

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES BY LAS VEGAS CASINO-GAMING MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

As the casino-gaming industry continues to grow, the understanding of leadership styles becomes even more important because of competition and economic challenges. The purpose of this research study was to examine employee perceptions of managerial leadership styles in Las Vegas casino-gaming operations in conjunction with revenue growth between 2000 and 2006. Participants in the current research study completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X (MLQ) to express their perceptions about the leadership styles of casino-gaming managers. The study revealed that Las Vegas casino-gaming employee participants perceived their managers as following a transactional rather than a transformational style of leadership. In addition, revenue growth was not seen as a determining factor in how employees viewed their manager's leadership style.

JEL: M1

KEYWORDS: Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Casinos, Gaming

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is one of the most widely researched topics of the 20th century while being one of the most misunderstood as well (Burns, 1978; Chang, 2005; Masood, Dani, Burns, & Backhouse, 2006). Antonakis, Cianciolo, and Sternberg (2004) claimed that the changing leadership paradigms explained a portion of the 20th century's long confusion related to the study of leadership. The difficulty in defining the most effective style of leadership is two-fold. First, leadership lacks a common definition. Throughout the past century, scholars could only disagree on what the term means (Antonakis et al.). The second issue of concern reflects the ever-changing environment of 21st century organizations (Kupers & Weibler, 2006). One factor believed to play a significant role in the changing environment concerns how emotions play an important role between how leaders and followers relate to one another (Kupers & Weibler).

The study of leadership over the early portion of the 20th century tended to disregard emotions as unimportant distractions (Kupers & Weibler, 2006). Kupers and Weibler believed ignoring emotions was a critical error on the part of leadership scholars; only recently does the literature account for the affect emotions play in the influence leaders have over their followers. The study of 20th century leadership initially focused on the characteristics or styles of leaders as perceived by the environment. The differences between leaders and non-leaders also raised the primary weakness of the Trait School of Leadership. Perceived leadership rely on individual opinions often resulting in negative descriptions preventing an accurate description of leadership (Antonakis et al., 2004).

As the study of leadership progressed from the late 20th century and into the early 21st century, the complexity of analysis increased (Antonakis et al., 2004). Antonakis et al. believed that the study of leadership no longer focused its impetus on individual traits or characteristics. Leadership research of the 21st century focuses on the transformation of an organization from being results-orientated leadership to one interested in the success of individuals and the organization (Antonakis et al.). According to Hack

and Roberts (2003), transforming an organization involves changing the approach taken towards defining and measuring organizational performance.

An important part of assessing key skills in hospitality leaders is the ability to understand and effectively deal with change (Brownell, 2005; Van Wart, 2004). According to Van Wart (2004), the analysis of leadership must focus on how “[leadership] varies significantly from one situation to the next” (p. 173). An example of the constant variation of situations found in the casino-gaming industry began in 1976 when casino style gaming in Atlantic City, New Jersey was legalized and was further expanded with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (Wenz, 2006). Van Wart’s (2004) analysis emphasized that leadership in the casino-gaming industry must remain flexible in its approach to guide an organization through expansive times.

Because of the exponential growth of casino gambling in the past few decades, leadership in the casino-gaming industry has become a topic of interest (Hayles, 2010; Schaap, 2006; Schneider, Macey, Barbera, & Martin, 2009). Over the past 20 years, the casino-gaming industry has grown from a Nevada industry to one encompassing 29 states and 176 Native American Indian reservations (Wenz, 2006). Between 1991 and 1998, casino-gaming revenues grew 134% nationally (Thalheimer & Ali, 2003). During the period 1996 to 2000, some Las Vegas casino-gaming operations experienced growth three times the national average. For example, revenues at the MGM-Mirage Corporation (known today as MGM Resorts International) experienced revenue growth at a rate of 304% (MGM-Mirage, 2000). The continued growth of the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry creates a need to understand if the leadership style of managers plays a significant factor in that growth (Brownell, 2005; Van Wart, 2004). Understanding existing leadership styles at casinos provides management with a tool necessary for the development of future leaders as the business environment of an industry continues to change. Schaap (2006) determined through his empirical research of the Nevada gaming industry that the environment is in a state of constant change requiring flexibility in order to remain competitive. This study provides an exploration of whether managers in 21st century Las Vegas casino-gaming industry exhibit transformational leadership behavior. The significance of this information could develop a model to train future managers for the casino-gaming industry.

