

The relationship between leadership styles and customer service employees' job satisfaction in a multinational company

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Acknowledgement

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Abstract

Leadership style is one of the factors that help achieving job satisfaction and organizational goal. The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction among customer service employees in an Irish multinational company. For this purpose, a total of 60 employees (M=32, F= 28) in a multinational company in Ireland participated in the research. To data collection, all employees filled in Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and job satisfaction Questionnaire. A significant positive relationship was found between job satisfaction and inspirational motivation transformational leadership. As well, a significant positive relationship was found between job satisfaction and contingent reward leadership. The results further indicated no significant difference in job satisfaction between Irish and other European or gender.

Introduction

General introduction

Management and organizational researchers have long known, that goals of companies are unattainable without the continuous commitment of the employees of the company. Job satisfaction is an important aspect for an organizations success.

Well recognized theorists such as Maslow (1954) spent time researching needs of employees and found that the more focus on motivation within an organization, the more productive the employee tend to be (Green, 2004). Now more and more organizations are realizing the importance of motivating their employees as key drive to job satisfaction and a successful business.

Many other researchers have found that satisfaction at the job is a motivational factor and in addition, this motivation leads people to their job satisfaction (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). It is no longer a question whether or not motivation and job satisfaction are related, the area of interest is now, what is the best way to motivate. Spector (1997) reported that thousands of literature on the subject have been written, especially on how leaders motivate their employees.

It has been found that job satisfaction and leadership motivation are two important constructs that has been individually studied in literature and associated with one another. They are both seen to be fundamental factors influencing the effectiveness of an organization (Jago & Vroom, 2007). In fact, behavioural science management states that if a leader does

not succeed in motivating and thereby raising employees' job satisfaction to a certain level, the company would have difficulties achieving its mission (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

In the last decade the development of the global markets has created numerous cross-cultural contacts and formed the basis for global multinational companies (McKenna, 2012). Multinational companies employ professionals from different countries, thus there is a need for managers to understand the cultural traits of each cultural group and implement the right leadership style.

Hence it is important to investigate how and why some leadership styles add to job satisfaction, in a company with different nationalities. Moreover, research on relationship between these variables in a customer service context appear to be limited, as such this study is set out to add to the literature about leadership styles relationship with job satisfaction of Customer Service employees.

Leadership definition

The psychological study of leadership began with the ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Chinese who tended to focus on some of the key qualities possessed by the leader, such as justice, judgment, wisdom and counsel. They believed a true leader would act so that others come to believe that their success is due to their own efforts and not that of their leaders (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). This early approach views leadership solely from the perspective of the individual leader and throughout the early 1900's theorists believed that the research of leadership should always be through the study of major traits common to all effective leaders (Derue et. al., 2011; McKenna, 2012). Drawing upon the Egyptians, Bass (1990) suggests that the leadership context consists of the leader and the follower. He defined leadership as interaction amongst individuals and groups that includes a structured and restructured situation, members' perception and expectations (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

Conger (1992) define leadership as “individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals who gain commitment from these group of members to this direction and who then motivate these members to achieve the direction’s outcome”. It has so far been suggested, that leadership style has a close relation to the organization and the individual. Based on this, Northouse (2007) described leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Azadi, Aida. Et. al., 2013).

According to Stogdill (1948), there are nearly as many definitions given to leadership as there have been researchers who have written about the concept. One of the problems might stem from the fact that the term leadership, is not a scientific or technical term with a standardized definition. But based on the definitions of various researchers as outlined above, many views are shared. As an attempt to synthesize the theories presented and for the purpose of this study, a common definition has been summarized; Leaders have one or more followers that they guide toward the achievement of common goals and it is a fundamental factor in influencing the effectiveness of an organization.

Leadership as a situational analyses

Stogdill’s (1948) review of the leadership literature, examined the studies of the trait leadership theories dating back to 1904. He cited more than 100 authors and concluded that persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in other situations (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). Furthermore, scholars commented that any trait’s effect on leadership behaviour always depend on the situation and subsequently, situational analyses of it began to dominate the field of leadership research and leadership process (Bass, 1990; McKenna, 2012).

The concept of leadership “process” was made important also as it calls attention to the variability of the leadership situation (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). For example, self-

confidence is not a fixed quality of a person and can change by the situation. Therefore, leadership does not only reside in a person, but is a function, where personality is a changing element in a total situation. As such, leadership has not only been studied as a simple psychological concept, but also from a situational approach, where contingency theories on the interaction between leader and situation has been developed (McKenna, 2012; Daniels & Radebaugh, 1998).

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is often a reference to one's attitude in work. It may be defined as a positive emotional response from the assessment of a job or specific aspects of a job. An extent to which a person is gratified or fulfilled by his or her work (Spector, 1994; McKenna, 2012).

Sempane, Rieger and Roodt (2002) describe job satisfaction as a relation on one person's own assessment on his job against the concern that matters to them and these emotions involved will considerably have an influence on this person's work attitude. Spector (1997) found that employees who find their job fulfilling, tend to be more satisfied with their job and defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experience (Spector, 1997; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

Edwin A. Locke's Range of Affect theory (1976) is possibly the most famous job satisfaction model. The main principle of this theory, is that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one has in a job and what one wants in a job. The theory also states, that when a person values a particular facet of a job, his satisfaction is more greatly impacted, compared to one who does not value that facet (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

The definitions of Job satisfaction are various, and a definite description for the term is unlikely, but a general definition may be concluded based on the previous findings: Job

satisfaction is the extent to which people like or dislike their job as a result of their own perception and expectation to the job that is important to them.

The Job satisfaction portion of the research questions focuses on general forms of total Job satisfaction (Spector, 1997).

Cross-cultural management and job satisfaction

It is well known that job satisfaction is influenced by many factors ranging from salaries, work itself, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, compensation, policy, supervision, flexibility, to leadership (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011; McKenna, 2012). To these factors can be added personality – job fit as a factor influencing job satisfaction too, as there may be a congruence between personality type and the demands of the job (McKenna 2012; Bono & Judge, 2004). As well, some research has indicated a difference in job satisfaction between genders, where women tend to be more satisfied than men (Soleman, 2002). Other conflicting research such as the one conducted by Greenberg and Baron (1983), found that employed women, in general, are more satisfied than men. These contradictory results suggest a possible difference in job satisfaction between genders. But the evidence is still not clear cut and findings does not stand (Clark, 1997; McKenna, 2012), when certain variables are held constant.

