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Followership and Performance in Acquisition, Research and Development Organizations

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Although Kelley (1992) contended that approximately 80 percent of the organization's success may be attributed to followers, the concept of followership remains an understudied phenomenon (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). One study, conducted by Oyetunji (2013), focused on the impact of followership styles on job performance in the Botswana culture. It included only in-role behaviors (IRB) and not organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) even though Blanchard, Welbourne, Gilmore, and Bullock (2009) posited that exemplary followers exhibit proactive behaviors and take the initiative leading to actions far beyond the minimum job requirements. Since this may have caused Oyetunji's (2013) study results to be inconsistent with Kelley's (1992) followership model, a cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted for the first time on the impact of followership styles on both IRB and OCB job performance. The research results supported the supposition that there is a difference in average job performance and work group performance of exemplary followers in comparison to pragmatist followers. Furthermore, the results supported the hypotheses that correlations exist between the active engagement dimension of followership with both job and work group performance, as well as the critical thinking dimension of followership and job performance. Finally, the study found no statistically significant correlation exist between critical thinking and work group performance. These results pointed to the need for future empirical research on the relationships of followership styles and dimensions with job and organizational performance.

Although leadership is an important aspect of organizational success, about 80 percent of the success is considered a direct result of follower contributions (Kelley, 1992). Despite this, inadequate research has been conducted on followership (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Without followers, leadership cannot exist (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) since followership is the opposite side of the leadership coin (Williams, 2008).

Kelley (1988) posited that followers can assume one of five different roles based on their degree of active engagement and independent critical thinking. These roles range from exemplary, conformist, passive, alienated and pragmatist followership (Kelley, 1992). Based on Kelley's (1992) followership model, followers' effectiveness is theorized to vary depending upon the style of followership that employees assume within an organization.

Although three previous scholarly studies and two dissertations used Kelley's (1992) followership model, only one of these studies examined the effectiveness of followers. This one study was limited since it examined only one of three aspects of follower performance, as posited by Williams and Anderson (1991). This limitation may have contributed significantly to the unexpected results that were obtained by Oyetunji (2013) suggesting that passive not exemplary followers were good performers. Another contributing factor to these unpredicted results may have

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(2013) study, job performance was measured using not just in-role behaviors but all three aspects of individual performance theorized by Williams and Anderson (1991). Furthermore, organizational performance was measured using a slight modification of Huang's (2009) research and development measurement scale since the unit of measure was project management personnel from the United States Army's defense acquisition community and personnel from the research and development community, which have similar organizational effectiveness standards of cost, schedule and performance. Additionally, the research also investigated for the first time the correlation of active engagement and critical thinking of followers with job and organizational performance. Therefore, this study addressed the following two research questions:

1. What are the differences in job and organizational performance of acquisition and research and development employees that use different followership styles?
2. Is there a correlation between the active engagement and the critical thinking of acquisition and research and development employees with their job performance and the performance of their work groups?

These questions were addressed empirically by surveying study participants on the perception of their followership behaviors and their perception of their job and work group's performance. Provided is an overview of the scholarly literature on performance and Kelley's (1992) followership model that was used to inform the

research hypotheses, a description of the methods used to conduct the research, the results of the study, and a discussion of the implications of the study results.

Literature Review

Based on the focus of the research questions, a review of scholarly literature was conducted on the concepts and theories associated with study. These concepts and theories were used to support the development of the study hypotheses. The associated concepts and theories include: Kelly's (1992) model of followership, follower performance, and organizational performance.

KELLEY'S MODEL OF FOLLOWERSHIP

Kelley (1992) posited that there are five followership styles. These include exemplary, conformist, passive, alienated and pragmatist styles (Kelley, 1992). These followership styles are based on a combination of two different followership dimensions: engagement and critical thinking (Kelley, 1992). Follower engagements range between passive and active (Kelley, 1992). Passive engagement involves followers waiting for direction from the leader before reactively taking action (Kelley, 1992; Latour & Rast, 2004). Active engagement consists of followers taking the initiative to actively participate in the organization's tasks (Bjugstad, Thach, Thompson, & Morris, 2006).

Critical thinking ranges between dependent uncritical thinking and independent critical thinking (Kelley, 2008). Dependent uncritical thinkers accept information that is provided to them at face value without any evaluation or questioning (Latour & Rast, 2004). Independent critical thinkers do not accept information without questioning, rather, they evaluate and analyze information to identify consequences and opportunities (Latour & Rast, 2004).

Exemplary followership. Exemplary followers rank high in both active engagement and independent critical thinking. Exemplary followers think for themselves and are therefore willing to challenge leaders by providing alternative solutions if they disagree with the leader (Kelley, 1992). They proactively support organizational goals and leader decisions that are congruent with their beliefs (Kelley, 1992). Exemplary followers "assume responsibilities beyond their minimum job requirements and exert considerable effort to accomplish goals" (Blanchard et al., 2009, p. 112-113). Finally, exemplary followers work well with others (Bjugstad et al., 2006).

Conformist followership. Conformist followers are high in active engagement but are dependent uncritical thinkers (Kelley, 1992). Kelley (2008) referred to conformist followers as "yes people" (p. 7). Conformist followers are very active doers that unquestioningly follow leader directions (Bjugstad et al., 2006; Kelley, 2008).

Passive followership. Passive followers are low in active engagement and are dependent uncritical thinkers (Kelley, 1992). Passive followers are referred to as sheep (Kelly, 2008) who unquestioningly follow the leader but only after being given constant direction (Bjugstad et al., 2006). After completing a task, the passive follower typically waits for direction before beginning the next task (Latour & Rast, 2004).

Alienated followership. Alienated followers are highly independent critical thinkers but are low in engagement (Kelley, 1992). They think for themselves, but instead of being positive like exemplary followers, who proactively provide alternative solutions to the leader, alienated followers are negative critical skeptics (Kelley, 2008). They consider themselves as mavericks who are willing to oppose management (Kelley, 2008).