Schaap (2006) determined through his empirical research of the Nevada gaming industry that the environment is in a state of constant change requiring flexibility in order to remain competitive. This study provides an exploration of whether managers in the 21st century Las Vegas casino-gaming industry exhibit transformational leadership behavior. The significance of this information could develop a model to train future managers for the casino-gaming industry. The paper will begin by describing the full range leadership model. It will then review literature about the specifics of the transformational leadership style in affecting a paradigm change in an organization. The discussion concludes with study results involving specific employee perceptions about managerial leadership styles in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry and then describes the methodology of the study, its results, and recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Significance to Leadership

The significance to leadership this study provides is a focus on employee perceptions of the leadership styles exhibited by managers in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry. The foundation of this study focused on the theory of transformational leadership included in the Bass and Avolio (2002, 2004) full range leadership model (FRLM). The FRLM consists of three levels of leadership styles defined by eight specific components. The highest level of the FRLM is the transformational level. The transformational

level includes four components: (a) charisma/idealized influence (II), (b) intellectual stimulation (IS), (c) individualized consideration (IC), and (d) inspirational motivation (IM). The middle level of the FRLM is the transactional level consisting of the following two components: (a) contingent reward (CR) and (b) management-by-exception (active) (MBEA). The lowest level of the FRLM is the passive-avoidant non-leadership level, which includes: (a) management-by-exception (passive) MBEP and (b) laissez-faire (Bass & Avolio, 2002).

The FRLM is a building process of the different levels of leadership based on specific leadership behaviors (Bass & Avolio, 2002). For example, the management-by-exception (active) (MBEA) component of transactional leadership centers on the observation of organization activities where the leader specifically looks for problems and errors and takes action only when something negative occurs (Kirkbride, 2006). In contrast, transformational leaders take a more proactive role in organizational observation and direct action and interaction with their followers (Bass & Avolio).

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short-Form (MLQ) is considered the primary tool for measuring the perception of followers about the leadership style of managers (Antonakis, 2001). This research study focused solely on the MLQ measurements of employee perceptions about the transformational leadership characteristics of managers in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry. This study attempted to understand if a relationship existed between employee perceived transformational leadership style and revenue growth in Las Vegas casino-gaming operations that exceeded 100% for the period 2000 to 2006. The significance to leadership that this study raised relates to Schaap's (2006) study of Nevada casino executives. Schaap found that the Nevada casino-gaming industry presents a number of unique situations requiring different managerial approaches depending on the situation. Successful leaders combine each of these unique situations into a database of knowledge that enhances itself within the process creating solutions focused on the specific problem.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership gained the attention of the leadership academic community and the social sciences because previous research on leadership failed to identify a single all encompassing style for every environment or situation (Barling, Christie, & Turner, 2008; Bass, 1990; Thompson, 2004). The shift in leadership paradigms began in the late 20th century focused on transforming ineffective leaders into effective leaders through the inspiration and motivation of followers (Spence-Lashinger & Finegan, 2005; Tucker & Russell, 2004). Al-Mailam (2004) found that transforming followers requires "enthusiasm, charisma and dedication" (p. 278) as critical components in successful leadership.

Bass and Avolio (2002) believed that charisma (idealized influence) is central to the transformational leadership process. The key to charismatic leading is the ability of leaders to influence their followers' acceptance of the organization's common vision (Jaskyte, 2004). Charismatic leaders articulate that vision by establishing their individual credibility (Ilies, Judge, & Wagner, 2006). Idealized influence is more than the admiration of one's followers based on popularity or personality. Idealized leaders create an atmosphere of follower desire to emulate the leader because the leader shares in the tasks required for goal attainment and the risks associated with those same goals (Bass & Avolio, 2002; Wu, Neubert, & Yi, 2007). This behavior establishes leadership credibility both internally and externally as all of the organization's stakeholders endow the leader with confidence and support (Bass & Avolio, 2002). Brown-Boone (2006) believed that idealized leaders become role models by establishing their expertise in guiding the organization. Leaders develop a level of confidence within the organization by creating a consistent environment where leaders and followers equally share risk (Brown-Boone).

