

LEADERSHIP STYLE ORIENTATION AND INTENT TO
LEAVE A RETAIL ORGANIZATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Managerial turnover in any industry causes concern among the company principals as well as among workers. Research has been conducted on possible reasons for turnover in hospitals, accounting firms, public agencies, insurance companies, banks and university service employees. No studies have been found which examine turnover of retail managers, specifically buyers. Retailing suffers from high turnover levels; 49.1 percent of management trainees voluntarily left a department store in a two year period (Gable, Hollon, & Dangelo, 1984).

Empirical studies have analyzed many factors for a possible relationship with turnover. Among these factors are age of the employee, length of tenure with the company, length of tenure of supervisor with the company, educational level of the employee and intent to leave the organization. No one factor accounted for a large part of the variance in turnover. Several studies alluded to a possible relationship between leadership style and turnover. In many manufacturing situations the supervisors classified as people-oriented seemed to retain subordinates longer than a task-oriented supervisor.

Autonomy and responsibility are negatively associated with turnover (Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980). Employees are less likely to leave an organization when they perceive their supervisor as having strong consideration skills (human relations ability) as opposed to employees

whose supervisors are perceived as being highly structured or production-oriented (Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980). For years management has looked for the best way to organize a firm, but while many management theories have been formulated there appears to be no single best way to organize a firm.

Classical management theory attempted to apply universal management principles to all organizations (Shetty, 1975; Urwick, 1937). Many managers consider classical management too static for use today. Behavioral theory helped management see that behavioral sciences are important to the understanding of organizations (Scott & Mitchell, 1972). Contingency management is a management style that does not try to fit universal solutions to management problems. Contingency management recognizes that organizations are unique. Luthans (1976) identified five established contingency approaches ranging from organizational design to planning for unexplained events. Thus contingency management may be an appropriate tool for retailers.

Retail managers must constantly be able to change and adapt styles and techniques based on a rapidly changing business environment. When change is a constant demand, organizations with a low degree of structure can cope more profitably than more rigidly structured organizations (Shetty, 1975). Hersey and Blanchard (1982) found that people respond to their environment based on their own perceptions of reality. Thus a leader's management style as perceived by his/her subordinates may have some influence on the subordinate's ability to deal with change in the organizational environment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine whether buyer perceptions of their personal leadership style and their perceptions of their Divisional Merchandise Manager's (DMM) leadership style had any relationship with the buyer's stated intent to leave the organization. The specific objectives were:

1. To determine whether buyer intent to leave is related to self-rated leadership style orientation;
2. To determine whether buyer intent to leave is related to buyer perception of their DMM's leadership style orientation;
3. To compare self-rated leader behaviors with perceptions of DMM leader behaviors;
4. To determine whether tenure with the organization or as a buyer is related to buyer intent to leave;
5. To determine whether age or sex of the buyer is related to either self-rated leadership style orientation or intent to leave the organization.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study:

1. Employee intent to leave is not related to employee leadership style orientation (initiating structure or consideration).
2. Employee intent to leave is not related to buyer perceptions of Divisional Merchandise Manager leadership style orientation (initiating structure or consideration).
3. Employee intent to leave is not related to similarity in buyer self-rated leadership style orientation and buyer perception of

Divisional Merchandise Manager leadership style orientation.

4. Employee intent to leave is not related to age of the respondent.

5. Employee intent to leave is not related to sex of the respondent.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were recognized at the outset of the study:

1. Employee stated intent to leave will be an accurate reflection of job intentions and can be used as a predictor of employee turnover.

2. The job description for buyers is similar enough to allow comparisons to be made among buyers within a retail organization.

Limitation

One limitation of the research was recognized. Generalizations are limited to populations with characteristics similar to those of the population sampled.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined for reference throughout the study:

Buyer - the individual reporting to a Divisional Merchandise Manager who selects, procures and manages the stock assortment of a given portion of retail merchandise within a retail store.

Divisional Merchandise Manager - the individual responsible for coordinating and evaluating the activities of a related group of buyers in a retail store.

Initiating Structures - "the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and members of the work-group, and in endeavoring to establish well defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedures" (Halpin, 1956, p. 4).

Consideration - "behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and the members of his staff" (Halpin, 1956, p. 4).

Individual Consideration Skills - the mean response score from all buyers to all of the 15 questions from the leader behavior description questionnaire reflecting the buyers' perceptions of the degree to which they possess consideration.

Individual Initiation Skills - the mean response score from all buyers to the 15 questions from the leader behavior questionnaire reflecting the buyers' perceptions of the degree to which they possess initiating structures.

Divisional Merchandise Manager Consideration Skills - the buyers' mean response score reflecting the degree to which they perceive their DMM as possessing consideration.

Divisional Merchandise Manager Initiation Skills - the buyers' mean response score reflecting the degree to which they perceive their DMM as possessing initiating structures.

Difference in Consideration Skills - the numerically calculated difference between the buyers' own consideration skill score and their DMM's score.

Difference in Initiation Skills - the numerically calculated difference between the buyers' own initiation skill score and their DMM's score.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee turnover costs American industry billions of dollars every year (Laser, 1980). No accurate predictor of turnover has been found. Management style, length of service, and personnel management all appeared to affect turnover. Research has shown that an employee's stated intent to leave the present organization was an immediate precursor to turnover (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979).

Management theorists have searched for the best way to organize a firm. Possibly the managerial organization of a firm can affect an employee's stated intent to leave. Classical, behavioral, scientific management, general systems and contingency theories of management are reviewed in this chapter. A review of research on employee turnover is also included.

Management Theories

Luthans (1975) called existing management theories a jungle of mixed approaches and beliefs about the best way to organize a firm. There have been many attempts to revise traditional management theories in search of a more suitable approach. This section includes a review of primary traditional management theories (classical, behavioral, scientific management, and general systems) and the major components of each. The contingency theory of management is also discussed.

Classical Management Theory

Scott and Mitchell (1972) recognized Weber's bureaucracy as one of the earliest management traditions. In the 1800s Weber identified five major qualities applicable to all organizations. These five qualities (division of labor, centralization of authority, rational program of personnel administration, rules and regulations and written records of company transactions) initially formed the basic foundation for all classically organized firms.

Fayol was another early theorist with views similar to Weber's. Luthans (1976) credited Fayol with identifying the five functions of management most widely used today (planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling). Since Fayol, classical theorists have argued over what to label each function and no new progress has really been made. For this reason, classical management theory is considered too static for use today. Shetty (1975) conceptualized the classical management structure as a pyramid shaped organization where human action is mechanistically explained. Urwick (1937) stated that inductive principles can govern arrangements for human associations of any kind. The principles are concerned with methods of subdividing and allocating to individuals all the various activities, duties and responsibilities essential to the purpose at hand, the people composing it or any theory underlying the creation of the purpose. Classical management theorists are proponents of universal management principles.

Behavioral Theory

The behavioral style is to arrange organizations so that people feel they count, belong, and that the work is meaningful. Behavioral

theory emerged in the late 1920s with the examination of what are now known as the Hawthorne studies. The principal researchers at Western Electric's Hawthorne Plant, F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, drew on sociology and psychology to demonstrate that economic assumptions about human motivation were not sufficient to explain work behavior within an organization. Roethlisberger and Dickson's contribution to management theory was that the behavioral sciences are important to the understanding of organizations (Scott & Mitchell, 1972).

As behavioral theory grew, it relied on a human relations approach to management. If management can make employees happy, maximum performance will result. This approach was seen as too simplistic, so, during the 1970s, behaviorists began relying more on the behavioral sciences where organizational behavior was seen as a result of the interaction between human beings and the formal organization (Luthans, 1975). Behavioral theorists also suggested modifying the formal organization according to the informal structure so that employees could participate more in decision-making (Shetty, 1975).

The views of the industrial humanists are similar to the views of behavioral theorists. Scott and Mitchell (1972) identified Argyris, Bennis, and Likert among those researchers who suggested changing traditional management beliefs on what constitutes appropriate administration of people. This change was seen as complementing man's nature, and producing greater freedom and satisfaction at work. The thrust of the industrial humanist view is to seek to bring man at work freedom from oppression and give opportunities for self-determination (Scott & Mitchell, 1972).

Scientific Management Theory

Early proponents of scientific management sought to determine how a society could increase industrial productivity. Initially, scientific management was also concerned with increasing the level of worker motivation (Scott & Mitchell, 1972). The early pioneers of scientific management included Fred Taylor, Frank Gilbreth, Morris Cook, Henry Gantt, and Harrington Emerson.