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role effectiveness (Oyetunji, 2013), leadership personality dimensions (Tanoff & Barlow, 2002), and courageous follower attributes (Fobbs, 2010). The last study involved the impact of leadership styles on followership styles (Colangelo, 2000).

Followership, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Blanchard et al. (2009) conducted a study on the two dimensions of followership posited by Kelley (1992) and job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Blanchard et al. (2009) surveyed “331 faculty members from a large southeastern university” (p. 117).

Blanchard et al. (2009) employed an instrument that measured followership dimensions (Kelley, 1992), intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction using the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire – short form (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967), and affective and normative organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The study results suggested that: active engagement by followers was positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and independent critical thinking was negatively related to extrinsic job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Blanchard et al., 2009). The interaction effects between active engagement and independent critical thinking revealed that the impact of independent critical thinking on job satisfaction was dependent upon the level of active engagement of the followers (Blanchard et al., 2009). Specifically, Blanchard et al. (2009) found that when high active engagement

followers engaged in critical thinking, intrinsic job satisfaction but not extrinsic job satisfaction increased. Low active engagement followers who engaged in independent critical thinking had decreased extrinsic job satisfaction (Blanchard et al., 2009).

Followership styles and in-role effectiveness in Botswana universities. Oyetunji (2013) conducted research on lecturers’ followership styles and effectiveness in Botswana private universities. Oyetunji (2013) surveyed 102 lecturers using Kelley’s (1992) followership style questionnaire, and four items of in-role performance from Williams and Anderson’s (1991) job performance questionnaire. Oyetunji’s (2013) study found that over half of the lecturers had a pragmatic followership style with the remainder of the lecturers nearly equally distributed between the alienated, exemplary, and passive leadership styles. The participants self-reported their followership style using Kelley’s (1992) questionnaire, and self-reported their perception of their in-role job performance. Although Kelley’s (1992) theory posited that exemplary followers should be exceptional performers, Oyetunji’s (2013) study results suggested the opposite. Passive performers viewed themselves as good performers while the other lecturers using the other three followership styles viewed their performance less favorably.

An analysis of Oyetunji’s (2013) study methodology suggested that his unexpected results may have been impacted by his lack of use of out-of-role performance items from Williams and Anderson’s (1991) performance survey instrument. This may have been significant since Blanchard et al. (2009) posited that exemplary followers exhibit proactive behaviors and take the initiative leading to actions far beyond the minimum job requirements, which can only be captured in out-role behaviors from Williams and Anderson’s (1991) survey instrument that were not included in the Oyetunji’s (2013) study. Consequently, the study’s results may have been different had Oyetunji (2013) included all of the 20 performance items from Williams and Anderson’s (1991) questionnaire.

Furthermore, differences in culture may have also had an impact on Oyetunji’s (2013) unexpected study results. Southern African countries probably have a higher power distance like neighboring South Africa (Purohit & Simmers, 2006; Booysen & van Wyk, 2007) in comparison to the United States, which is a low power distance society (Hoppe & Bhagat, 2007). In high power distance cultures, followers are expected to comply with rules (Dickson, Den Hartog, & Michelson, 2003) and are less willing to challenge leaders (Adsit, London, Crom, & Jones, 1997). Consequently, followers are probably less proactive since they do not want to inadvertently appear to be challenging their leaders. Consequently, individuals with non-passive follower styles may have considered their performance as less than effective in Oyetunji’s (2013) study since these followership styles include either critical thinking or proactivity that could be considered as culturally unacceptable challenges to the high power distance leader.

Followership styles and leadership personality dimensions. Tanoff and Barlow (2002) conducted a study on leadership personality dimensions and Kelley’s (1992) followership styles. Tanoff and Barlow (2002) surveyed 130 military college students using Kelley’s (1992) followership model and Curphy’s (1998) leadership personality survey. Tanoff and Barlow’s (2002) study results suggested that both the followership dimensions of critical thinking and active engagement are similar to the personality dimensions of effective leaders.

Followership style, courageous follower attributes and job satisfaction. Fobbs’ (2010) dissertation consisted of a study on employee job satisfaction based on the influence of followership styles and courageous followers’ attributes. Fobbs (2010) surveyed 120 hotel personnel using several instruments that included Kelly’s (1992) followership questionnaire. The study results indicated that despite the fact that there is a strong relationship between followership style and courageous followership behaviors, it appears that followership style is not related to job satisfaction (Fobbs, 2010).

Leadership styles impact on followership styles. Colangelo’s (2000) dissertation consisted of a study on leadership styles relationship with followership dimensions of active engagement, critical independent thinking, passion, and team mindedness.

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There are two distinct types of performance. They include follower and organizational performance.

Follower performance. Blanchard et al. (2009) posited that “individuals who demonstrate active engagement go above and beyond expectations, proactively participate in activities, and provide high-quality work” (p. 113). Since followers that are actively engaged exhibit behaviors beyond expectations, it is posited that the evaluation of performance should include more than just in-role behaviors (IRB).

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) defined in-role behaviors as those that just fulfill job descriptions and are included in formal reward systems.

Williams and Anderson's (1991) study suggested that individual performance includes three distinct types: IRB, organizational citizenship behavior individual (OCBI) and organizational citizenship behavior organization (OCBO). Organizational citizenship

behaviors (OCB) are behaviors that “improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness” (Williams & Anderson, 1991, p. 601). They are voluntary behaviors that are outside of the in-role behaviors (Williams & Anderson, 1991). OCBO behaviors benefit the organization while OCBI behaviors benefit members within the organization and only benefit the organization indirectly (Williams & Anderson, 1991). The motivation for OCBI behaviors typically exemplify altruism, while the motivation for OCBO behaviors is generalized compliance (Organ & Konovsky, 1989).

