

PREFERENCES OF FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEES
FOR THREE STYLES OF SUPERVISORY
LEADERSHIP

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

The type of supervisory leadership given the individual employee is cited by many authorities in the management field as one of the most important factors in employee productivity (1) (2) (3) and in the balance between employee job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (4) (5). More specifically, a supervisor's attitude toward employees has been declared to be the supervisor's most influential means of directing employee behavior (6), and studies have shown that employees tend to accomplish what their supervisor expects of them (7). Furthermore, two of the current leaders in management science, Rensis Likert (8) and Frederick Herzberg (4), agree that effective management of employees must emphasize the human aspects of supervision. Thus it appears that one of the most important keys in promoting employee job satisfaction and productivity is supervisory leadership. A continual need exists to develop supervisory leadership styles which incorporate good human relations skills and positive supervisory attitudes.

Much research has been done in an effort to understand the role of leadership in employee supervision. In a landmark leadership study in 1939, Lewin, Lippitt, and White (9) identify three general leadership patterns--the autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire styles of leadership. Since this study, other authors and researchers have also

discussed these basic styles, expanding them and analyzing their effectiveness in supervisor-employee relations (10) (11) (12). Studies have also been conducted which correlate employee performance and the employee's perception of his or her current supervisor (13). However, no previous research has been found which utilizes employee opinion as the source of information on preferred styles of supervisory leadership. Thus it appears that the area of employee opinion about the type of supervision preferred needs to be explored.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to stimulate possible improvements in the leadership patterns of food service supervisors based on the opinions of food service employees concerning preferred styles of supervisory leadership. The results of this study contribute an employee-oriented perspective to the study of supervisory leadership styles. If the leadership factors preferred by food service employees can be incorporated into existing supervisory leadership styles, improved supervisor-employee relations will result. This change in leadership style should in turn increase employee productivity and decrease employee job dissatisfaction. To accomplish this purpose the objectives of this study are:

- 1) To identify the style of supervisory leadership preferred by food service employees.
- 2) To assess the relationship between personal and employment-related variables and employee preferences concerning supervisory leadership styles.
- 3) To formulate guidelines for food service supervisor training programs which will include an employee-oriented perspective toward supervisory leadership patterns.

Hypotheses

To achieve the desired assessment of employee opinion concerning supervisory leadership patterns, the following hypotheses are tested in this research:

- H₁: There is a significant difference in the preferences of food service employees for the democratic style of leadership rather than for the autocratic or laissez faire styles of supervisory leadership.
- H₂: There is no significant relationship between the personal background of the employee and his or her preference concerning styles of supervisory leadership.
- H₃: There is no significant relationship between the past, current, and projected employment patterns of the employee and his or her preference concerning styles of supervisory leadership.

Assumptions

The assumptions basic to this research are that:

- 1) The responses obtained in the survey are truthful.
- 2) The responses obtained reflect the overall opinions of the employees surveyed and are not influenced by any temporary deviation from the usual work routine.
- 3) The responses obtained from the employees about their preferences for supervisory leadership styles are not influenced by the employees' current opinion of their present supervisor's personality or abilities.

Limitations

Any conclusions drawn from this research are limited by the following factors:

- 1) The food service workers surveyed are all employed in hospital food services in the state of Oklahoma.
- 2) The 15 hospitals in the sample are located in the Northeastern District of the Oklahoma Hospital Association. Each is accredited by the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation,

designed for short term patient care, and not funded and operated by any federal or state agency.

- 3) The employees surveyed are full-time food service workers.
- 4) The supervisory leadership patterns under study are those of the first line supervisor at the lowest level of the management hierarchy.

Definitions

Throughout the course of this paper certain terms are used which need to be clearly understood. These include the following:

A Supervisor is one "whose major function emphasizes leading, coordinating, and directing the work of others in order to achieve the group's goals" (14, p. 2). While supervisors exist at many levels in the managerial hierarchy, the supervisor referred to in this study is the food service supervisor "who stands at the first level of employee supervision" (12, p. 104). This first line supervisor can be more specifically defined as filling

the job that bears the formally assigned authority and responsibility for planning and controlling the activities of subordinate, nonsupervisory employees usually on a direct, face to face basis (15, p. 18).

Employees referred to in this paper are the food service employees defined by the sample.

Leadership is the "process of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement" (16, p. 4). It has been stated that "the skill with which you apply the three basic tools of leadership--autocratic, democratic, and free-rein [laissez faire] techniques--determines your personal success as a leader" (17, p. 31).

Autocratic Leadership is defined as

leadership whereby the person vested with authority sets the goals, plans, and determines all policy, assigns functions, prescribes procedures, directs, checks, judges, and corrects the work in great detail (18, p. 27).

Democratic Leadership is

a participative or group-centered leadership in the sense that the leader in charge usually encourages and helps his group to achieve its goals by (1) allowing or calling for maximum initiative from and participation by group members in deciding upon and carrying out certain policies; (2) distributing or decreasing his overt 'leadership' or 'authority' roles and creating close relationships with members. . . and; (3) teaching, motivating, and developing rather than ordering or criticizing (18, p. 59).

Laissez Faire Leadership or free-rein leadership is

a type of leadership whereby the leader (1) allows his followers to set their own objectives, make their own decisions, to create, develop, and proceed in their own direction with minimum or no control or supervision; (2) gives (or merely be available to give) necessary materials, information, guidance, or instruction, and; (3) passively stands by as some sort of observer or mediator without actually participating or being involved in the activity of his group (18, p. 114).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Since the beginning of the scientific study of leadership in 1939 by Lewin, Lippitt, and White, both leadership research and theory development have been actively pursued. A great deal of authoritative literature has resulted. The following review of literature includes a discussion of the key elements of leadership, as well as the qualities considered essential in a good leader. The second section of this review surveys literature dealing with the importance of leadership in the supervisory role. Next, the Lewin leadership study of 1939 is reviewed in some detail, as it is considered among the foundations of scientific leadership research (13). Literature on each of the three basic leadership styles is also surveyed, and the final section of this review of literature deals with authoritative opinion on other leadership methods.

Leadership Characteristics

Many authors appear to be most successful in identifying effective leadership by describing its characteristics and essential elements. Uris (17, p. 22) believes the key elements of leadership to be "objectivity, understanding of people, flexibility, communications mindedness, and use of authority". He also describes the successful leader as "sensitive to the potentialities of people" (p. v).

Davis (12) views leadership as the means of transforming these potentials into reality. He goes on to describe leadership as displaying six general characteristics: leadership is a human factor; it motivates; it is a position of authority and responsibility; leadership seeks goals; it is situational; and leadership utilizes formal and informal organizational structures. McGregor (19, p. 73) looks at leadership in still another way. He states that "leadership is not a property of the individual, but a complex relationship among . . . variables". He identifies these variables as:

- (1) the characteristics of the leader,
- (2) the attitudes, needs, and other personal characteristics of the followers,
- (3) the characteristics of the organization, and
- (4) the social, economic, and political milieu (p. 73).

Similarly Pigors (20) views the exercise of authority in leadership as interweaving the four elements of the leader, the followers, the situation, and the cause.

While McGregor (19) and Pigors (20) view the personal characteristics of an effective leader as varying with the other relative factors, some researchers have identified specific leadership traits. After an extensive review of the existing literature in 1948, Stogdill (21) reports some 29 traits or characteristics of leaders. Goode (22) includes above average mental ability, the ability to speak and write fluently, emotional and mental maturity, high personal motivation, a reliance on administrative skills more so than on technical skills, well developed social skills, and the quality of being well-rounded as specific leadership traits. After group discussions with leaders from various fields, Cooper (23) compiles this list of the personal

qualifications for leadership--intelligence, integrity, forcefulness, fairness, loyalty, kindness, health, and knowledge of the work. Such lists of leadership qualities have been formulated by many authors and can be found in the literature (24) (25) (26).

Leadership and the Supervisor

The importance of the first line supervisor in today's organizational structures can hardly be overemphasized. In a recent management text, Eckles, Carmichael, and Sarchet (14) state that:

increased pressure of competitive markets, changing technology, job boredom, employee dissatisfaction, and rising costs have encouraged business and industrial organizations to reexamine the supervisor's position and its relationship to the satisfaction of employee needs and to the effectiveness of the total organization's performance (p. vii).

In further describing the growing importance of the front line supervisor, these authors (14, p. vii) point to the supervisor as "a vital and integral part of the management team".