When working in a multinational company, another possible factor influencing job satisfaction, is nationality and culture.

One of the most widely referenced approaches for analysing variables among cultures has been done by Greet Hofstede (1991) as explained in the study journal by Jarinto (2011). Hofstede developed a cultural dimensions theory from surveying more than 116,000 IBM managers and employees in 40 countries. He found five values of dimensions that tend to vary in national culture: Power distance, (strength of social hierarchy). Individualism versus

collectivism. Masculinity-femininity (task orientation versus person-orientation), uncertainty avoidance and long or short term, looking to future or past and present (Tu 2007; Jarinto, 2011). Hofstede's model holds national culture significantly impacts employees' values and expectations, ultimately contributing to their overall job satisfaction (Tu, 2007). This theory with its' dimensions has been widely used by cross-cultural psychologists as a paradigm for research on job satisfaction and cross-cultural management.

Measuring Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an abstract personal cognition and therefore difficult to measure. As previously mentioned, the definitions of job satisfaction are many and there is no consensus form on how best to measure it. However, the most frequently adopted approach to measuring job satisfaction involves the use of rating scales (McKenna, 2012). These are standard instruments designed to provide feedback on employees' satisfaction and dissatisfaction. It is assessed at both a general level, where individual indicate whether or not they are satisfied with the overall job and at the partial level, where the individual can indicate whether or not they are satisfied with certain aspects of their job (Spector, 1997, Cabrita & Perista, 2007).

One of the best known Job satisfaction Surveys was developed by Paul Spector (1997). Spector has been involved with the research of job satisfaction for many years and designed a survey that would measure job satisfaction within the human service field, based on 9 facets of employee attitudes. The survey has been continually re-evaluated for reliability and validity by researchers in various organizations (Spector, 1997).

Leadership and job satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been examined more than any area by organizational psychology for a long time (Chen, 2005) and been associated with many different aspects of an organization including leadership.

Research conducted by McKee (1991) on leadership of community college presidents, found a correlation with job satisfaction and concluded that leadership makes a difference on job satisfaction level. Furthermore, a meta-analysis done by Judge & Piccolo (2004) examined 626 correlations studies on leadership styles and job satisfaction and found a positive relationship.

Many other research in the area have also found a significant relationship between the style of leadership and job satisfaction (Bass, 1990; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011; McKenna, 2012). But interestingly, studies from different countries found that different styles of leadership do not have the same impact on job satisfaction (Stogdill, 1974).

While some restrict the term leadership to particular types of influence methods, such as appealing to moral values, others use the form of influence as the basis of distinguishing different types of leadership. One of the most influential theories of leadership types, which is extensively used by researchers in the leadership field and will also be examined in this study, is the one developed by Bass and Avolio (1992). The theory was originally presented by Burns (1978) who introduced the concepts of transformational and transactional leadership in his treatment of political leadership (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). According to this theory further evolved by Bass and Avolio (2004), there are three types of leadership styles which consist of transformational leadership, transactional leadership and passive or laissez-faire leadership. This leadership constructs form a new paradigm for understanding both the lower and higher order effect of leadership styles.

Different leadership styles; Transformational, transactional and laissez-faire

Transformational leadership is divided into four dimensions of charisma or idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2006). *Idealized influence* is the degree to which the leader behaves in ways that cause followers to identify with the leader, who are highly admired, respected and trusted by their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). *Inspirational motivation* refers to the way leaders motivate and inspire their followers. Leaders with inspirational motivation will communicate an appealing vision and challenge followers with high standards (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011; McKenna, 2012). *Intellectual stimulation* is concerned with the role of leaders in stimulating creativity in their followers by questioning assumptions and approaching problems from a new perspective (Newstrom & Pierce, 2012). Last dimension, *individualized consideration*, includes providing support, coaching, and encouragement to followers. It is the degree to which leaders pay special attention to each individual follower's need and acts as a mentor or coach to the follower (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

Transformational leadership is frequently contrasted with transactional leadership and both are normally defined from the perspective of the behaviours employed by each to influence their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). From a behavioural perspective, transactional leadership is seen as one involving a transaction between the leader and the follower where leaders motivate their followers by relying upon contingent reward. Bass and Avolio (2004) propose that transactional leadership consists of three dimensions namely contingent reward, management by exception-active and management by exception-passive. *Contingent reward* refers to the degree in which the leader sets up constructive exchanges with followers in terms of establishing the rewards if expectations are met (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). The difference between *management by exception-active* and *management by exception-passive* lies in the

timing of the leader's intervention. Active leaders monitors followers' performance, to make sure that standards are met and then take action, which can be seen as negative reinforcement (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). Passive leaders wait until the behaviour has created problems before taking action, giving negative feedback (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

A final form of the leadership is *laissez-faire leadership* which represent an absence of leadership. Leaders who score high on laissez-fare avoid making decisions, are content to let things ride and let others do their own thing (Avolio & Bass, 1994). Although this leadership style bear some resemblance of the management by exception-passive leadership, it should be treated as separate from other dimensions, as it represents the absence of any leadership both transformational and transactional (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

As a result based on this theory, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) instrument was developed to measure the different leadership styles and has been empirically validated to reflect the complementary dimensions of each leadership style (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Research on Bass and Avolio's leadership styles and job satisfaction

Since their introduction, the different leadership styles' relationship to job satisfaction, has been explored by a number of researchers (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Contemporary literature on leadership focus especially on transformational and transactional leadership styles.

According to Bass (1985) transformational leaders motivate their followers to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the group. As a consequence, such leaders foster more job satisfaction, given its' ability to impart a sense of intellectual stimulation. Empirical studies

have supported this position. For instance, a study done by Ayob et. al. (2004) investigated the influence on leadership styles on employee's job satisfaction in a public Sector organization in Malaysia. The results revealed that transformational leadership style has a positive relationship with job satisfaction whereas transactional leadership style has a negative relationship with job satisfaction in government organization.

