

Transformational Leadership, Job Characteristics, and Organizational Citizenship Performance

Radostina K. Purvanova, Joyce E. Bono,
and Jessica Dzielwczynski
Department of Psychology
University of Minnesota

According to transformational leadership theory, one of the fundamental ways in which leaders influence followers is by creating meaningful work. Testing this notion, we conducted a field study in which we linked transformational leadership behaviors to employees' perceptions of their jobs (e.g., significance, meaningfulness, importance of the work), and job perceptions to employees' citizenship performance as rated by their manager. Results indicate a positive link between managers' transformational leadership behaviors and followers' citizenship performance. Furthermore, the effects of transformational leadership on citizenship performance are mediated through employees' perceptions of their jobs. Results of a follow-up analysis with employees in 1 organization holding the same job indicate that managers' transformational leadership behaviors predict employees' job perceptions, even when objective characteristics of the job are invariant.

Inspired by Burns' influential book *Leadership* (1978), Bass (1985) advanced an extended theory of transformational leadership. According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders are charismatic and inspirational. They intellectually stimulate followers, and thus promote rationality and problem-solving skills. They also provide individualized consideration to the followers, attending to followers' individual needs for growth and development. Bass further specified that transformational leadership occurs

when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interests for the good of the group. (Bass, 1990, p. 21)

There is considerable overlap between Bass' theory of transformational leadership and charismatic leadership theories advanced by House (1977), Conger and Kanungo (1987), and others, both in theory and in empirical associations. Though the relation between charismatic and transformational leadership has been the subject of some debate (see Bass, 1999; Beyer, 1999; Shamir, 1999; Yukl, 1999), many scholars recognize the similarities between charismatic and transformational leadership theories. In this article, we use the Bass (1985) model, which includes charisma as one element of transformational leadership, as our overarching framework. However, we draw from both literatures (i.e., charismatic and transformational leadership) in the development of our hypotheses.

Since the popularization of the charismatic and transformational leadership theories, a substantial literature on transformational leadership has developed. Scholars have established positive associations between transformational leadership and in-role or task performance (e.g., Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Frost, 1989; Rai & Sinha, 2000; Rickards, Chen, & Moger, 2001; Sosik, Avolio, Kahai, & Jung, 1998) and have shown that transformational leadership affects extra-role performance as well (e.g., Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996b). Indeed, several researchers, including Podsakoff et al. (1996b), have argued that though the effects of transformational leadership on task performance are important, the effects of transformational leadership on extra-role behaviors, such as organizational citizenship, could be even more important. This is consistent with Bass' claim that transformational leadership is about achieving "performance beyond expectations" (Bass, 1985).

The purpose of our study is to examine the role of employees' perceptions of their jobs as a link between transformational leadership and citizenship performance. There are three reasons why this is an important concern. First, possibly the most central tenet of transformational leadership is that it affects citizenship performance—transformational (and charismatic) leaders stimulate followers to engage in extra effort and to perform beyond expectations (e.g., Bass, 1985; House, 1977; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). This theoretical proposition has been well supported empirically (e.g., Pillai et al., 1999; Podsakoff et al., 1996b; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Second, though transformational leadership is the most studied contemporary theory of leadership, another of its central tenets—that transformational leaders affect followers by creating meaningful work (e.g., Bass, 1985; Shamir et al., 1993; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982)—has not been tested. We are

aware of no research explicitly focused on the link between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of their jobs. Third, research shows that employees' perceptions of their work (e.g., nonroutine work that provides feedback and challenge) positively predict their citizenship behaviors (e.g., Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996a; Podsakoff et al., 1996b). Linking these ideas, we suggest that transformational leaders influence the way followers think about their work, leading them to view it as more rewarding, challenging, and meaningful, which affects the extent to which they engage in citizenship performance.

To explore these issues, we conducted a field study in which we examined employees' perceptions of their jobs as a mediator between managers' transformational leadership and employees' citizenship performance. Specifically, we tested the notion that transformational leaders increase the likelihood of followers' citizenship performance by influencing the way followers view their jobs. Given the importance of transformational leadership theory to research and practice in the past two decades, it seems crucial to gain a full and complete understanding of the ways in which transformational leaders affect followers. If our hypotheses are correct, then new leadership training strategies could be developed to teach managers how to link employees' work to broader organizational and societal goals, helping them view their work as meaningful, significant, and important as a way of attaining citizenship performance.

CITIZENSHIP PERFORMANCE

Before developing our hypotheses, we first clarify the meaning of citizenship performance. There is both conceptual and measurement overlap and ambiguity in the literature with respect to similarities and differences between various forms of citizenship or extra-role behavior. In a comprehensive overview of the organizational citizenship literature, Podsakoff et al. (2000) described over 30 forms of citizenship behaviors. The better known terms are organizational citizenship behaviors, which include altruism, courtesy, peacemaking, cheerleading, sportsmanship, generalized compliance, conscientiousness, and civic virtue (Organ, 1988; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983); extra-role performance, which includes altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue (Podsakoff et al., 1996b); organizational spontaneity, which includes helping coworkers, protecting the organization, making constructive suggestions, developing oneself, and spreading goodwill (George & Brief, 1992); and contextual performance, which includes helping and cooperating with others, interpersonal facilitation, endorsing, supporting, and defending organizational objectives, following organizational rules and procedures, job dedication, persisting with enthusiasm and extra effort, and volunteering to carry out task activities (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994).