These authors are not alone in associating good supervision and sound leadership practices. Seimer (27, p. 107) states that "among the various responsibilities that a supervisor has . . . leadership is frequently indicated as the most important". The supervisor is viewed by Hepner (28, p. 224) as "the leader who deals with and directs the efforts of the individual employee". Furthermore, Davis (12, p. 104) states that "better leaders develop better employees and the two together develop a more effective organization". The relationship between the effective leadership practices of the first line supervisor and the employees, however, does not exist in a vacuum. As Kahn and Katz (29) point out

the style of supervision [or leadership] which is characteristic of first level supervisors reflects in considerable degree the organizational climate which exists at higher levels in the management hierarchy (p. 618).

Thus, the link between effective employee supervision and good leadership is important throughout the entire organization.

Historically, the description of the supervisor as the leader has been that of being "hard-nosed" concerned only with production and results (30, p. 104). However, since the advent of the Human Relations Movement in the 1930's and 1940's, the importance of the supervisory role as a key in organizational human relations has developed (28). The employees of today "expect and deserve good leadership. The work group wants to follow a leader rather than be driven by a 'boss' " (14, p. 9). This realization has brought about an abundance of research designed to improve supervisory leadership.

The Lewin Study

It appears that the systematic study of leadership did not begin in earnest until the 1930's. It is the opinion of Latona (13) that

many consider the studies of Kurt Lewin and his associates, Lippitt and White, at the University of Iowa in the 1930's as the most widely known works in leadership and the primer that launched the scientific study of leadership (p. 4).

Uris (17, p. 30) also acknowledges the importance of this study stating that the "Lewin studies provide a sound starting point for an approach to leadership". Thus, because of the recognized importance of this study in the development of leadership theory, the Lewin study is described in this literature review in some detail.

The importance of the Lewin leadership study lies not only in its

findings, but also in the establishment of the three basic styles of leadership--the autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire leadership patterns (9). The autocratic pattern in the Lewin study is characterized by total policy determination by the leader, as well as by the leader's assigning of work tasks and work companions. The autocratic leader also dictates the techniques to be used in task accomplishment and the steps to be followed. This is done in such a way as to make future steps uncertain. This leader gives personal rather than objective praise and criticism. He or she remains somewhat aloof from the work group when not giving directions, demonstrating a technique, or giving criticism or praise (9).

In the Lewin study, democratic leadership is quite different from the autocratic. The democratic leader encourages group discussion of policy issues culminating in leader-assisted decisions. The members of the group are free to choose their own companions and divide the work among themselves. Before the group begins work the leader sketches out the general activity steps and techniques with several alternatives from which the members can choose. The democratic leader tries to be a group participant, and when appropriate he or she offers objective praise or criticism in evaluating the work of individual group members (9).

The remaining leadership style outlined by Lewin and his coworkers, the laissez faire (or free-rein) style, differs markedly from the other two patterns in that the role of the leader is greatly minimized. The leader functions as a consultant supplying materials and information upon request from group members. The laissez faire leader allows complete freedom for the group or individual in policy making,

determination of activity steps, work techniques, work companions, and division of work. He or she comments infrequently on the work of the group unless asked and makes no attempt to participate in group events (9).

To test the relative effectiveness of these three leadership styles, Lewin (9) establishes four clubs of 10 year old boys for the purpose of making masks. In this study, four adult leaders are selected to supervise the clubs, and each leader receives extensive training in each of the three leadership styles. The leaders are rotated through the four clubs to provide each club with different types of supervisory leadership. The leadership styles are also rotated among the leaders to minimize any association of a particular leader's personality with a specific leadership style.

The results of the Lewin study show the democratic style of leadership to be the most desirable. In the democratic work groups the interactions between the boys are spontaneous and friendly, and the work proceeds smoothly even in the leader's absence resulting in high productivity. In interviews with the group members, 19 of the 20 boys state a preference for their democratic leaders. By contrast in the autocratically led groups, the boys develop patterns of aggressive hostility toward each other and their leader. Although work proceeds under the leader's direction with high productivity, in his absence it halts. In the groups under laissez faire leadership, the work is haphazard, and time is lost in confusion and arguments. However, it should be noted that in the personal interviews with the boys, when the autocratic and laissez faire work groups are compared, seven out of 10 boys favor laissez faire leadership showing that even disorder is preferable to

rigidity (9).

Since 1939 the work of Lewin, Lippitt, and White has received both praise and criticism. Many researchers have retested the effectiveness of the three leadership styles and in some cases have expanded these basic styles presenting new theories on leadership patterns. A survey of this authoritative opinion on the types of leadership follows.

Styles of Supervisory Leadership

Leadership styles can be viewed from one of several perspectives. The following review surveys the literature on the three basic leadership patterns defined by Lewin, as well as authoritative opinion concerning the situational approach to leadership and employee-centered verses production-centered supervision.

Autocratic Leadership

One of the three leadership styles outlined in the Lewin study is autocratic leadership, referred to by some authors as "authoritarian" (31, p. 100) or "leader-centered" (12, p. 114) leadership due to the negative connotations which are conveyed by the term autocrat. As with each of the leadership styles, autocratic leadership has certain advantages and disadvantages. Because the autocratic leader centralizes the decision-making function in himself or herself, little time is wasted in this process as is sometimes the case when decision making is the responsibility of a group (12). Communications are also efficient in an autocratic setting since this is a one-way process from leader to subordinates. The disadvantage in this lies in that no feed-back loop exists to complete the communications circuit (17).

The autocratic leader also structures the work situation utilizing complete authority and assuming full responsibility. This is an advantage in that less competent subleaders can be utilized (12). "Being the man" (17, p. 30) in a one man supervised operation affords both strong motivation and rewards for the leader (12); however, the effect upon subordinates may be negative in that the autocratic leader "mainly seeks obedience from his group" (17, p. 30). This can result in poor morale and conflict within a work group which is uninformed, insecure, and afraid of the leader's authority (12). It should also be remembered that autocratic decisions are unilateral--little opportunity exists for group members to make contributions. This has the double disadvantage of repressing creativity in subordinates, as well as placing the burden of success or failure of the organization on the leader-decision maker (12).

On the other hand, Ross (31, p. 100) states that "authoritarian leadership is not to be dismissed as 'bad' or unproductive", and he continues saying "there are situations in which members want such leadership . . . situations in which a narrowly focused leadership makes for greater productivity". Other studies have also shown that autocratic leadership does not necessarily have a detrimental effect on productivity. Among these are studies by Mullen (11), Shaw (32), and the Lewin study of 1939 (9).

The autocratic leadership style has been expanded by some authors to include two leadership subtypes. The first of these is termed the dictatorial leadership style. As described by Heyel (10), this type of leader motivates his or her employees through fear. Employees working under this type of leader perform only to avoid losing their jobs.

Fortunately this style only exists in a small minority of cases when the overall picture of supervisory leadership is surveyed (10).

The second modification of the autocratic style is benevolent autocratic leadership. Eckles et al. (14) state that this style can offer strong psychological rewards and motivation for the leader and also provide security and satisfaction for certain workers through the use of some human relations skills by the leader. Like the autocratic leader, the benevolent autocrat gives orders which his or her subordinates carry out; however, unlike the autocrat, this more benevolent leader gives praise in return for his or her demands of loyalty and decision acceptance by subordinates. Another characteristic of this leadership style as described by Eckles, Carmichael, and Sarchet (14) is that subordinates are allowed to contribute suggestions making them feel a part of the decision making process. However, the final power of decision making lies with the leader.

The benevolent autocratic style is also recognized by other authors. Reddin (33, p. 42) views benevolent autocratic leadership as more effective than the autocratic. He describes the benevolent autocrat as "knowing what he wants and how to get it without creating resentment". While Reddin views benevolent autocratic leadership as one of several possible effective leadership patterns, McMurry (34) recommends it as the most practical style overall. Although McMurry states a preference for democratic leadership in theory, he views it as impractical. As a result he recommends benevolent autocracy as an alternative. He promotes this style based upon his theory that most employees desire a structured work environment with strong guidance. He sees the benevolent autocrat as demonstrating sufficient human relations

skills to offset any excessive reduction in employee morale caused by the production emphasis of autocratic leadership (34).