Another recent empirical study was carried out by Ali et. al. (2013) in selected Universities in Mogadishu-Somalia and showed results also indicating a positive significant relationship between job satisfaction and transformational leadership style but as well, a positive significant relationship between job satisfaction and transactional leadership style (Ali et. al., 2013). Moreover, a cross-sectional study by Bahadori et. al. (2012) on leadership styles and job satisfaction of emergency medical technicians in Iran, also found a significant relationship between transformational and transactional leadership style and job satisfaction. No significant relationship was observed between the laissez-faire management style and job satisfaction (Bahadori et. al., 2012).

Although, a mounting body of evidence has shown that the transformational leadership style has a positive relationship with job satisfaction, other studies such as the one conducted by Chen et. al. (2005) in a nursing faculty in Taiwan found that followers were satisfied with the contingent reward dimension of transactional leaders as it provided high satisfaction and organizational identification compared to transformational leadership style (Riaz & Haider, 2010). And a meta-analysis study carried out by Lowe et. al. (1996) also revealed that contingent reward belonging to the transactional leadership dimension, was the most effective.

The results of these studies provide an understanding of the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in certain contexts.

Research on nationality, culture and job satisfaction

Studies that aim at analysing the levels of job satisfaction by taking a cross-national approach have repeatedly shown a difference in job satisfaction across Europe (Tu, 2007; Mckenna, 2012; Lauer and Lerch, et. al. 2013). An international comparison done by Lauer and Lerch, et. al. (2013) based on the European employment analysis found that the level of job satisfaction varied at national level. Denmark was found to be the country with the highest average job satisfaction, followed by the UK, Norway, Switzerland and Austria with Ireland being on an 8th place.

Although job satisfaction has been a widely researched topic for decades, there is a lack of research on the role national culture plays on job satisfaction (Tu, 2007; Mckenna, 2012). Those studies that have investigate the relationship between factors of job satisfaction and nationality of employees, report contradictory findings (Soleman, 2002). For example, data was collected on job satisfaction from European Community Household Panel to analyse (Ahn & Garcia, n.d.) between 14 European countries in the period 1994-2001 and found a substantial difference in the average and standard deviation of job satisfaction across countries. Interestingly the difference remain the same even after controlling for important job characteristics which suggest some intrinsic differences across countries such as culture (Ahn & Garcia, n.d).

However, in Ireland, research in this field is very limited. This raise the question of whether or not there will be a difference when examining job satisfaction among different nationalities with in the same company in Ireland.

Rationale for the current study

We know that both employee job satisfaction and leadership style is fundamental to organizational success, but it is important to understand how these two dominant factors

affect each other. As outlined in above literature, previous research show the impact of leadership styles on job satisfaction in different context, related to specific population. The different results, suggest that not all employees get increased job satisfaction from the same leadership style.

While relevant literature widely investigates job satisfaction and leadership styles, studies of these variables in multinational companies among customer service employees, are almost absent.

Avolio (1999) noted that laissez- faire leadership is ineffective and highly dissatisfying for followers, and because lack of evidence prove otherwise, the interest and aim of this research is to examine two of the three leadership styles, namely, transformational leadership and transactional leadership. And more specifically to determine the relationship between the two different leadership styles dimensions Inspirational motivation/Contingent reward and customer service employee's job satisfaction in multinational company. The research will look at different aspects of each leadership style and how specific dimensions may correlate with employees' job satisfaction.

The research will also look to investigate whether nationality in an Irish multinational company will make a difference on job satisfaction, as previous research have shown that there is a clear difference on the level of job satisfaction between different countries in Europe.

Main hypotheses

Given the empirical support and the theoretical context for transformational leadership on job satisfaction, the *first hypothesis* of the study is the following: there will be a relationship between inspirational motivation transformational leadership style and customer service employee's job satisfaction.

The *second hypothesis* is based on previous studies suggesting contingent rewards as being effective and rewarding for followers. Thus we hypothesize the following: there will be a relationship between Contingent reward transactional leadership style and Customer Service employees' job satisfaction.

The following *third hypothesis* is based on previous research done on job satisfaction in Europe: There will be a significant difference on the job satisfaction between Irish and other Europeans.

A *fourth additional hypothesis* will be the following: there is a significant difference between job satisfaction and gender.

Testing these hypotheses is important for my case because it is elaborating on previous research and the result of this study should contribute to the literature about leadership styles effect on job satisfaction of Customer Service employees' in particular. Furthermore, research on job satisfaction in a multinational company in Ireland has received little to no attention and this research should help to fill this gap in literature.

Methodology

A review of previous literature was conducted to identify and study different leadership styles, job satisfaction and several theories on the relationship between the mentioned variables. This was a study looking at the relationship between variables and a quantitative approach was taken, by means of questionnaire surveys being sent out to the participants. The convenient sample method was used in this study.

A valid research depends on the way it was conducted and the course of action adopted. In order to arrive at reliable conclusions the procedure and methodology used will be narrated here in details including population, sample size used, research design chosen, collection of data, design of the questionnaires handed out, meaning of the variables tested and lastly, an elaboration of which statistical tests used to analyse the hypotheses.

The director of the multinational company was contacted in advance for approval and to be informed via email about the purpose of the study, confidentiality issues and the reporting of the results.

This research studied the relationship between previously defined leadership styles and Customer Service employees' job satisfaction in multinational company. As well, we investigated the difference in job satisfaction between Irish/other Europeans and gender.

Participants

A population about which the information was needed was the employees' from a multinational Customer Service sector, and so the data was gathered from a multinational Customer service department in Ireland.

Out of a total of 110 questionnaires sent out via email, 60 responded yielding a 55% response rate. The sample obtained included full time customer service employees only, 28 (46,67%) males, 32 (53,33%) females, and their ages ranging from 22-45 years-old with a mean age of 30. 26.67% of participants were Irish and remaining 73.33% other Europeans. Table 1 illustrates the frequency and percentage of respondents' age, gender and nationality.

Table 1

Respondents' profiles			
Variable	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	22 - 29	28	46,67
	30 - 45	32	53,33
Gender	Male	32	46,67
	Female	28	53,33
Nationality	Irish	16	26.67
	Other Europeans	44	73.33

Design

The study aimed at detection the relationship of leadership styles on Customer Service Employees' job satisfaction in a multinational company. In order to collect the data, an email was sent out to all Customer Service Employees'. The convenient sampling method was used in this research study.

