

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DESIRE FOR  
MANAGERIAL CAREER ADVANCEMENT IN MEDIUM-SIZED AND LARGE-  
SIZED BUSINESSES IN THE UNITED STATES

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

by

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To: Dean William G. Hardin  
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This dissertation, written by Stacy Howell and entitled Investigating the Factors that Contribute to the Desire for Managerial Career Advancement in Medium-sized and Large-sized Businesses in the United States, having been approved in respect of style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

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Florida International University, 2024

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the extraordinary individuals in my life, whose unwavering support and inspiration have propelled me through the challenging journey of earning my Doctor of Business Administration degree.

To my mother, Virginia Howell, your enduring support has been a pillar of strength throughout this academic pursuit. Your encouragement and belief in my abilities have fueled my determination, and I am profoundly grateful for your unwavering love.

To my aunt, Merle Howell, your wisdom and encouragement have been my sources of inspiration. Your belief in my potential has been a constant reminder that I am part of a family that values and champions intellectual pursuits.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DESIRE FOR  
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As the pursuit of career advancement remains a key aspiration for professionals, understanding the factors that drive individuals' desire for managerial career progression is increasingly crucial. Over the last four decades, career advancement in organizations has received much attention. Scholars from various disciplines have attempted to address the question of advancement in the workplace. Kanter (1977) produced what is widely regarded as the primary work on the structural barriers individuals face in their career advancement. A significant body of research considers the many individual factors that affect career advancement, much of it theoretical. Researchers have also previously identified several factors that are considered barriers to career advancement. Some of the factors explored in the existing research and literature regarding workplace advancement in organizations include the glass ceiling, gender discrimination, a male-dominated organizational culture, family issues (i.e., work and family conflict), a lack of support, and equity. The purpose of this research was to explore the factors that contribute to the desire for managerial career advancement in medium-sized and large-sized businesses in the United States. By examining this topic, the study seeks to shed light on the underlying motivators and barriers that shape individuals' aspirations for managerial roles

within organizations. The study drew upon the existing literature on career advancement, motivation, and organizational behavior, guided by the theoretical framework of social cognitive career theory (SCCT).

Data from 1,315 respondents were analyzed using hierarchical linear regression analysis. The study's results supported the positive relationship between ambition, motivation to lead (affective-identity and social-normative) and persistence and the desire for managerial career advancement. The study's moderation analyses showed mixed results - the two hypotheses examining the moderating effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity on the relationships between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement, were supported. On the other hand, the various hypotheses examining the moderating effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity on the relationships between motivation to lead and persistence and desire for managerial career advancement, were not supported. . The outcomes of this study have both theoretical and practical implications by informing organizational policies and practices related to talent management, leadership development, and employee engagement. The theoretical implications of these results within SCCT highlight the importance of personal characteristics, motivation, persistence, and environmental factors in shaping individuals' desire for managerial career advancement.



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# I. INTRODUCTION

## Background and Problem

In the fast-paced world of business, climbing the corporate ladder has long been seen as a symbol of professional achievement and success. Within this broad quest for career progression, the specific pursuit of managerial roles stands out as especially compelling for ambitious professionals. For ambitious individuals, the allure of managerial career advancement acts as a beacon, guiding their aspirations and propelling them forward. This pathway entails starting at the entry-level and gradually advancing to higher-level positions. But, what are the factors that fuel this desire for higher positions of authority and responsibility? What motivates individuals to strive for managerial roles in medium-sized and large-sized businesses in the United States?