Democratic Leadership

Although McMurry (34) views democratic leadership--also called participative or group-centered leadership by some authors (11) (35)--as impractical, a number of other authorities view it as the most successful leadership style to be used in non-emergency situations. In a review of research findings on morale and productivity, Lunken (5) states that

virtually all research findings point to the fact that better morale and productivity are found . . . under supervision where participative [democratic] management is practiced as distinct from authoritative management (p. 13).

Based on their research findings utilizing employee interviews and attitude questionnaires, Tarnopol and Tarnopol (36, p. 332) support Lunken's opinion by simply stating "the top-rated supervisor is democratic". More recently, Seimer (27, p. 110) has written that although no one leadership approach is best under all circumstances, "the increasing popularity of a more participative or democratic approach" should be recognized.

The theory, originally proposed in the Lewin study of 1939, that democratic leadership is the preferable leadership style has been tested in later research. In 1966 Mullen and coworkers (11) have utilized a combination of the case study method and survey techniques to test the hypothesis of no relationship between the three leadership styles--autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire--and the performance of subordinates in three structurally similar regional automobile insurance

claims divisions. Although the researchers fail to establish any significant relationships between subordinate productivity and supervisory leadership style, their results show a link between leadership style and employee morale and job satisfaction. In the employee interviews, the democratic leadership pattern is favored by subordinates, while the lowest morale and job satisfaction are displayed by those employees receiving autocratic supervision. This supports the Lewin findings in which 19 of the 20 boys in the study report a preference for their democratic leaders over the autocratic leaders, although productivity is comparably high for both groups (9).

The Lewin leadership findings are also retested by Latona (13) in research conducted in 1972. Interviews and questionnaires, as well as objective productivity measures, are used in this study to evaluate leadership styles and productivity in an office setting. Latona (13) summarizes the findings of this study saying

the supervisor who displays the most democratic style of leadership or supervision is the one who can expect the highest degree of individual and group commitment, initiative, and motivation on the job, which seems to result in a higher productivity rate (p. 7).

Latona (13) goes on to characterize the democratic supervisor described by the employees in the study. This supervisor is a defender and spokesman of the work group; he or she encourages group goals over individual goals; and he or she promotes group interaction and participation in decision making. The preferred supervisor is also seen by the employees as setting fair standards, using positive motivators, giving general direction to the work group, and using rules as guidelines in discipline while remaining flexible in extreme cases.

While the majority of research testing the Lewin leadership theory

has dealt with the effects of leadership on employee productivity and morale, Preston and Heintz (37) have investigated the effects of two leadership styles on the judgment of a group. The two leadership styles investigated--participatory and supervisory--have been purposely structured by the researchers to simulate Lewin's democratic and laissez faire leadership styles. Each of two groups--one with a democratic leader and one with a laissez faire leader--is given the task of ranking possible candidates for the next Presidential election. The study results show the participatory (democratic) leader to be more effective than the supervisory (laissez faire) leader in changing individual and group attitudes. Furthermore, the individuals working under the democratic leader report more satisfaction with the final group decision than do the members of the laissez faire group. The democratically led members also have found the task assigned to be more interesting and meaningful to them.

Another strong defense of democratic leadership comes from Davis (12, p. 115) who states "participative leadership offers the most long run promise to achieve maximum productivity and employee satisfaction". He feels that one of the main advantages of this style of leadership is multiplication of the leader's abilities through the contributions of others. Davis (12) goes on to say, however, that effective democratic supervision requires more coordination and better communications than the other types of supervisory leadership. This idea is also echoed by Uris (17) who sees the two way communications of democratic leadership as an advantage unless mishandled resulting in confusion and a waste of time.

The possible mishandling of democratic leadership has also led

other authors to be cautious in recommending it. Among these is Ross (31) who sees democratic participation as a source of frustration to some workers. This observation concurs with the statements of McMurry (34) who believes democratic supervision to be impractical for the majority of work situations. It should also be noted that in the Lewin study, one boy of the 20 is recorded as preferring the autocratic leadership style because of frustration he experiences in democratic situations (9).

Laissez Faire Leadership

Of the three basic leadership styles, the laissez faire or free-rein pattern seems to have generated the least authoritative research. Perhaps this is explained by the fact that this leadership pattern is generally not utilized in large scale operations, but is viewed as most effective with small, highly motivated work groups in which the true power and decision making responsibilities lie with the individual group members (14). Although the leader does exercise a minimum of control, this supervisory approach should not be viewed as a lack or abdication of leadership (17). Furthermore, there is at least one research study which shows that laissez faire leadership promotes productivity equal to democratic or autocratic supervision (11). This report, however, contradicts the Lewin study and the majority of research opinion which is summarized by Banki (18, p. 114) who states that with laissez faire leadership "the probability of disorganization, instability, non-participation, low outputs, failure, or even chaos is just too great".

Situational Approach to Leadership

As can be seen from the previous review of literature on the three basic leadership styles--autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire--many authorities are divided in their opinion about the relative effectiveness of these styles. In an effort to reconcile some of these conflicting opinions and research findings, a number of leadership researchers and theorists support the situational or contingency approach to leadership (38) (39) (40). Likert (8, p. 89), an advocate of situational leadership, comments that "supervisory and leadership practices, effective in some situations, yield unsatisfactory results in others". He continues saying

supervision is, therefore, always a relative process. To be effective and communicate as intended, a leader must always adapt his behavior to take into account the expectations, values, and interpersonal skills of those with whom he is interacting (p. 95).

This view has also been recently supported by Steinmetz and Todd (30, p. 113) who state "the contingency notion of leadership rejects the idea that there is a single 'best' style of leadership". Furthermore, they state "whether or not a leader is to be effective depends upon the appropriateness of the style of the leader in a given situation" (p. 114).

Similarly, in analyzing the effectiveness of the situational approach to leadership, Eckles et al. (14, p. 184) comment that "the skill of leadership . . . lies largely in knowing when to use which method". Golembiewski (35) lists four conditions to consider in choosing the appropriate leadership method in a given situation. The conditions include: the personalities of the followers; the characteristics of the group as a whole; the roles of various individuals in

the group; and the decision to be made or problem to be solved. Uris (17) also lists factors to consider in leadership style selection: the individuals; the group; the situation; and the leader's personality.

Choosing a leadership style while considering the individuals involved is further expanded by Uris (17). It is his theory that with employees who are either hostile or dependent, the autocratic approach should be used, while cooperative and group-minded individuals respond best to democratic leadership. He further states that the free-rein or laissez faire approach is most effective with highly individualistic or socially isolated employees. Uris (17) also comments about the influence of age, sex, and work background of employees upon choosing leadership patterns. He theorizes that the autocratic leadership style is more effective with younger, less experienced employees and with most female employees, while mature employees, experienced workers, and most men prefer democratic or free-rein supervisory leadership.

Like the individuals in the group, the situation also influences the leadership style to be chosen. In general the more pressure on the group, the more autocratic the leader should become. For example, in an emergency situation there is no time for a democratic group decision--firm, swift, decisive leadership must be exerted (17).

However, even when a supervisor is utilizing the situational approach to leadership, employees may respond unexpectedly in certain situations due to factors known or possibly unknown to the supervisor. Likert (8) lists four reasons for employee reactions to acts of supervision: differences in the employees' perceptions of the supervisory act; the personality effect of the supervisor; the traditions of the work situation; and the expectations, values, norms, and background of

the individual employee. Perhaps the complexity of supervisor-employee reactions is best summarized by Pigors (20, p. 200) who says "leadership is an individualizing process which cannot easily be reduced to rules".

Employee versus Production-Centered

Supervision

Supervisory leadership can also be analyzed from the perspective of the supervisor being more employee-centered or production-centered. Lunken (5, p. 10), who believes that high employee productivity and good morale are directly related, states the "high producing supervisors are employee-centered" rather than production-centered. He characterizes the employee-centered supervisor as placing emphasis on his or her relationship with the employees as a means of attaining high productivity.

Employee-centered supervision is also viewed as more effective by Kahn and Katz (29). After extensive field studies with a wide range of work groups, these researchers report that high producing work groups are supervised through employee-oriented leadership, rather than by more production-centered supervisors. Likert (41, p. 20) supports this research stating that "employee-centered supervision yields better production and better job satisfaction than production-centered supervision". Similarly, Davis (12) points to the superior effectiveness of employee-centered leadership over production-oriented supervision. He states that "this confirms the importance of human relations at the supervisory level" (p. 130).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The research design chosen for this study is that of descriptive research. This chapter contains a discussion of the research procedures and a description of the sampling plan. A further section pertains to the development of the instrument and its administration. The final section of this chapter deals with the methods for the statistical analysis of the data obtained.