Fred Taylor is credited as the father of scientific management theory (Scott & Mitchell, 1972). In 1903, Taylor presented his philosophy of management to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. His major thesis was that management and labor must cooperate to achieve maximum good for the society. Taylor believed that man started with a given amount of natural resources and his only means of utilizing these resources was through human effort. The greater the effort, the greater the wealth man could achieve. Scientific management was a combination of four principles (Taylor, 1929):

1. Develop a science for each element of man's work, which replaces the old rule-of-thumb method.
2. Scientifically select and then train, teach, and develop the worker.
3. Cooperate with the worker to insure that all of the work is being done in accordance with the principles of the science which has been developed.
4. Divide the work and the responsibility equally between management and the workers.

In the past, almost all work, and the greater part of the responsibility, were thrown onto the worker. Taylor's idea of the fourth

principle was for managers to take over all the work for which they are better qualified than the worker.

Henry Gantt was a protege of Taylor. Gantt added four new ideas to Taylor's concepts: the Gantt chart used to compare actual to planned performance; task and bonus plans for paying workers; a policy of instructing workers, not driving them; and an emphasis on service, not profits (Gantt, 1929).

In the 1970s, the scientific management approach turned more toward management science and added use of computers to solve managerial problems. Luthans (1976) stated that the scientific management theory had never claimed to be an overall conceptual base for management theory as had the classical theory.

General Systems Theory

A biologist, Ludwig von Bertalanffy, credited with early development of general systems theory, believed that all parts of a system were interrelated and interdependent and that the system was composed of subsystems that related and depended on one another. He saw a unitary whole coming from subsystems in interaction with one another. Thus von Bertalanffy (1968) conceptualized that almost every phenomenon can be presented from a systems viewpoint. An organization is composed of individuals, the formal organization, the informal organizations, status, and role-expectancy systems, and the physical environment or work situation. Luthans (1975) recognized that a formal organization can be seen as a system consisting of structure, processes, technology and human beings. This system contains a biological-physiological structure, psychological processes and a personality.

Kast and Rosenweig (1972) wrote that this systems approach is seen as a new organizational paradigm but it must be applied, modified, and elaborated on to make it as useful as possible. General systems theory is used extensively to investigate relationships between subsystems within organizations and in studying the environmental interfaces.

Environmental forces have a strong influence on organizational structure. When innovation is a constant demand, experience has shown that organizations with a low degree of formal structure can more profitably cope with changing environments than those with a high degree of structure (Shetty, 1975). General systems theory emphasizes a high level of abstraction and thus managers have not become sophisticated enough to use general systems theory appropriately (Kast & Rosenweig, 1972). Moving down the abstraction level to a midrange concept brings managers to what is termed the "contingency approach."

Contingency Management

Carlisle (1976) perceived the contingency management approach as an approach that does not try to fit universal solutions to management problems. To Carlisle, contingency management is an approach that emphasizes the uniqueness of organizations. In 1976 Luthans (widely recognized in the literature as one of the foremost proponents of contingency management) wrote that contingency management was concerned with the functional relationship between designated environmental variables and appropriate management concepts and techniques. Environmental variables can be external to the organization (social, technological, economic, or political) or they can be internal within an organization (organizational structure or managerial processes such as

decision-making, communication and control). The goal of contingency management is to determine a functional if/then relationship that will lead to effective goal achievement (Luthans, 1976). He further stated,

management is active, not passively dependent in the practice of contingency management, but the determination of the functional relationships . . . is intended to improve the effectiveness of the practice of contingency management (p. 31).

Dessler (1976) cited research which differentiated four types of environments which vary in complexity, relevant uncertainty, relatedness and overall causal-texture. These four types of environments are placid, randomized; placid, clustered; disturbed, reactive; and turbulent. In each of these four environments different functional relationships must be identified for the practice of contingency management. The placid, randomized environment is the simplest and corresponds to the classical market environment where change does not occur quickly and managers learn by trial and error. In the placid, clustered environment, survival is linked to what an organization knows of its environment. The organization is hierarchical and centrally controlled and coordinated. In a disturbed, reactive climate, many similar organizations exist; the action of competitors must be considered. Greater flexibility is required and there is a premium on quality and speed of decisions. The turbulent environment is complex due to the growth of organizations and there is a deeper interdependence between economics and other facets of society. There is a reliance on research and development to meet the competitive challenge.

Pugh, Hickson, and Hinings (1969) outlined a taxonomy of organizational structures. The five primary variables of structures used in their research were specialization of functions, standardization of

procedures, formalization of documentation, centralization of authority, and the configuration of positions. These five variables were believed to represent a large number of the concepts used in the literature on organizational structure. The taxonomy based on these five variables included a workflow bureaucracy which is highly structured with a low concentration of authority. A personnel bureaucracy has centralized authority with minimal structuring of daily activities, but does have central recruiting, selecting, disciplining, and dismissing procedures. The implicitly structured organization has minimal structuring and dispersed authority. The structure is implicit when the organization is run by transmitted custom. Implicit structure is typical in small- or medium-sized organizations where ownership and management overlap. A full bureaucracy is high in structure and concentration of authority.

Each of these divisions of environments and structure indicate that no two organizations are the same; they each face very different problems and thus require different management styles. Most organizations are formed through evolutionary processes rather than conscious design (Shetty, 1975). In much the same evolutionary way, contingency management has emerged as the path out of the management jungle. Contingency management recognizes that organizations are unique and makes no attempt to apply universal management principles. Contingency management has become the "conventional wisdom" of post industrialism and is effective in linking theory to practice (Wooton, 1977). Wooton further stated that contingency management is a transition strategy.

Luthans (1976) identified five established contingency approaches. First is personnel management where the human element, relationships

and organizational policies are major variables that affect personnel management. Next is contingency planning which is an attempt to plan for unexpected events. Third is contingency organizational design in which past research indicated there is no "one" best way to organize. Fourth is the behavioral contingency model whereby it is believed that employee behavior can change if environmental contingencies and their consequences are established. The fifth established contingency approach is a contingency model of leadership where specific functional relationships between situations and leadership styles are identified.

Contingency Model of Leadership. The contingency model of leadership is based on the premise that there is no one best style of leadership for an organization. Leaders and their respective subordinates are unique and interact in a way no other leader/subordinate group does. In most leadership situations, however, two primary foci emerge on the part of the leader. The leader may place strong emphasis on tasks (initiating structures) or on people relationships (consideration skills). Hersey and Blanchard (1982, p. 96) defined task behavior as "the extent to which leaders are likely to organize and define the roles of the members of their group . . . characterized by establishing well-defined patterns of organizations and channels of communication." Relationship behavior was defined as "the extent to which leaders are likely to maintain personal relationships between themselves and members of their group" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982, p. 96).

Fiedler (1964) attempted to determine what the most effective leadership style would be for a particular situation. Fiedler hypothesized that the type of leader attitude required for effective group performance depended on the degree to which the group performance

depended on the degree to which the group situation was unfavorable or favorable to the leader. Favorableness of the situation was the degree to which the situation enabled the leader to exert influence over his group. Underlying Fiedler's work is his concept that leadership behavior is a single continuum with only two basic leader behavior styles: task-oriented leadership and relationship-oriented leadership.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) were among the first researchers to propose that leadership style is a continuum ranging from boss-centered to subordinate-centered. Tannenbaum and Schmidt suggested several situational variables which influence a boss's leadership style: type of organization, the work group's experience in working together, the nature of the work and time pressure on the individuals.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) suggested that any combination of situational variables might occur. Thus, they proposed four basic leader behavior quadrants: high task and low relationship, high task and high relationship, high relationship and low task, and low relationship and low task. The leadership style of a manager is the behavior pattern that a person shows when attempting to moderate activities of others as perceived by those others. This is different from the self-perception of the leader.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) found that people respond based on their own perceptions of reality. Two components of leadership behavior seem to affect subordinate behavior: initiation of structure and consideration (Evans, 1970). A highly considerate leader will be seen as offering rewards in more need areas whereas the less considerate supervisor will be perceived as rewarding only with pay and security. The leader who is perceived as low in formulating and communicating

specific structures for the job is seen as giving rewards without successful following of a path by a subordinate.

Jago and Vroom (1977) proposed that leader behaviors are a function of person and situation. They found the higher the hierarchical level, the more congruent were the subordinate's perceptions of the management style of their supervisors with the supervisors' own self-reported management style. Jago and Vroom suggested that if subordinate perceptions of participativeness are not accurate in the leader/member relationship, the morale and performance gains may not be satisfactory for the organization. They wrote that it is possible to find organizations where no discrepancies exist and suggested this as an area for further research. Followers will tend to behave according to how they perceive the behavior of their bosses (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) stated that an effective leadership style is one appropriate to a given situation; an ineffective style is inappropriate for a given situation. Effectiveness is really a matter of degree; any given style could fall somewhere on a continuum from extremely effective to extremely ineffective.