Inspirational leaders expand their credibility by engaging their followers into accepting new responsibilities necessary for goal attainment (Bass & Avolio, 2002; Bass, 2003). These responsibilities begin with a clear articulation of the organization's vision and follows closely with detailed communication of this vision (Barbuto, 2005; Ozaralli, 2003). Intellectual stimulation uses influence (charisma) and inspiration to entice creativity and innovation among followers (Bass, 2003; Lim & Ployhart, 2004). Transformational leaders encourage followers to integrate creativity and risk-taking as a part of the problem solving process. Individual consideration focuses on the individual improvement of followers. Avolio and Yammarino (2002) equate the individual consideration component of transformational leadership to the contingency paradigm because leaders change styles based on the individual needs of their followers. Transformational leaders encourage creativity, individual responsibility and innovative approaches to support the leader's vision (Bass, 1990). Kouzes and Posner (2007) believed positive change is possible through articulated communication of a supportable vision within an environment relating the organization's vision to follower self-interests. Lester (2007) believed the key to transformational leadership is the ability of top leadership to recognize that transforming an organization depends on change.

Hack and Roberts (2003) discovered that transforming an organization is a “means to change the nature, function, or condition of [an organization's environment]” (p.1). Kirkbride (2006) posited that transactional leaders utilize customary punishment-reward methods to accomplish organizational goals while transformational leaders focus on a vision and process for guiding an organization and its members. Key dimensions of transformational leadership include (a) articulating a vision; (b) fostering group goal acceptance; (c) modeling behaviors in alignment with the articulated vision; (d) providing individualized support and consideration; (e) setting high expectations for performance; and (f) imparting intellectual stimulation. The leader's behavior as a role model is imperative, setting an example for others to follow on the path to a common goal (Gooty, Gavin, Johnson, Frazier, & Snow, 2009).

Transformational leadership is not without controversy. Transformational leaders depend on their ability to influence followers by affecting their beliefs and values (Rowlett, 2005; Vera & Crossan, 2004). Unethical leaders use transformational leadership principles to take advantage of their followers (Homrig, 2005; Rowlett). Bass (2003) called this behavior *pseudotransformational leadership*. Pseudotransformational leadership behavior appears transformational on the surface, but in reality is selfish, ineffective, and immoral (Barling et al., 2008; Smith, Montagno & Kuzmenko, 2004). Examples of pseudotransformational leadership were the corporate scandals of Enron and WorldCom in the early 21st century (Bass, 2003). Homrig believed that transformational leaders could unscrupulously influence followers to abandon their individual desires in favor of the goals of their leaders. According to Action and Golden (2003) and Spence-Lashinger and Finegan (2005), pseudotransformational leaders create a distrustful environment that directly affects organizational performance including a diminished commitment on the part of their followers.

Khatri (2005) postulated that the Bass transformational leadership model includes conceptual and methodological flaws primarily the overlapping found within the four transformational leadership components. For example, Yukl (1999) believed intellectual stimulation is unclear and includes similarities with individual consideration and inspirational motivation. Khatri believed these similarities center on two primary constructs: charisma and vision. Charisma represents the conceptual construct of emotion and vision represents the methodological construct of intellect. Khatri found these constructs form the basis found within each of the Bass (1990) transformational leadership components. Following Khatri's alternative model of transformational leadership, leaders fall within one of four leadership categories: (a) charismatic and visionary (transformational), (b) non-charismatic and visionary, (c) charismatic and non-visionary, and (d) non-charismatic and non-visionary. Central to the Khatri alternative model is the independence between charisma and vision. Khatri expanded his theory by

demonstrating an overlap between transformational leadership and contingent reward transactional leadership. Key to the Khatri model is the presence of both constructs to inspire and lead an organization. Absence of either or both charisma and vision represents non-transformational leadership.