Sampling

The American Hospital Association Guide to the Health Care Field (42) has been used to identify a total population of 130 hospitals located in the state of Oklahoma. Four basic criteria have been used to select hospitals within a certain geographic region which also meet certain standards of patient service. These criteria include the following:

1. The hospital must meet the uniform standards necessary for accreditation by the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation.
2. The facility is designed for short term patient care as defined by the American Hospital Association (42) with an average patient stay of 30 days or less.
3. The facility is not operated and funded by any federal or state agency.
4. The hospital is located in the Northeastern Hospital District as defined by the Oklahoma Hospital Association.

Eighteen hospitals have been found which meet all four of the criteria.

These 18 hospitals have been stratified into three sub-groups utilizing patient bed capacity as the factor for stratification. After analyzing the range of patient bed capacities as provided by the American Hospital Association (42) for the hospitals, the following sub-groups have been selected: hospitals with less than 100 patient beds; hospitals with 100 to 250 patient beds; and hospitals with bed capacities of over 250. By classifying the hospitals in this way, it is found that of the 18 under study, eight have fewer than 100 beds, five fall into the category of 100 to 250 beds, and five of the hospitals have over 250 patient beds.

From the three sub-groups, a random sample of 15 hospitals has been drawn utilizing a stratified random sampling plan. The sample includes five hospitals of less than 100 beds, five hospitals with 100 to 250 beds, and five hospitals with over 250 beds. At the time of the initial sample selection, the remaining three hospitals in the district have been randomly ranked to serve as a backlog should participation in the study be rejected by any members of the invited sample from the hospitals with less than 100 beds.

Instrument Development

Since no previously validated instrument has been found to test employee preferences concerning the three types of supervisory leadership, a survey tool has been developed by the author. The first section of the instrument contains questions pertaining to the employee's personal and employment background which supply information for the independent variables of the study. The selection of these variables is

based on literature dealing with factors influencing effective leadership styles for various types of employees and work situations (39) (17) (43). Appendix A contains a sample of the instrument innumrating these variables.

The second section of the instrument deals with the employee's preference for the three styles of supervisory leadership--autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire. These preferences are the dependent variables of this study. To identify the employee's preferred leadership style, a total of 30 situational questions have been developed. Ten depict each leadership type as described in the original studies by Lewin (9), in later publications by his coworkers (44) and in a questionnaire designed for self-assessment of leadership tendencies (17). The survey questions can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B contains a list identifying the questions pertaining to each leadership style.

Using a Likert scale the employees are asked to respond to each of the described supervisory acts or attitudes by marking their degree of preference for the leadership style portrayed. The sequencing of questions has been established by random selection to avoid any patterning of responses. Instructions in the use of the Likert scale are also included to help eliminate confusion or missinterpretation by the survey respondents.

To check the validity of this instrument, a panel of three management professors from Oklahoma State University has analyzed the questionnaire. A 96 percent concensus of agreement upon the validity of each question in depicting either autocratic, democratic, or laissez faire supervision has been attained. A panel of three food service

employees has also reviewed the questions for clarity and readability.

Administration of the Questionnaire

Following the selection of the sample hospitals, an introductory letter of request has been mailed to the Food Service Director of each hospital. This letter explains the purpose of the study, the reasons the hospital has been invited to participate, and a brief explanation of the time factor and methods involved in administration of the questionnaire. The letter further explains that the Food Service Director can expect a follow-up telephone call from the researcher to answer any questions he or she might have and to set a date and time for administration of the questionnaire if the hospital agrees to participate. A copy of the letter is included in Appendix C.

Of the 15 hospitals invited to participate in the study, 11 have accepted. This group includes four hospitals with less than 100 beds, three hospitals with 100 to 250 beds, and four hospitals of over 250 beds. None of the three backlog hospitals of less than 100 beds have been contacted since these are to be surveyed only if needed to equalize the number of hospitals in the sub-groups.

The following procedures have been followed in setting up appointments and administering the questionnaire in the participating hospitals.

- 1) The researcher has traveled to each institution to personally administer the questionnaire to the food service workers in group meetings.
- 2) The questionnaire has been administered on the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of four consecutive weeks.
- 3) The time of administration is within the overlap period between the morning and evening full time employee work shifts so as to provide a maximum number of respondents from

all shifts and work areas.

- 4) It has been requested that up to one hour be allowed for administration of the questionnaire, although the average completion time is approximately 25 to 35 minutes for most of the employees.
- 5) It has been requested that each Food Service Director reserve a room with adequate space for each employee to sit and complete the questionnaire.
- 6) It is requested that no first line supervisors be present in the employee group meeting when the survey is being administered.

Statistical Analysis of Data

Three basic statistical techniques have been used to analyze the data obtained in this research. The first of these techniques is the paired comparison t-test used to establish if significant differences exist between employee preferences for the three leadership styles. After completion of the survey by the food service workers, each questionnaire is analyzed to obtain the degree of preference for each leadership style. The 10 questions on each leadership style are separated, and the degree of preference marked by the employee is assigned a numerical value. (Appendix B contains a list separating the 30 questions by leadership style.) Numerical scoring is done as follows:

<u>Degree of Preference</u>	<u>Numerical Score</u>
Strongly Like	1
Like	2
Neither	3
Dislike	4
Strongly Dislike	5

Using this scoring system with 10 questions, the strongest possible preference (Strongly Like) for a single leadership style is reflected by a score of 10, a neutral attitude by a score of 30, and the strongest

possible dislike for a leadership style is a score of 50.

Next each employee's scores for each pair of leadership styles are compared. The employee's overall score for the democratic questions is compared with the autocratic score, the democratic score is compared with the laissez faire score, and the total autocratic score is compared with the laissez faire score. The numerical differences between each pair of individual employee leadership style scores are totaled for all employees within each hospital. Then a mean score reflecting the average difference in preference for each pair of leadership styles is obtained for each employee group. This value is then used in making the paired comparison t-tests between paired leadership styles. The .05 level of significance is accepted as showing a significant difference in preference between two leadership styles.

To establish if any significant relationships exist between the personal and employment-related variables and employee preferences for supervisory leadership, the standard F-test is used to compare the variance in the variable being tested and the variance in the residual error. The .05 level of significance is used with this test.

The Least Squares Difference test is also used in the analysis of data. Each personal or employment-related variable contains various sub-groups. To establish if significant differences exist in the preferences of these various sub-groups for a leadership style the Least Squares Difference test is used.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter contains the results with accompanying discussion of the data obtained after administration of the questionnaire to 174 food service employees. Seven questionnaires have been discarded by the researcher as unreliable due to incomplete responses to the majority of the questions. This leaves 167 questionnaires upon which the research findings are based. The results of the study focus on testing the three basic hypotheses in order to identify the style of supervisory leadership preferred by food service employees and to assess the relationship between personal and employment-related variables and employee preferences concerning supervisory leadership styles.

Preferences for Supervisory Leadership Style

To identify the employees' preferences for supervisory leadership style the data obtained have been subdivided into 11 groups by hospital. The preferences within each employee group are compared using a paired comparison technique and analyzed statistically using a t-test at the .05 level of significance. Table I presents these data.