The style and expectations of an organization are determined by the history and tradition of the organization as well as by the organizational goals and objectives of top management (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). It is important for managers to know the expectations of their boss, especially if the manager wants to advance in the organization. If a boss is very task-oriented, subordinates may be expected to behave in the same way.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) suggested that as the maturity level of followers increased in terms of accomplishing a specified task,

leaders should begin to reduce task behavior and increase relationship behavior until the group reached a moderate level of maturity. In their research, Hersey and Blanchard suggested that a bell-shaped curve might best represent which type of leader behavior might be most effective in a given situation. As maturity of the followers changed so would the leader's style.

Contingency Management in Retailing. Contingency management seems especially appropriate for retailers because their competitive environment is so fast paced. No study was found which attempted to apply any of the contingency management and leadership style principals outlined here in a retail setting.

In the initial phase of hiring management trainees retailers emphasize individuals, their autonomy in the organization and the extent to which the trainee can manage their own career success. These characteristics would appear to indicate management's belief in the maturity of the new trainees. But, frequently because retailing functions in a disturbed, reactive climate, new managers and buyers are carefully controlled and individual autonomy is often at a minimum. This lack of autonomy as well as the management style employed by the supervisor can lead to turnover levels higher than really desirable.

Individual management styles depend on one's training, experience, and perceptions of job requirements as well as individual styles of relating to people (O'Brien, 1969). The relationship of leaders to their subordinates has been shown to affect the group's performance and level of output.

Employee Turnover

Price (1977, p. 4) defined employee turnover as "the degree of individual movement across the membership boundary of a social system." Voluntary turnover is movement initiated by the individual whereas involuntary turnover is not initiated by the employee and often includes dismissals, layoffs, and deaths.

Total employee turnover costs American industry billions of dollars every year. In retailing alone, turnover runs 30 percent a year (Gable, Hollon, & Dangelo, 1984). Turnover affects firms of all sizes. The financial costs can be direct, increasing the cost of payroll administration and requiring additional dollars for recruitment, or the costs can be indirect, most commonly viewed as the decrease in productivity as replacements are trained (Laser, 1980). Price (1977) reported on data that indicated that high performers leave more often than low performers thereby supporting the belief that turnover decreases company effectiveness.

Porter and Steers (1973) said that it may be necessary to accept certain levels of turnover as a price for rapid change and increased efficiency. A program to reduce turnover can actually be shortsighted for organizations with relatively large amounts of unavoidable turnover (Dalton, Krackhardt, & Porter, 1981). Turnover can help the organization get rid of an ineffective employee by bypassing the administrative procedures necessary to terminate the ineffective employee (Powell & Feinberg, 1984). Turnover can also be positive in that it helps allocate the efficiency of a given labor market by creating a good fit between workers and jobs (Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980).

An equally significant cost of turnover, though less tangible, is the "human cost" of turnover when the morale of contented employees is upset by those people who do not fit into the organization (Laser, 1980). Price (1977) acknowledged that individuals who leave an organization are commonly dissatisfied with the organization or some of its aspects. Price cautioned, however, that not all leavers are dissatisfied and not all dissatisfied employees leave. Voluntary turnover has been the focus of most turnover studies because most turnover is voluntary and is subject to control by managers. It is natural to focus attention on a phenomenon capable of some degree of control (Gable et al. 1984; Price, 1977).

Correlates and Determinants of Employee Turnover

Price (1977), considered to be one of the foremost researchers in the area of employee turnover, distinguished between turnover correlates and determinants in the literature on employee turnover. Correlates are related to turnover (i.e., they may be viewed as potential causes of turnover). Most empirical generalizations indicate correlation rather than causation among variables. Determinants are analytical variables believed to produce variations in already existent turnover levels.

Correlates. Several variables are believed to have a direct impact on turnover levels. By examining major correlates, strategies can be developed to attempt to reduce turnover. Price (1977) found length of service (sometimes referred to as tenure), age, and level of employment to be strongly correlated with turnover. Employees who have

been with the company for a short period of time usually have higher turnover rates than employees with a longer company service record. Younger employees usually have higher turnover rates than older employees. Age may be closely related to length of service but employees in the same age group differ widely in the amount of time they have worked for an organization. Higher rates of turnover usually occur during periods of high employment locally or nationally. Weak correlations were found between turnover and educational level or managerial status, but Price suggested that more research needs to be done on managers and proprietors.

Determinants. Salary, integration in relationships, communication and centralization were identified by Price (1977) as turnover determinants. Determinants produce variation in turnover but do not directly affect turnover levels as do correlates. Eleven studies reviewed by Price supported the idea that successively higher rates of pay will produce successively lower turnover levels. Price introduced the concept of integration and its impact on turnover rates. Integration is the extent of participation in primary or quasi/primary relationships. Primary relationships (e.g., the family) are diffuse and emotionally involved. The "close friend" on the job is seen as a quasi/primary relationship in the organization. Price suggested that higher degrees of integration will probably produce successively lower turnover rates.

Communication, the degree to which information is transmitted among members of a social system, may also influence turnover. Price (1977) identified instrumental communication as communication directly related to role performance. Instrumental communication provides

information necessary to give individuals a realistic picture of the job environment. Frequently this communication comes formally through a training class. As instrumental communication increases, turnover levels are believed to fall.

High turnover rates may result from increased centralization in the organization. Centralization refers to the degree to which power is concentrated in a social system. An employee who has little autonomy in his immediate work area is probably working in a centralized firm. Price (1977) found that each of these four determinants produced variations in turnover in an additive rather than multiplicative manner.

Other Variables. Beyond correlates and determinants, other variables may influence turnover. Price (1977) identified satisfaction, or the degree to which members of a social system have a positive attitude toward belonging to that system, as a product of the determinants discussed earlier. Opportunity or the availability of alternative roles outside the company, can influence turnover. With greater opportunities, turnover rises.

Laser (1980) indicated that a major misconception about turnover concerns salary. He suggested that the importance of salary was greatly exaggerated simply because employees who leave (for whatever reason) make the organization and its pay scale the target of their frustration. Thus both Price (1977) and Laser saw pay as a determinant of turnover; it may produce variations in turnover but is not correlated with actual turnover figures.

Laser (1980) believed the fundamental causes of turnover were linked to problems within the organization. Laser identified three organizational problems which he believed caused turnover levels to

increase: improper personnel selection techniques, inadequate employee orientation and training, and personnel management within the organization.

In Laser's (1980) view, employee selection problems come from management's lack of appreciation for the selection process. Many organizations do not communicate to applicants exactly what is ahead for them as employees in the organization. Recruiters gloss over unpleasant job tasks and portray the job as more glamorous than it is.

Gable et al. (1984) found support for the hypothesis that a clear understanding of the job would increase the likelihood of the employee staying with a retail store. Gable et al. specifically noted that lack of understanding of the job was a major problem among retailing recruits and suggested that applicants to a retail management training program be required to write a statement of what they envision the job to be.

Formal training is considered by many companies to be too time consuming or costly. The most common training approach is frequently the sink-or-swim approach, formally called on-the-job-training. A lack of formal training provides no instruction in work behaviors for the employee and frequently results in the employee prematurely leaving the organization (Laser, 1980).

Internal management problems also impact on employee turnover. Poor supervision with inconsistent behaviors or failing to enforce work rules can frustrate good employees to the point that they leave the company.

Organizational Factors

Organizational factors were defined by Porter and Steers (1973, pp. 154-155) as "those variables affecting the individual that are primarily determined by persons or events external to the immediate work group." Several of the previously discussed determinants of voluntary turnover (salary, communication, and centralization) were examples of organizational factors that can affect turnover rates. Additional factors that can affect turnover rates are job content, employee job expectations, leadership style, and peer group interaction.

Job Content. Previous research indicated that employee satisfaction with the work itself was negatively correlated with turnover. The intrinsic value of the work, intrinsic motivation, and satisfaction were all negatively related to turnover (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand., & Meglino, 1979). Turnover appeared negatively related to perceived opportunities to fully utilize one's abilities on the job (Porter & Steers, 1973). The variety of tasks provided on the job was negatively related to turnover among retail non-managerial employees (Taylor & Weiss, 1969). Beyond job content, the job expectations of the employees are also very important. Research indicates these job expectations are influencers of employee turnover.

