of a group. A supervisor's job is to guide the group toward its goals, see that all members of the group are productive, and resolve problems as they arise. Do you have any experience as a supervisor?  
    \_\_Yes            \_\_No
  
4. In your own personal words, please briefly describe what you think are some of the characteristics of an ideal supervisor. \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Please read the following short scenario and answer the questions that follow.

Imagine that you are going for an interview for a job that you think is a good match with your own interests and skills. While you are waiting for the interview, you run into a current employee. This employee tells you the following about the supervisor that you would be working for if you are hired.

- The supervisor is a 40 year old female
- She has a clear understanding of where the group is going
- She leads by "doing" rather than simply by "telling"
- She fosters collaboration among her employees
- She shows that she expects a lot from her employees
- She shows respect for employees' personal feelings

Based on what the employee has told you about the supervisor, please indicate how strongly you agree with each of the following statements, from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Strongly Agree
The supervisor would treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
I would be satisfied with the level of concern the supervisor would show for my career progress.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would be consistent with her behavior toward me.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would understand the problems I might run into doing the job.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would back me up with other managers.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to work for this supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!!! ©

**Figure 2: Female Supervisor/Transactional**

**Form 2 (Female supervisor / Transactional style)**

1. What is your gender?       Female       Male
  
2. How much work experience would you say that you have?  
 None       A limited amount       Some       A fair amount       A lot
  
3. A supervisor is someone who is responsible for the performance of a group. A supervisor's job is to guide the group toward its goals, see that all members of the group are productive, and resolve problems as they arise. Do you have any experience as a supervisor?  
 Yes       No
  
4. In your own personal words, please briefly describe what you think are some of the characteristics of an ideal supervisor. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Please read the following short scenario and answer the questions that follow.

Imagine that you are going for an interview for a job that you think is a good match with your own interests and skills. While you are waiting for the interview, you run into a current employee. This employee tells you the following about the supervisor that you would be working for if you are hired.

- The supervisor is a 40 year old female
- She always gives employees positive feedback when they perform well
- She gives employees recognition when their work is very good
- She commends employees when they do a better than average job
- She personally compliments employees when they do outstanding work
- She frequently acknowledges employees' good work performance

Based on what the employee has told you about the supervisor, please indicate how strongly you agree with each of the following statements, from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Strongly Agree
The supervisor would treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
I would be satisfied with the level of concern the supervisor would show for my career progress.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would be consistent with her behavior toward me.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would understand the problems I might run into doing the job.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would back me up with other managers.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to work for this supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!!! ☺

**Figure 3: Male Supervisor/Transformational Style**

**Form 3 (Male supervisor / Transformational style)**

1. What is your gender?           \_\_Female           \_\_Male
  
2. How much work experience would you say that you have?  
    \_\_None           \_\_A limited amount           \_\_Some           \_\_A fair amount           \_\_A lot
  
3. A supervisor is someone who is responsible for the performance of a group. A supervisor's job is to guide the group toward its goals, see that all members of the group are productive, and resolve problems as they arise. Do you have any experience as a supervisor?  
    \_\_Yes           \_\_No
  
4. In your own personal words, please briefly describe what you think are some of the characteristics of an ideal supervisor. \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_\_\_  
    \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Please read the following short scenario and answer the questions that follow.

Imagine that you are going for an interview for a job that you think is a good match with your own interests and skills. While you are waiting for the interview, you run into a current employee. This employee tells you the following about the supervisor that you would be working for if you are hired.