TABLE I
 PREFERENCES FOR SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP STYLES
 PAIRED COMPARISON TESTS

Compared Leadership Styles	Number of Responses (n)	Preference Difference (Mean)	Standard Deviation	T	PR > T
Large Hospital 1-1					
Demo/Auto	11	-4.818	4.622	-3.46	0.0062 *
Demo/L.F.	11	-11.182	7.574	-4.90	0.0006 *
Auto/L.F.	11	-6.364	7.941	-2.66	0.0240 *
Large Hospital 1-2					
Demo/Auto	33	-3.242	6.769	-2.75	0.0097 *
Demo/L.F.	30	-9.533	7.762	-6.73	0.0001 *
Auto/L.F.	32	-6.125	7.088	-4.89	0.0001 *
Large Hospital 1-3					
Demo/Auto	55	-7.091	5.559	-9.46	0.0001 *
Demo/L.F.	52	-11.596	9.373	-8.92	0.0001 *
Auto/L.F.	56	-4.286	8.457	-3.79	0.0004 *
Large Hospital 1-4					
Demo/Auto	5	-4.600	5.128	-2.01	0.1154
Demo/L.F.	6	-7.000	6.957	-2.46	0.0569
Auto/L.F.	5	-2.000	6.124	-0.73	0.5057
Medium Hospital 2-1					
Demo/Auto	9	-6.222	5.093	-3.66	0.0064 *
Demo/L.F.	10	-10.600	6.363	-5.27	0.0005 *
Auto/L.F.	9	-5.444	6.187	-2.64	0.0297 *
Medium Hospital 2-2					
Demo/Auto	10	-7.800	6.663	-3.70	0.0049 *
Demo/L.F.	9	-16.000	7.018	-6.84	0.0001 *
Auto/L.F.	9	-7.222	8.482	-2.55	0.0339 *

TABLE I (Continued)

Compared Leadership Styles	Number of Responses (n)	Preference Difference (Mean)	Standard Deviation	T	PR> T
Medium Hospital 2-3					
Demo/Auto	12	-6.750	7.325	-3.19	0.0086 *
Demo/L.F.	11	-11.182	6.509	-5.70	0.0002 *
Auto/L.F.	11	-4.000	5.796	-2.29	0.0451 *
Small Hospital 3-1					
Demo/Auto	6	-4.500	7.176	-1.54	0.1851
Demo/L.F.	6	-12.667	5.680	-5.46	0.0028
Auto/L.F.	6	-8.167	7.935	-2.52	0.0531
Small Hospital 3-2					
Demo/Auto	7	-6.571	8.203	-2.12	0.0783
Demo/L.F.	7	-13.286	7.609	-4.62	0.0036
Auto/L.F.	7	-6.714	5.765	-3.08	0.0216
Small Hospital 3-3					
Demo/Auto	5	-8.400	4.827	-3.89	0.0177
Demo/L.F.	5	-14.200	7.155	-4.44	0.0114
Auto/L.F.	5	-5.800	5.118	-2.53	0.0644
Small Hospital 3-4					
Demo/Auto	8	-4.875	6.058	-2.28	0.0570
Demo/L.F.	8	-11.000	8.298	-3.75	0.0072
Auto/L.F.	8	-6.125	5.194	-3.34	0.0125

*For these hospitals significant preferences for democratic leadership are shown at the .05 level.

Compared Leadership Styles:

Demo/Auto means democratic preferences compared to autocratic.

Demo/L.F. means democratic preferences compared to laissez faire preferences.

Auto/L.F. means autocratic preferences compared to laissez faire preferences.

The overall results show that in six of the 11 hospitals surveyed the democratic style of supervisory leadership is preferred by the employees. Autocratic supervision has been ranked second, and the laissez faire leadership style is the least preferred. Referring to Table I, the six hospitals are identified by an asterisk (*). In each of these hospitals when comparing the preferences for the democratic leadership style with the autocratic or laissez faire style, the mean difference in the employee preferences is significant at the .05 level using a paired comparison t-test. Thus the democratic style is preferred over both the autocratic and laissez faire leadership styles. To establish if significant differences in preferences exist between autocratic and laissez faire supervisory styles, the paired comparison t-test is also used. In each of the six hospitals, this test shows autocratic leadership to be preferred over laissez faire. Thus in summary, democratic supervisory leadership is preferred over both autocratic and laissez faire leadership, and autocratic supervision is preferred over laissez faire.

The results can also be analyzed by hospital size. In the large hospitals, with over 250 beds, three of the four employee groups show a strong preference for the democratic style of leadership, with autocratic leadership ranked second, and laissez faire leadership being the least preferred. In the fourth hospital it has been possible to contact only six out of an approximate 160 employees for completion of a questionnaire. No significant results can be obtained.

From the hospitals ranging in size from 100 to 250 beds, all three employee groups show a preference for the democratic style of leadership over the two alternate styles. Autocratic supervision is preferred

second to democratic, and the laissez faire leadership style is the least preferred.

Among the four hospitals of less than 100 beds, no significant differences can be shown for preferred leadership styles. The sample sizes of each of these hospitals range from five to eight employees. It is interesting to note that of the other larger hospitals surveyed, the only employee group for which no significant results can be shown has a sample size of six. This indicates that small sample sizes have had a negative impact on the collection of statistically reliable data. An analysis of the data also shows that for three of the four small hospitals, the results very closely parallel the .05 level of significance. This shows a trend toward a democratic preference, although this is not statistically verified.

In summary it can be seen that in hospitals of 100 to 250 beds and in hospitals of 250 beds or more, the food service employees show an overall preference for the democratic style of supervisory leadership. The employees rank the autocratic style second, and the laissez faire leadership style last. This has been shown in six of the seven medium and large sample hospitals. Of the four hospitals with less than 100 beds no statistically significant results have been obtained although a trend appears toward a preference for democratic supervision. A follow-up study of small hospitals would be beneficial to determine if a statistically significant preference can be shown despite small sample sizes.

Personal Background and Employee Leadership Preferences

Three personal employee variables--age, years of formal education, and sex--have been used to determine if any significant relationships exist between the personal background of the employee and his or her preferences concerning styles of supervisory leadership. The research shows that with each of these three variables the overall preference of the employees is as follows: democratic supervision, most preferred; autocratic, second preferred; and laissez faire supervision, least preferred. Table II presents these data. A more detailed discussion of these variables and their relationship to employee preferences for supervisory leadership follows.

Age of Employees

Using a one way analysis of variance, no statistically significant relationship can be seen between the employee's age and his or her preference for either the democratic or laissez faire leadership style. However, even though the autocratic leadership style is preferred second to the democratic leadership style, some variation in preference for autocratic supervision can be seen according to age group. As employee age increases (grouped by ages 16-25; 26-45; 46-65 years old) a trend toward a stronger preference for autocratic leadership can be seen. However, using the Least Squares Difference test at the .05 level of significance, only the age group 46-65 years old can be shown as significantly distinct from the other two groups with a stronger preference for autocratic leadership. It should also be noted that the employee group aged 66 years and older does not follow the trend of

increasing autocratic preference with increasing age; however, the extremely small sample size of this age group must be considered. Table III and Table IV contain these data.

TABLE II
OVERALL PREFERENCES FOR SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP
BY PERSONAL EMPLOYEE VARIABLES

Variable	Democratic n=165	Overall Means	
		Autocratic n=167	Laissez Faire n=163
Age	22.581	28.353	33.632
Education	22.581	28.353	33.632
Sex	22.581	28.353	33.632

*Based on Likert Scale Values of 1 through 5 with a score of 1 indicated Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

TABLE III

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE - EMPLOYEE AGE AND
PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	*Prob. > F
Employee Age	451.60	3	150.53	5.743	0.0013
Residual	4272.55	163	26.21		

*Considered significant at the .05 level.

TABLE IV

PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION
BY EMPLOYEE AGE GROUPS

Age Groups	Means	n
16 to 25 Years Old	30.743	39
26 to 45 Years Old	28.830	59
46 to 65 Years Old	26.554	65
Over 65 Years Old	27.250	4

*Based on Likert Scale Values of 1 through 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

LSD Value at .05 Level = 2.21

Years of Formal Education

The number of years of an employee's formal education does not appear to be significantly related to employee preferences for democratic or laissez faire supervision. However, as with the personal variable of employee age, a relationship does appear between years of education and preferences for autocratic supervision (at the .05 level of significance). These data are presented in Table V.

TABLE V
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE - EMPLOYEE EDUCATION
AND PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	*Prob. > F
Years of Education	229.27	3	76.42	2.771	0.042
Residual	4494.88	163	27.57		

*Considered significant at the .05 level.

While democratic supervisory leadership is the most preferred style, autocratic supervision appears to be most strongly preferred as the second choice by employees with seven to nine years of formal education. This preference is significant using the Least Squares Difference Test.

A trend toward less strong preferences for autocratic supervision can be seen with increasing levels of education; however, these relationships are not statistically distinct using the Least Squares Difference test at the .05 level. These data are presented in Table VI where it can also be seen that employees with six years or less of formal education show the least preference for autocratic supervision. However, it should also be noted that this group has a very small sample size.

TABLE VI
PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION
BY EMPLOYEE EDUCATION LEVEL

Years of Education	Means	n
6 Years or Less	30.333	6
7 to 9 Years	25.769	26
10 to 12 Years	28.643	112
College	29.348	23

*Based on Likert Values of 1 to 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

LSD Value at .05 Level = 2.26

Sex of the Employee

No statistically significant relationships are shown, using the

F-test, between the employee's sex and his or her preference concerning styles of supervisory leadership.