Employee Job Expectations. Mobley et al. (1979) suggested that models of employee turnover processes must move beyond satisfaction as the single explanatory variable for turnover because satisfaction only accounts for 16 percent of the variance in turnover. One means of further exploring turnover is through examination of job expectations. Consistently throughout the literature, the degree to which expectations

were met was related to turnover levels. Porter and Steers (1973) operationally defined "met expectations" as the discrepancy between what persons positively or negatively experience on the job and what they expected to experience. Simply knowing that an employee is dissatisfied and about to leave is not adequate; the reasons for the dissatisfaction must be ascertained. Often, unmet job expectations help explain dissatisfaction. When there are unmet job expectations, the propensity to leave does increase (Porter & Steers, 1973). James Andress, Operating Vice President for Federated Department Stores said, "beware of setting job specifications where they inflate a position with little substance or load a position with an impossible number of diverse responsibilities" (cited in Cooper, 1983, p. 50). Research has shown no significant difference in expectations at the time of hiring in employees who stay and those who decide to leave. With increased employee tenure, significant differences emerge. Those who remained with the company felt their expectations were adequately met while those who eventually left felt their expectations were not met. Porter and Steers in a 1973 study found that leavers felt they were given less autonomy on the job than was expected. Turnover has been shown to be related to a perceived lack of autonomy over work.

Meyer (1979) questioned corporate executives who had changed jobs recently about factors affecting their decision to move. More than 41 percent of those surveyed said the move was motivated by perceptions of greater long-term opportunity available with a new employer. Nearly 23 percent shifted for an immediate improvement in status. Overall, nearly two-thirds of the executives changed companies for what they perceived to be career opportunities greater than those available to

them with the present company. Meyer suggested that companies may control turnover through career planning and clear, open communication channels. Porter and Steers (1973) suggested that companies enrich the potentially available rewards and increase accuracy and realism of expectations through improved communication about the nature of the job and payoffs for good performance.

Supervisory Style

Krackhardt, McKenna, Porter, and Steers (1981) suggested that the role of the supervisor is the key to a new employee's job experience and ultimately the employee's satisfaction. They noted that supervisors control the degree of structure, ambiguity, and conflict in the work itself, they provide informal and formal feedback of employee behavior, and they control rewards and job security. Training a supervisor to reduce turnover is difficult but supervisory skills may be manipulated and have been shown to be related to turnover. Porter and Steers (1973) described a study in which turnover was highest for groups whose foreman was rated low in consideration. Turnover and consideration were curvilinearly related; critical levels appeared beyond which increased consideration or decreased structure had no effect on turnover. Other research (Porter & Steers, 1973) indicated a significant correlation ($r = .76$) between turnover and authoritarian ratings of the supervisor by the employees. Bassett (1967) found that white collar managers were more likely to leave when their supervisors had less than five years of managerial experience. The implication Bassett outlined was that managerial experience may need to be considered by a company before determining where to place a new employee

if turnover is to be reduced. This concept has implications for retail management training programs. Krackhardt et al. (1981) found that supervisory training for branch bank managers and carefully controlled implementation of set objectives reduced bank teller turnover from 26 percent to five percent in a four month period.

Prediction of Turnover

The literature contains many studies where attempts were made to develop a model for predicting employee turnover. In research with a retail department store Gable et al. (1984) stated that prediction of managerial turnover would be helpful to busy executives who must make decisions affecting a firm's profitability. Voluntary turnover represents a sizable cost to the retailer in terms of selecting and training replacements.

Gable et al. (1984) found retail management trainees with a clear understanding of their job and prior retail experience were more likely to stay with an organization. Mobley et al. (1979) thoroughly reviewed the literature on turnover and found that no one factor explained a significant amount of variance in turnover. Mobley et al. (1979) did find a significant relationship between supervisory style and turnover. Most frequently, specific aspects of the leader/member interaction were significantly related to turnover. The perceived intrinsic value of the work, motivation and satisfaction were all negatively related to turnover. Intention to quit was positively related to turnover. However, Mobley et al. (1979) noted that intentions did not account for impulsive behavior and did not adequately capture the perception and evaluation of alternatives. The more specific the intention statement

and the less time between measurement and actual turnover behavior, the stronger the relationship between intent to leave and turnover.

Muchinsky and Morrow (1980) developed a process model of turnover. Among their determinants of turnover was supervisory style. In their model, supervisors high in human relations ability or consideration had employees less likely to quit (low intent to leave). Supervisors high in structure or those who are production oriented tended to produce more employee turnover.

Cooper (1983) looked specifically at retail stores. He found large department stores and specialty stores were suffering most from high turnover. Cooper noted that very rarely have retailers considered the management style of the supervisor as a possible factor causing high turnover.

Bartol (1979) asked computer specialists their intent to leave the organization within the next year. He did not find strong support for a relationship between intent to leave and actual turnover.

Mitchel (1981) asked field managers from 43 life insurance companies their intentions to leave with four statements ranging from an intent to leave immediately to an intent to leave within five years. Mitchel found a significant correlation between intent to leave and turnover from follow up data gathered three years after the questionnaire was completed. Terborg and Lee (1984) looked at managerial turnover rates in 65 retail stores over a two year period. They found that stores with the highest turnover rates tended to be in areas of expanding economic activity and to have, on the average, young, low tenured and highly educated personnel.

Summary

Retail organizations operate in a fast paced environment where rapid change may be crucial for the survival of the firm. When employees are not assimilated into the patterns of change the employees may leave the organization. Employee turnover in retailing runs 30 percent a year (Gable et al., 1984). Turnover can be beneficial by creating a good fit between workers and jobs, but turnover can also upset the morale of the contented employees (Laser, 1980; Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980). Turnover can also decrease productivity while replacements are trained (Laser, 1980).

The contingency management approach seems appropriate for the modern retailer. One aspect of contingency management is the contingency model of leadership. In this model, specific functional relationships between situations and leadership variables are identified. Leadership variables are first assessed and then coordinated with the various situations faced by a retail manager. Two primary leadership variables have emerged in leadership research: initiating structures and consideration.

Several studies have shown that when supervisors are rated high in consideration turnover is lower than when supervisors were rated low in consideration. Within a retail organization there are leaders who are perceived by their subordinates as possessing either more consideration or more initiating structures.

While there are many correlates and determinants of turnover, no single factor has been found to adequately predict turnover. Thus leadership style and intent to leave may be stepping stones for future research on predicting turnover.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

The purpose of the study was to determine whether buyers' perceptions of their personal leadership style and their perception of their divisional merchandise manager's leadership style had any relationship with the buyer's stated intent to leave the organization. An already developed and tested leadership style measure, the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, was used to determine leadership style orientation. Intent to leave was measured using the four items developed and used by Mitchell (1981).

Instrument

The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) was developed at The Ohio State University. Developmental work on the questionnaire was done in a series of studies with military aircraft commanders but the questionnaire has been used in industry and education. Halpin (1956) identified initiating structures and consideration as two fundamental dimensions of leader behavior. Halpin noted that there was nothing especially new about these two dimensions but these two concepts have probably always been used by effective leaders in guiding their subordinates. Hemphill (1955) found that university departments with reputations for effective administration had chairmen who were described by their respective faculty as above average on consideration and

initiating structures. Fleishman (1953) administered the questionnaire to 394 workers in an industrial plant and asked them to describe the behavior of their own foreman. Fleishman found the reliability of the consideration scale to be .98 and the reliability of the initiating scale to be .78. Fleishman concluded that these two leadership dimensions were meaningful in that particular industrial setting. Fleishman (1953) also stated that a supervisor could be high in consideration without necessarily being high or low in initiating structures; the halo effect from scale to scale did not seem to exist. Halpin (1955) administered the LBDQ to 64 school superintendents and 132 aircraft commanders. The aircraft commanders placed greater emphasis on initiating structures and the superintendents placed greater emphasis on consideration. Halpin (1956) used the LBDQ in sampling the faculty reporting to 50 different school superintendents. The faculty rated the superintendents lower in consideration and initiating structures than the superintendents rated themselves. The reliability was .92 for consideration and .83 for initiating structures.

In reviewing the literature the LBDQ seemed to be a reasonable measure of leadership style. Leadership style (consideration and initiating structure) was the focus of this study, so the LBDQ was chosen for use as a measure of leadership style. The LBDQ had been used both as a measure of personal leadership style and as a measure of staff perceptions of the leadership style of their boss. The LBDQ was used in both ways in the present research. Initiating structure was believed to reflect a characteristic attitude about profit-consciousness in retailing. Consideration is a more behavioral approach that may be used by retail managers. Fifteen short descriptive statements

from the LBDQ reflected initiating structures and 15 reflected consideration. Minor wording changes in the instructions were made to reflect the perspective of a retail manager. Responses were made on a Likert-type scale including always, often, occasionally, seldom, and never. The respondents indicated which of these adverbs best described their own leadership style and then which best described how they perceived their divisional merchandise manager.

One section of the questionnaire contained six demographic questions and four items developed by Mitchel (1981) measured the respondents' intent to leave the retail company where they were currently employed. Intent to leave items were recorded on a five point Likert scale ranging from not accurate at all to extremely accurate. Mitchel calculated a reliability coefficient of .64 for his scale.