The independent variables here are: transactional leadership, transformational leadership, gender and nationality. The dependent variable is: Customer Service employees' job satisfaction.

Materials and procedure

Data was collected through two survey questionnaires sent out as a link via email. All participants filled in the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Avolio and Bass (1992) for measuring leadership. According to Avolio and Bass (2004) and many other researchers (Lowe & Kroeck et. al., 1996; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), the questionnaire has been used in more than 200 studies in the past few years and proven to have well established reliability and validity (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

The other questionnaire that participants filled in is the Job satisfaction Questionnaire (JSS) developed by Spector (1994). Also here systematic reviews and research have been carried out to confirm the reliability and validity of this instrument (Spector, 1997; Frings-Dresen et. al. 2003).

Both questionnaires were combined in to one online Google survey, making sure the same person was assigned to both questionnaires, which made the data collection easier and more reliable. The participants were informed about the goal of the research, the anonymity of their participation and data confidentiality before completing the questionnaires.

The MLQ is developed to measure the seven leadership dimensions previously examined, of Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Individualized Consideration, Contingent Reward, Management-by-exception and Laissez-faire Leadership. It is a self-reporting questionnaire that consists of 21 questions addressing how often certain leadership behaviours are displayed (Avolio & Bass, 1995). A Likert scale format is used for each question, with 5 choices per items ranging from "Not at all" to "Frequently, if not always".

In order to make sure every employee answered the MLQ questions based on how they perceive their managers style, the following instructions were attached to the questionnaire: "This questionnaire is designed to assess the leadership style of your manager/supervisor. There are twenty one descriptive statements, you should judge how each statement fits your manager/supervisor. The

word “others” refers to the people your manager/supervisor interacts with, their team, other colleagues, managers, clients etc.”.

The Job satisfaction Survey, JSS consists of 36 questions, nine facet scale to assess employee attitudes about the satisfaction and aspects of the job. Each facet is assessed with four items, and a total score is computed from all items. A summated rating scale format is used, with six choices per question ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Questions are written in both directions, so about half was reversed scored allowing them to be combined meaningfully. The nine facets are Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards, Operating Conditions, Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication. Instructions for the JSS questionnaire was also attached: “Please circle the one number for each question that comes closest to reflecting your opinion about it”.

In addition, for the purpose of the study and analysis of results, three questions were added: Age, gender and nationality (Irish/other European).

Data analysis

In order to analyze the data collected and to test the hypotheses stated, all the computation was made by using the program Statistical Package for Social Science 21 (SPSS). First, all the data obtained from the questionnaires were imported in to SPSS via Excel and then recoded and computed. Next, the appropriate value was assigned to each question asked, to represent the response options. E.g. female was assigned the number 1 and males the number 2.

After importing data in to SPSS and defining construct, the descriptive part of the analysis start. Descriptive was run for all variables, assumptions for each test was examined and correlation between independent and dependent variables was investigated.

Results section

Statistical analysis

The first step in statistical analysis is to determine whether or not a parametrical test can be conducted to analyse the data. In order to find which test to use, the assumptions of each parametric tests was examined.

A histogram to check the dependent variable Job Satisfaction was run and results showed a normal bell shaped distribution, with the Skewness and Kurtosis both under 2, -.171 and -.106 respectively. Moreover, the Shapiro Wilks test showed 0.820 which is significant, as it is more than 0.05.

As well, to make sure that the variability of each independent variable group, namely nationality and gender, is approximately equal, the assumption of the test “Levene's Test for Equality of Variances” was checked by running a one-way ANOVA. The results revealed

values of 0.21 and 0.55, and so above 0.05. Thus the groups have equal variance and therefore, the parametric samples t-test was employed to statistical analysis.

Another step was to examine a possible correlation between Job Satisfaction and two different dimensions in leadership styles: Inspirational Motivation and Contingent Reward. In order to do this, scatterplots were run to check for relationships between the variables in question, see table 2. The “Fit Line at Total” showed a correlation with clustering around the line and value of R² 0.234 and 0.155 indicating a valid predictor of criterion for both correlations. Therefore, the parametric test of Pearson’s correlation was employed to statistical analysis.

Descriptive statistic – Pearson’s correlation

The first and second hypotheses were tested using Pearson’s correlation. Table 2 shows the Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of Total Job satisfaction and the dimension Inspirational motivation belonging to the transformational leadership style and Contingent reward belonging to the transactional leadership style.

Table 2: Descriptive of Inspirational motivation, Contingent Reward and total Job satisfaction

Variable	Mean	SD
Inspirational motivation	8.87	1.79
Contingent reward	8.27	2.39
Total job Satisfaction	161.95	22.06

In addition, a Pearson’s correlation between Total Job Satisfaction and Inspirational motivation is represented in Table 3. Pearson’s correlation between Total Job Satisfaction and Contingent reward leadership is represented in Table 4.

Our first hypothesis to be tested: There will be a positive relationship between inspirational motivation transformational leadership style in a multinational company and customer service employee’s job satisfaction.