In the United States, the pursuit of career advancement can often be an arduous journey filled with numerous challenges. One significant challenge that individuals face is the increasing competition in the job market. With a growing population and limited job opportunities, the competition for promotions and higher positions has intensified. This trend means that even highly skilled and qualified individuals must constantly strive to stand out from the crowd, constantly updating their skills and knowledge to remain relevant. To advance to the next career level, individuals need to invest more effort and seek out growth opportunities. In this context, the intricate interplay of organizational and personal factors cannot be overlooked. In many medium-sized and large-sized businesses, the promotion process is not always transparent or fair, leading to frustration and a sense of stagnation among employees. Biases, stereotypes, and hidden barriers can hinder the upward mobility of certain individuals, creating disparities and perpetuating inequalities within the workplace. Nevertheless, amidst these challenges, individuals persist in their pursuit of managerial career advancement. The allure of increased

influence, decision-making power, and recognition continues to fuel their aspirations. The promise of greater financial rewards, enhanced job security, and opportunities for personal growth acts as a powerful magnet, compelling individuals to embark on this ambitious journey.

This study encompasses an examination of the factors influencing career advancement to a position in senior leadership in the context of the United States—a field of research that has attracted much scholarly attention over the last 40 years. Researchers across the board have probed the topic of workplace inequality due to increasing concerns in organizations about the numerous barriers preventing certain employee subgroups from growing and advancing in their careers. For example, researchers have focused on whether women are perceived as less ambitious by their superiors, and thus are not only less likely to be offered opportunities for development but also receive fewer important tasks that would showcase their competencies (Hoobler et al., 2014). With an increasingly female labor force, gender diversity and equality are becoming more salient as the salaries and leadership roles given to women still do not match those of their male counterparts. In the United States, treating female employees differently from their male colleagues (i.e., gender stereotyping) is prohibited as it goes against gender equality laws (Suk, 2010). Nonetheless, as the organizational culture profoundly influences the firm's generally held perceptions and attitudes toward male and female employees, issues such as gender and race, invariably influence employees' access to opportunities for career advancement.

Taken together, despite the extensive literature on career advancement, the factors that drive individuals to aspire for managerial positions and the factors that constrain or promote career advancement in medium-sized and large-sized businesses in the United States are still not understood. Therefore, this study focused on examining how an individual's desire for managerial career advancement is related to ambition, persistence, and motivation to lead , as

well as how these relationships may be moderated by developmental relationships and perceived career opportunities.

By exploring the gaps in the extant literature, this study seeks to enrich the understanding of the workplace experiences of employees and the challenges they face by examining the issue of unequal promotion practices from their perspective. The investigation further focused on factors that may promote or hinder career advancement. This study has several valuable contributions. First, the insights from the study's findings may help mitigate the phenomenon of brain drain, wherein skilled and talented individuals express the intention to quit the organization because they perceive no opportunities for advancement. Second, it highlights a way for organizations to use their human resources more effectively by ensuring greater workplace equality.

By shining a spotlight on the intricacies of motivation, individual characteristics, environmental influences, and behavioral dynamics, the aim of this study is to shed light on the underlying drivers that ignite the fire within individuals to pursue managerial positions. The study involved examining individual motivations, organizational dynamics, societal influences, and personal experiences to uncover insights that can inform strategies and initiatives to facilitate a more equitable and supportive environment for career progression. The findings of this research provide insights into how organizations can develop strategies to support employees in their pursuit of career advancement and ultimately contribute to the overall success of the organization. In sum, the intention of this research is to comprehend which organizational and individual factors promote or constrain career advancement, guided by the following question: What perceived factors promote and/or constrain career advancement?

## **Significance of the Problem**

The problem of identifying perceived factors that promote or constrain career advancement is significant because it can help individuals, organizations, and policymakers understand individual and organizational factors that affect career development and provide insights into how to improve career outcomes for individuals. Identifying the factors that promote or constrain career advancement can help employees better understand their own career development and make more informed career decisions. For organizations, understanding these factors can help them develop more effective career development programs, retain talented employees, and create a more motivated and engaged workforce. Policymakers can also use this information to design policies and programs that support career development and promote economic growth. Overall, understanding the factors that promote or constrain career advancement is crucial for individual, organizational, and societal success.