Despite these many views of citizenship behavior, a meta-analysis by LePine, Erez, and Johnson (2002) concluded that the various forms of organizational citizenship are highly related and may be indicators of a latent construct. Furthermore, Podsakoff et al. (2000) concluded that the overlap between the different citizenship dimensions can be explained by the common origin of those dimensions—Katz's (1964) work on spontaneous cooperation. Thus, despite differences in operationalization and measurement, it is clear that organizational citizenship behaviors, extra-role performance, organizational spontaneity, prosocial behaviors, and contextual performance have much in common. For purposes of this article, therefore, we refer to this broad class of performance behaviors as organizational citizenship performance. However, when citing individual studies, we use the language of the authors of a particular study.

The literature on the consequences of organizational citizenship performance shows consistently that citizenship translates into important organizational outcomes (e.g., Bell & Menguc, 2002; Chen, Hui, & Segó, 1998; Griffin, Neal, & Neale, 2000; Koys, 2001; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Therefore, studying the antecedents of citizenship performance is essential as well. According to Podsakoff and colleagues (2000), the known antecedents of citizenship performance can be placed into four broad categories—individual characteristics, such as attitudes and dispositions; organizational characteristics, such as formal versus informal organizational structures; task characteristics, such as intrinsically satisfying tasks, nonroutine tasks, and tasks that provide feedback; and leadership behaviors, such as transactional and transformational leadership. Our focus is on employees' perceptions of their jobs (e.g., task characteristics) and leadership behaviors as direct and indirect antecedents of citizenship performance. Specifically, we tested the notion that transformational leadership is linked to followers' citizenship performance because leaders affect followers' perceptions of their jobs.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP

There are a number of theoretical statements suggesting that transformational leadership should increase the likelihood of citizenship behaviors by followers. For instance, Bass (1990) stated that transformational leadership should result in more engaged, more devoted, and less self-concerned employees, as well as in workers who perform beyond the level of expectations (Bass, 1985). House (1977) proposed that charismatic leadership should result in a workforce that performs above and beyond the call of duty. Shamir et al.'s (1993) theory of the motivational effects of charismatic leadership suggested that "increased social identification and value internalization will lead to ... a high level of 'extra role,' organizational citizenship behaviors" (p. 587).

Empirical findings confirm these theoretical specifications. Linking transformational leadership to organizational citizenship behaviors, Podsakoff et al. (1996b) found that after controlling for factors such as organizational structure and rewards not under the leaders' control, transformational leadership uniquely accounted for between 1% and 7% of the variance in citizenship behaviors. Though these percentages seem small, Podsakoff and colleagues (1996b) argued that the effects of leadership should not be ignored. Moreover, they demonstrated that excluding transformational leadership from regressions predicting citizenship behaviors substantially reduced the proportion of variance accounted for.

Several additional studies support a link between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship. Podsakoff et al. (1990) showed an average correlation of .18 between the transformational leadership dimensions and the citizenship behaviors of conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism. Similarly, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich (2001) reported an average correlation of .14 between transformational leadership dimensions and the citizenship behaviors of helping, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Pillai et al.'s (1999) two-sample study showed that transformational leadership was directly and significantly related to organizational citizenship ($r_{\text{sample1}} = .34$ and $r_{\text{sample2}} = .16$). We expected to replicate past research linking transformational leadership and organizational citizenship performance.

H1: There will be a direct positive relation between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship performance.

JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP

The job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980) focused on five elements of the job: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Though the primary purpose of the job characteristics model was to link work to motivation, job satisfaction, and job performance, task characteristics have also been linked to citizenship behavior. Farh, Podsakoff, and Organ (1990) compared the relative effects of *task* characteristics, leadership behaviors, and job satisfaction on organizational citizenship. They reported an average correlation of .20 between the five *task* characteristics and altruism, and an average correlation of .16 between the five characteristics and compliance. They further found that task characteristics, especially autonomy, and participative leadership were stronger predictors of citizenship behaviors than job satisfaction.

Several other empirical studies focused on the link between perceived characteristics of the job (e.g., autonomy) and organizational citizenship. Gellathly and Irving (2001) found that managers who perceived greater job autonomy were rated

by supervisors as above average on contextual performance, and Bell and Menguc (2002) reported an average correlation of .17 between job autonomy and the citizenship behaviors. Empirical support for the link between job characteristics and organizational citizenship performance can also be found in the substitutes-for-leadership literature (Podsakoff et al., 1996b). Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1995) found that task characteristics (i.e., routine tasks, task-provided feedback, and intrinsically satisfying tasks) aggregated at the group level were the best predictors of extra-role performance ($M \beta = .17$). In a similar study, Podsakoff et al. (1996b) also found that task characteristics emerged as the most systematic predictors of altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue ($M \beta = .10$). Meta-analytic results reported by Podsakoff and colleagues (1996a) revealed that task characteristics were the most consistent predictors of the five forms of organizational citizenship behaviors. Based on this pattern of results, Podsakoff et al. (1996b) concluded that they “[found] support for Farh et al.’s (1990) conceptual arguments regarding the potential importance of job characteristics as determinants of organizational citizenship behaviors” (p. 292).