- The supervisor is a 40 year old male
- He has a clear understanding of where the group is going
- He leads by "doing" rather than simply by "telling"
- He fosters collaboration among his employees
- He shows that he expects a lot from his employees
- He shows respect for employees' personal feelings

Based on what the employee has told you about the supervisor, please indicate how strongly you agree with each of the following statements, from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Strongly Agree
The supervisor would treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
I would be satisfied with the level of concern the supervisor would show for my career progress.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would be consistent with his behavior toward me.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would understand the problems I might run into doing the job.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would back me up with other managers.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to work for this supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!!! ☺

**Figure 4: Male Supervisor/Transactional Style**

**Form 4 (Male supervisor / Transactional style)**

1. What is your gender?            Female            Male
  
2. How much work experience would you say that you have?  
None            A limited amount            Some            A fair amount            A lot
  
3. A supervisor is someone who is responsible for the performance of a group. A supervisor's job is to guide the group toward its goals, see that all members of the group are productive, and resolve problems as they arise. Do you have any experience as a supervisor?  
Yes            No
  
4. In your own personal words, please briefly describe what you think are some of the characteristics of an ideal supervisor. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Please read the following short scenario and answer the questions that follow.

You are going for an interview for a job that you think is a good match with your own interests and skills. While you are waiting for the interview, you run into a current employee. This employee tells you the following about the supervisor that you would be working for if you are hired.

- The supervisor is a 40 year old male
- He always gives employees positive feedback when they perform well
- He gives employees recognition when their work is very good
- He commends employees when they do a better than average job
- He personally compliments employees when they do outstanding work
- He frequently acknowledges employees' good work performance

Based on what the employee has told you about the supervisor, please indicate how strongly you agree with each of the following statements, from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

	1 = Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 = Strongly Agree
The supervisor would treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
I would be satisfied with the level of concern the supervisor would show for my career progress.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would be consistent with his behavior toward me.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would understand the problems I might run into doing the job.	1	2	3	4	5
The supervisor would back me up with other managers.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to work for this supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!!! ©

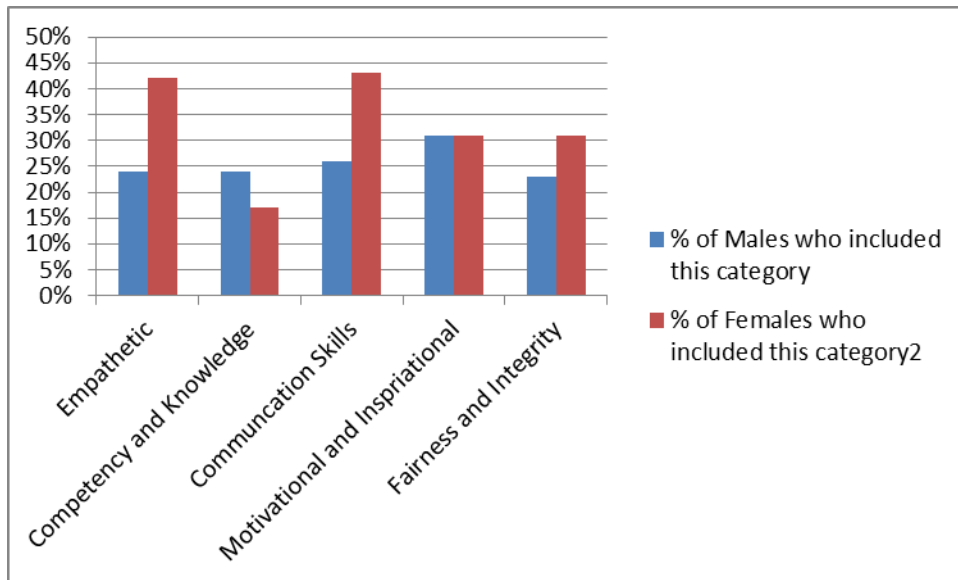
## **Appendix C: Participants' Ideal Supervisor**