Pretest

The purpose of the pretest was to determine whether the LBDQ was understood by retail managers. Employees in a local department store participated in the pretest. The store manager was contacted to ask whether his department managers would participate. The pretest was administered in April 1986. All pretest respondents completed usable questionnaires. Pretest responses were not statistically analyzed but were evaluated for item response. All items were answered and appeared to be understood by the retail managers.

Final Instrument

The final instrument is included in the Appendix. The final instrument was identical to the pretest instrument except that the

final instrument had a cover letter with an endorsement of the study from a company vice president. The endorsement was used to attempt to increase the response rate of the buyers.

Sample

A convenience sample of three retail companies, one in Louisiana and two in Texas, that recruited Clothing, Textiles and Merchandising majors at Oklahoma State University was chosen. One company moved its headquarters to California and another one did not agree to participate. At the remaining company, personnel did agree to participate. The executive recruiter at another company which had recruited at Oklahoma State University in the past was contacted and agreed to participate. Three additional companies were contacted but none agreed to participate in the study.

Personnel at the two companies that agreed to participate were asked to provide a list of all buyers and their respective divisional merchandise managers. The executive recruiter of only one company provided the list; the other executive recruiter did not choose to release buyer names. Thus the administration of the instrument was handled differently as explained in the next section. All buyers in these two stores received a questionnaire.

Administration

In order to secure as many usable questionnaires as possible the researcher collected data from the buyers during the summer when their work load would be somewhat lighter than at other times of the year.

One store provided a numerical coding of all buyers so that buyers could be grouped by their respective divisions. The researcher coded the questionnaire, provided a stamped return envelope for each one and sent the coded questionnaires to the executive recruiter for distribution to every buyer in the store. The questionnaires were sent to the executive recruiter in July 1986, timed to arrive after the Fourth of July holiday weekend. It was believed that distribution could then be done without the possibility of the questionnaire sitting on a buyer's desk over the long weekend. Distribution by the executive recruiter to each buyer was not completed until August 1986.

The second company sent a complete list of all buyers and their respective divisional merchandise managers to the researcher. Questionnaires were coded, a stamped envelope was provided, and the questionnaires were mailed to each buyer individually in August 1986. A second questionnaire with an enclosure requesting buyer participation in the study was mailed to nonrespondents 10 days after the first mailing.

Analysis of Data

Overall scores for initiating structure and consideration were calculated for each respondent's personal leadership style and for each respondent's perception of the divisional merchandise manager's leadership style. For each item, scores ranged from 0 (never) to 4 (always). Four items were reverse scored. Intent to leave was calculated by summing the response to each of four items on a one to five scale, with only one item reverse scored.

Correlations between individual style orientation and intent to leave were examined. Self-rated leadership style orientation and intent to leave were compared by age, sex, and tenure with the organization.

Buyer perceptions of the divisional merchandise manager's leadership style were also compared to self-rated leadership style orientation and to intent to leave. The differences in perceptions of individual style orientation and perceptions of the divisional merchandise manager's style orientation were calculated and compared to intent to leave, to age and to sex of the respondent. Findings were interpreted and recommendations were made for future research.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the research was to determine whether buyers' perceptions of their personal leadership style and their perceptions of their divisional merchandise manager's leadership style had any relationship with the buyer's stated intent to leave the organization.

In this chapter, respondents are described and the data analysis is reported and interpreted. Each hypothesis is discussed separately. A probability level less than .05 was selected for reporting significant findings.

Description of the Sample

Questionnaires were distributed to 105 retail buyers in two department stores during July and August 1986. The overall response rate to the questionnaire was 60 percent after two contacts. In Store One where the executive recruiter distributed the questionnaires the initial response rate was 12 (22.2%). After the executive recruiter's follow up with the buyers, the total response rate from Store One increased to 24 (44.4%). Questionnaires were individually mailed to buyers in Store Two. Initial response rate after 10 days was 27 (52.9%). A second mailing increased the overall response rate from Store Two to 39 (76.4%). A total of 55 usable questionnaires were analyzed. Eight questionnaires were not analyzed because only half of the questionnaire was completed.

Not all respondents provided a response to each demographic question; thus totals are not always equal to 55. Table I contains the characteristics of the respondents whose questionnaires were analyzed.

The majority of respondents were females (69.2%), and were between 27 and 35 years of age (71.7%). Eighty-seven percent had been buying in their present position from one to 10 years and 89 percent had been with the present company from one to 10 years. More than two-thirds of the sample had been retail buyers for from two to 10 years.

Leadership Perceptions of the Sample

Individual responses to the 15 items of the leader behavior description questionnaire which reflected consideration or people skills were summed for an overall score reflecting self-perception of consideration skills. The 15 items reflecting initiation or task skills were summed for an overall score reflecting self-perception of initiation skills. Mean scores were calculated. Table II summarizes the leadership scores. The mean score for consideration skills was 43.8. The maximum possible score on each of these two scales was 60 which would indicate a high degree of self-perception on the trait of interest (consideration or initiation). A lower score on these scales would reflect a perception that the individual did not possess the particular trait to a high degree. The mean score for initiation skills was 46.1.

Individual responses to the divisional merchandise manager's leadership style were determined in the same way as the self-perception scores. As shown in Table II, the mean response of the buyers to the divisional merchandise manager's consideration skills (DMMC) was 37.3 and for the perception of the divisional merchandise manager's initiation skills (DMMI) was 41.5.

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Characteristic	Frequency	%
<u>Age</u>		
21-26 years	7	13.2
27-35 years	38	71.7
36-45 years	6	11.3
46-55 years	2	3.8
<u>Length of Time in Present Position</u>		
Less than 1 year	6	10.9
1 year - 23 months	17	30.9
2-5 years	28	50.9
6-10 years	3	5.5
11-14 years	0	-
More than 15 years	1	1.8
<u>Years Worked for Present Organization</u>		
Less than 1 year	2	3.6
1 year - 23 months	14	25.5
2-5 years	19	34.5
6-10 years	16	29.1
11-15 years	2	3.6
More than 15 years	2	3.6
<u>Total Years as a Retail Buyer</u>		
Less than 1 year	4	7.3
1 year - 23 months	6	10.9
2-5 years	25	45.5
6-10 years	13	23.6
11-15 years	4	7.3
More than 15 years	3	5.5
<u>Sex of Respondent</u>		
Male	16	30.8
Female	36	69.2
Total Number of Respondents	55	100.0

TABLE II
MEAN SCORES FOR LEADERSHIP STYLE

Characteristic	Mean Scores	Range of Scores	SD	N ^a
Self-Perception of Consideration Skills	43.8	27 to 56	5.1	55
Self-Perception of Initiation Skills	46.1	31 to 55	4.7	52
Perception of DMM's Consideration Skills	37.3	18 to 55	8.9	53
Perception of DMM's Initiation Skills	41.5	16 to 56	8.7	55

^aN's are not equal due to missing values.

A difference was calculated by subtracting each score for perceived Divisional Merchandise Manager consideration skills and initiation skills from the respective individual score for self-perception of consideration and initiation skills (Table III). The mean difference in scores was 6.4 for consideration and 4.2 for initiation skills.

Intent to Leave

A buyer's intent to leave the present company was determined by summing responses to the four items included as a measure of intent to leave. Intent-to-leave scores were grouped to reflect buyers more likely to leave the company and buyers more likely to stay with the company. Intent-to-leave scores could range from four to 20, with 12 representing uncertainty as to whether there was any intent to leave.

Thus 12 was chosen as the dividing point reflecting intent to leave. The seven respondents with a score of 12 were omitted from the grouped intent to leave analysis. Intent-to-leave scores of less than 12 represented buyers who were more likely to leave and scores of greater than 12 represented buyers who were more likely to stay with the company. Thirty-eight buyers were in the group who were more likely to stay with the company while nine buyers were in the group who were more likely to leave the company. Table IV summarizes these responses. One demographic question related to whether buyers would seek another job in the retail sector or a job outside of retailing if they decided to leave their present company. Forty respondents (73%) indicated that they would seek another job inside the retailing industry if they decided to leave their present company and 15 (27%) of the respondents indicated that they would seek another job outside the retailing industry.

TABLE III
MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BUYERS AND DMMS FOR CONSIDERATION
SKILLS AND INITIATION SKILLS

Characteristic	Mean	Range of Scores	SD	N ^a
Difference in Consideration Skills	6.4	-13 to 26	9.4	53
Difference in Initiation Skills	4.2	-15 to 25	8.1	52

^aN's are not equal due to missing values.