In addition to the empirical results reported in the preceding paragraphs, there are theoretical reasons to expect an association between challenging, meaningful, and rewarding work and citizenship behaviors. Building on Yukl and Van Fleet (1982), Bass (1985) suggested that work that is perceived as significant and meaningful will result in extra effort. Furthermore, Shamir et al. (1993) suggested that when employees’ work is linked to important aspects of their identity, they are more willing to put in extra effort. Therefore, we expect a link between employees’ perceptions of their job characteristics and citizenship performance. That is, employees will be more likely to increase their citizenship performance when they perceive their jobs as rewarding, meaningful, and important.

- H2: There will be a direct positive relation between employees’ perceptions of job characteristics and organizational citizenship performance.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND JOB CHARACTERISTICS

The fundamental premise behind the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) is that objective characteristics of the work influence outcomes such as job satisfaction or job performance (Fried & Ferris, 1987). Thus, workers’ reports of their job characteristics should represent veridical characteristics of the work. There is considerable evidence, however, that incumbent-based assessments of job characteristics are imperfect measures of task characteristics, representing both objective characteristics of the job and individuals’ unique perceptions. For example, Gerhart (1988) found that though incumbent-based measures “demon-

strated a statistically significant degree of convergence with an alternative measure of complexity derived from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT), the level of convergence was not strong in terms of variance explained" (p. 160). Judge, Bono, and Locke (2000) also found a statistically significant, but modest, link between perceived job characteristics and DOT-based measures of job complexity.

Scholars have argued that "psychologically based measures confound personal needs and preferences ... with the objective characteristics of the task" (Schwab & Cummings, 1976, p. 23). More specifically, in their social information processing approach to job attitudes, Salancik and Pfeffer (1978) argued that characteristics of a job or a task are "not given but constructed" (p. 227). In other words, employees use information from their social context (such as social norms and expectations) to make judgments and develop perceptions of the "meaningfulness, importance, and variety of the job" (p. 228). Salancik and Pfeffer further specified that supervisors are one potent source of social information, and that they can affect to a considerable extent employees' attitudes about their jobs and tasks. For example, if a leader calls attention to the importance of the job to the organization and to its mission or vision, employees' perceptions of task significance might increase.

In this respect, then, Salancik and Pfeffer's (1978) social information processing theory coincides with Bass' (1985) theoretical suggestion that inspiring leaders energize followers about the importance of their work, as well as with Yukl and Van Fleet's (1982) definition of inspirational leadership as leadership that "stimulates enthusiasm among subordinates for [their] work" (p. 90). Furthermore, Shamir et al.'s (1993) motivational approach to charismatic leadership also lends support to this position. Shamir and colleagues (1993) argued that by linking employees' work to a greater purpose (organizational goals) and to employees' own values, leaders have a direct influence on followers' perceptions of their jobs and tasks. Specifically, they state that "followers of charismatic leaders are expected to have a high sense of 'meaningfulness' associated with the task" (p. 578). Therefore, we expected to demonstrate a positive link between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of their jobs.

H3: There will be a direct positive relation between transformational leadership and perceived job characteristics.

In summary, we tested the notion that transformational leaders influence employees' perceptions of their jobs (viewing them as more significant and meaningful), which in turn influences the likelihood that they will engage in citizenship behaviors in the organization. It should be noted that prior research has established other psychological links between transformational leadership and citizenship behaviors. For example, Pillai et al. (1999) reported that both procedural justice and perceptions of trust were mediators of the transformational leadership–citizenship behaviors link, and MacKenzie et al. (2001) showed that transformational leader-

ship increased perceptions of trust, which resulted in more sportsmanship and civic virtue. However, the focus of our research is on the way in which leaders influence workers' job perceptions, a topic that has not been addressed in past research. This is an important topic, as theory suggests that one of the key ways transformational leaders influence followers is by focusing on the importance and meaning of the work (Bass, 1985; Shamir et al., 1993; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982).

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Participants in this study were managers and employees from two large organizations that took part in a leadership development program. Specifically, managers and their employees from a manufacturing plant of a large aerospace company and from the customer service department of a large private utility company filled out surveys. Both participating organizations were divisions of Fortune 500 companies. Participants were invited by e-mail to complete Web-based surveys as part of the leadership development program.

Employees (258 from the utility company and 254 from the manufacturing company, representing a response rate of 79%) reported on the leadership behaviors of their managers and on their own perceptions of their jobs. Two months after employees filled out the first survey, managers (56 from the utility company and 68 from the manufacturing company) reported on the citizenship behaviors of the employees who reported to them. Thus, our sample consisted of 124 managers and 512 employees, with an average of 4.39 employees per manager.