Bass and Avolio (2002) believed that the characteristics of a successful leader include components from each level of the FRLM. Successful leaders minimize their frequency as passive-avoidant leaders while maximizing their transformational leadership style. Many research studies have examined transformational leadership, empirically proving the value of transformational characteristics for effective leadership (Hetland, Sandal, & Johnsen, 2008; Pielstick, 1998; Young, 2004). Northouse (2010) extolled the intuitive appeal of transformational leadership: (a) leaders advocate for others, and (b) leadership is a process between leaders and followers. Transformational leadership also serves as an important mechanism for organizational change (Masood, Dani, Burns, & Backhouse, 2006). Schaap (2006) found there exists “a positive relationship between companies having success in achieving their financial and/or strategic performance targets and a senior-level leader’s style of leadership being inspirational to others” (p.21).

Tracey and Hinkin’s (1994) research of hospitality industry executives found effective transformational leadership styles include a focused vision of organizational needs. Hartley-Leonard, former chair of Hyatt Hotels, believed that employee creativity is an integral part of a company’s success (Tracey & Hinkin). Kouzes (1999) believed that leading people means caring about them. The development of individual followers defines leadership, not the leader’s control over followers (Kouzes). In a study of 68 financial services managers, Feinberg, Ostroff and Burke (2005) found a positive correlation between transformational leadership behavior and followers’ willingness to adopt the organization’s vision. Tesone (2004) believed that hospitality leaders operate in a transformational environment by increasing the learning process of its leaders. Tesone referred to the learning process as the whole brain leadership model. The focus of the whole brain leadership model is learning through knowledge and experience. Successful hospitality leaders that are truly transformational utilize cognitive assimilation of information as the knowledge component. Working closely in conjunction with the knowledge component is the experience component. Tesone (2004) found that transformational hospitality leaders “create and enhance the leadership abilities of all staff members within a given organization” (p. 367).

Schapp (2006) conducted the only known empirical study of leadership behavior in the casino-gaming industry. Schapp studied 126 executives from throughout the Nevada gaming industry focusing on leadership styles in correlation to successful organizational performance. Schapp believed that successful performance encompasses two primary factors. First, leaders need to take an innovative approach to the structure of the organization. The second factor concerned the actual implementation of the organization’s strategy. Schapp found that a correlation exists between the transformational leadership trait of inspirational motivation and successful performance. Although a specific leadership style does not explain organizational success in every instance, Schaap’s study did determine that inspiring one’s followers was a significant key to effective strategy implementation and eventual organizational success. The lack of additional empirical research indicates a need for additional study in the area of leadership in the casino-gaming industry.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

There are many different methods for conducting effective and meaningful research. This study utilized a non-experimental quantitative method of cross-sectional research to examine employee perceptions about managerial leadership styles in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry. Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2009) believed that survey research is an effective method for measuring a sample or the entire population to

describe specific opinions or perceptions of a topic. Cross-sectional surveys measure existing perceptions at a fixed point-in-time (Hair et al.).

HYPOTHESIS

The focus of this research study was on the MLQ measurements to understand if a relationship exists between perceived transformational leadership characteristics and revenue growth of Las Vegas casino-gaming operations for the period 2000 to 2006. This study compared employee perceptions of transformational leadership styles between Las Vegas casino-gaming operations experiencing growth in revenue exceeding 100% with those operations experiencing revenue growth less than 100% for that time period. The analysis of the data collected for the following hypothesis determined if a statistically significant difference existed in employee perceptions of managerial transformational leadership in Las Vegas casino-gaming operations:

H1: There is no difference in the perception of Las Vegas casino-gaming employees regarding their managers' possessing a transformational leadership style in operations having revenue growth in excess of 100% when compared with operations having revenue growth less than 100% (for the period 2000 to 2006).

Instrumentation

This study utilized the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X Short-Form (MLQ) to measure the perceptions of casino-gaming employees about their managerial leadership styles (e.g. transformational leadership). The MLQ Form 5X consists of 45 rating statements utilizing a five –point Likert-type scale (0=not at all, 1= once in a while, 2= sometimes, 3= fairly often, 4=frequently, if not always) for measuring employee perceptions about the leadership styles of their managers. Antonakis (2001) verified the effectiveness and validity of the MLQ in his doctoral dissertation. Antonakis found the MLQ provides the most accurate measure of organizational leadership in a broad variety of business and academic environments. This study focused solely on the rating statements measuring the transformational style of leadership.