## **Research Gap**

The existing literature on career advancement reveals several gaps that need to be addressed. First, there is a limited focus on underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities. Research on their unique experiences and challenges in relation to career advancement is lacking, hindering the current understanding of the barriers they face and potential solutions. Second, consideration and intersectionality in career advancement research are lacking. The impact of intersectionality, which reflects the interconnectedness of multiple social identities and experiences, on career progression warrants further investigation. Studies on how various identities intersect and influence career advancement are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

Individual motivations are not well understood, with existing studies providing only partial insights into the specific factors that drive individuals to aspire to managerial roles. Delving deeper into underlying motivations, such as the desire for increased responsibility, influence, or financial rewards, can provide valuable insights into the true drivers behind the ambition for managerial career progression. Although many studies emphasize factors that promote career advancement, there is a need to shift attention to the barriers and challenges that individuals encounter on their career journeys. By exploring and addressing these obstacles, strategies and interventions can be developed to support individuals in overcoming them and fostering more equitable career advancement opportunities.

Another key research gap pertains to the exploration of personality traits and individual characteristics that influence career aspirations. Personality factors such as conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness to experience have been associated with career success and progression. However, there is limited research examining how these traits interact with ambition and motivation to lead in driving individuals' desire for managerial roles. Understanding the role of personality in shaping career aspirations can provide valuable insights into the underlying drivers of ambition and persistence in pursuing managerial career paths.

Additionally, the impact of personal values and beliefs on career advancement remains underexplored in the existing literature. Research suggests that individuals with a strong sense of purpose or alignment with organizational values may be more motivated to seek leadership positions. Investigating the impact of personal values, such as integrity, creativity, or collaboration, on career aspirations can enrich our comprehension of the varied motivations propelling individuals' career trajectories. By examining the interplay between personal values, aspirations, and career decisions, researchers can identify ways to align organizational



opportunities with individuals' intrinsic motivations, thereby fostering more meaningful and fulfilling career paths. Addressing these gaps in understanding individual-level factors can contribute to a more holistic perspective on career advancement processes and inform tailored approaches to support individuals in achieving their professional goals.

Addressing these gaps and conducting research that encompasses underrepresented groups, intersectionality, career advancement barriers, and organizational factors can provide comprehensive insights into the complexities surrounding career advancement. This knowledge informs evidence-based interventions, policies, and practices that promote equitable and inclusive career development for individuals across diverse backgrounds and identities. By closing these knowledge gaps, organizations can develop targeted interventions and practices to support employees' career aspirations and establish inclusive pathways for advancement.

### **Research Question**

The following overarching research question guided this study: *What factors contribute to the desire for managerial career advancement in medium-sized and large-sized businesses in the United States?*

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY

This section includes a review of the literature on workplace advancement to examine the topic of managerial career advancement and identify the factors that have been identified as significant in the context of medium-sized and large-sized businesses in the United States. Career advancement is a central focus in the fields of organizational behavior and human resource management. Within the field of organizational behavior, it contributes to employee satisfaction, organizational performance, and the achievement of organizational goals. According to research by Ng and Feldman (2013), individual characteristics such as a proactive personality and self-efficacy play a significant role in career advancement. They found that individuals who possess a proactive personality and self-driven approach to work are more likely to seek career opportunities, engage in career-enhancing behaviors, and achieve higher levels of career success. Similarly, individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations, are more likely to set ambitious career goals, persist in the face of challenges, and take advantage of career advancement opportunities.

Chan and Drasgow (2001) identified motivation to lead as an important construct that can predict leadership behavior and performance. Motivation to lead has been found to be positively related to career advancement, and it is a key predictor of career success (Ng et al., 2005). Several studies (e.g., Judge et al., 1995; Ng et al., 2005) have shown that individuals who are motivated to lead are more likely to seek out and pursue career advancement opportunities. They are also more likely to be selected for such opportunities by their employers and to exhibit the types of behaviors that are valued in managerial positions, such as taking initiative, being proactive, and demonstrating leadership potential (Judge et al., 1995).