Employment Background and Employee Leadership Preferences

Six employment-related variables relating to the employee's past, present, and future expectations for work in food service have been used to determine if any relationships exist between the employee's employment background and his or her preference for supervisory leadership styles. The research shows that with each of these variables the overall preference of the employees is as follows: democratic supervision, most preferred; autocratic supervision, second; and laissez faire supervision, least preferred. Table VII presents these data. A more detailed discussion of these variables and their relationship to employee preferences for supervisory leadership follows.

Length of Full Time Employment

No significant relationship can be established between the employee preferences for democratic or laissez faire supervision and the variable, length of time the employee has worked full time. However, a significant relationship does exist in their preferences for the autocratic supervisory style as the second most preferred style of supervision. (Democratic supervision is ranked as the most preferred). Table VIII presents these data.

TABLE VII

OVERALL PREFERENCES FOR SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP
BY EMPLOYMENT-RELATED VARIABLES

Variable	Democratic	Overall Means	
		Autocratic	Laissez Faire
Length-Full Time Work	22.515 n=163	28.424 n=165	33.689 n=161
Length-Work in Food Service	22.581 n=165	28.353 n=167	33.632 n=163
Length at Present Job	22.552 n=163	28.291 n=165	33.627 n=161
Area of Work	22.586 n=162	28.378 n=164	33.681 n=160
Perception of Own Work	22.582 n=165	28.353 n=167	33.632 n=163
Future Work in Food Service	22.577 n=163	28.357 n=165	33.671 n=161

*Based on Likert Scale Values of 1 to 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

TABLE VIII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE-LENGTH OF FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT
AND PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	*Prob. > F
Length of Full Time Work	365.84	5	73.17	2.751	0.020
Residual	4228.46	159	26.59		

*Considered significant at the .05 level.

Using the Least Squares Difference test at the .05 level of significance, employees working over 20 years show a significantly stronger preference for autocratic leadership than employees in the other sub-groups. Employees with less than three months of full time employment show the least strong preference for autocratic supervision. The remaining four sub-groups are statistically indistinct as to the degree of preference for autocratic supervision. Table IX contains these data. These findings can be compared with those for employee age which show a trend toward stronger preferences for autocratic leadership as age increases. This comparison is not surprising since many older employees are those with the most years of full time employment.

TABLE IX
 PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION
 BY LENGTH OF FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT

Length of Full Time Employment	Means	n
Less Than 3 Months	32.000	5
3 Months to 1 Year	27.476	21
2 Years to 5 Years	29.872	39
6 Years to 10 Years	28.946	37
11 Years to 20 Years	28.167	42
Over 20 Years	25.428	21

*Based on Likert Values of 1 to 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

LSD Value at .05 Level = 2.72

Length of Employment in Food Service

A significant relationship (at the .05 level) can be shown between the preferences of employees for the autocratic style of leadership and the length of time the employees have worked full time in food service. No relationship exists between the years of employment in food service and preferences for democratic or laissez faire supervision, despite the fact that democratic supervision is ranked overall as the most preferred supervisory style. Using the Least Squares Difference test only the sub-group with over 20 years of employment in food service can be shown to have a statistically distinct, stronger preference for autocratic supervision. These data are presented in Tables X and XI.

TABLE X
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE-LENGTH OF FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYMENT
AND PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	*Prob. > F
Length of Food Service Work	501.53	5	100.31	3.824	0.003
Residual	4222.62	161	26.23		

*Considered significant at the .05 level.

TABLE XI
PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION AND LENGTH OF
EMPLOYMENT IN FOOD SERVICE

Length of Work in Food Service	Means	n
Less Than 3 Months	30.800	10
3 Months to 1 Year	28.857	28
2 Years to 5 Years	30.366	41
6 Years to 10 Years	27.720	39
11 Years to 20 Years	27.000	38
Over 20 Years	24.273	11

*Based on Likert Values of 1 to 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

LSD Value at .05 Level = 2.70

Length of Employment in Present Job

No significant relationship exists between the preferences of food service employees for democratic or laissez faire supervisory leadership and the length of time the employees have worked in their current jobs. However, a significant relationship does exist between their preferences concerning autocratic supervision and the length of employment in their present jobs. These data concerning the employees' length of time in their current jobs are presented in Table XII.

TABLE XII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE—LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT IN CURRENT JOB
AND PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	*Prob. > F
Length of Time in Current Job	483.67	5	96.73	3.674	0.004
Residual	4186.36	159	26.33		

*Considered significant at the .05 level.

Although the employees' most preferred style of supervision is democratic, as the number of years of employment in the current job increases, an overall trend toward increased preference of autocratic supervision as a second most preferred leadership style can be seen. It

should be noted; however, that this trend is only statistically significant using the Least Squares Difference test for employees with over 20 years of employment in their current jobs. Table XIII presents these data.

TABLE XIII
PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION AND LENGTH OF
EMPLOYMENT IN CURRENT JOB

Length of Time in Current Job	Means	n
Less Than 3 Months	30.238	21
3 Months to 1 Year	28.643	42
2 Years to 5 Years	29.118	51
6 Years to 10 Years	27.724	29
11 Years to 20 Years	25.210	19
Over 20 Years	20.667	3

*Based on Likert Values of 1 to 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

LSD Value at .05 Level = 2.71

Type of Food Service Work

The type of work performed by the food service employee is significantly related only to his or her degree of preference for the

autocratic style of supervisory leadership. No significant relationship exists between the type of work performed and the employee's preference for democratic or laissez faire supervision.

The four areas of food service work considered in the study are preparation, cafeteria or patient service, sanitation or dishroom, and diet office or other clerical work. Overall, all of these employee groups report democratic supervision to be the most preferred. However, a significant relationship exists only between the degree of preference for autocratic supervision, as the second most preferred leadership style, and the area of employee work. It should be noted that this relationship is significant at the .001 level. Table XIV contains these data.

TABLE XIV

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE - AREA OF FOOD SERVICE WORK
AND PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F Value	*Prob. > F
Area of Work	463.78	3	154.59	5.883	0.001
Residual	4204.78	160	26.28		

*Considered significant at the .05 level.

Using the Least Squares Difference test, food service employees in preparation areas--cooks, bakers and salad workers--show the strongest autocratic preference. The other three work areas are statistically indistinct as to degree of preference. These data are presented in Table XV.

TABLE XV
PREFERENCES FOR AUTOCRATIC SUPERVISION AND
AREA OF FOOD SERVICE WORK

Area of Work	Means	n
Preparation	26.301	63
Service--Cafeteria, Patient	29.516	62
Dishroom and Sanitation	29.375	24
Diet Office and Clerical	30.800	15

*Based on Likert Values of 1 to 5 with a score of 1 indicating Most Preferred and 5 indicating Least Preferred.

LSD Value at .05 Level = 2.24

Employees' Perception of Their Own

Work Performance

No significant relationships exist between the employees' perceptions of their own work performance and their preferences for the three styles of supervisory leadership. Asking an individual to evaluate his

or her own work performance is a highly subjective question; thus, the lack of any significant relationships is not surprising.

Anticipated Future Employment

in Food Service

No significant relationships exist between the employee's future plans to make food service his or her career and employee preferences for supervisory leadership. While administering the questionnaire, the researcher has identified several intervening variables which employees have stated would influence their choice of food service as a career. These include such items as pay increases, promotions, age of children at home, and hours of work. Some of these intervening variables may have led to the lack of significant results for this question.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The final chapter of this study contains a summary of the research procedures, a summary of the research findings, and recommendations concerning training programs for food service supervisors. Recommendations for continued research are also included.

Summary of Research Procedures

To assess the supervisory leadership preferences of food service employees, the research design chosen for this study is descriptive research. In sampling, a total population of 130 Oklahoma hospitals has been limited to 18 hospitals which meet four basic criteria. These 18 hospitals have been stratified into three sub-groups using patient bed capacity as the factor for stratification. A stratified random sampling plan is used to place five hospitals in each of the three sample sub-groups. Of the 15 hospitals invited to participate in the study, 11 have accepted.

The researcher has traveled to each of the 11 hospitals to personally administer the questionnaire to the food service employees in group meetings. The questionnaire contains nine demographic questions pertaining to the employees' personal and employment-related backgrounds. Employee responses to these questions supply the independent variables of the study. The second section of the questionnaire

contains 30 situational questions. Ten questions depict each of three supervisory leadership patterns--the autocratic, the democratic, and the laissez faire styles of supervision. The employees are asked to mark their degree of preference for each of the 30 described supervisory acts or attitudes using a Likert scale. Employee responses to these 30 questions supply the dependent variables of the research study.