**Figure 5: Supervisor Prototypes**

Supervisor Prototype Categories	Attributes for Category
Empathetic	empathetic, caring, understanding, reasonable, shows a genuine interest in his supervisors, nice, friendly, understand workers are people, considerate, compassionate, looks out for others' well-being besides their own, concern for employees, kind, emotional intelligence
Competency and Knowledge	informative, intelligent, knowledgeable, insightful, competent, practical wisdom, able to learn and adapt, knows job well, smart, be able to perform anyone's tasks if required efficiently, experienced, knows how to do the job correctly, well educated, expert, understands daily tasks and objectives, informative
Communication Skills	open-communication, ability to listen, open-door policy, communicate without it being a bother, communicates, works well with others, making employees feel comfortable to ask questions without hesitation, easy to talk to, good communicator, clearly communicate ideas, clear and concise, approachable, have people skills, make sure they understand what is expected of them, open to suggestions, people-oriented
Motivational and Inspirational	motivator, supporter, encouraging, helpful, leads by example, great role-model, building morale, inspiring, mentoring, follows what they preach, empowering, coach/developer, compliments, influences, supportive, guide, figure-head, encourages, helpful
Fairness and Integrity	honesty, reasonable, mediator, loyal, trustworthy, fair, equal treatment, rational, open-minded, unbiased, resolve conflict, credible, truthful, integrity, considerate, open to suggestions, don't favor certain employees

**Figure 6: Supervisor Prototype Results**

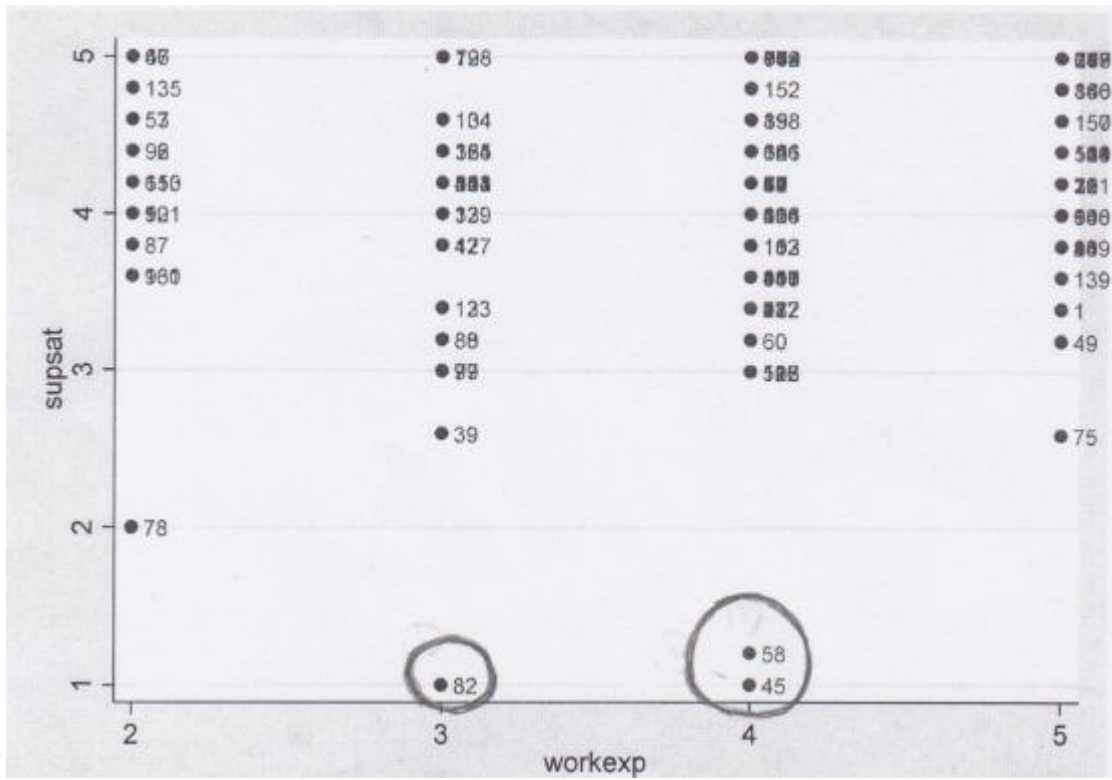
Supervisor Prototype Categories	% of Males who included this category	% of Females who included this category
Empathetic	24%	42%
Competency and Knowledge	24%	17%
Communication Skills	26%	43%
Motivational and Inspriational	31%	31%
Fairness and Integrity	23%	31%