Another factor that has been identified as contributing to managerial career advancement is an individual's level of ambition (Seibert et al., 2001). Ambition is characterized by a strong desire to achieve success and to attain high levels of status and recognition. Research has shown that ambitious individuals are more likely to be selected for career advancement opportunities and are more likely to be successful in these roles (e.g., Barrick et al., 2001). Ambition is also related to an individual's willingness to take risks and to pursue challenging opportunities, which can contribute to their ability to succeed in managerial roles.

Persistence is another important factor that has been identified as contributing to managerial career advancement (Duckworth et al., 2007). Persistence is characterized by an individual's ability to persevere in the face of obstacles and setbacks and to maintain their focus and commitment to achieving their career goals. Research has shown that individuals who are persistent are more likely to achieve career success and be selected for career advancement opportunities (e.g., Judge et al., 1999). Persistence is also related to an individual's ability to learn from failures and setbacks, which can contribute to their ability to succeed in managerial roles (Dweck, 2009).

In addition to individual characteristics, organizational factors also contribute to career advancement. Research by DeFillippi and Arthur (1994) suggests that organizational support and developmental opportunities significantly influence career advancement. Organizations facilitate employees' career progression through providing career development programs, mentorship, and opportunities for learning and growth. Organizational support, such as fair and transparent promotion processes, can foster employees' motivation to pursue career advancement and reduce perceived barriers to progression (Bauer et al., 2006). Perceived career opportunities refer to the individual's beliefs about the availability of career advancement opportunities in their

organization and the potential for their career advancement. Research has shown that individuals who perceive greater career opportunities are more likely to seek out and pursue career advancement opportunities and are more likely to be successful in these roles (Judge et al., 1995; Ng et al., 2005).

The imbalance in the leadership roles given to men and women has been explored through various theoretical approaches. Nonetheless, Eagly and Chin (2010) stated that research into leadership has thus far been unable to fully address the issues inherent to contemporary leadership and its challenges. They exemplified this as “(a) the limited access of individuals from diverse identity groups to leadership roles; (b) the shaping of leaders’ behaviors by their dual identities as leaders and members of gender, racial, ethnic, or other identity groups; and (c) the potential of individuals from underrepresented groups to provide exceptional leadership because of their differences from traditional leaders” (Eagly & Chin, 2010, p. 216). Meanwhile, the dominance of male executives at the senior management level is often attributed to the gender assumptions held by society, such as perceptions that exaggerate the status and capabilities of male leaders (Weyer, 2007).

Xiang et al. (2017) investigated the internal and external factors leading to the underrepresentation of women in senior management roles, focusing on workplace barriers across several countries and regions. Although they noted that a leader’s ability is not defined by gender, the researchers highlighted the “critical imbalance” in the number of male and female leaders, which they ascribed to the intangible obstacles facing women in their career advancement. They further contended that female leaders seem to represent an untapped resource in organizations, and proposed education as a suitable method for engaging decision-makers to ensure gender equality and overcome gender stereotyping. The researchers concluded that

leading organizations should act as role models by eliminating barriers and ensuring that leadership positions are given to capable women. Organizations should further strive to employ a gender-equal workforce, meaning equal opportunities for promotions, rewards, and management roles for all employees regardless of gender or race.

Kanter (1977), in *Men and Women of the Corporation*, informed the current understanding of the mechanisms underlying the dominance of White males in senior management, explaining the concept of “homosocial reproduction, a form of in-group network sponsorship in which ambitious white men are privileged over women and minorities because they share two important characteristics with most of their superiors: *whiteness* and *male status*” (p. 62). These intersecting characteristics—*White* and *male*—foster mentorship and favoritism, enhancing mutual feelings of loyalty and trust among this particular group. Based on the description by Moore of a “bureaucratic kinship system,” Kanter explicated the underpinnings of these relationships as follows:

Keeping management positions in the hands of people of one’s kind provides reinforcement for the belief that people like oneself deserve to have such authority. “Homosocial” and “homosexual” reproduction provide an important form of reassurance in the face of uncertainty about performance measurement in high regard, high prestige positions. So, management positions again become easily closed to people who are “different.” (pp. 62-63)

According to Parker and Stepler (2017), in the United States, men are still prevalently considered the financial providers whereas women are perceived as the caretakers of the family. In their experimental study, Durante et al. (2012) examined whether women who set aside their career ambitions and refrain from pursuing high-profile careers do so not because of a lack of interest but rather due to societal influence. Investigating the perceptions of college women in

relation to how many men were in the vicinity, the researchers found that the women were more likely to express higher ambitions and prefer high-level positions if fewer men were nearby. In the presence of more men, however, the women tended to state a preference for a caretaking role rather than a high-powered career.

The main categories of career barriers are internal (i.e., related to the individual's traits and personality) and external (i.e., related to their structural and situational context). The former emerges from the specific behaviors and roles imposed by society on male and female employees, whereas the latter are the general barriers obstructing their professional advancement. In their survey examining the career progression of male and female executives, Lyness and Thompson (1997) found that women's career development paths tend to differ significantly from those of men. Specifically, female executives expressed less satisfaction with the opportunities they had to advance their careers than their male counterparts. High-level female executives often reported facing additional barriers, such as a mismatch with organizational culture and exclusion from certain networks.

McGee (2018), exploring the impact of various organizational and individual factors on career development, investigated whether race and gender play a significant role, focusing specifically on women aiming to take on senior leadership positions in the field of Information Technology (IT). Instead of considering race and gender as separate variables, the researcher incorporated the "gender intersectionality" perspective into the analysis, utilizing the lens of the individual differences theory of gender and IT. The study highlighted the complexity of women's advancement in the field of IT and revealed the need for multifaceted, tailored solutions to address it. McGee also proposed that senior managers embrace workforce diversity and all its

complexity, tackle issues of inclusion, and view the issue by considering the experience of a senior IT executive who has come across unfair barriers in their career path.

Seeking to summarize the extant literature on career equality and the salient organizational and individual factors, Kossek et al. (2017) identified the three research perspectives of gender bias, career preference and work-family balance. Some debate exists on whether female employees themselves “opt out” of leadership roles or are rather “pushed out.” As the research has thus far not been cohesive, what needs to be investigated and which managerial practices should be implemented remain unclear. Kossek et al. suggested that employees’ professional experiences and perceptions are grounded in their social contexts, which reflect commonly held attitudes towards gender equality and have a mediating effect on the likelihood that women have equal career outcomes. The researchers surmised that because gender equality initiatives tend to target women individually rather than their detrimental contexts, career inequality continues to adversely affect not only women but also their families and society.

The existing body of research on career advancement has primarily focused on various aspects and factors related to career progression—gender and diversity (e.g., Carli & Eagly, 2016), bias and discrimination (e.g., Pager & Shepherd, 2008), and work-life balance (e.g., Kossek & Ozeki, 1999). However, there is a relative dearth of research specifically on the factors that contribute to managerial career advancement in medium-sized and large-sized businesses within the United States. Further exploration is needed to shed light on this specific context and uncover unique factors and dynamics that influence managerial career advancement in these settings.

Overall, the literature suggests that several factors contribute to managerial career advancement. This study focused on a subset of these factors, which included the motivation to lead, ambition, persistence, developmental relationships, and perceived career opportunities. By understanding these factors, organizations can develop strategies to promote career advancement and support the development of their employees. Future research should focus on investigating the specific mechanisms through which these factors influence managerial career advancement and identifying additional factors that may contribute to career advancement in this context.