TABLE IV
MEAN SCORES FOR INTENT TO LEAVE AND GROUPED
INTENT TO LEAVE

Characteristic	Range of Scores	N	Mean Score	SD
Intent to Leave	4 to 20	54	14.3	3.5
Grouped Intent to Leave:				
Buyers more likely to leave the company	4 to 11	9	8.4	2.9
Buyers more likely to stay with the company	13 to 20	38	16.1	2.1

Leadership Behavior and Intent to Leave

Responses to the LBDQ were examined to determine buyers' perceptions of their own leadership behavior and buyers' perceptions of their DMM's leadership behavior. Mean responses to individual leadership behavior and perceived DMM leadership behavior are presented and compared to mean responses of intent to leave in this section. Differences in leadership behavior are also compared to intent to leave.

Hypothesis 1

Employee intent to leave is not related to employee leadership style orientation (initiating structure or consideration). Pearson product-moment correlation analyses indicated no significant correlation between buyer initiation skills or consideration skills and buyer intent to leave the present company. Table V presents these findings. When scores on intent to leave were grouped into employees more likely to

stay and those more likely to leave the company, t-test analysis indicated no significant difference between buyers more likely to leave the company and buyers more likely to stay with the company on either initiation or consideration skills. Table VI shows these findings. Thus, the null hypothesis could not be rejected.

TABLE V
RELATIONSHIP OF INTENT TO LEAVE
AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	Intent to Leave	
	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P Value
Consideration Skills	-.007	9.59
Initiation Skills	.051	.721

TABLE VI
COMPARISON OF GROUPED INTENT TO LEAVE
AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	Buyers More Likely to Stay with the Company			Buyers More Likely to Leave the Company			t-Score	Level of Significance
	N ^a	Mean	SD	N ^a	Mean	SD		
Consideration Skills	38	44.1	5.7	9	43.8	3.8	-.155	NS
Initiation Skills	36	46.3	4.7	8	45.3	5.0	-.545	NS

^aN's not equal due to missing values.

Hypothesis 2

Employee intent to leave is not related to buyer perceptions of Divisional Merchandise Manager leadership style orientation (initiating structure or consideration).

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis indicated no significant relationship between employee perception of DMM consideration skills or initiation skills and intent to leave (Table VII). T-test analysis indicated that the buyers more likely to leave the company rated their DMM lower in consideration skills than buyers more likely to stay with the company. There was no significant difference in buyer rating of DMM initiation skills between buyers more likely to leave the company and buyers more likely to stay with the company. Table VIII presents these findings. Hypothesis two could not be rejected for initiation skills but was rejected for consideration skills.

TABLE VII
RELATIONSHIP OF INTENT TO LEAVE
AND DMM LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	Intent to Leave	
	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P Value
DMM Consideration Skills	.241	.084
DMM Initiation Skills	.001	.994

TABLE VIII
COMPARISON OF GROUPED INTENT TO LEAVE
AND DMM LEADERSHIP SKILLS

DMM Leadership Variables	Buyers More Likely to Stay with the Company			Buyers More Likely to Leave the Company			t-Score	Level of Significance
	N ^a	Mean	SD	N ^a	Mean	SD		
Consideration Skills	36	39.1	9.1	9	31.5	7.07	-2.71	.01
Initiation Skills	38	41.7	8.7	9	38.5	11.06	-.80	NS

^aN's not equal due to missing values.

Hypothesis 3

Employee intent to leave is not related to similarity in buyer self-rated leadership style orientation and buyer perception of divisional merchandise manager management style orientation.

The relationship between intent to leave and the difference between the buyers' own perceived leadership styles and their perceptions of the leadership style of their DMM were examined. The difference was calculated by subtracting each score for perceived DMM consideration skills and initiation skills from the respective individual score for self-perception of consideration and initiation skills.

Person product-moment correlation analyses indicated no significant relationship between intent to leave and the differences for either consideration or initiation skills. Table IX presents the results of the correlation analyses.

T-test analysis showed a significant difference between buyers more likely to stay with the company and buyers more likely to leave the company in the difference in consideration skills (Table X). A smaller

difference was calculated for consideration skills between buyers more likely to stay with the company and their DMM than for buyers more likely to leave the company. It could be inferred that the difference in perceived consideration skills had an effect on the buyers' intent to leave the company. The differences in initiation skills for buyers more likely to leave and buyers more likely to stay were not significant. Table X presents the results of the t-test analyses. Null hypothesis three could not be rejected for initiation skills but was rejected for consideration skills.

TABLE IX
RELATIONSHIP OF INTENT TO LEAVE WITH DIFFERENCE
IN LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	Intent to Leave	
	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P Value
Difference in Consideration Skills	-.236	.091
Difference in Initiation Skills	.026	.853

In the retail setting, these findings seem consistent. Initiation skills are task related and may reflect profit consciousness in a retailer as well as a strong concern for adequately completing jobs. Consideration skills reflect more of a people orientation and a concern

for good human relations on the job. The traditional view of retailing as a career path has been more quantitative than human relations oriented. In this sample, the mean difference in consideration skills (6.4) was larger than the mean difference in initiation skills (4.2) (Table III, p. 40). These findings support previous research by Krackhardt et al. (1981) where it was concluded that supervisory behavior was a focal point for managing employee turnover.

TABLE X
COMPARISON OF GROUPED INTENT TO LEAVE
AND DIFFERENCE IN LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	Buyers More Likely to Stay with the Company			Buyers More Likely to Leave the Company			t-Score	Level of Significance
	N ^a	Mean	SD	N ^a	Mean	SD		
Difference in Consideration Skills	36	4.86	9.58	9	12.33	8.06	2.38	.03
Difference in Initiation Skills	36	4.47	8.84	8	4.13	8.77	-1.01	NS

^aN's not equal due to missing values.

Demographic Characteristics

Two demographic variables, age and sex of the respondent, were examined for a possible relationship with intent to leave. The findings are presented in this section.

Hypothesis 4

Employee intent to leave is not related to age of the respondent.

Table XI presents analysis of variance findings between the various age groups regarding intent to leave. Analysis of variance indicated a relationship only approaching significance ($p=.08$). Null hypothesis four could not be rejected.

TABLE XI
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF INTENT TO LEAVE
BY AGE GROUPS

Source	df	SS	MS	F	Significance of F
Between Ages	3	80.6	26.8	2.29	.08
Within Ages	<u>49</u>	<u>574.6</u>	11.7		
Total	52	665.2			

Hypothesis 5

Employee intent to leave is not related to sex of the respondent.

T-test analysis indicated no significant difference between males and females with regard to intent to leave (Table XII). Null hypothesis five could not be rejected.

TABLE XII
COMPARISON OF MALES AND FEMALES ON
INTENT TO LEAVE

	Male			Female			t-Score	Level of Significance
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Intent to Leave	16	15.38	2.45	36	13.91	3.89	1.6	NS

Discussion

The only significant findings resulting from the hypotheses were that buyers more likely to leave the company rated their DMM significantly lower in consideration skills and perceived a larger difference between their own and their DMM's consideration skills than did buyers more likely to stay with the company. These findings are discussed in relation to the literature on turnover.

DMM Consideration

Buyers more likely to leave the company rated their DMM lower in consideration skills ($\bar{X}=31.5$) while buyers more likely to stay with the company rated their DMM higher in consideration skills ($\bar{X}=39.1$). (See Table VIII, p. 44.) Porter and Steers (1973) reported research which indicated that turnover was highest for work groups whose foreman was rated low in consideration. Muchinsky and Morrow (1980) found employees with supervisors high in consideration were less likely to quit. Jago and Vroom (1977) in their research with a research and development organization found that subordinates tended to perceive the management

level above them as less considerate than their own level. The present research supports these previous findings.

Differences in Consideration

Buyers more likely to leave the company perceived a significantly larger difference in consideration skills between themselves and their DMM than buyers more likely to stay with the company. (See Table X, p. 46.) The difference in consideration increased as the buyers' rating of themselves on consideration increased. In discussing hypothesis three it was inferred that this difference in consideration skills had an effect on the buyers' intent to leave the company. Meyer (1979) found that 16.4 percent of corporate executives in his study changed jobs due to philosophical differences with management or because of a personality conflict. Differences in consideration skills may indicate a philosophical difference resulting in higher intent to leave among retail buyers. Mobley et al. (1979) in a comprehensive review of the turnover literature found supervisor-employee interactions often related to turnover. The present research did allow for analysis of specific components of the working relationship (initiation or consideration skills). The difference in consideration scores did relate to intent to leave.

Other Significant Findings

In this section significant relationships that were found between leadership variables but that were not included in the objectives are discussed. Buyer leadership skills are discussed first, followed by DMM leadership skills and differences in leadership skills. Sex of the

respondent as well as length of time worked for the company and length of time in present position are also discussed in reference to leadership skills.