After obtaining 167 usable questionnaires from the food service employees, the questionnaires are analyzed statistically to determine the employees' preferences for supervisory leadership. The Likert scale values are analyzed using paired comparison t-tests to determine the overall preferred style of supervisory leadership for the food service employees at each hospital. F-tests and a one way analysis of variance are used to determine if significant relationships exist between the employees' preferences for supervisory leadership styles and the nine personal and employment-related variables.

Summary of Research Findings

By analyzing the preferences of food service employees for three styles of supervisory leadership, this study presents information which can be used to stimulate improvements if needed in the leadership patterns of food service supervisors. The researcher has identified the style of supervisory leadership preferred by these food service employees, as well as six personal and employment-related variables which show a significant relationship to the employees' preferences.

Overall, the research results show that in hospitals with over 100 beds the democratic style of supervisory leadership is preferred. Autocratic leadership is ranked second of the three styles, and laissez

faire leadership is the least preferred. No statistically significant differences in preferences are shown in hospitals with less than 100 beds; although, a trend can be seen toward a democratic preference for these employees.

Employee responses to nine demographic questions are used to determine if any significant relationships exist between an employee's personal and employment backgrounds and preferences for supervisory leadership. Significant relationships are found between six of the variables and the employees' preferences for autocratic supervision. Although democratic supervision is consistently ranked as the most preferred style, no statistically significant relationships are found between the nine demographic variables and this style of leadership or for the laissez faire leadership style.

Four of the variables which are significantly related to the degree of preference for autocratic leadership are employee age, length of full time employment, length of employment in food service, and length of employment in the current job. As age and years of employment increase, a general trend toward a preference for autocratic leadership can be seen. Similar trends are also observed with the two variables length of employment in food service and length of employment in the current job. As length of employment increases, the preference for autocratic leadership becomes stronger.

The education level of the employee is also related to his or her preference for autocratic leadership. As the education level of the employee increases, a general trend toward a lessened preference for autocratic supervision is observed.

Employee preferences for autocratic supervision are also related

to the type of food service work performed by the employee. Workers in preparation areas--cooks, bakers, and salad workers--show the strongest preference for autocratic leadership.

Recommendations for Training Programs

One of the objectives of this research is to formulate guidelines for food service supervisor training programs which include an employee-oriented perspective toward supervisory leadership patterns. The research results show that a strong preference for democratic supervision is held by hospital food service employees in hospitals with 100 beds or more. Thus, the researcher recommends that any supervisory training programs must focus on the development and/or extension of democratic leadership skills of the supervisors.

In the development of such a training program a starting point might be an examination of the democratic supervisory actions and attitudes from the leadership questionnaire which the employees have identified as being preferable overall. These democratic qualities are innumeraled in Appendix B.

Although democratic supervision is preferred by the employees surveyed, any supervisory training program should also include a discussion of the situational approach to leadership in which the supervisor utilizes the leadership style appropriate to the situation and people involved. For example, the employees in the survey have identified autocratic leadership as the second most preferred style, and different situations may necessitate its use. It should be pointed out in any training program that according to these research results, the employees most likely to be receptive to autocratic supervision are

employees between the ages of 46 and 65, employees with over 20 years of full time employment, those with 20 or more years of work in food service, and employees with 20 or more years in their current jobs. Employees in preparation areas are also more likely to be receptive to autocratic supervision than other food service workers.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. A validated questionnaire to determine the leadership patterns of food service supervisors needs to be developed. Then the preferences of an employee group could be compared to a supervisor's current leadership style. Any differences shown could be used as a starting point for supervisor training.
2. Since this research has been limited to food service employees in hospitals in the Northeastern Oklahoma Hospital Region, an expansion of the research to a larger area is recommended.
3. Surveying employees in areas of food service work other than in hospitals could give interesting comparative results.
4. This study failed to show any significant preferences for employees in hospitals with less than 100 beds. A study designed to focus on this group is needed to discover their preferences for supervisory leadership.

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APPENDIX A

WHAT TYPE OF SUPERVISOR DO YOU PREFER?

QUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT TYPE OF SUPERVISOR DO YOU PREFER?

Directions: This questionnaire about supervision has two parts. It is important that you complete both parts and leave no questions unanswered. Your supervisor will not see any of your answers, so please answer each question honestly and completely. Read each question carefully and mark your answer according to the directions for that section of the survey. If you wish to sign your questionnaire, please do so here _____.

(optional)

Thank you for your participation.

PART A

To make your answers about supervision more meaningful in this study, certain information is needed about you and your work experience. Following each question, please mark an (X) in the space next to the phrase which best describes you.

For Example: What is your age?

 16 to 25 years 26 to 45 years 46 to 65 years Older than 65 years

If you are 35 years old, then the X is placed in the () as shown.

If you have any questions about filling out this section of the questionnaire, please feel free to ask.

1. What is your age?

 16 to 25 years 26 to 45 years 46 to 65 years Older than 65 years

2. How many years of formal schooling have you completed?

 6 years or less 7 to 9 years 10 to 12 years College

3. What is your sex?
 Male
 Female

4. How long have you worked on a full time basis?
 Less than 3 months
 3 months to 1 year
 2 years to 5 years
 6 years to 10 years
 11 years to 20 years
 Over 20 years

5. How long have you worked full time in food service?
 Less than 3 months
 3 months to 1 year
 2 years to 5 years
 6 years to 10 years
 11 years to 20 years
 Over 20 years

6. How long have you worked in your current job at this hospital?
 Less than 3 months
 3 months to 1 year
 2 years to 5 years
 6 years to 10 years
 11 years to 20 years
 Over 20 years

7. In what area of food service do you work now?
 Preparation--cook, baker, salads, dessert
 Service--cafeteria or patient tray service
 Sanitation and Dishroom
 Diet Office and Clerical

8. How do you evaluate your own performance in your current job?
 Outstanding
 Good
 Average
 Fair
 Poor

9. Do you plan at this time to make food service work your career?
 Yes
 No

This section of the questionnaire is an opportunity for you to indicate the type of supervisor with whom you would prefer to work. This is not an evaluation of your present supervisor. Indicate how you would like a supervisor to act to create a good, productive work situation for you. Read each question and mark your opinion about the supervisor's action or attitude as follows:

If you strongly like the type of supervisor described, mark an (x) in the space under Strongly Like.

If you like the type of supervisor described, mark an (x) in the space under Like.

If you neither like or dislike the type of supervisor described, (no strong opinion), mark an (x) in the space under Neither.

If you dislike the type of supervisor described, mark an (x) in the space under Dislike.

If you strongly dislike the type of supervisor described, mark and (x) in the space under Strongly Dislike.

	STRONGLY LIKE	LIKE	NEITHER	DISLIKE	STRONGLY DISLIKE
1. Before a new vacation policy is selected this supervisor calls a meeting to explain the policy and get your opinion.	()	()	()	()	()
2. To help avoid problems this supervisor uses strict discipline with adequate punishments for breaking the rules.	()	()	()	()	()
3. This supervisor spends little time supervising or working directly with you, but spends more time on paperwork and consultation.	()	()	()	()	()
4. This supervisor feels that by working side by side with employees he/she is better able to lead than someone who plays the role of "the boss".	()	()	()	()	()
5. This supervisor feels that familiarity with employees lessens respect for a supervisor and therefore puts himself/herself "above" the employees.	()	()	()	()	()

	STRONGLY LIKE	LIKE	NEITHER	DISLIKE	STRONGLY DISLIKE
6. This supervisor enjoys personal visits with employees almost becoming "one of the gang" but exercising leadership when needed.	()	()	()	()	()
7. When a decision is to be made this supervisor puts the responsibility for the decision on the work group giving the employees a free hand.	()	()	()	()	()
8. This supervisor is "all business" rarely getting involved in the personal lives of employees.	()	()	()	()	()
9. This supervisor takes any questions or suggestions as a challenge to his/her authority. He/she expects orders to be accepted without question.	()	()	()	()	()
10. Communications take a long time in this work group because the information travels among all members of the group and back to the supervisor.	()	()	()	()	()
11. It is important to this supervisor that everyone know that he/she is "running the show".	()	()	()	()	()
12. This supervisor seeks to satisfy employee needs and better the work group as well as get the work done.	()	()	()	()	()
13. Within this work group there is little time spent with communications between supervisor and employees.	()	()	()	()	()
14. You are never uncertain about how to do a job because this supervisor outlines exactly how he/she wants you to do it and checks to be sure that his/her directions are being followed.	()	()	()	()	()
15. Your work group is asked to vote on a new schedule. It takes a long time but everyone gets to express an opinion.	()	()	()	()	()