Thirty-one percent of the managers had a high school diploma, 51% had an associate or bachelor's degree, and 18% had graduate degrees. Managers were, on average, 43 years old, with an average of 4 years in their current job and 9 years in their current organization. They were split evenly between men (51%) and women. To protect anonymity in the leadership feedback process, no demographic information was collected from employees, except for number of years working for the current manager (average 2 years).

Measures

Transformational leadership behaviors. We used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-Form 5X)¹—a commonly used measure of transfor-

¹The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), Form 5X (copyright 1995 by Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio), is used with permission of Mind Garden, 1690 Woodside Road, Suite 202, Redwood City, CA 94061. All rights reserved.

mational leadership—to measure transformational leadership behaviors. In a meta-analysis of the MLQ literature, Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) found that the scales of the MLQ were reliable and predicted work unit effectiveness across studies. However, the MLQ has faced sustained criticism revolving around the extent to which the instrument appropriately samples the full range of leadership behaviors (Yukl, 1999), as well as its failure to replicate the proposed factor structure, due in part to high intercorrelations among the MLQ dimensions (Tejeda, Scandura, & Pillai, 2001). These concerns are most relevant when using the MLQ as a comprehensive assessment of leadership behavior, when examining a two-factor (transformational and transactional) model of leadership, or when examining the discriminant validity of the transformational leadership dimensions. However, in this research, our hypotheses were developed around the overall construct of transformational leadership. Indeed, though there is evidence in support of a multidimensional model of transformational leadership (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999); second order factor analyses demonstrate that the four dimensions can be combined to form a single, reliable, transformational leadership factor (e.g., Carless, 1998; Bono & Judge, 2003).

Hence, in this study, we obtained an overall measure of transformational leadership by asking employees to respond to items corresponding to the four dimensions of transformational leadership—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—using a four-item scale for each dimension (the scale for idealized influence included eight items). Participants rated their managers on a 5-point scale, from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*frequently, if not always*). The 20 items were averaged to form a single transformational leadership score. Sample items include, “Talks to us about his/her most important values and beliefs,” “Articulates a compelling vision of the future,” “Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate,” and “Spends time teaching and coaching me.”

Perceived job characteristics. Employees’ perceptions of their jobs were assessed using a 14-item version of the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS; Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Employees responded to statements about their job on a scale ranging from 1 (*very inaccurate*) to 7 (*very accurate*). Sample items include “This job is one where a lot of other people can be affected by how well the work gets done,” and “Just doing the work required by the job provides many chances for me to figure out how well I am doing.” Though the JDS was originally created to measure the five core dimensions of jobs, subsequent analyses have revealed that a unidimensional model, representing overall job complexity, is a better fit for JDS items (Dunham, 1976; Loher, Noe, Moeller, & Fitzgerald, 1985). As our theory is based on employees overall perceptions of their jobs, we averaged the 14 items to form a single score, with a high internal consistency ($\alpha = .76$). This is in line with practices used by Judge et al. (2000), and in line with Fried and Ferris’ (1987)

meta-analytic findings that a simple additive index is a better predictor of outcomes than a multiplicative factorial index.

Objective job characteristics. An objective measure of job characteristics was obtained using the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT). The DOT was developed in 1939 for the U.S. Employment Service, and has been updated periodically. It provides occupational definitions of thousands of jobs, based on over 75,000 on-site job analysis studies. The DOT is useful for a variety of purposes, including job placement, occupational research, career guidance, labor-market information, curriculum development, and long-range job planning (United States Department of Labor, n.d.). The DOT provides a job code for each occupation it lists; a complexity score can be derived from those codes.

In our study, employees reported their job title, and we assigned a complexity score to each job based on the Roos and Trieman (1980) complexity scores derived from the fourth edition of the DOT. Two of the authors (R. P., J. D.) independently assigned complexity scores based on job titles. Of the 512 employees in the entire dataset, 20 job titles could not be coded, either because the employee did not list a job title or listed a vague or abbreviated title. Interrater agreement was 86% for the remaining 492 job titles. Disagreements were mainly due to ambiguous titles, and consensus was reached for these job titles. Because DOT job codes were derived using independent assessments of job characteristics via on-site job analyses, one major advantage of using these codes is that they represent an objective measure of job characteristics. The job codes, and the complexity scores that can be derived from the job codes, are completely independent of workers' perceptions of their jobs. A drawback of the DOT codes, however, is that they are based on general occupations, rather than on specific jobs. For example, all persons with a job titled "secretary" will receive the same complexity score, though the job of a secretary can vary greatly from company to company. Thus, though our DOT-based scores are not perfect measures of job complexity, they do lend an objective element to the measurement of job characteristics. Job complexity scores in this study ranged from 1.4 to 8.3, with a mean of 4.6.

