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TITLE A Leadership and Psycap: A Study of the Relationship Between Positive Leadership Behaviors and Followers' Positive Psychological Capital

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to investigate a possible relationship between positive leadership behaviors, followers' positive psychological capital, and various demographic measures within a retail bank staff.

METHODOLOGY The population for this study came from 24 retail branches of a regional bank located in the mid-west. The participants included 24 branch managers, and 214 team members. The managers' leadership behaviors were assessed by the LPI (Self) and the Positive Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007) was completed by team members (assessing the dimensions of hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience). The typical team member was a female (83%); about 25 percent were between the ages of 18-25 years, 39 percent between 25-35 years, and 21 percent between 35-45 years. About one-third had some college education, another 12 percent had completed junior college and 31 percent had a college degree. Their average years of work at the bank were 6.4, with just over three years in their current positions. The majority of branch managers were female (58%), between 25-45 years of age (83%), with a college degree (71%), and an average of 4.7 years with the bank and 3.8 years in their current positions. The Cronbach alpha score for the LPI overall was 0.97.

KEY FINDINGS

Model and Enable were the two leadership practices reported by managers as engaging in most frequently, followed by Encourage, Inspire and Challenge. The correlation between the overall LPI score from the manager and the overall PsyCap score from team members was not statistically significant; and this was also true for each leadership practice and the total PsyCap scores. ANOVA by managers' LPI rank (into three groups) revealed a generally consistent pattern for all four dimensions of psychological capital (hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience) but none of the differences were statistically significant. All in all, says the researcher: "The results of this study do not support the research hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between the LPI and the PCQ instruments when administered within a retail bank environment" (p. 99). She goes on to suggest that the two constructs may be independent on one another such that "the branch managers' high scores of their leadership practices supports the cognitive resources of followers' which is demonstrated through the followers' high scores on their perception of their PsyCap. Although mutually exclusive the follower's performance is enhanced through cognitive resources provided through leadership behaviors and the followers' psychological capital" (p. 109).