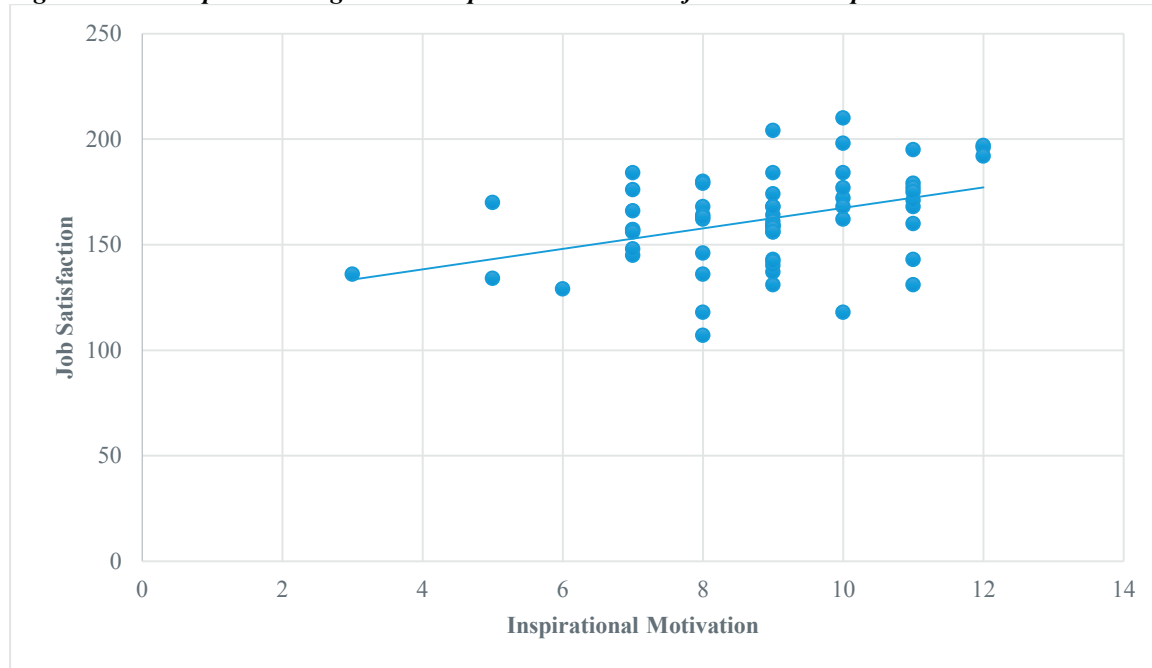
Table 3: Correlation table between Total job satisfaction and Inspirational motivation

		Inspirational motivation	Total satisfaction	Job
Inspirational motivation Correlation	Pearson	1	0.39*	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.002	
Total Job satisfaction Correlation	Pearson	0.39*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002		

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)*

The mean scores for Inspirational motivation was 8.87 (SD = 1.79) and for Total Job satisfaction was 161.95 (SD=22.06). As illustrated in figure 1, a Pearson correlation found that there was a moderate significant positive relationship between Inspirational motivation and Job satisfaction. Therefore, our first hypothesis can be accepted.

Figure 1: Scatter plot showing relationship between Job Satisfaction and Inspirational motivation leadership



Our second hypothesis to be tested: there will be a relationship between Contingent reward transactional leadership in a multinational company Customer Service employees' job satisfaction.

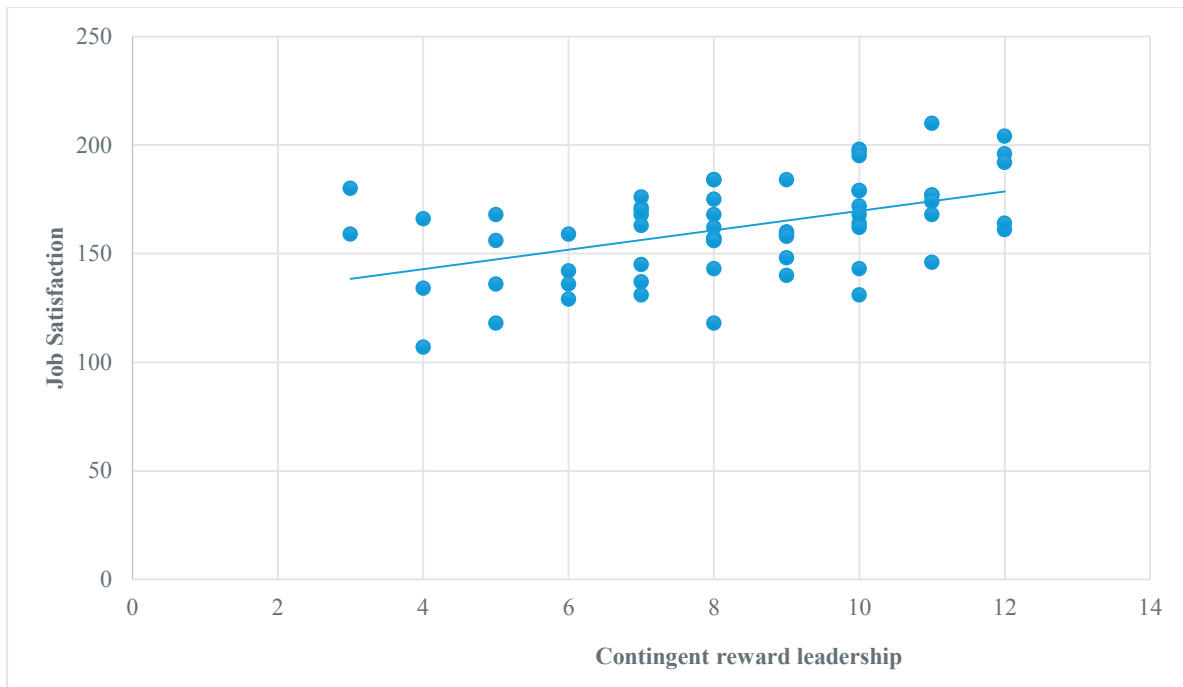
Table 4: Correlation table between Total job satisfaction and Contingent rewards

	Contingent Reward	Total Job satisfaction	Job
Contingent Reward Correlation	Pearson 1	0.48**	0.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Total Job satisfaction Correlation	Pearson 0.48**	1	0.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)		

***Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)*

The mean scores for Contingent reward was 8.27 (SD = 2.39) and for Total Job satisfaction was 161.95 (SD=22.06). As illustrated in figure 2, a Pearson's correlation found a strong, significant positive relationship between Contingent reward and Job satisfaction. Therefore, our second hypothesis can be accepted

Figure 2: Scatter plot showing relationship between Job Satisfaction and Contingent reward leadership



Both correlations show a relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable, so when one goes up the other one goes up too.

Descriptive statistic – independent samples t-test

The third and fourth hypotheses were tested using independent samples t-tests. Table 5 show the Mean, Standard deviation (SD), t , degrees of freedom (df) and p of job satisfaction between Irish and other Europeans.

Table 5: An independent samples t-test displaying the difference between Irish and other Europeans for the dependent variable Job satisfaction

	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Irish	170.44	23.93			
Other Europeans	158.86	20.77			
Equal Variances assumed			1.83	58	0.07

Note: p significant at .05 level

Irish (mean = 170.44, SD = 23.93) were found to have a slightly higher level of job satisfaction than other Europeans (mean = 158.86, SD = 20.77), see figure 3. The 95% confidence limits shows that the population mean difference of the variables lies somewhere between -1.07 and 24.22. An independent samples t-test found that there was no significant

difference between job satisfaction level of Irish and other Europeans ($t(1.83) = 58, p = .07$). Therefore our fourth hypothesis can be rejected.