Citizenship performance. We used the organization scale from the Role-Based Performance Scale (RBPS) developed by Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez (1998).² Welbourne et al. based their RBPS measure on both theoretical and practical considerations. Upon review of Role Theory and Identity Theory, the authors identified five so-called job and nonjob roles that, they argued, provided a fuller mapping of the construct of job performance than what had been available. Specifically, the roles were job, career, innovator, team, and organization. The impor-

²The Role-Based Performance Scale (RBPS) is used with permission of Theresa Welbourne, University of Michigan Business School, 701 Tappan Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1234.

tance of those roles to companies was confirmed by extensive interviews with human resource managers of 10 Fortune 100 companies, as well as by pilot tests at 6 companies. Four items designed to measure performance on the thus-identified roles made up each of the five RBPS scales. Welbourne et al. stated that the number of items was kept low for reasons of practicality and face-validity. They demonstrated high internal consistency and validity of the scales, and argued for the future use of this short, reliable survey for research and practical purposes.

The organization scale (used in this study) consists of items that measure employees' citizenship behaviors directed toward the organization. The four items in this scale were: "doing things that help others when it's not part of the job," "working for the overall good of the company," "doing things to promote the company," and "helping so that the company is a good place to be" (Welbourne et al., 1998; p. 555). Responses were made using a 5-point scale from 1 (*needs improvement*) to 5 (*excellent*). The items were averaged to form a score for citizenship performance ($\alpha = .93$). Further, they formed a single factor that explained 80% of the item variance.

Data Analysis

Prior to examining associations between the variables of interest, we examined the measurement properties of our data. First, as has been done in the past (Barling, Loughlin, & Kelloway, 2002; Bono & Judge, 2003; Shin & Zhou, 2003), we combined the MLQ items to form a single transformational leadership factor. This was justified by an average correlation between the four dimensions of .77, and an exploratory factor analysis that produced a single factor with an eigenvalue greater than one, which explained 83% of the variance across items.

Second, to form a more reliable measure of transformational leadership behaviors, we aggregated ratings across all employees who reported on each manager, forming a single transformational score for each manager. One benefit of aggregation is that individual differences in followers' reports—due either to idiosyncratic follower reactions to their leader or to follower perceptual biases—are treated as error (Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, & Popper, 1998). Furthermore, in line with Shamir et al. (1998), we conceptualize transformational leadership as a group level variable. That is, though we recognize that leaders have different relations with different followers, we are not interested in examining dyadic processes. Rather, we are interested in leadership behaviors exhibited to the group as whole. Thus, consistent with past research, we averaged the transformational leadership scores of all followers for each leader. A significant interclass correlation (ICC)(1) of .18 ($F_{(123, 417)} = 1.96$) and ICC(2) of .49 supported aggregation of the data (Bliese, 2000). The ICC(1) value has been interpreted both as a measure of interrater reliability (James, 1982), and as a measure of nonindependence (i.e., total variance explained by group membership; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Bliese (2000) attempted to clear up this confusion by suggesting that when ICC(1) is calculated on the inde-

pendent variable (as in this case), it should be interpreted as a measure of reliability. ICC(2), on the other hand, is to be interpreted as a measure of the reliability of the group means (Bliese, 2000). Though the reliability of the aggregate measure of transformational leadership is not high, it is consistent with that found in past research (see Judge & Bono, 2000), and is within the limits suggested by Bliese (i.e., ICC(1)'s of .05 to .20, rarely exceeding .30). Based on the request of an anonymous reviewer, we also calculated an r_{wg} value. Specifically, r_{wg} was .83, assuming a slight negative skew in the data (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1993). Typically, r_{wg} values greater than .70 are used to justify aggregation (Bliese, 2000).

In addition to forming a single transformational leadership score and aggregating followers' individual transformational leadership ratings to the group (i.e., manager) level, we also examined the study variables for differences across the organizations. *T* tests revealed that transformational leadership, perceived job characteristics, and organizational citizenship performance did not differ across the two organizations. However, objective job complexity ratings were slightly higher in the manufacturing plant as compared to the utility company ($t = 4.58, p = .03$). As objective job complexity serves only as a control in this study, we proceed to analyze the data from both organizations together.

When data are clustered—as is the case here, with several followers reporting to each leader—traditional Ordinary Least Squares regression approaches to testing for mediation are not appropriate because they fail to take within-group dependency into account, thus producing biased parameter estimates and standard errors. In such situations, it is preferable to analyze data using multilevel modeling techniques (Krull & MacKinnon, 1999, 2001). Therefore, we used Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) to test our mediation hypotheses. This analytical strategy allows individual-level dependent variables (e.g., citizenship performance) to be regressed on both individual-level predictors (e.g., objective and perceived job characteristics), and group-level predictors (e.g., transformational leadership). Though it is advisable to have large groups in HLM analyses, HLM5 uses empirical Bayes estimates, which makes the use of small groups feasible. Nonetheless, very small groups (e.g., group membership is smaller than the number of predictors) cannot be used. For this analysis, we used data from all groups with a manager and at least three employees, resulting in 455 employees clustered into 94 leader groups.