## **Theoretical Perspective**

### **Social Cognitive Career Theory**

The basis for the model and hypotheses developed in this study was the social cognitive career theory (SCCT). According to the SCCT, individuals' career-related behavior and decision-making are influenced by their personal characteristics, environment, and interactions with others. It emphasizes the role of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals in career development and decision-making. The SCCT suggests that individuals' beliefs about their abilities and the outcomes of their actions (self-efficacy) play a key role in shaping their behavior. Individuals who have high self-efficacy beliefs in their ability to achieve career advancement may be more likely to set and pursue ambitious career goals. According to the SCCT, individuals form their career goals and beliefs about their abilities through their self-efficacy beliefs and by observing the experiences of others. The theory suggests that contextual factors, such as social support and work experiences, can also influence career-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction and advancement. Thus, a person's level of ambition may be influenced by their self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn increases their desire for career advancement.



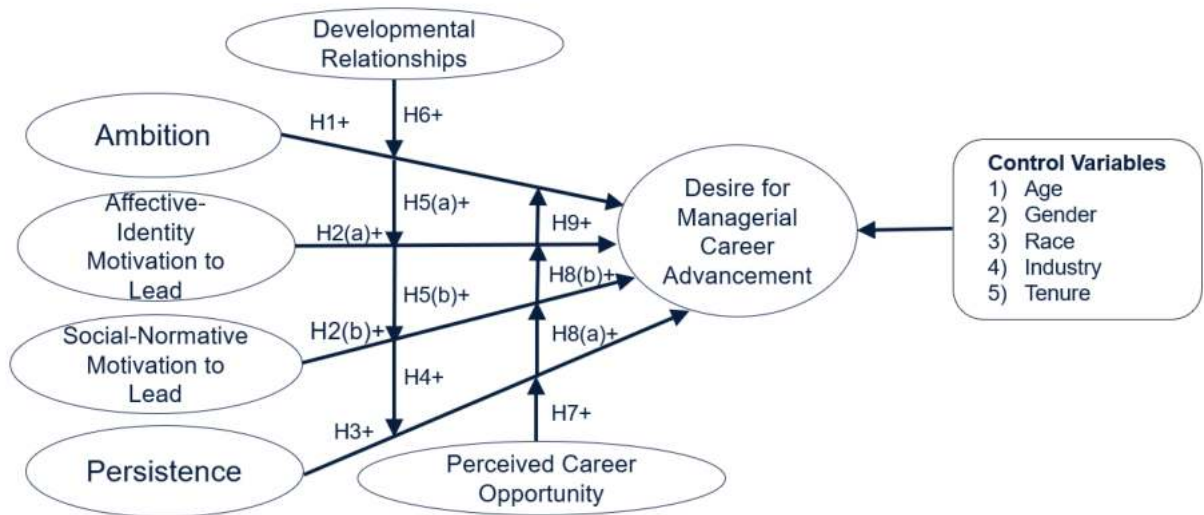
The SCCT is a valuable framework for understanding the challenges faced by individuals in their career progression. According to Lent et al. (1994), SCCT accounts for the tendency of individuals to seek certain fields in which to have a career. In other words, during their career path, people perceive different levels of support and barriers; consequently, they are more likely to compromise in their career choices if they perceive substantial entry barriers or obstacles in fields they might be interested in or if they believe that their environment will not support their career decision. In the context of investigating the factors that contribute to managerial career advancement in medium-sized and large-sized businesses in the United States, the SCCT served as a useful framework for exploring how individuals' self-efficacy beliefs, social support networks, and work experiences may impact their career advancement opportunities and success.

### III. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Figure 1 below depicts the conceptual model and a summary of the hypothesized relationships investigated in this study.

**Figure 1**

*The Conceptual Research Model*



#### An Employee's Level of Ambition

Significant research supports the idea that higher levels of ambition are positively associated with a desire for managerial career advancement. As it can be both a driver and an impediment to career advancement, ambition has received much scholarly and practical attention. Although ambition can lead to significant achievements in both personal and societal spheres, it can also be detrimental when the needs of others are overlooked in the race for personal gain (Pettigrove, 2007). Numerous researchers (e.g., Jones et al., 2017; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) have agreed that ambition is a significant factor shaping various

workplace behaviors and outcomes. For example, Hogan and Schroeder (1981) highlighted ambition as a positive trait that originates in the individual's internal intentions and objectives.