Next, to explore and test our fourth and last hypothesis: there will be a significant difference on the job satisfaction between males and females. Table 6 shows the Mean, Standard deviation (SD), t , degrees of freedom (df) and p of job satisfaction in males and females. Our third hypothesis to be tested: there is a significant difference in job satisfaction and gender.

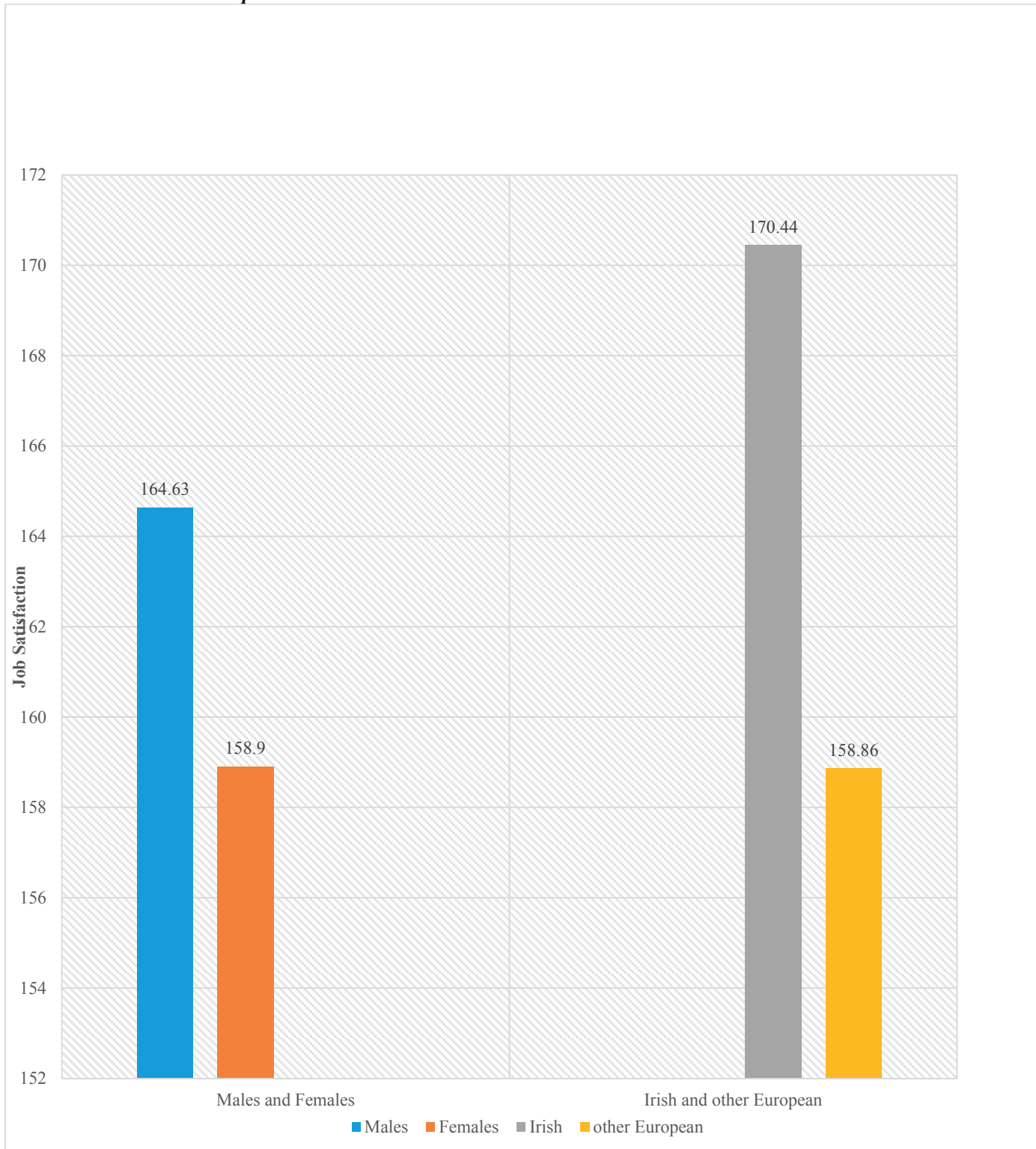
Table 6: An independent samples t-test displaying the difference between males and females for the dependent variable Job satisfaction

	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Males	164.63	19.00			
Females	158.90	25.12			
Equal Variances assumed			-1.00	58	0.32

Note: p significant at .05 level

Males (mean = 164.63, SD = 19.00) were found to have a slightly higher level of job satisfaction than females (mean = 158.90, SD = 25.12), see figure 3. The 95% confidence limits shows that the population mean difference of the variables lies somewhere between -17.16 and 5.70. An independent samples t-test found that there was no significant difference between job satisfaction level of males and females ($t(-1.00) = 58, p = .32$). Therefore our third hypothesis can be rejected.

Figure 3: A clustered Bar Chart illustrating the difference in mean scores in Job Satisfaction between Gender and Irish/other Europeans



Discussion and conclusion

The study aimed to produce findings on job satisfaction among customer service employees' in a multinational company.

Job satisfaction is known to be linked with leadership style as an influencing factor. However, the focus of leadership research has shifted from examining the effect of different leadership styles, to the identification of those behaviours and dimensions associated with the leader style. Because not much research has been done on this in a customer service specific industry, one of the compelling stimulus for the present study, was the possibility to test the theories suggested by previous research on different leadership styles effect on job satisfaction of customer service employees'.

As well, the average level of job satisfaction and the factors influencing this (salaries, benefits etc.) has been recognized to vary at national level. In the present study, it was possible to test the difference in the overall job satisfaction level between Irish and other Europeans within the same company and industry. This allow us to analyse some of the factors normally influencing job satisfaction in a different way.

Moreover, because research on whether gender has influence on job satisfaction or not, has garnered conflicting results, we were interested in testing this in the customer service industry.