Organizational performance. Huang's (2009) study on 60 research and development (R&D) teams in Taiwan suggested that team performance is impacted by group cohesiveness. Since exemplary followers are postulated to work well with others (Bjugstad et al., 2006), which is required for the task related aspects of group cohesiveness (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985), it is postulated that followership style probably impacts team performance.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Using the results of the literature review that related to the various aspects of the research questions, this study's hypotheses concentrated on the differences in job and organizational performance of different followership styles, and the potential correlation of active engagement and critical thinking with job and organizational performance within the American culture. The study included an examination of the respondents' followership styles posited by Kelley (1992), the respondents' perceptions of their job performance using all three aspects of job performance theorized by Williams and Anderson (1991), and work group performance postulated by Huang (2009). Although Kelley's (1992) followership styles have been examined in five previous studies, the focus of all but one study did not include performance. The one study by Oyetunji's (2013) examined performance but was limited to just in-role behaviors and ignored the out-role OCB behaviors as well as organizational performance.

Followership styles and job performance. Based on Kelley's (1992) followership model job performance can be expected to be different for each of the various types of followership. For example, exemplary followers are probably the only acquisition project management or R&D team members that can be anticipated to go beyond expectations. Therefore, it was posited that exemplary followers' job performance probably included not only IRB but also OCB behaviors. Since conformist followers are actively engaged yes people (Kelley, 1992), it was posited that their behaviors probably included IRB, but may not include OCB performance. Since passive followers simply follow directions (Kelley, 1992), it was posited that their behaviors probably meet minimum IRB requirements. Furthermore, since pragmatist followers drag their feet while trying to maintain the status quo until they see the benefit of change (Kelley, 1992), it was posited that their job performance may also be limited to in-role behaviors.

Lastly, since alienated followers vociferously criticize the leader and the organization (Kelley, 1992), it was posited that their job performance was probably significantly less than any of the other types of followers. Consequently, the study included the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1a: The average job performance of exemplary followers is different than the average job performance of conformist followers.
- Hypothesis 1b: The average job performance of exemplary followers is different than the average job performance of passive followers.
- Hypothesis 1c: The average job performance of exemplary followers is different than the average job performance of alienated followers.
- Hypothesis 1d: The average job performance of exemplary followers is different than the average job performance of pragmatist followers.

Followership styles and organizational performance. The unit of analysis for the study was followers from acquisition project management and R&D teams. Since organizational outcomes within acquisition project management offices are similar to R&D teams (Huang, 2009), this study examined not only follower performance but organizational performance. This is because both R&D teams and acquisition project management teams are focused on developing innovative solutions within a prescribed cost and schedule. Furthermore, similar to R&D teams (Huang, 2009), project management is a complex endeavor (Ng & Walker, 2008) that requires the integration of a diverse set of teams of multiple cross-functional experts (Stagnaro & Piotrowski, 2014). To achieve success, project managers and R&D team leaders must integrate stakeholders into the process, build teams, and generate a cohesive environment (Johnson, Boucher, Connors, & Robinson, 2001). Since active followers tend to

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- Hypothesis 2a: The average job performance of conformist followers.

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work groups with

- Hypothesis 2c: The average organizational performance of work groups with exemplary followers is different than work groups with alienated followers.
- Hypothesis 2d: The average organizational performance of work groups with exemplary followers is different than work groups with pragmatist followers.

Active engagement, critical thinking, and job and organizational performance. The key dimensions of each of the followership styles was the level of the follower active engagement in the organization, and the level of the critical thinking of the follower. Consequently, since followers with different styles were theorized to have different levels of job performance that impacts organizational performance, it was posited that active engagement and critical thinking were probably correlated with job and organizational performance. Consequently, the study included the following additional hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 3a: Followers' active engagement is correlated with follower job performance.
- Hypothesis 3b: Followers' critical thinking is correlated with follower job performance
- Hypothesis 4a: Follower's active engagement is correlated with organizational performance
- Hypothesis 4b: Followers' critical thinking is correlated with organizational performance.

Methodology

The study explored for the first time the differences in job performance and organizational performance of different followership styles, and the possible correlations of active engagement and critical thinking with job and organizational performance in Army acquisition project management and R&D offices. Since validated survey instruments for the study's independent and dependent variables were available that have been used within previous studies, this study did not create any new empirical survey instruments. Since previous empirical research on the impact of followership styles on job performance has been limited in scope to in-role behaviors within the Botswana culture, this study was conducted to examine for the first time the impact of followership styles on all three aspects of job performance posited by Williams and Anderson (1991) and organizational performance within the United States. Since a validated scale exists for the organizational performance of R&D and acquisition project management teams the study was conducted using participants from both the Army's R&D and defense acquisition communities. The description of the methodology for the study includes an explanation of the research design, population and sample, variables, instrumentation, data collection method, and data analysis to test the hypotheses.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study used a cross-sectional study method (Cozby & Bates, 2012) to examine the differences in the job and organizational performance of the five types of followership styles. The study examined the occurrence of the dimensions of followership within different project management and R&D offices within the Department of the Army. This study incorporated survey instruments that contained items that examined the respondents' perceptions of their followership style, and job performance within the project management and R&D office, and the respondents' view of the effectiveness of their organization's performance. The study also recorded the demographical information of the respondents.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for the study was 224 employees in one Army project management and 54 personnel from one R&D organization in the United States. The Army has 13 program executive offices (PEO) that conduct project management activities to acquire new defense materiel for the United States military and seven laboratories that conduct R&D research projects spread throughout the United States. Each of these offices and laboratories is led by either a general officer or a civilian senior executive servant (SES). Each PEO and laboratory have several project management offices and directorates that are led by Army colonels or GS15 civil servants.

The research performed a convenience sampling (Cozby & Bates, 2012) of both 22 supervisory and 35 non-supervisory employees that volunteered to participate from each of the organizations that had been purposively selected and voluntarily agreed to partake in the study. Since most supervisors within the American culture are direct reports to someone else, supervisors within the acquisition and research and development communities serve in both leadership and followership roles. Consequently, supervisor viewpoints on their own followership experiences was included in this study.