Population

Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2009) postulated that the target population of a research study encompasses individuals sharing a unique focus or purpose. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) found that the validity of the sample size depends on the level of homogeneity of the population. The more homogeneous the population, the smaller the sample required for a valid quantitative study. The population of this study was randomly selected from a homogenous population of Las Vegas casino-gaming employees. The target population was individuals currently employed in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry. The sampling of a target population provided this research study with a representative group needed to generalize about the target population (Cooper & Schindler, 2005). The source of this target population originated from two sources: (a) individuals registered in the electronic mail database of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration (Hotel College) located at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and (b) UNLV alumni currently employed at Harrah's Entertainment.

A total of 71 individuals expressed an interest in participating in the current research study. A total of 18 individuals were eliminated from the results of the current study leaving a net total of 53 qualified participants. Unqualified participants were individuals not currently employed in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry. Participants failing to complete one or more of the study documents were designated as incomplete responses. Other eliminated participants listed in their demographic survey a non-publicly

traded or unidentifiable employer. The final sample of participants represented individuals that were employees of a publicly traded Las Vegas casino-gaming operation.

Demographics

The demographic distribution of this study included 56.6% female participants. The age distribution of participants included 77.4% between the ages of 18 and 35 years. The educational distribution of participants showed 58.5% currently holding a bachelor's degree. The employment demographics included 49.1% of participants in a line position of a Las Vegas casino-gaming operation. Study participants included 45.3% holding their current position for less than one year and 35.8% working in the casino-gaming industry between one and five years (see Table 1).

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Demographic	Statistics
Gender	Male = 43.4% Female = 56.6%
Age	N (53) 18-25 = 45.3% 26-35 = 32.1% 36-45 = 13.2% 46-54 = 5.6% Over 55 = 3.8%
Education Completed	N (53) High School = 35.8% Bachelor's Degree = 58.5% Master's Degree = 5.7%
Employment	N (53) Line Position = 49.1% Supervisor = 15.1% Manager = 28.3% Senior Executive = 7.5%
Time in Current Position	N (53) Under 1 Year = 45.3% 1-5 Years = 35.8% 6-10 Years = 13.2% Over 10 Years = 5.7%

This table shows the summary statistics for the demographic variables.

Findings

Bass and Avolio (2004) prescribed a set of guidelines as the benchmark for mean scores of employee perceptions about their leaders (see Table 2). For example, a mean score that is 3.0 or greater for any of the four components of transformational leadership could denote that the employee perceived their managers' leadership style as transformational.

Table 2: Benchmark Guideline for Mean Scores of Full-Range Leadership Model Components

FRLM Component	Mean Range
Idealized Influence	>3.0
Inspirational Motivation	>3.0
Individualized Consideration	>3.0
Intellectual Stimulation	>3.0
Contingent Rewards	>2.0
Management-By-Exception (Active)	<1.5
Management-By-Exception (Passive)	<1.0
Laissez-faire	<1.0

This table shows the benchmark guidelines of the mean scores of the Full-Range Leadership Model.

The resulting descriptive statistics for the transformational leadership style of the FRLM indicate an overall mean score of 2.31 (sometimes). The mean score for the FRLM transformational leadership components of employee perceptions of their managers in Las Vegas casino-gaming operations that experienced revenue growth exceeding 100% was 2.34 (sometimes). In contrast, the mean score of employee perceived transformational leadership components of Las Vegas casino-gaming managers in operations failing to experience revenue growth of at least 100% was 1.91 (once in a while).

To test the hypothesis, The F test: two-samples for variances were generated to determine if the variances between the samples were equal or unequal regarding Las Vegas casino-gaming employee perception of the managerial leadership style of the four components of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation). Once the variances between the samples were determined to be equal or unequal, the appropriate t tests: two-samples for equal or unequal variances, were generated for each transformational leadership component. According to Cooper and Schindler (2005) and Creswell (2008), the t test: two-samples assuming equal variances or the t test: two-samples assuming unequal variances were appropriate because the t test measures the difference between the means of two groups with a small sample size (Cooper & Schindler, 2005; Creswell, 2008). The confidence interval for the current study was 95%.