To confirm the existence of dependencies in our data, we specified a null-model in HLM to estimate the amount of variance in our dependent variable (citizenship behaviors) due to group membership (manager). HLM analyses revealed significant between group variance ($\chi^2 = 207.01, p < .001$). Furthermore, the interclass correlation, ICC(1), for citizenship performance estimated from the variance components yielded by the null model was .20, indicating that 20% of the variance in citizenship performance could be explained by group membership (i.e., leader). Note that interpreting the ICC(1) value in this instance as a measure of nonindependence (and not interrater reliability) is appropriate, because ICC(1) was calculated on the dependent variable, citizenship performance (Bliese, 2000). In our

HLM analysis, transformational leadership was treated as a group level variable, whereas citizenship performance, perceived job characteristics, and objective job characteristics were treated as individual level variables.

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 1. Citizenship performance was significantly related to transformational leadership, though this association was not large ($r = .15, p < .01$). The association between perceptions of job characteristics and citizenship performance was also significant ($r = .18, p < .01$). In addition, there was a significant link ($r = .32, p < .01$) between transformational leadership and perceptions of job characteristics.

We conducted three steps to test for mediation, following Baron and Kenney (1986), and Krull and MacKinnon (1999, 2001). Because our interest was in perceptions of job characteristics, we controlled for objective job characteristics in each step of our analyses. In the first step, we examined the effects of transformational leadership on citizenship performance. As shown in Table 2, the between-group (level-2) slope capturing the effect of transformational leadership on citizenship performance was significant ($\gamma_{01} = .31, p = .01$). The value of the coefficient (.31) indicates that a one unit increase in transformational leadership is associated with .31 units increase in citizenship performance. The proportion of between-group variance in citizenship behaviors (an R^2 -type statistic) explained by transformational leadership was 13.85%. Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) defined this statistic as a measure of the proportion reduction in variance at level-2. In other words, transformational leadership accounts for 13.85% of the total between-group variance in citizenship performance, which was 20%. Hence, the between-group variance in citizenship performance that remains after transformational leadership is accounted for is 17.23%. This drop in between-group vari-

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Transformational leadership	3.69	0.45	(.92)				
Perceived job characteristics	3.72	0.46	.32**	(.76)			
Objective job characteristics	4.63	1.82	.23**	.19**	(—)		
Citizenship–organization	3.61	0.82	.15**	.18**	.11*	(.93)	
Job satisfaction	.85	0.36	.09	.30**	-.03	.10*	—

Note. Listwise $N = 492$, except job satisfaction, where $N = 388$. Reliability estimates are shown on the diagonal. There is no reliability for objective job characteristics as these were complexity codes derived from the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*. There is no reliability estimate for job satisfaction as this was a 1-item measure.

* $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

TABLE 2
Mediation of the Transformational Leadership–Citizenship Performance Link
by Perceived Job Characteristics, Controlling for Objective Job Characteristics

Step	Independent Variables	Dependent Variable					
		Citizenship Performance			Perceived Job Characteristics		
		γ	SE	df	γ	SE	df
1	Transformational leadership	0.31*	0.12	92			
	Objective job characteristics	0.009 ^{ns}	0.03	446			
2	Transformational leadership				0.29**	0.06	92
	Objective job characteristics				0.03*	0.01	446
3	Transformational leadership	0.21 ^{ns}	0.12	92			
	Objective job characteristics	-0.0001 ^{ns}	0.03	445			
	Perceived job characteristics	0.32**	0.08	445			

Note. N_{level-1} (employees) = 455. N_{level-2} (managers) = 94. Results are Hierarchical Linear Modeling-derived parameters.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

ance is corroborated by two auxiliary statistics. First, a significant decrease in the chi-square statistic indicates a decrease in between group variance with transformational leadership in the model (207.01 to 191.47). Second, a deviance test, which provides an estimate of how well the specified model fits the data, showed that the model with transformational leadership was a better fit to the data than the model which simply grouped the data by leader ($H_{(D0 - D1)} = 7.09, p < .05$). Together, these statistics support the notion that transformational leadership explains significant variation in followers' citizenship behaviors, supporting H1.

Though not a part of the test for mediation in Krull and MacKinnon (1999, 2001), Baron and Kenny (1986) recommend that the outcome variable be regressed on the mediator. Perceived job characteristics were significantly and positively related to citizenship performance ($\gamma_{01} = .35, p < .001$; not shown in Table 2), after controlling for objective job characteristics, supporting H2.

The second step in multilevel mediation is to test for whether transformational leadership affects the mediator variable, perceptions of job characteristics. As shown in Table 2, transformational leadership does affect perceived job characteristics (supporting H3). Specifically, for every one unit increase in transformational leadership, there is a .29 unit increase in perceived job characteristics ($\gamma_{01} = .29, p < .001$). As expected, objective job characteristics were also significantly related to perceived job characteristics, though this association was not large ($\gamma_{10} = .03, p = .013$).

The third step in multilevel mediation is to regress citizenship performance on both perceived job characteristics and transformational leadership. Step 3 is important because it establishes that job characteristics influence citizenship perfor-

mance with transformational leadership in the model. As per Baron and Kenny (1986), if the effects of transformational leadership decrease when perceived job characteristics are added to the model, then there is evidence for mediation. As shown in Table 2, transformational leadership is no longer significant when perceived job characteristics are added to the model ($\gamma_{01} = 0.21, p = .09$). It is important that the mediator variable, perceived job characteristics, remains a significant predictor of citizenship performance ($\gamma_{20} = .32, p < .001$).