Variables

The study included independent, dependent, and demographic variables. The independent variables captured the respondents' perception of their active engagement and critical thinking that were used to calculate the followership styles of the respondents. Each hypothesis used one independent variable, and one continuous dependent variable.

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Each of the variables for follower style were a combination of the critical thinking and active engagement dimensions proposed by Kelley (1988).

Active Engagement. Active engagement represents that amount of involvement the follower has in organizational activities (Kelley, 1992). High active engagement involves proactive participation in organizational activities, while low active engagement involves reactive participation in organizational activities after being provided guidance and direction (Kelley, 1992). The active engagement independent variable was used in hypotheses 3a and 4a.

Critical Thinking. Critical thinking represents the level where the follower accepts information with or without self-analysis (Kelley, 1992). High critical thinking involves follower analysis of information before it is accepted (Kelley, 1992). Low critical thinking involves followers accepting information without question (Kelley, 1992). The critical thinking independent variable was used in hypotheses 3b and 4b.

Exemplary. The exemplary variable represents a followership style that is high in both critical thinking and active engagement dimensions (Kelley, 1992). The exemplary followership variable was used in hypotheses one and two.

Conformist. The conformist variable epitomizes a follower style that is low in critical thinking and high in active engagement dimensions (Kelley, 1992). The conformist followership variable was employed in hypotheses 1a and 2a.

Passive. The passive variable characterizes a follower style that is low in both critical thinking and active engagement dimensions (Kelley, 1992). Hypotheses 1b and 2b included the passive followership variable.

Alienated. The alienated variable represents a follower style that is high in critical thinking and low in active engagement dimensions (Kelley, 1992). The alienated followership variable was used in hypotheses 1c and 2c.

Pragmatist. The pragmatist variable characterizes a follower style that is moderate in both critical thinking and active engagement dimensions (Kelley, 1992). Hypotheses 1d and 2d included the pragmatist followership variable.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

There are two interval scale continuous dependent variables in the study. These variables are job performance and organizational performance.

Job performance. The dependent variable for the outcomes of followers' styles in hypotheses one and three was job performance that was derived from Williams and

Anderson's (1991) study. It consisted of a combination of IRB, OCBI, OCBO items that were measured separately.

Organizational performance. The second dependent variable was organizational performance. Organizational performance was the dependent variable in hypotheses two and four; it involved how well the group meets schedules, remains within budget, and provides its deliverables (Huang, 2009). Since acquisition project management and research and development both manage their projects similarly, the performance variable used in the study was derived from Huang's (2009) study of performance of research and development teams. The five items that make up team performance in the survey instrument were derived from Lewis' (2004) study.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

The study collected information on six demographic variables. These included: age, gender, organizational position, type of service, time in current position, and career field. The variables on type of position and type of service captured whether the respondent was a supervisory or non-supervisory employee, military or civil servant. The career fields for the study were: acquisition, research and development, or other.

INSTRUMENTATION

A comparison of the differences of follower style on all three aspects of job performance, and organizational performance have not been previously examined in scholarly literature. To measure follower styles, job and organizational performance this study employed previously validated measurement instruments for the independent variables and the dependent performance variables. Kelley (1992) developed a followership questionnaire that had been validated in three previously published studies and two dissertations that captured the research participants' perceptions on the two dimensions of followership that were used to calculate their followership style. Williams and Anderson (1991) developed a job performance scale that included IRB, OCBI and OCBO items. Finally, Huang (2009) developed a survey instrument for research and development teams that contained five items on team performance.

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from 41 to 60 should be considered exemplary followers, while pragmatist followers have critical thinking scores and active engagement scores of 20 to 40. This scoring criteria is depicted in figure 1. An examination of figure one using Fobbs' (2010) follower type scoring criteria revealed that this left individual's with active engagement scores of 31 to 40 and critical thinking of 41 to 60 depicted in zone one as uncategorized. As a result, the categorization scoring criteria for this study was modified from the criteria used in Fobbs' (2010) dissertation to account for this omission.

Consequently, this resulted in participants with critical thinking scores of 31 to 60 and active engagement scores of 41 to 60 or zone 1 critical thinking scores of 41 to 60 and active engagement scores of 31 to 40 being categorized as exemplary followers as described in table 1. Conformist followers had critical thinking scores of 0 to 30 and active engagement scores of 41-60 or zone 2 critical thinking scores of 0 to 19 and active engagement scores of 31 to 40. Passive followers had critical thinking scores of 0 to 30 and active engagement scores of 0 to 19 or zone 3 critical thinking scores of 0 to 19 and active engagement scores of 20 to 30. Alienated followers had critical thinking scores of 31 to 60 and active engagement scores of 0 to 19 or zone 4 critical thinking scores of 41 to 60 and active engagement scores of 20 to 30. The measurement instrument possesses face and content construct validity (Cozby & Bates, 2012) since it was based directly on the two dimensions and five follower types developed by Kelley (1992).

Follower performance. The job performance of followers was measured in the study using 20 items from Williams and Anderson's (1991) scale on performance in table A2. Williams and Anderson's (1991) scale included seven items to measure the IRB, seven items to measure OCBI, and six items to measure OCBO. Each item was evaluated on a seven point Likert scale from zero to six as follows: 0 = never, 1 = once in a while, 2 = sometimes, 3 = occasionally, 4 = often, 5 = almost always, and 6 = always. The Cronbach alpha for Williams and Anderson's (1991) scale in previous studies 0.76.

Organizational performance. Organizational performance was measured in the study using the five performance items from Huang's (2009) scale on research and development teams contained in table A3. The survey instrument used a five point Likert scale to measure the respondents' perception of their organization's performance. Since research and development teams' performance outcomes are very similar to those of acquisition project management teams Huang's (2009) survey items were modified slightly to read projects instead of research and development. The organizational performance items within Huang's (2009) study were derived from Lewis' (2004) study,

which had a Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.82. The content construct validity (Cozby and Bates, 2012) of the measure was directly related to the description of team performance from Huang's (2009) study. The instrument was used to obtain the measure of the organizational performance variable that was used in the second and fourth hypotheses.