Findings for Hypothesis 1

H1: There is no difference in the perception of Las Vegas casino-gaming employees regarding their managers' possessing a transformational leadership style in operations having revenue growth in excess of 100% when compared with operations having revenue growth less than 100% (for the period 2000 to 2006).

Idealized Influence

The F test: two-samples for variances of Las Vegas casino-gaming employee perception about their managers' idealized influence component of transformational leadership indicated the variances between samples were unequal, $F(3, 48) = 3.022, p = 0.039$ (one-tailed). As the variances were unequal between the samples, the t test (unequal variances between means) generated a t -statistic less than the t -critical value with three degrees of freedom. The result of the t test (unequal variances between means) indicates that employee perceptions are the same for both groups of employees and no significant difference exists in conjunction with revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006 ($M = 2.39, SD = 1.04, t(3) = 0.605, p = 0.294$ (one-tailed), $p = 0.588$ (two-tailed) (see Table 3).

Inspirational Motivation

The F test: two-samples for variances of Las Vegas casino-gaming employee perception about their managers' inspirational motivation component of transformational leadership indicated the variances between samples were equal, $F(3, 48) = 2.353, p = 0.084$ (one-tailed). As the variances were equal between the samples, the t test (equal variances between means) generated a t -statistic less than the t -critical with 51 degrees of freedom (pooled variances and observations). The result of the t (equal variances between means) indicates that the means of employee perceptions are equal and no significant difference exists between the means in conjunction with revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006 ($M = 2.39, SD = 1.18, t(51) = 0.581, p = 0.282$ (one-tailed), $p = 0.564$ (two-tailed) (see Table 3).

Individualized Consideration

The F test: two-samples for variances of Las Vegas casino-gaming employee perception about their managers' individualized consideration component of transformational leadership indicated the variances between samples were equal, $F(3, 48) = 1.768$, $p = 0.166$ (one-tailed). As the variances were equal between the samples, the t test (equal variances between means) generated a t -statistic less than the t -critical with 51 degrees of freedom (pooled variances and observations). The result of the t (equal variances between means) indicates that the means of employee perceptions are equal and no significant difference exists between the means in conjunction with revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006 ($M = 2.20$, $SD = 1.06$), $t(51) = 0.267$, $p = 0.395$ (one-tailed), $p = 0.791$ (two-tailed) (see Table 3).

Intellectual Stimulation

The F test: two-samples for variances of Las Vegas casino-gaming employee perception about their managers' intellectual stimulation component of transformational leadership indicated the variances between samples were equal, $F(3, 48) = 2.782$, $p = 0.051$ (one-tailed). As the variances were equal between the samples, the t test (equal variances between means) generated a t -statistic less than the t -critical with 51 degrees of freedom (pooled variances and observations). The result of the t (equal variances between means) indicates that the means of employee perceptions are equal and no significant difference exists between the means in conjunction with revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006 ($M = 2.20$, $SD = 1.06$), $t(51) = 1.050$, $p = 0.149$ (one-tailed), $p = 0.299$ (two-tailed) (see Table 3).

Table 3: Summary of t Test: Two-Samples Assuming Equal or Unequal Variances

Leadership Style	t -Statistic	p -Value (one-tailed)	t -critical (one-tailed)	p -Value (two-tailed)	t -critical (two-tailed)
Idealized Influence	0.605*	0.294	2.353	0.588	3.182
Inspirational Motivation	0.581*	0.282	1.675	0.564	2.007
Individualized Consideration	0.267*	0.395	1.675	0.791	2.007
Intellectual Stimulation	1.050*	0.149	1.675	0.299	2.007

* indicates significance at the .05 level. This table shows the results of the t tests: two-samples assuming equal or unequal variance results for each component of the Transformational Leadership Style.

To confirm the results of the t test: two-samples assuming equal or unequal variances, an ANOVA of the transactional leadership perceptions of Las Vegas casino-gaming employees was generated to determine if a relationship exists between employees working at a Las Vegas casino-gaming operation that experienced revenue growth that exceeded 100% for the period of 2000 to 2006. The results of the ANOVA revealed that no significant difference exists between employee perceptions of their managers' transformational leadership traits because of percentage of revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006 ($F = 0.64$; F crit. = 4.03; $p = 0.42$). If a low p value (less than .05) had been found, then the employee perception of transformational leadership traits of their managers may be used to determine a difference in leadership traits rejecting the null hypothesis (see Table 4).