Firstly, the study looked at the relationship between two leadership styles; transformational and transactional, based on Bass and Avolio (1992) theory of the different leadership styles. More specifically however, this study aimed to examine whether two particular dimensions of leadership styles, individually correlated with job satisfaction. The results demonstrated a positive relationship, thus suggesting that leadership styles have a significant role in job satisfaction.

Secondly the study aimed to investigate the difference in job satisfaction between nationalities, in specific Irish and other Europeans. The test found no significant difference between nationalities, consequently rejecting the hypothesis: there will be a significant difference on the job satisfaction between Irish and other Europeans.

Thirdly, the study hypothesized that there would be a difference in job satisfaction between males and females. Again, results revealed no insignificant difference between both groups, which rejected the hypothesis.

This chapter will discuss the research findings of the study conducted. First, there will be a review of the different hypothesis tested. Next, we will look at the strengths and the different limitations of this study, following implications for future research. Last, a general conclusion will be provided.

First hypothesis - Inspirational motivation transformational leadership and job satisfaction

Research on transformational leadership has been criticized for providing little information about the possible mechanisms through which transformational leadership behaviour influence work outcome such as job satisfaction (Yukl, 1999; Newstrom & Pierce, 2011). This study was intended to enhance our understanding of the transformational leadership style process, by looking at a specific dimension of it namely Inspirational motivation.

The findings of this study support our hypothesis that there will be a relationship between inspirational motivation transformational leadership style in a multinational company and customer service employee's job satisfaction. The result support previous findings on how transformational leadership's effect job satisfaction (Ayob et. al., 2004; Bahadori et. al., 2012; Ali et. al., 2013). As well, they are also in line with results of Judge and Piccolo (2004) who conducted a meta-analysis based on 626 correlations from 87 sources

and found a stronger relationship with criteria from the transformational leadership style, that reflect follower and job satisfaction, than any other criteria or leadership styles. Moreover, because transformational leadership has received lots of attention in recent years, many other studies have looked at the dimensions of transformational leadership style and found positive correlation with motivation, achievement, positive effectively and job satisfaction (McKenna, 2012).

A review of the literature for this study lead to the location of research studies examining the influence of transformational leadership dimensions on job satisfaction in many specific sectors and populations. However, very limited research studies was found on the effect of transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction to the field of customer service employees' in multinational company.

The findings in this study are important in that it is strongly supported by earlier research done on relationship between dimensions of the transformational leadership style and job satisfaction.

In summary, the findings are showing us that there is a positive correlation between Inspirational motivation transformational leadership style and job satisfaction of customer service employees', suggesting that leadership style does have an impact on job satisfaction in this specific industry.

Second hypothesis – Contingent reward transactional leadership and job satisfaction

The purpose of researching the second hypothesis, was to determine if a significant relationship existed between Contingent reward transactional leadership and job satisfaction in customer service employees' in a multinational company. Our results supported this hypothesis, which imply that the use of contingent reward may enhance customer service employees' satisfaction with work. These results are consistent with previous findings made

for example by Judge and Piccolo (2004) who in their meta-analysis demonstrated that contingent reward behavior was positively related to employee satisfaction. Other researchers like Bahadori et. al., (2012) and Chen et. al. (2005) also found a positive correlation between contingent reward leadership and job satisfaction.

On the contrary, some research findings suggest that transactional leadership style in general, has a negative effect on job satisfaction, as the one proposed by Ayob et. al. (2004). Therefore it remains unknown whether the effect in the present study is real or occurred by chance, and further similar research in multinational companies is needed.

In summary, based on the literature reviewed, research has found more positive correlation between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction, but it is clear by comparing and examining previous research with our own findings, that the dimension contingent reward belonging to the transactional leadership style, has a positive correlation with job satisfaction as well.

Third hypothesis – difference between nationality and job satisfaction

As we know, job satisfaction is influenced by different factors ranging from salaries, work itself, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, compensation, policy, supervision, flexibility, to leadership (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011; McKenna, 2012).

A challenge for leaders and managers in multinational companies may be to adapt an effective leadership style with employees who are hired to support different languages, due to the different cultural traits and international diversity. Because this study was conducted in an Irish multinational company, we were interested in exploring the relationship of job satisfaction between Irish and other Europeans. The third hypothesis was that there would be a significant difference on the job satisfaction between Irish and other Europeans. The results

failed to detect job satisfaction differences based on nationality. Our third hypothesis was therefore rejected.

This is not in line with recent European employment analysis research reported in the study done by Lauer and Lerch, et. al. (2013) and Ahn and Garcia (n.d.) comparing the average level of job satisfaction across Europe and found a significant difference. In fact, all literature we have come across has shown a difference in the level of job satisfaction between nationalities.

However, a certain level of caution must be applied when examining these results, as there are some obvious explanations, as to why these are not in line with previous research. This will be addressed later when discussing the limitation.

Fourth hypothesis – difference between gender and job satisfaction

Lastly, as an additional hypothesis based on the contradictory evidence suggested by previous literature, we hypothesized that there would be a significant difference between job satisfaction and gender. The study revealed an insignificant difference between gender and job satisfaction and thereby rejecting our hypothesis. The findings does not support the claim made by Greenberg and Baron (1983), who reported that females tend to be less satisfied with their job than men. Furthermore, other researchers have argued that women's level of job satisfaction is higher than men's caused by the systematic differences in occupation and work content experienced by men and women (McKenna, 2012).

There are some potential reasons why these findings does not support previous literature and our hypothesis, which will also be addressed later when discussing the limitations of this study.

Strengths and limitations

Unlike many other studies on leadership styles and job satisfaction, the participants were not all of same nationality. In fact, this seem to be the first research study looking at the relationship between Customer service employees' and job satisfaction in a multinational company in Ireland.

Another main strength of the current study is that it extend previous research by comparing Job satisfaction with Irish and other Europeans. As this is a growing and competitive industry (McKenna, 2012) there is a need for managers to understand the cultural differences in order to implement the right leadership style and therefore there is a necessity for further research on these variables.

In terms of leadership style and job satisfaction research, it has succeeded in validating previous studies and expanding on the research in the Customer service employee industry.