To recapitulate, transformational leadership was significantly linked to citizenship behaviors and perceived job characteristics, after controlling for objective job characteristics. Perceived job characteristics were significantly linked to citizenship performance. Most important for our mediation hypothesis, the effects of transformational leadership decreased and became nonsignificant when perceived job characteristics were added to the model. Thus, using Baron and Kenny's (1986) guidelines for test of mediation, H1, H2, and H3 were supported in these data. However, Krull and MacKinnon (1999, 2001), recommended a final step in multilevel tests of mediation, to test whether the mediated effect is significant. The mediated effect is defined either as (a) the value of the link from transformational leadership to perceived job characteristics multiplied by the value of the link from perceived job characteristics to citizenship performance, or (b) the value of the direct link from transformational leadership to citizenship performance minus the value of the link from transformational leadership to citizenship performance when controlling for perceived job characteristics. To test for significance, the values obtained in (a) and (b) are divided by the standard error of the mediated effect. The standard error of the mediated effect was .03. Dividing the mediated effect (.10 or .09) by its standard error, resulted in values of $t = 3.33$ and $t = 3.00$, respectively ($p < .05$), fully supporting our mediation hypothesis.

One of the advantages of our sample was that we had enough employees who held the same job to allow us to examine the association between transformational leadership and job perceptions for individuals who worked in the same company and held the same job. Thus, there should be no differences in the actual job characteristics or perceptions of job characteristics except those influenced by the leader. In Table 3, we report the correlations between transformational leadership and employees' per-

TABLE 3
Correlations Between Transformational Leadership and Perceptions
of Job Characteristics for Customer Service Associates
and Production Associates

	<i>Customer Service Associates^a</i>	<i>Production Associates^b</i>
Transformational leadership and perceived job characteristics	.14 ^{ns}	.38*

^a $N = 87$. ^b $N = 69$.

* $p < .01$, two-tailed.

ceptions of job characteristics for two job classes: customer service associates ($N = 87$) in the utility company and production associates ($N = 69$) in the manufacturing company. Results reveal positive associations between leadership and perceptions of job characteristics in both companies ($r = .14$ and $r = .38$ for customer service and production associates, respectively). However, only the correlation for production associates was significant. It should be noted that both of these jobs are fairly low complexity jobs (with job complexity scores of 3.80 and 2.10 for customer service associates and production associates, respectively).

Though our measure of transformational leadership was based on the aggregate of responses from all followers, there is some same-source variance present in the link between transformational leadership and perceptions of job characteristics. Because of this possibility, a reviewer suggested we include job satisfaction in our model as a proxy for general affect. Job satisfaction was not assessed for research purposes in this study; however, a single item measure of job satisfaction ("All things being equal, are you satisfied with your present job?" Yes/No) was obtained as part of the organizations' assessment. Employees responded to this item two months after they completed ratings of leadership behaviors and responded to job characteristics items. Thus, we repeated our mediation analysis controlling for job satisfaction as a proxy for employees' general affect at work.

Because our group sizes were small in many cases, and group size must be larger than the number of variables in any regression, it was not possible to use HLM for these supplemental analyses in which we added a fourth independent variable (fewer than 40% of our groups had more than four followers). Therefore, we conducted this post hoc analysis using cross level operator procedures (CLOP; James & Williams, 2000). These procedures are suggested when the data is not appropriate for HLM for reasons such as small group size. In CLOP procedures, the group variable (transformational leadership) is assigned to each follower, creating dependencies in the data in violation of assumptions of independence. Thus standard errors in CLOP procedures are downwardly biased, resulting in liberal tests of statistical significance. To adjust for this problem, we ran the regression using REGRESS (Hunter, 1992), a program that allows us to manually alter the degrees of freedom to represent the number of leaders (124), rather than the number of followers (512). We used the unbiased standard errors produced by this program to calculate a significance test for transformational leadership. Results in Table 4, using the larger, unbiased standard errors, are consistent with our HLM results. Perceived job characteristics mediate the relation between transformational leadership and citizenship behaviors, even when controlling for employee affect (e.g., job satisfaction).

DISCUSSION

Results of this study revealed the expected positive link between transformational leadership and employees' organizational citizenship performance. We also found

TABLE 4
Mediation Model With Overall Job Satisfaction

	<i>Organizational Citizenship Performance</i>
Step 1	
Overall job satisfaction (β)	.10*
Objective job characteristics (β)	.15**
Transformational leadership (β)	.16*
<i>R</i>	.24**
Step 2	
Overall job satisfaction (β)	.06
Objective job characteristics (β)	.10
Transformational leadership (β)	.13
Perceived job characteristics (β)	.11*
<i>R</i>	.26**
ΔR^2 from Step 2	.02*

Note. Listwise $N = 388$.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

a positive link between employees' perceptions of their jobs and their managers' ratings of their citizenship performance. Furthermore, in support of the central hypothesis of this research, we found a positive link between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of their jobs. Employees who report to managers who engage in transformational leadership behaviors rated their jobs as more challenging, meaningful, and significant. Furthermore, employees' perceptions of their jobs mediated the link between transformational leadership and citizenship performance. These effects were observed after controlling for objective characteristics of the job and when we examined a single job within one organization.