Table 4: Transformational Leadership ANOVA

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Revenue Growth Over 100%	49	114.65	2.34	0.97		
Revenue Growth Under 100%	4	7.64	1.91	2.66		
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p -Value	F crit
Between Groups	0.69	1	0.69	0.64*	0.43	4.03
Within Groups	54.33	51	1.07			
Total	55.01	52				

* indicates significance at the .05 level. This table shows the results of the ANOVA for the Transformational Leadership Style.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Chung-Herrera, Enz, and Lankau (2003), competitive organizations in the 21st century depend on a comprehensive understanding of its leader's abilities and leadership style. Understanding the nuances and characteristics of the existing leadership styles provides management with a necessary tool for developing future leaders. This research study focused on the perceptions of employees working in the Las Vegas casino-gaming industry about the leadership styles found in their managers.

The results of the tests for the hypothesis failed to reject the null hypothesis for each of the four transformational leadership components. The mean scores of each of the transformational leadership components measured by the MLQ rating statements was (a) 2.39 (idealized influence), (b) 2.39 (inspirational motivation), (c) 2.20 (individualized consideration), and (d) 2.20 (intellectual stimulation) resulting in the employee perceptions that managerial leadership style does not include any of the transformational leadership components in conjunction with the percentage of revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006. The results of the mean scores of each transformational leadership component measured by the MLQ rating statements fell below the range of the leadership benchmark guidelines of the FRLM presented in Table 1.

During the first half of the 20th century, scholars found that individual characteristics defined leadership (McCauley, 2004). The results of the various *t* tests generated in the current study indicated that no significant differences existed between the perceptions of the study's participants about overall leadership styles in Las Vegas casino-gaming managers in conjunction with the percentage of revenue growth for the period 2000 to 2006. This is a significant finding when contrasted with the studies of Lim and Ployhart (2003) and Spinelli (2006). In both studies, the MLQ results indicate a significant focus on the transformational leadership style. Lim and Ployhart found a strong relationship between the Five-Factor Model of Personality factor of extroversion and the components of the transformational leadership. Spinelli initially hypothesized that no difference would exist in the perception about hospital executive leadership traits. Spinelli found the perceptions of hospital employees correlated the four components of transformational leadership to the contingent reward component of transactional leadership. This study did not indicate the same association between transformational and transactional leadership styles in the overall leadership traits of Las Vegas casino-gaming managers.

The mean scores of the four transformational leadership components indicated that employees did not perceive their managers as transformational leaders. The conclusion of this study determined that Las Vegas casino-gaming employees perceived their managers as following the contingent rewards transactional leadership style.

The recommendations of the current study are based on the results and implications of the findings to management in the casino-gaming industry and for further research of this topic. The recommendation of this quantitative study for casino-gaming management is to incorporate the four components of transformational leadership into the training of future managers. This recommendation is the focus of the finding that Las Vegas casino-gaming employees perceive their managers as transactional leaders. According to Bass and Avolio (2004), transformational leaders encourage follower creativity and innovation resulting in a maximization of an organization's overall performance. Barling, Weber, and Kelloway (1996) believed that managers receiving training in the traits of transformational leadership develop an increased level of follower commitment to the goals of the organization. The inclusion of transformational leadership traits in the training of future casino-gaming managers could positively affect organizational performance by encouraging employee advancement.

The lack of previous empirical research of leadership in the casino-gaming industry provides numerous opportunities for future research. The current study focused on the perceptions of employees in the generalized Las Vegas casino-gaming industry about the leadership styles of their managers. Future research might solicit participants from a more diverse sample of casino-gaming employees from operations throughout the United States. Since 1976 and the legalization of casino-gaming in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the industry has expanded exponentially across the country including the implementation of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (Wenz, 2006). An expanded sample of participants could provide more information about employee perceptions concerning the leadership styles of managers in the casino-gaming industry.

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