Table 1

Followership Style Scoring Criteria

Follower Style	Active Engagement Score	&	Critical Thinking Score
Exemplary	31 to 40	&	41 to 60
or	41 to 60	&	31 to 60
Conformist	31 to 40	&	0 to 19
or	41 to 60	&	0 to 30
Passive	0 to 19	&	0 to 30
or	20 to 30	&	0 to 19
Alienated	0 to 19	&	31 to 60
or	20 to 30	&	41 to 60
Pragmatist	20 to 40	&	20 to 40

Note. Followership style determination is based on total active engagement and total critical thinking scores from Kelley's (1992) 20 item

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DATA COLLECTION

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Study development and performance and phone contact was followed up through an email to the program executive office, human capital management directorate (HCMD) and the laboratory's directorate of engineering. The email included a description of the study and its potential benefits as a means to solicit support for the study. The intent of the study was to obtain a convenience sample by having the HCMD and the engineering directorate

ask all their supervisors and employees to volunteer to participate in the study and to have the volunteers complete the survey instruments within a two-week period. Once the program executive office and laboratory were recruited to support the study, arrangements were made to have HCMD and the engineering directorate send out an email announcing the survey and solicit voluntary participation in taking the digital survey that was available on survey monkey. This enabled the participants to anonymously access the digital survey to input their perspectives into the instrument. The emailed survey instructions, as well as the instructions on the survey monkey web site, included a guarantee on the anonymity of the respondents, and informed the prospective participants that if they voluntarily chose to participate in the survey it implied their voluntary consent. The email as well as the survey monkey web site instructions included a description of the purpose of the survey.

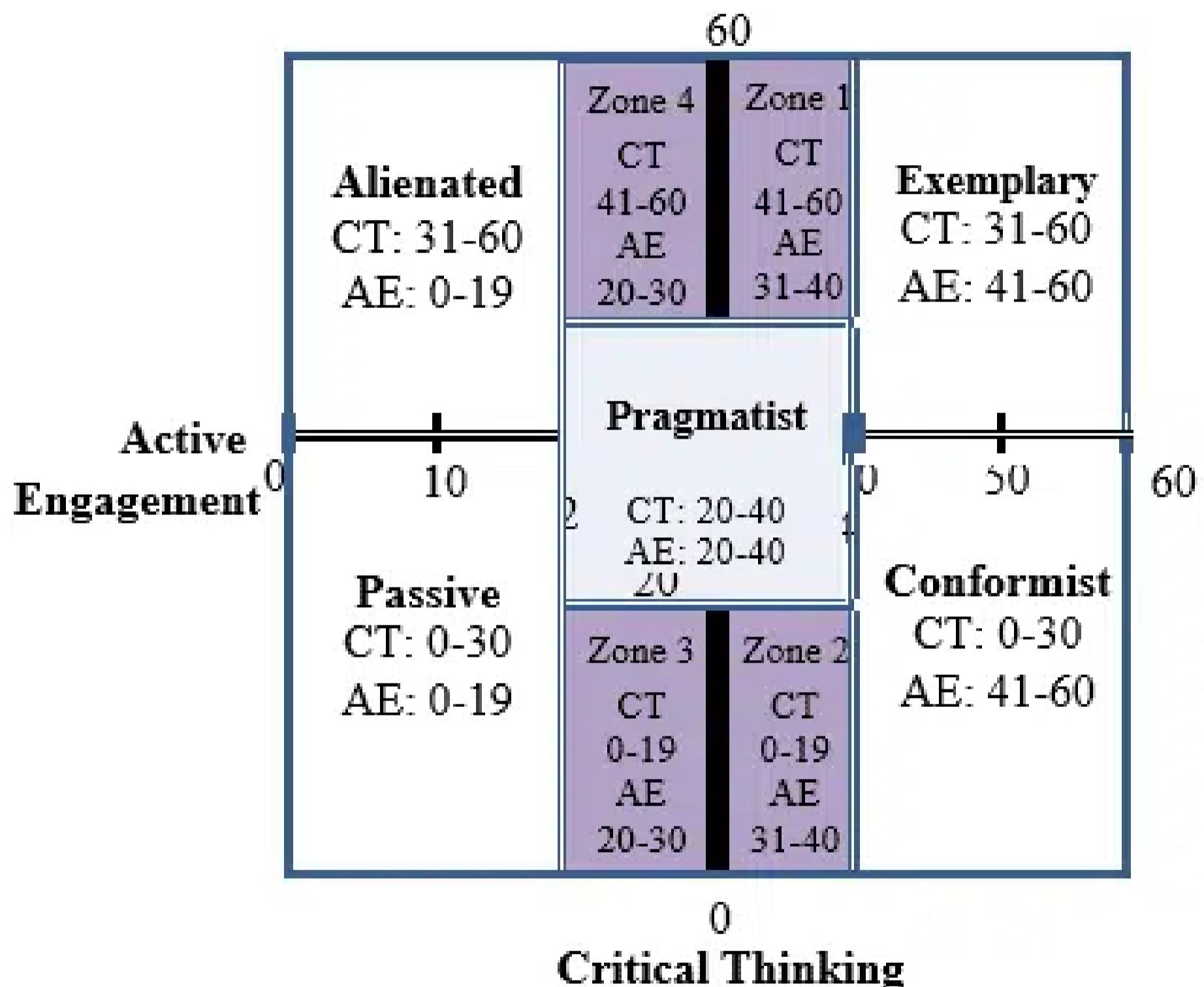


Figure 1: Modified Follower Scoring Criteria. Critical thinking (CT) and active engagement (AE) scores were each integer summations of the scores from the applicable 10 items from Kelley's (1992) followership questionnaire.