Buyer and DMM Leadership Skills

Buyer perception of initiation skills significantly correlated with perceptions of the DMM's initiation skills. As buyers perceived themselves possessing stronger initiation skills they also perceived their DMM as possessing stronger initiation skills ($r=.33$, $p<.02$, Table XIII). Buyer consideration skills did not correlate with DMM consideration skills.

TABLE XIII
RELATIONSHIP OF BUYER'S LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO
DMM LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	DMM Consideration Skills		DMM Initiation Skills	
	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P-Value	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P-Value
Buyer's Initiation Skills	.16	.25	.33	.02
Buyer's Consideration Skills	.20	.14	.12	.36

There was no significant correlation between the buyers' perceptions of their own consideration and initiation skills (Table XIV). A rise in

consideration skills was not accompanied by a rise or fall in perception of initiation skills.

TABLE XIV
RELATIONSHIP OF BUYER'S INITIATION AND CONSIDERATION SKILLS
AND DMM INITIATION AND CONSIDERATION SKILLS

Variable Names	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P-Value
Buyer Initiation-Consideration Skills	.11	.4
DMM Initiation-Consideration Skills	.39	.003

There was a significant positive correlation between DMM consideration skills and DMM initiation skills ($r=.39$, $p<.003$, Table XIV). Thus it appeared that as the buyer's perception of their DMM's consideration skills rose so did the perception of the DMM's initiation skills.

Difference in Leadership Skills

The difference in consideration skills significantly negatively correlated with both the DMM's consideration skills and the DMM's initiation skills (Table XV). The negative correlation between DMM initiation and the difference in consideration ($p<.03$) would appear to be partially accounted for by a large difference perceived in consideration skills. As the perception of the DMM's initiation skills decreased, the difference in consideration skills increased. Conversely when the

perception of the DMM's initiation skills increased, the difference in consideration skills decreased. The difference in consideration skills significantly positively correlated with the buyers' consideration skill score ($p < .007$). It may be inferred that the more highly the buyers rated themselves on consideration skills the greater the difference between their own and their DMM's perceived consideration skills.

TABLE XV
RELATIONSHIP OF DMM LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND BUYER'S LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO DIFFERENCES IN LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Variables	Difference in Consideration Skills		Difference in Initiation Skills	
	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P-Value	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P-Value
DMM Consideration	-.838	.0001	-.260	NS
DMM Initiation	-.305	.03	-.840	.0001
Buyer Consideration	.364	.007	-.137	NS
Buyer Initiation	-.097	NS	.230	NS

Table XV also indicates that the difference in consideration skills significantly negatively correlated with perception of the DMM's consideration skills ($r = -.838$, $p < .0001$). Thus it appeared that as the difference in consideration skills increased, the perception of the DMM's consideration skills decreased.

The difference in initiation skills was significantly negatively correlated with the perception of the DMM's initiation skills ($r = -.840$, $p < .0001$) (Table XV). As with consideration skills it appears that as

the buyers' perceptions of the DMM's initiation skills decline, the difference in initiation score rises.

Sex of the Respondent

Table XVI summarizes the relationship between sex of the buyer and the leadership styles of the buyer, the DMM and the difference in leadership styles. T-test analysis indicated no significant difference between male and female buyers with regard to initiation skills or consideration skills. The relationship between males and females on consideration skills began to approach significance ($p < .08$). Females rated themselves more highly on consideration skills than did males. Males and females did not have significantly different perceptions of their DMM's leadership style. Table XV also indicates a significant difference between responses of males and females on difference in consideration skills. The difference of females and their DMM on consideration skills ($\bar{X} = 7.8$) was greater than that of males ($\bar{X} = 2.3$). There was no significant difference between males and females in regard to differences in initiation skills.

Length of Time Worked for the Company and in Present Position

Initiation skills significantly correlated with how long the buyer had worked for the company ($p < .05$). For this sample, perception of initiation skills increased as the length of time the buyer worked for the company increased. Table XVII summarizes these findings.

TABLE XVI
 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES ON LEADERSHIP STYLE,
 DMM LEADERSHIP STYLE AND DIFFERENCE
 IN LEADERSHIP STYLE

	Males			Females			t-Score	Level of Significance
	N ^a	Mean	SD	N ^a	Mean	SD		
Consideration	16	41.6	6.1	36	44.8	4.5	-1.8	.08
Initiation	15	46.0	5.0	36	46.1	4.6	-.06	NS
DMM Consideration	16	39.4	9.8	35	36.9	8.3	.89	NS
DMM Initiation	16	41.1	7.2	36	42.7	8.7	-.67	NS
Difference in Consideration	16	2.3	9.4	35	7.8	8.6	-2.03	.05
Difference in Initiation	15	5.0	7.2	36	3.5	8.4	.65	NS

^aN's not equal due to missing values.

The length of time the buyers had been in their present positions correlated significantly with both initiation skills ($p < .03$) and differences in initiation skills ($p < .01$). The longer the buyers had been in their present positions the larger the difference in initiation skills. Whether perceptions of the DMM's initiation skills changed during the time a buyer worked for that DMM is not known, but could be investigated with additional research.

TABLE XVII
 RELATIONSHIP OF LENGTH OF TIME WITH THE COMPANY AND TIME
 IN PRESENT POSITION WITH INITIATION AND DIFFERENCE
 IN INITIATION SKILLS

Variable Names	Correlation Coefficient	Calculated P-Value
Length of time with company- initiation skills	.28	.05
Length of time with company- difference in initiation skills	.20	NS
Time in present position- initiation skills	.29	.03
Time in present position- difference in initiation skills	.35	.01

Problems in Obtaining a Sample

Researchers interested in additional leadership studies with retail managers should recognize that obtaining store permission for distributing a questionnaire may be very difficult and frustrating. The research reported here is based on data from two stores. Three stores representing corporately owned and family owned stores were initially sought. After many unsuccessful attempts to secure the cooperation of three stores the researcher decided to use only the two stores who agreed to participate. One is publicly owned and one is family owned.

The small sample size precludes strong generalizations being made for other department store buyers. Great care was taken to ensure that the buyers received the questionnaire at a time of the year when buyers are least likely to be busy. Store sponsorship was used to increase the

response rate. Many retail stores, however, conduct internal research on an ongoing basis and do not want to burden their managers with another survey; others simply do not choose to participate in outside research studies.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research was an initial step in collecting information from retail managers related to intent to leave. Intent to leave was found to be a good predictor of turnover (Porter & Steers, 1973). It was hoped that by collecting this information from retail buyers some indication of actual future buyer turnover might be gained. Gable et al. (1984) collected information from management trainees in an attempt to predict voluntary turnover. Many of their variables were not pertinent to the present study since buyers tend to have been with the store several years. Terborg and Lee (1984) did examine voluntary turnover rates for management personnel in retail stores but their data were all archival; data were gathered from employee's personal employment files after they left a company. No one reported examining intent to leave among retail managers who were currently on the job. The research reported in this paper was conducted to determine whether buyer perceptions of their personal leadership style and their perceptions of their divisional merchandise manager's leadership style had any relationship with the buyer's stated intent to leave the company.

The objectives of the study were to determine whether buyer intent to leave was related to their self-rated leadership style orientation or to their perception of the DMM's leadership style orientation, or to the similarity between leadership style orientation; to determine

whether tenure with the company or as a buyer was related to intent to leave; and to determine whether age or sex of the buyer was related to self-rated leadership style orientation or intent to leave.

Summary of Procedures

The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) developed at The Ohio State University was used to measure two fundamental dimensions of leader behavior: initiation and consideration skills. Minor wording changes in the instructions were made to reflect the perspectives of a retail buyer. Six demographic questions of interest to the researcher and four items developed by Mitchel (1981) measuring respondent's intent to leave the company were added to the LBDQ. The instrument was pretested at a local department store with department managers. Pretest responses were evaluated for item response.

The final instrument was in booklet form with a letter explaining the research and containing an endorsement of the research by a store vice president attached as a cover. The final instrument was mailed individually to buyers at one store and was, by store request, distributed to the buyers by the executive recruiter at another store. Follow-up contacts were made with each store and the overall response rate was 60 percent. Fifty-five usable questionnaires were analyzed; eight were discarded because only half of the questionnaire was completed.

Summary of Findings

The results of the study indicated that buyers' self-perceptions of their own leadership styles did not correlate with the buyer's intent

to leave. Females did rate themselves higher in consideration skills than did males. Initiation skills did positively correlate with how long the buyer had worked for the company. Buyer perception of the DMM's leadership style on consideration skills was related to the buyer's intent to leave. The employees more likely to leave perceived their DMM lower in consideration skills while employees more likely to stay rated the DMM higher in consideration skills. Ratings of the DMMs were not significantly different between males and females.