Theoretically, our results make an important contribution in that they directly test a central tenet of transformational leadership theory—that transformational leaders inspire followers to see their jobs as important, significant, and rewarding (Bass, 1985; Shamir et al., 1993; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982). Furthermore, our results link job perceptions to the “performance beyond expectations” suggested by Bass (1985). Specifically, managers who score high on transformational leadership appear to be more successful at stimulating followers' enthusiasm about their jobs than managers who score lower, thus indirectly influencing followers' tendencies to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors. Past research suggests that perceptions of intrinsic job characteristics can be substitutes for leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). In contrast, our results suggest that perceptions of job characteristics may be, at least in part, the effects of transformational leadership, as suggested by Podsakoff and colleagues (1996a).

Our sample included several employees in each organization who held the same job (i.e., customer service associates and production assistants) but reported to a different manager, allowing us to directly examine the effects of managers' trans-

formational leadership behaviors on employees' job perceptions. Because employees in these two jobs did the same work but reported to different managers, we can conclude with some confidence that employees' perceptions of their jobs were related to leader behaviors, and not to other factors such as differences in objective task characteristics. Moreover, these two jobs were fairly low complexity jobs, indicating that transformational leaders may be able to increase the meaningfulness of jobs, even for jobs that are objectively routine and repetitive. Conversations with some of the production assistants illustrate this point. The job of a production assistant in the aerospace company consisted of assembling a series of color wires to match a diagram posted at the workstation. The second author had the opportunity to interview some of these employees during a site visit and asked them to "Tell me about your job." In some cases, employees pointed out the diagram and indicated that their job was connecting the red wire to the yellow wire. In other cases, employees indicated that their job was making a wire harness for an airplane. In fact, one employee mentioned the type of airplane that her wire harness was for, continuing to say that if she ever heard news of a plane crash, she and her coworkers anxiously watched the news to see if it was the type of plane that used their wire harnesses. In the second case, the employee viewed her job as important, meaningful, and significant, despite the fact that her main task was connecting wires.

In addition to supporting one of the key tenets of transformational leadership theory, our results have important practical implications for organizations. First, we demonstrate that leaders can impact the way followers view their jobs. Thus, leadership training courses could be developed to teach leaders how to create meaning for jobs that may on the surface appear to be less important or significant. This can be done by linking jobs to the broader purpose, goals, and mission of the organizations. Second, our results suggest that one possible means of increasing citizenship performance in an organization is by altering employees' perceptions of their jobs. Thus, companies concerned with raising the level of citizenship performance in their workforce could start by educating company leaders/managers about the importance of meaningful work to citizenship performance.

A strength of our study is that we obtained data from several sources. Citizenship performance was assessed by managers, job perceptions were based on employee reports, job complexity was objectively coded using DOT data, and leadership behaviors were based on team reports. Thus, though the transformational leadership-job perceptions link was not entirely free of biases expected when data are obtained from the same source, using the leadership reports of multiple employees considerably reduces the effects of common method variance. A second strength of our study is that we included a variety of jobs, ranging from production to customer service to sales.

Our study also has several limitations. First, we cannot make causal attributions about the direction of the link between study variables. However, it is certainly less theoretically or intuitively compelling to argue that helping out in organizations (i.e., citizenship performance) creates more challenging jobs, which in turn creates the tendency to view leaders as inspirational and intellectually stimulating. Sec-

ond, both leadership ratings and job characteristic perceptions were obtained from employees at the same point in time. Based on a reviewer's suggestion, we added job satisfaction to our model to control for general affective feelings about the work environment. With job satisfaction in our model, our mediation results remained unchanged, suggesting that they represent something more than self-report, common source bias. A third limitation of our study is that we were not able to use a multi-dimensional measure of citizenship behaviors, such as those developed by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), and Smith, Organ, and Near (1983), due to constraints on the length of our survey. Our use of the Welbourne et al. (1998) scale, which includes only citizenship behaviors directed toward the organization (not coworkers), limits the generalizability of our results. An important area for future research would be linking job perceptions to helping behavior in other domains. Fourth, we relied on follower ratings of leadership behavior, which are known to be deficient measures of actual behaviors. Unfortunately, research using objective measures of leadership behavior is rare, due to the difficulty of obtaining such measures. However, a valuable future research endeavor could be collecting observational behavioral data on the specific actions leaders take to help followers see their jobs as more meaningful.

In summary, this study provides empirical evidence linking leader behaviors and employees' perceptions of their jobs, thus providing support for a key theoretical proposition of transformational leadership theory. In addition, the study provides practical information related to perceptions of job characteristics that can be used by organizations wishing to design leadership training courses for their leaders, as well as by organizations aiming to increase employees' citizenship behaviors. Finally, the study adds to the growing body of evidence that transformational leaders have direct and indirect effects on employees' perceptions and attitudes, as well as on behaviors that have been linked to individual, group, and organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

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