It is however, important to note the general limitations of this research. First, this study was designed to be analyzed trough quantitative methods, which did not allow for further exploration on employees' responses on questionnaire items. Furthermore, the questions asked were not concrete in terms of comparison groups, leaving room for interpretation and are therefore based solely on individuals own perception.

In addition, to the potential limitations listed above, the Multifactor leadership Questionnaire and job satisfaction Questionnaire involve rating scales which allowed respondents to give a neutral answer by using the midpoints of the scale or an extreme answer by using the edge of the scale. This could potentially account for some of the unexpected

results of no significant difference in job satisfaction between gender and Irish/other Europeans.

Furthermore, this study only looked at European nationalities all working in the same company, one can imagine that the expectation of a job is somewhat the same, and therefore so is the perception of job satisfaction. As well literature (Tu, 2007; McKenna, 2012; Ahn & Garcia, n.d.) has shown that certain factors influence individuals on the level of job satisfaction more than other factors. When everyone is working in the customer service industry within the same company some of these factors, such as working conditions, policy, flexibility, work itself and compensation, may no longer be current. In addition to this, the study done by Ahn Garcia on data comparing 14 different countries between year 1997-2001, show that the work type stands out as the most important job domain.

Lastly, our sample size was quite small - 60 employees responded to the questionnaires out of a total of 110. This could explain the results and rejection of hypothesis 3 and 4. However, this cannot be concluded with certainty before further research has been conducted.

Implications for future research

Although our findings on leadership styles and job satisfaction is in line with previous research, more studies in a customer service context is needed, as very limited research has been done in this specific area.

Furthermore, while job satisfaction across Europe has been extensively researched, research on job satisfaction in Ireland specific appear to be relatively limited and no research was found on job satisfaction in multinational companies.

Moreover, even though the topic of job satisfaction and different leadership styles have received a great deal of attention, especially in recent years, the understanding of what is

involved in leadership styles is still in some ways unclear. For instance, as Stogdill pointed out in regards to being a leader in different situations, we may want to be looking at different behavior in specific situations rather than averaging across situations. This should allow for other variables to be taken into account such as personality - which is also more consistent with contemporary research.

For example, Bono and Judge (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of this literature and reported that personality dimension of extroversion, emerged as the most consistent and strongest correlate of transformational leadership (Newstrom & Pierce, 2011).

Although, there has been attempts to define who the transformational and transactional leader is, by looking at certain personality traits, there is much more research to be done in this area.

Conclusion

There are dozens of theories, concepts and perspectives on leadership and the relationship with job satisfaction. It remains one of the most researched areas within organizational and psychological study and the developing interest will continue to provide us with a better understanding.

Generally, based on the literature review and our results, we know that different leadership styles affect job satisfaction. This study has added to the understanding of job satisfaction among customer service employees' in an Irish multinational company.

It is important, however, to note that very little research has been done on job satisfaction in Ireland both among Irish nationalities and other Europeans who work in Ireland, especially in the context of customer service employees' in multinational companies. Further research on these variables is needed to fill the gap found in the literature and to get a

better understanding of Job satisfaction of customer service employees' of different nationalities.

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Appendix

Consent Form

Dublin Business School

Psychology Department

13-14 Aungier Street

Dublin 2.

My name is Line Thomsen and I am conducting research in the Department of Psychology that explores leadership styles and job satisfaction. This research is being conducted as part of my studies and will be submitted for examination.

You are invited to take part in this study and participation involves completing the anonymous survey. While the survey asks some questions that might cause some minor negative feelings, it has been used widely in research. If any of the questions do raise difficult feelings for you, contact information for support services are included on the final page.

Participation is completely voluntary and so you are not obliged to take part.

Participation is anonymous and confidential. Thus responses cannot be attributed to any one participant. For this reason, it will not be possible to withdraw from participation after the questionnaire has been completed.

The questionnaires will be securely stored and data from the questionnaires will be transferred from the online record to electronic format and stored on a password protected computer.

It is important that you understand that by completing and submitting the questionnaire

that you are consenting to participate in the study.

Should you require any further information about the research, please contact Line Thomsen, or . My supervisor can be contacted at

Statement of consent:

I have read the above information and I understand the procedure and what's involved in this study. I consent to participate in this study by completing the questionnaire.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Debriefing Form

Thank you for your participation in this research.

If answering any of the questions on the questionnaires lead you to feel distressed and you would like to talk to someone please contact the following organizations:

Samaritans- 1850 60 90 90

If you have any inquiries regarding the research itself, findings or possible publications please feel free to contact me via email:

Demographics Questionnaire

Please indicate the correct answer with an "x" in the appropriate box or by typing:

Gender:

Male []

Female []

Age:

[]

Nationality:

Irish []

Other European []

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Instructions: this questionnaire is designed to assess the leadership style of your manager/supervisor. There are twenty one descriptive statements, you should judge how each statement fits your manager/supervisor. The word “others” refers to the people your manager/supervisor interacts with, their team, other colleagues, managers, clients etc.

KEY: 0 = Not at all
 1 = Once in a while
 2 = Sometimes
 3 = Fairly often
 4 = Frequently, if not always

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I make others feel good to be around me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I express with a few simple words what we could and should do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I enable others to think about old problems in new ways. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I help others develop themselves. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. I tell others what to do if they want to be rewarded for their work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I am satisfied when others meet agreed-upon standards. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I am content to let others continue working in the same way as always. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Others have complete faith in me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. I provide appealing images about what we can do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. I provide others with new ways of looking at puzzling things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. I let others know how I think they are doing. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. As long as things are working, I do not try to change anything. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Whatever others want to do is O.K. with me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Others are proud to be associated with me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. I help others find meaning in their work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. I get others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. I give personal attention to others who seem rejected. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 19. I call attention to what others can get for what they accomplish. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. I tell others the standards they have to know to carry out their work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. I ask no more of others than what is absolutely essential. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

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Job Satisfaction Survey

JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY Paul E. Spector Department of Psychology University of South Florida <small>Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.</small>		
PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.		Disagree very much Disagree moderately Disagree slightly Agree slightly Agree moderately Agree very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7	I like the people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1 2 3 4 5 6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6

	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.	Disagree very much Disagree moderately Disagree slightly Agree slightly Agree moderately Agree very much
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1 2 3 4 5 6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30	I like my supervisor.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1 2 3 4 5 6