A difference score between self-perception and perception of the DMM on leadership styles was calculated. This difference score for consideration skills significantly negatively correlated with buyers' intent to leave. The larger the difference in consideration skills, the more likely the buyer was to leave the company. The smaller the difference in consideration skills, the more likely the buyer was to stay with the company.

Conclusions

The first null hypothesis, employee intent to leave is not related to employee leadership style orientation, could not be rejected. Personal leadership style orientation had no effect on intent to leave.

The second null hypothesis, employee intent to leave is not related to buyer perceptions of divisional merchandise manager leadership style orientation, could not be rejected for initiation skills but was rejected for consideration skills. Intent to leave was significantly correlated with buyer perceptions of the DMM's consideration skills. Buyer's more likely to leave rated the DMM lower on consideration skills while buyers more likely to stay rated the DMM higher. There was no

significant relationship between buyer perception of DMM initiation skills and intent to leave.

The third null hypothesis, employee intent to leave is not related to similarity in buyer self-rated leadership style orientation or buyer perception of DMM leadership style orientation, was rejected for consideration but could not be rejected for initiation skills. There was a significant correlation between difference in consideration skills and intent to leave. There was a larger difference in consideration skills among buyers more likely to leave than among buyers more likely to stay. Careful analysis of the data seemed to indicate, for this sample, that the more similar the buyers perceived themselves and the DMM to be in consideration skills the less likely the buyer was to leave the organization. The perception of the DMM's consideration skills significantly correlated with intent to leave. Buyers more likely to stay rated the DMM higher in consideration skills.

The fourth and fifth null hypotheses could not be rejected. Age and sex of the respondent was not related to intent to leave.

The results suggest that intent to leave is strongly related to how similarly buyers perceive themselves and their DMM in consideration skills. Initiation structures, while important, may be second to consideration skills in affecting buyer turnover.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations for future research are suggested:

1. Survey a level of retail management other than buyers and measure leadership style and intent to leave. This would provide for a comparison to the current research on retail buyers.

2. Incorporate DMMs' perceptions of their own leadership styles into a similar study with retail buyers. This would provide evidence as to whether buyers rate their DMM in the same way the DMM would rate themselves.

3. Repeat the study with buyers from specialty stores, discount stores and national chain stores to determine if perceptions of leadership style and intent to leave are similar among store types.

4. The present research suggested that initiation skills may change over time, thus it would be feasible to conduct a longitudinal study with retail managers to see if self-perceptions more closely align with perceptions of the leader the longer the manager works for a particular leader.

5. Investigate current retail practices in establishing the work group. Is leadership style orientation determined and taken into consideration in placing the employee in a position within the organization?

6. Determine employee expectations at the time of entry into the organization. In a longitudinal study examine whether these expectations are met or changed during the course of employment at the organization.

7. Include organizational size as another variable in determining intent to leave. Does a large organization generally seem to have employees less likely to leave than a smaller company?

8. Conduct a longitudinal study to see whether buyers who state a high intent to leave the company do eventually leave the company.

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APPENDIX

FINAL INSTRUMENT

O K L A H O M A S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y
Department of Clothing, Textiles & Merchandising

Dear Buyer,

Oklahoma State University, in conjunction with our store personnel department, is conducting a research study on the leader behaviors of buyers and the buyers' perceptions of their DMM's leader behaviors.

The focus of the study is to determine the similarities and differences between buyer self rated leader behaviors and the buyers' perceptions of their DMM's leader behaviors. Please take just 15 minutes to complete the attached questionnaire. The first half is for your evaluation of your own leader behaviors and also contains some basic demographic information necessary for the study. The second half is for your evaluation of your DMM.

All responses will be confidential and will only be seen by researchers at Oklahoma State University. The numbers in the upper corner of this page are only for the researcher's use. Overall store results will be shared when they become available. If you would like a copy of your analyzed leadership style, please check where requested on the questionnaire. This information will be sent as soon as all analyses are complete!

Thank you for cooperating in this research venture.

(XXXXXX)
Senior Vice-President
Personnel and Loss Prevention

Jane Swinney
Graduate Researcher

Dr. Lynn Sisler
Graduate Adviser

PART 1. PERSONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

Instructions: Please indicate on this questionnaire how **YOU** believe **YOU BEHAVE AS A LEADER**. Each item describes a specific kind of leader behavior. Place an **X** in the blank which best describes how frequently you engage in each kind of behavior.

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
1. I look out for the personal welfare of individual staff members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. I encourage the use of uniform procedures.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. I maintain definite standards of performance.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. I try out my new ideas with my staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. I emphasize the meeting of deadlines.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. I see to it that the work of staff members is coordinated.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. I am friendly and approachable.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. I assign staff members to particular tasks.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. I rule with an iron hand.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. I refuse to explain my actions.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. I am slow to accept new ideas.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. I get staff approval on important matters before going ahead.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. I speak in a manner not to be questioned.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. I make my attitudes clear.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. I do personal favors for staff members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
16. I see to it that staff members are working up to capacity.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. I put suggestions by the staff into operation.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
18. I treat all my staff members as my equals.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
19. I keep to myself.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
20. I find time to listen to staff members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
21. I do little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
22. I let staff members know what is expected of them.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
23. I am willing to make changes.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
24. I make sure that my part in the organization is understood by all members of my staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
25. I am easy to understand.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
26. I work without a plan.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
27. I criticize poor work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
28. I make staff members feel at ease when talking to them.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
29. I act without consulting my staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
30. I ask that staff members follow standard rules and regulations.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. How long have you been in your present position?

Less than 1 year _____ 1 year to 23 months _____
 2-5 years _____ 6-10 years _____
 11-15 years _____ more than 15 (please specify) _____

2. How many total years have you been a retail buyer?

less than 1 year _____ 1 year to 23 months _____
 2-5 years _____ 6-10 years _____
 11-15 years _____ more than 15 (please specify) _____

3. How many years have you worked for this store in any job capacity?

less than 1 year _____ 1 year to 23 months _____
 2-5 years _____ 6-10 years _____
 11-15 years _____ more than 15 (please specify) _____

4. If you were to decide to leave your present company which of the following would you seek? Another job in the

retail sector _____ A job outside of retailing _____
 (please check)

5. Are you **MALE** or **FEMALE**? (circle one)

6. Your age is

21-26 _____ 27-35 _____ 36-45 _____ 46-55 _____ Over 55 (specify) _____

For the following items indicate the accuracy of the statement by placing a check in the space that most closely represents your feeling.

	NOT ACCURATE AT ALL	1	2	3	4	EXTREMELY ACCURATE	5
7. I plan to be with the company quite a while.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Sometimes I get so irritated I think about changing jobs.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. I plan to be with the company 5 years from now.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. I would turn down an offer from another retail company if it came tomorrow.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING PART 1.

PART 2. PERCEPTION OF YOUR DMM'S LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

Instructions: Please indicate how you believe **YOUR DIVISIONAL MERCHANDISE MANAGER** behaves as a leader. Each item describes a specific kind of leader behavior. Mark the frequency with which you believe your DMM engages in each kind of leader behavior.

Your answers will NOT be seen by your DMM. The questionnaire will be scored and analyzed at Oklahoma State University as part of a research project on leader behaviors.

Thank you. ✓

PART 2. PERCEPTION OF YOUR DMM'S LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

My Divisional Merchandise Manager:	ALWAYS	OFTEN	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
1. Looks out for the personal welfare of individual staff members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Encourages the use of uniform procedures.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Maintains definite standards of performance.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Tries out his/her new ideas with the staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Emphasizes the meeting of deadlines.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Sees to it that the work of staff members is coordinated.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Is friendly and approachable.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Assigns staff members to particular tasks.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Rules with an iron hand.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Refuses to explain his/her actions.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Is slow to accept new ideas.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Gets staff approval on important matters before going ahead.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. Speaks in a manner not to be questioned.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. Makes his/her attitudes clear to the staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. Does personal favors for staff members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

My Divisional Merchandise Manager:

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
16. Sees to it that staff members are working up to capacity.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. Puts suggestions by the staff into operation.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
18. Treats all staff members as his/her equals.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
19. Keeps to himself/herself.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
20. Finds time to listen to staff members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
21. Does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
22. Lets staff members know what is expected of them.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
23. Is willing to make changes.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
24. Makes sure that his/her part in the organization is understood by all members of the staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
25. Is easy to understand.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
26. Works without a plan.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
27. Criticizes poor work.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
28. Makes staff members feel at ease when talking to them.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
29. Acts without consulting his/her staff.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
30. Asks that staff members follow standard rules and regulations.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire. If you would like to receive your personal leadership style analysis please check here ____.

VITA

Jane Lowry Swinney

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: LEADERSHIP STYLE ORIENTATION AND INTENT TO LEAVE A
RETAIL ORGANIZATION

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