Ethical Considerations. The research adhered to ethical standards of quantitative studies by obtaining approval of the survey instruments from the institutional review board (Cozby & Bates, 2012), and by providing the participants a full disclosure of the research intent (Qu & Dumay, 2011). The study guaranteed the participants the right to privacy and confidentiality prior to obtaining their informed consent to complete the empirical survey instrument (Cozby & Bates, 2012). Maintenance of confidentiality was

essential for this study since it helped mitigate the challenges of participant reticence to evaluate their job performance (Qu & Dumay, 2011) with

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second hypothesis a t test was also conducted on the difference in average organizational performance of work groups with exemplary followers and the average organizational performance of work groups containing other types of followers.

To evaluate the third hypothesis an analysis was conducted to determine the correlation (Williams & Monge, 2001) between the followers' active engagement and job performance, and the followers' critical thinking and job performance. The fourth hypothesis was evaluated also through an analysis to determine the correlation (Williams & Monge, 2001) of the followers' active engagement with organizational performance and followers' critical thinking with organizational performance.

Prior to testing the first two hypotheses each of the respondents were categorized into one of five followership styles. This was accomplished by calculating the level of critical thinking and the level of engagement and then comparing the results with the modified scoring criteria contained in table 1. The level of critical thinking and the level of engagement are the two dimensions that were used to determine the followership style variables.

RESULTS

The sample size for the study was 58 participants. This included 52 personnel from the Army program executive office and 6 personnel from the R&D laboratory. The gender of the respondents was primarily male (77.2 percent). The respondents were a mix of non-supervisory (61.4 percent) and supervisory (38.6 percent) employees. The overwhelming majority of the employees were civil servants (91.4 percent) from the acquisition career field (89.7 percent). The majority of the respondents had been in their positions for over 5 years (70.7 percent). Half the respondents were between the ages of 50 and 59, with only 29.3 percent of the respondents less than 50 years of age.

The analysis began with a determination of the reliability of the survey instruments used in the study. The Cronbach's alpha for: Kelley's (1992) followership questionnaire was .89, the active engagement items was .85, and the critical thinking items was 0.79. The Cronbach's alpha for: the job performance items in Williams and Andersons (1991) performance scale was 0.84, and the work performance items within Huang's (2009) R&D measurement scale was 0.90. Consequently, the measurement instruments used within the study were reliable.

The analysis continued with a determination of the active engagement and critical thinking scores for each of the study participants using their responses to Kelley's (1992) followership questionnaire. Table 2 contained the descriptive statistics for the active engagement and critical thinking dimensions. Active engagement scores ranged from a minimum of 24 to a high of 58 out of a maximum score of 60. The active engagement mean was 44.7 with a standard deviation of 8.0. Critical thinking scores ranged from a minimum of 15 to a high of 56 out of a maximum score of 60. The critical thinking mean was 40.7 with a standard deviation of 8.9.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Follower Dimension Scores

Dimension	N	Low	High	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Active Engagement	57	24	58	34	44.7	8.0
Critical Thinking	58	15	56	41	40.7	8.9

The 58 survey participants' scores were evaluated using the scoring criteria in table 1. Since one of the study participants failed to respond to all of the active engagement items the categorization of the survey participants' followership type was only performed on 57 of the survey participants. The categorization of these 57 survey respondents displayed in table 3 surprisingly revealed that 70.2 percent of the respondents ($n = 40$) were categorized as exemplary followers based on a combination of their responses to the active engagement and critical thinking items from Kelley's (1992) followership style survey instrument. Only 24.6 percent of the respondents were categorized as pragmatist followers ($n = 14$), and 3.5 percent ($n = 2$) of the respondents were categorized as conformist. Only 1.8% of the followers ($n = 1$) were categorized as alienated, and none of the followers were categorized as passive. The descriptive statistics for each of the followership types is displayed in table 4. Due to the fact that there were no passive followers in the study, and there was such a low number of conformist and alienated followers, their responses were insufficient to be used to evaluate hypotheses 1a through 1c, and hypotheses 2a through 2c. As a result, the data for the two conformists and one alienated follower was removed from further data analysis for the study.

Table 3

Follower Type Frequency

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Exemplary	Chat	Apply Now	Request Info	Call Now
Praamist				

Alienated	1	1.8	26.3
Passive	0	0.0	26.3

Note. Total respondents included 58, with one respondent not answering enough survey items to have their followership style categorized.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Follower Types

Active Engagement

Critical Thinking

Type	N	Min	Max	Range	Mean	Std Dev.		Min	Max	Range	Mean	Std Dev.
Exemplary	40	38	58	20	48.8	5.1		32	56	24	44.3	6.2
Pragmatist	14	27	39	12	36.0	3.1		25	39	15	32.9	5.0
Conformist	2	32	34	2	33.0	1.4		15	19	4	17.0	2.8
Alienated	1	24	24	0	--	--		42	42	0	--	--
Passive	0	—	—	—	--	--		—	—	—	--	--

An independent samples t test was then conducted to evaluate hypotheses 1d and 2d. The results of the t test for hypothesis 1d was significant (table 5) with $t(19.73) = 3.16$ and $p = 0.005 < 0.010$. When the variances are significantly different between the two groups and the sample sizes are different as they are in this study, the standard t value is not reported; instead the t value with unequal variance was used (Green & Salkind, 2014). The job performance of exemplary followers on average ($M=5.3$, $SD = 0.5$) was higher than the job performance of pragmatist followers ($M= 4.8$, $SD = 0.6$) as depicted in the descriptive statistics in Table 6.

Table 5

Job Performance Differences Between Exemplary and Pragmatist Follower Independent Samples *t* Test for Equality of Means

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

		F	Sig.	t	df	p-value (2 tailed)
Job Performance	Equal variances assumed	0.53	0.471	3.48	50.00	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed			3.16	19.73	0.005

Note. Exemplary follower type ($n = 40$, $M = 5.3$, $SD = 0.5$), pragmatist follower type ($n = 14$, $M = 4.8$, $SD = 0.6$).