## **Appendix D: Descriptive Statistics**



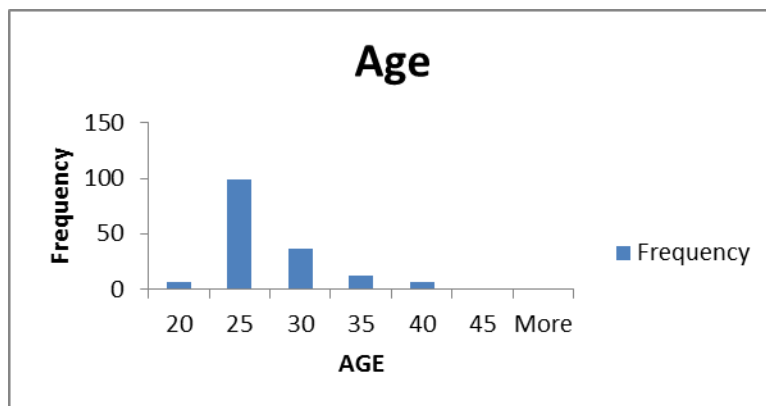
Figure 7: Scatter Plot



**Table 1: Age**

AGE		Age	Count
Mean	25.1625	19	2
Standard Error	0.34293034	20	4
Median	24	21	15
Mode	23	22	24
Standard Deviation	4.33776382	23	32
Sample Variance	18.816195	24	22
Kurtosis	1.85589352	25	6
Skewness	1.45144381	26	10
Range	21	27	7
Minimum	19	28	9
Maximum	40	29	6
Sum	4026	30	4
Count	160	31	6
		32	1
		33	0
		34	3
		35	2
		36	0
		37	4
		38	1
		39	0
		40	2

**Histogram 1: Age**



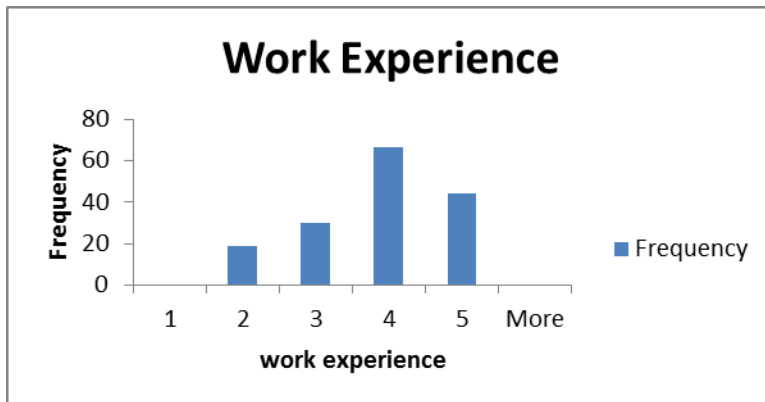
**Table 2: Work Experience**

<i>WORK EXPERIENCE</i>	
Mean	3.85
Standard Error	0.07585985
Median	4
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	0.95955965
Sample Variance	0.92075472
Kurtosis	-0.6291592
Skewness	-0.5159903
Range	3
Minimum	2
Maximum	5
Sum	616
Count	160

Work Experience	Count
1 = None	0
2 = A limited amount	19
3 = Some	30
4 = A fair amount	67
5 = A lot	44

**Histogram 2: Work Experience**



**Table 3: Gender**

<i>GENDER</i>	
Mean	0.40625
Standard Error	0.03894933
Median	0
Mode	0
Standard Deviation	0.49267432
Sample Variance	0.24272799
Kurtosis	-1.8750694
Skewness	0.38539337
Range	1
Minimum	0
Maximum	1
Sum	65
Count	160

Gender	Count
Male	95
Female	65

**Table 4: SameSex**

<i>SameSex</i>	
Mean	0.48125
Standard Error	0.03962469
Median	0
Mode	0
Standard Deviation	0.50121707
Sample Variance	0.25121855
Kurtosis	-2.0196647
Skewness	0.07576494
Range	1
Minimum	0
Maximum	1
Sum	77
Count	160