	STRONGLY LIKE	LIKE	NEITHER	DISLIKE	STRONGLY DISLIKE
16. If a problem comes up this supervisor quickly steps in and makes a firm, final decision.	()	()	()	()	()
17. A new job needs to be done. You volunteer and this supervisor tells you the goal you are to shoot for, but leaves you to determine the method to use.	()	()	()	()	()
18. This supervisor spends little time seeking out employees to see if you have questions or problems.	()	()	()	()	()
19. This supervisor feels that his/her main job is to see that the work gets done. He/she emphasizes production.	()	()	()	()	()
20. This supervisor works right along with the employees giving direction and guidance to you if needed.	()	()	()	()	()
21. This supervisor rarely criticises or offers suggestions for improving your work unless you ask him/her.	()	()	()	()	()
22. Although this supervisor gives instructions to employees he/she is not afraid to listen to employee suggestions and let the group try new ideas.	()	()	()	()	()
23. This supervisor rarely participates in the work effort unless a problem is brought to his/her attention by an employee.	()	()	()	()	()
24. When possible this supervisor prefers to appoint a committee to solve a problem rather than make an immediate decision.	()	()	()	()	()

	STRONGLY LIKE	LIKE	NEITHER	DISLIKE	STRONGLY DISLIKE
25. This supervisor praises or criticises the <u>work</u> of the employee rather than the <u>person</u> doing the work.	()	()	()	()	()
26. This supervisor leaves deciding on policies and rules for the work group totally up to the employees acting only to record their decision.	()	()	()	()	()
27. When this supervisor talks to his/her employees it is usually to give instructions. There is little time for "small talk".	()	()	()	()	()
28. This supervisor demands not only good work from you, but also personal loyalty to him/her as a supervisor.	()	()	()	()	()
29. If needed this supervisor can usually be found in his/her office rather than out working with the employees.	()	()	()	()	()
30. This supervisor has little contact with employees as long as things are going well and in case of problems usually tries to "smooth things over" rather than take an active part in settling the problem.	()	()	()	()	()

APPENDIX B

AUTOCRATIC, DEMOCRATIC, AND
LAISSEZ FAIRE QUESTIONS

Autocratic, Democratic, and
Laissez Faire Questions

The following list separates the 30 situational questions from the questionnaire into autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire qualities. The validity of these questions as depicting one of the three leadership types has been examined by a panel of three Oklahoma State University professors who have arrived at a 96% concensus of agreement.

Autocratic Qualities:

1. To help avoid problems this supervisor uses strict discipline with adequate punishments for breaking the rules.
2. This supervisor feels that familiarity with employees lessens respect for a supervisor and therefore puts himself/herself "above" the employees.
3. This supervisor is "all business" rarely getting involved in the personal lives of employees.
4. This supervisor takes any questions or suggestions as a challenge to his/her authority. He/she expects orders to be accepted without question.
5. It is important to this supervisor that everyone know that he/she is "running the show".
6. You are never uncertain about how to do a job because this supervisor outlines exactly how he/she wants you to do it and checks to be sure that his/her directions are being followed.
7. If a problem comes up this supervisor quickly steps in and makes a firm, final decision.
8. This supervisor feels that his/her main job is to see that the work gets done. He/she emphasizes production.
9. When this supervisor talks to his/her employees it is usually to give instructions. There is little time for "small talk".
10. This supervisor demands not only good work from you, but also personal loyalty to him/her as a supervisor.

Democratic Qualities:

1. Before a new vacation policy is selected this supervisor calls a meeting to explain the policy and get your opinion.
2. This supervisor feels that by working side by side with employees he/she is better able to lead than someone who plays the role of "the boss".
3. This supervisor enjoys personal visits with employees almost becoming "one of the gang" but exercising leadership when needed.
4. Communications take a long time in this work group because the information travels among all members of the group and back to the supervisor.
5. This supervisor seeks to satisfy employee needs and better the work group as well as get the work done.
6. Your work group is asked to vote on a new schedule. It takes a long time but everyone gets to express an opinion.
7. A new job needs to be done. You volunteer and this supervisor tells you the goal you are to shoot for, but leaves you to determine the method to use.
8. This supervisor works right along with the employees giving direction and guidance to you if needed.
9. Although this supervisor gives instructions to employees he/she is not afraid to listen to employee suggestions and let the group try new ideas.
10. This supervisor praises or criticises the work of the employee rather than the person doing the work.

Laissez Faire Qualities:

1. This supervisor spends little time supervising or working directly with you, but spends more time on paper work and consultation.
2. When a decision is to be made this supervisor puts the responsibility for the decision on the work group giving the employees a free hand.
3. Within this work group there is little time spent with communications between supervisor and employees.
4. This supervisor spends little time seeking out employees to see if you have questions or problems.

5. This supervisor rarely criticises or offers suggestions for improving your work unless you ask him/her.
6. This supervisor rarely participates in the work effort unless a problem is brought to his/her attention by an employee.
7. When possible this supervisor prefers to appoint a committee to solve a problem rather than make an immediate decision.
8. This supervisor leaves deciding on policies and rules for the work group totally up to the employees acting only to record their decision.
9. If needed this supervisor can usually be found in his/her office rather than out working with employees.
10. This supervisor has little contact with employees as long as things are going well and in case of problems usually tries to "smooth things over" rather than take an active part in settling the problem.

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS

Route 1, Box 326
Sand Springs, Oklahoma
May 1, 1978

Mr. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear Mr. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX,

As a graduate student at Oklahoma State University, I am currently conducting my research study involving food service employees. The research will analyze the preferences of these employees for three styles of supervisory leadership as displayed by first line supervisors. The research is based on the premise that after analyzing employee preferences for supervisory leadership the information will be available to modify first line supervision if needed to improve supervisor-employee relations.

In a random selection of Oklahoma hospitals, I would like to request the participation of your food service department in the study. Participation in the study will involve a maximum of one hour of your employee's time in a group meeting. I plan to travel to each institution to personally administer the questionnaires to each group of food service workers. The questionnaire contains 30 questions concerning leadership preferences and 10 about the employees's personal and employment-related backgrounds.

Following the completion of the study a copy of the results will be sent to each participating institution. It will show the preferences of each individual employee group and a summary of the overall research findings. One of the objectives of the study is also to supply recommendations for supervisory training programs based on the leadership preferences of the employees.

During the week of May 8 through May 12, I will call you regarding your participation in the study. I will be happy to answer any questions you have at that time. This research is being conducted under the direction of Dr. Esther Winterfeldt, Head of the Department of Food, Nutrition and Institution Administration, at Oklahoma State University. She will also be happy to answer any questions which you might have.

Sincerely,

Julie Thompson, R.D.

Dr. Esther Winterfeldt, Head
Food, Nutrition, and
Institution Administration

VITA²

Julie McMorris Thompson

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PREFERENCES OF FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEES FOR THREE STYLES OF SUPERVISORY LEADERSHIP

Major Field: Food, Nutrition and Institution Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August 13, 1952, the daughter of Robert and Dolores Daniel McMorris. Married Mark Alan Thompson, December 31, 1977.

Education: Graduated from Baton Rouge Senior High School, in May, 1970; received Bachelor of Science degree in Dietetics and Food Service Administration from Louisiana State University and A & M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in December, 1973; completed Administrative Dietetic Internship, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in December, 1974; completed requirements for the degree of Master of Science with a major in Food, Nutrition and Institution Administration from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, December, 1978.

Professional Experience: Therapeutic Dietitian, Hillcrest Medical Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, January, 1975, to May, 1976; Cafeteria Manager, Hillcrest Medical Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, June, 1976, to May, 1977; Graduate Teaching Assistant in Food, Nutrition and Institution Administration, Oklahoma State University, September, 1977, to May, 1978; Teaching Dietitian, Hillcrest Medical Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, January, 1978, to present.

Professional Affiliations: American Dietetic Association, Oklahoma Dietetic Association, Tulsa District Dietetic Association.