Table 6

Job Performance Descriptive Statistics

Follower Type	Mean	Median	Variance	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Range
Pragmatist	4.8	4.98	0.31	0.6	3.56	5.61	2.05
Exemplary	5.3	5.40	0.20	0.5	4.33	5.93	1.60

The results of the t test for hypothesis 2d was also significant (table 7) with $t(18.21) = 2.78$ and $p = 0.012 < 0.050$. Similar to the t test for

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Table 7

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Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

		F	Sig.	t	df	p-value (2 tailed)
Work Group Performance	Equal variances assumed	0.10	0.752	3.21	52.00	0.002
	Equal variances not assumed			2.78	18.21	0.012

Note. Exemplary follower type ($n = 40$, $M = 4.6$, $SD = 0.5$), pragmatist follower type ($n = 14$, $M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.7$).

Table 8

Work Group Performance Descriptive Statistics

Follower Type	Mean	Median	Variance	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Range
Pragmatist	4.0	4.00	0.43	0.7	2.60	5.00	2.40
Exemplary	4.6	4.70	0.24	0.5	3.40	5.00	1.60

The results of the correlation analysis for hypotheses 3 and 4 are displayed in table 9. The Pearson correlation coefficient between active engagement and job performance was large ($r = 0.56$) with $p = 0.000 < 0.010$. The Pearson correlation coefficient between critical thinking and job performance was medium ($r = 0.33$) with $p = 0.015 < 0.050$. The Pearson correlation coefficient between active engagement and work group performance was medium ($r = 0.32$) with $p = 0.017 < 0.050$. The Pearson correlation coefficient between critical thinking and work group performance was not only low ($r = 0.14$) but was also not statistically significant since $p = 0.304 > 0.050$. The Pearson correlation of active engagement and critical thinking was also high ($r = 0.74$) with $p = 0.000 < 0.010$, and Pearson correlation of job performance with work group performance was medium ($r = 0.34$) with $p = 0.015 < 0.050$.

Table 9

Pearson Correlations between Active Engagement, Critical Thinking, Job Performance and Work Group Performance

	Active Engagement	Critical Thinking	Job Performance
Critical Thinking	0.74**		
Job Performance	0.56**	0.33*	
Work Group Performance	0.32*	0.14	0.34*

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.010 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.050 level (2-Tailed)

Discussion

The results of the t test analysis of job performance between exemplary and pragmatist followers suggested that the difference between job performance of exemplary followers, which was 0.52 higher than pragmatist followers on a Likert scale from zero to six, was statistically significant with $p < 0.010$. Consequently, these results support hypothesis 1d that there is a difference between the average job performances of exemplary and pragmatist followers. These results support the supposition that exemplary followers have higher job performances than pragmatist followers.

Unfortunately, based on the few conformist and alienated followers and the lack of passive followers that participated in the study, the results could not support the supposition that exemplary followers may have the best job performance in comparison to any of the other types of followers even though Blanchard et al.'s (2009) study suggested that exemplary followers' high active engagement was positively related to organizational commitment, and exemplary followers have been posited to exceed the minimum to meet job requirements.

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conducted with respect to the mean IRB and OCBI than pragmatist followers. This finding is significant since $p = .020$

versus have a higher average lowers was statistically

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and $p = .502 > .050$. This suggests that IRB and OCBI may have greater importance than OCBO in calculating job performance for followers. This speculative supposition will require further examination since this study did not include adequate conformist, alienated or passive follower data.

Table 10

IRB, OCBI, and OCBO Independent Samples t Test for Equality of Means

Performance	t-Test of Means	p-value (2-tailed)	Follower Type	Mean	Std. Dev.
In-Role Behaviors	$t (15.32) = 2.59$	0.020	Pragmatist Exemplary	5.0 5.6	0.9 0.4
Organizational Citizenship Behaviors – Individual	$t (22.25) = 2.85$	0.009	Pragmatist Exemplary	4.2 4.9	0.8 0.8
Organizational Citizenship Behaviors – Organizational	$t (25.52) = 0.68$	0.502	Pragmatist Exemplary	5.0 5.2	0.5 0.6

The results of the t test analysis of work group performance between exemplary and pragmatist followers suggested that the difference between organizational performance of exemplary followers in the work group, which was 0.53 higher than pragmatist followers on a Likert scale from one to five, was statistically significant with $p < 0.050$. Consequently, these results support hypothesis 2d that there is a difference in the average organizational performance of work groups with exemplary followers than with pragmatist followers. Once again, due to the lack of adequate sample size of conformist, alienated, and passive followers the supposition that work groups with exemplary followers may have a higher average work group performance than work groups with other types of followers could not be assessed in this study.

Hypotheses three and four were evaluated using Pearson's correlation. The results suggested that active engagement is strongly positively correlated with job performance ($r = 0.56$) with statistical significance of $p < 0.010$, which supports hypothesis 3a. The results also suggested that active engagement is moderately positively correlated with work group performance ($r = 0.32$) with statistical significance of $p < 0.050$, which supports hypothesis 4a.

Furthermore, the results also suggested that critical thinking is moderately positively correlated with job performance with statistical significance of $p < 0.050$, which supports hypothesis 3b. Finally, critical thinking is not correlated with any statistical significance to work group performance since $p > 0.050$; consequently, hypothesis 4b is not supported by the study results.

Since Oyetunji's (2013) study on follower types and performance only focused on IRB and not the two other components of job performance posited by Williams and Anderson (1991) a further analysis of the correlation between the dimensions of followership and IRB, OCBI, and OCBO was also conducted. As depicted in table 11 active engagement is moderately positively correlated with IRB, strongly positively correlated with OCBI, and moderately positively correlated with OCBO resulting in a strong positive correlation overall with job performance. Critical thinking, however, is only weakly positively correlated with OCBI, and not correlated with IRB and OCBO as illustrated in the table 11.