Same Sex	Count
Same Sex as Supervisor	77
Not Same sex as supervisor	83

**Table 5: Transformational vs. Transactional**

<i>Transformational</i>	
Mean	0.50625
Standard Error	0.03964948
Median	1
Mode	1
Standard Deviation	0.50153068
Sample Variance	0.25153302
Kurtosis	-2.0248326
Skewness	-0.0252392
Range	1
Minimum	0
Maximum	1
Sum	81
Count	160

Leadership Style	Count
Transformational	81
Transactional	79

## **Appendix E: Regression Results**

### Model 1: Controls

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.241954698							
R Square	0.058542076							
Adjusted R Square	0.040437116							
Standard Error	0.610843391							
Observations	160							
<i>ANOVA</i>								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	3	3.619524834	1.206508278	3.23348274	0.023970348			
Residual	156	58.20822517	0.373129648					
Total	159	61.82775						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	4.070409032	0.316386476	12.86530666	2.80682E-26	3.445454779	4.695363284	3.445454779	4.695363284
GENDER	0.159715517	0.099081507	1.611960912	0.108991759	-0.035998947	0.35542998	-0.035998947	0.35542998
AGE	-0.021546127	0.011615283	-1.854980775	0.06548635	-0.044489651	0.001397397	-0.044489651	0.001397397
WORK EXPERIENCE	0.133924925	0.052888982	2.532189507	0.012323848	0.02945398	0.23839587	0.02945398	0.23839587

### Model 2: Theory Variables

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.285366978							
R Square	0.081434312							
Adjusted R Square	0.051610751							
Standard Error	0.607276493							
Observations	160							
<i>ANOVA</i>								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	5	5.034900277	1.006980055	2.730536138	0.021513592			
Residual	154	56.79284972	0.368784738					
Total	159	61.82775						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	3.926359548	0.32655528	12.02356781	6.65292E-24	3.281253493	4.571465603	3.281253493	4.571465603
GENDER	0.164941496	0.098728326	1.67066031	0.096819887	-0.030095133	0.359978126	-0.030095133	0.359978126
AGE	-0.02086633	0.011559904	-1.80506125	0.073018663	-0.043702785	0.001970117	-0.043702785	0.001970117
WORK EXPERIENCE	0.137313736	0.053216499	2.580285057	0.010806176	0.032185179	0.242442294	0.032185179	0.242442294
SameSex	0.167901953	0.097749513	1.717675594	0.087865868	-0.025201043	0.36100495	-0.025201043	0.36100495
Transformational	0.061178071	0.098840016	0.618960553	0.53685687	-0.1340792	0.256435343	-0.1340792	0.256435343

### Model 3: Interaction

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.306657375							
R Square	0.094038745							
Adjusted R Square	0.058510853							
Standard Error	0.605063309							
Observations	160							
<i>ANOVA</i>								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	6	5.814204046	0.969034008	2.646899079	0.018011734			
Residual	153	56.01354595	0.366101608					
Total	159	61.82775						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	4.181947127	0.369527941	11.31699841	5.89302E-22	3.451911305	4.911982949	3.451911305	4.911982949
GENDER	0.166959557	0.098378241	1.697118752	0.091707509	-0.027395542	0.361314657	-0.027395542	0.361314657
AGE	-0.01966825	0.01154701	-1.70331995	0.090538598	-0.042480414	0.003143909	-0.042480414	0.003143909
WORK EXPERIENCE	0.065321235	0.072430832	0.901842945	0.368557808	-0.077772415	0.208414885	-0.077772415	0.208414885
SameSex	0.168748243	0.097394998	1.732617141	0.085178796	-0.023664372	0.361160859	-0.023664372	0.361160859
Transformational	-0.50795775	0.402327541	-1.26254779	0.208672681	-1.302792142	0.286876645	-1.302792142	0.286876645
EXPXTRAN	0.147952014	0.101407088	1.458990857	0.146617575	-0.052386847	0.348290875	-0.052386847	0.348290875



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