It was not possible to definitively ascertain the cause of the lack of correlation of IRB and OCBO with critical thinking. Nor was it possible to determine if the lack of correlation of IRB and OCBO with critical thinking will be substantiated in future studies that have respondents with all five types of followership behaviors. It was speculated that the lack of correlation of IRB and OCBO with critical thinking may be related to the fact that independent critical thinking has been shown to be negatively related to organizational commitment (Blanchard et al., 2009).

Table 11

Pearson Correlations between Active Engagement, Critical Thinking, IRB, OCBI, OCBO and Job Performance

Followership Dimension	IRB	OCBI	OCBO	Job Performance
Active Engagement	0.45**	0.51**	0.33*	0.56**

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Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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organization and members, inclination of members to exert themselves for the organization, and willingness to remain with the organization. Since increased self-exertion is similar to increased engagement in work activities (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003) it was posited that commitment may lead to increased work engagement. Increased work engagement probably then results in increased employee performance. As a result, a reduction in organizational commitment probably negatively impacts performance.

Within this study, all 40 exemplary followers and 9 of 14 pragmatist followers scored high in critical thinking with scores greater than 30. Acquisition and research and development tends to have complex interdependent dynamic projects that requires members' assessments and the application of judgement in the completion of their tasks. Since those high in critical thinking independently analyze the information to ensure that they agree with the proposal before taking action, it was speculated that independent critical thinking may have negatively impacted follower IRB and OCBO behaviors resulting in the lack of correlation of critical thinking with IRB and OCBO. Surprisingly, critical thinking and OCBI were found to be weakly positively correlated despite the fact that 90.7 percent of respondents scored high on critical thinking. It is speculated that this may have possibly occurred based on two different factors. First, OCBI behaviors are altruistically focused on helping followers in the group. Second, decisions on how to help others may primarily be based on one's ethical perspective of egoism rather than the results of critical thinking. Consequently, critical thinking probably had less impact on OCBI than IRB and OCBO behaviors within this study.

These suppositions as to why critical thinking is not correlated with IRB and OCBO, but OCBI behaviors, requires further investigation.

LIMITATIONS

The most significant limitations of this study was the small sample size of 57 useable responses. The study resulted in a surprisingly large number of exemplary followers (70.2 percent) and moderate number of pragmatist followers (24.6 percent) and an inadequate number of conformist, alienated, and no passive followers. Based on the small sample size it was not possible to determine if the skewed results were based on the unique characteristics of the organizational context. The typical employee within acquisition and research and development is college educated, and the work environment requires adaptability based on the complex interdependent dynamic tasks involved with the projects. Without an expanded study of followers from other program executive offices and laboratories within the Army, it will not be possible to ascertain if this studies sample of 96.5 percent high active engagement and 87.7 percent high critical thinking is the norm in the acquisition and research and development communities. Furthermore, the small sample size of this study limited the ability to examine the relationships between follower types and job and organizational performance that could be performed using a hierarchical regression analysis model.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although it was not possible to ascertain with any statistical significance, it appears that exemplary followership might be the dominate followership style within the acquisition, and research and development communities. Consequently, future studies within this organizational context should include a larger number of participants from across the acquisition, and research and development communities. Furthermore, to ensure that future studies include a statistically relevant number of respondents from all five different followership styles posited by Kelley (1992) a broader array of organizational contexts may need to be included in future studies of follower job performance and work group organizational performance, which will help improve the generalizability of the results. This will also enable the researchers to conduct hierarchical regression modeling to compare the relationship of the followership styles

with the job and organizational performance. Additionally, since the results suggested a statistically significant moderate correlation exists between job performance and organizational performance of work groups, future studies should examine not only the active engagement of different followership styles on organizational performance, but should also attempt to determine what other possible impacts besides job performance there may be on organizational performance. Furthermore, the results of this study suggested that further investigations on the relationship of the components of job performance with the different dimensions and types of followership may also be warranted in the future.

CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that about 80 percent of organizational success is posited to be a result of follower contributions (Kelley, 1992), little research has been conducted on followership (Uhl-Bien et al, 2014). Only five published studies have been conducted on the possible impacts of different styles of followership posited by Kelley (1992). One of these studies conducted by Oyetunji (2013) surveyed follower performance within a very limited context. Because Oyetunji's (2013) study only examined IRB and not OCB job performance, and was conducted solely within the Botswana culture that may be a high power distance society like neighboring South Africa (Purohit & Simmers, 2006), a cross-sectional study was conducted that investigated for the first time the impacts of two of the five followership styles on all aspects of job performance posited by Williams and Anderson (1991) and team performance posited by Huang (2009) within the low power distance American culture (Hoppe & Bhagat, 2007). The study surveyed employees from one Army acquisition organization and one research and development laboratory usina Kelley's (1992) 20 item followership questionnaire. Williams and Anderson's (1991) 20 item job performance scale. and Huana's

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age job performance of follower on a Likert scale of one to five than the average organization using t tests that suggested



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dimension of followership and job performance, and a moderate correlation between active engagement and organizational performance. Finally, the study results revealed that the correlation between critical thinking and job performance was moderate; however, there was no statistically significant correlation between critical thinking and organizational performance.

Although the study's small sample size, and perhaps the study's organizational context resulted in limited to no data available for conformist, alienated, and passive followers required for the evaluation of hypotheses 1a through 1c and 2a through 2c, the study provided evidence to support Kelley's (1992) and Blanchard et al.'s (2009) suppositions that exemplary followers tend to be committed to the organization resulting in work efforts that exceed the minimum required. Consequently, these results suggested that future empirical research is required to determine if: the norm in acquisition and research and development is exemplary followership, the average job performance and work group performance is statistically higher for exemplary followers than all other types of followers, and relationships exist between the dimensions and the different followership styles with the various aspects of job performance and work group performance.

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