Ng and Feldman (2010) found ambition to be positively related to career success and advancement. Seibert et al. (1999) found that individuals high in achievement motivation, which is closely related to ambition, had a greater likelihood of pursuing managerial positions. Similarly, Heslin and VandeWalle (2011) found ambition to be a predictor of career success, with individuals high in ambition more likely to advance to higher-level positions. The social cognitive career theory (SCCT) served as a theoretical framework for understanding how individuals develop and pursue their career goals. According to the SCCT, career development is influenced by three key factors: individual factors (e.g., personality, interests, and values), environmental factors (e.g., social and economic context), and behavioral factors (e.g., goal setting and self-regulation).

According to the SCCT, individuals' beliefs and self-efficacy (confidence in their ability to perform tasks and achieve goals) play a crucial role in career development. As a person's level of ambition increases, they may become more confident in their ability to succeed in a managerial role, and this increased self-efficacy may lead to a stronger desire for managerial career advancement. The SCCT also suggests that social and economic factors can influence career development. For example, an individual may be more likely to pursue a managerial career path if they observe others who have succeeded in similar roles, or if they perceive that managerial roles are in high demand and offer attractive rewards. Finally, the SCCT highlights the role of goal setting and self-regulation in career development employing the use of behavioral factors. As a person's level of ambition increases, they may set more ambitious career

goals and work harder to achieve them, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement. Taken together, the following hypothesis was derived:

**Hypothesis 1:** As a person's level of ambition increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases.

### **An Employee's Motivation to Lead**

Numerous studies in the field of organizational behavior have revealed that a person's motivation to lead is a key predictor of their desire for managerial career advancement.

According to the path-goal theory of leadership (House, 1971), individuals who are motivated to lead seek out opportunities for leadership are more likely to perceive a managerial position as a means to achieving their career goals. Research has shown that individuals with a high need for achievement, a key component of motivation to lead, tend to have higher aspirations for advancement in the workplace. Judge and Bono (2001) found that employees who scored higher on measures of achievement motivation were more likely to have a desire for promotion and were more likely to engage in career planning behaviors.

Motivation to lead (MTL) is defined as "an individual-differences construct that affects a leader's or leader-to-be's decisions to assume leadership training, roles, and responsibilities and that affect his or her intensity of effort at leading and persistence as a leader" (Chan & Drasgow, 2001, p. 482). Three factors underlie the construct of motivation to lead. These are affective-identity, noncalculative, and social-normative (Chan & Drasgow, 2001).

The affective-identity MTL prong refers to the emotional and identity-based motivation to lead. It is the extent to which individuals are driven to lead due to their personal identification with leadership roles and the emotional satisfaction they derive from assuming these roles. The noncalculative MTL prong focuses on intrinsic motivation to lead that is not based on external

rewards or instrumental considerations. It represents an individual's genuine desire and interest in leadership, stemming from their personal values, beliefs, and inherent enjoyment of leadership responsibilities. The social-normative MTL prong reflects the motivation to lead based on societal or social norms and expectations. It measures the extent to which individuals feel obligated or influenced by social norms to take on leadership roles, driven by the desire to fulfill perceived societal expectations or meet group norms. This study focused on two of these three factors—*affective-identity MTL* and *social-normative MTL*—because they were more relevant to the intended outcome of the research.

As noted previously, the SCCT underscores the role of individual, environmental, and behavioral factors. From an individual standpoint, MTL is a personality trait that describes a person's desire to take charge and influence others. Therefore, if a person's MTL increases, they may become more interested in pursuing a managerial career path, where they can exercise their leadership skills and influence others. Taking environmental factors into account, a person's perception of the demand and rewards associated with managerial roles may affect their desire for managerial career advancement. If a person believes that there is high demand for managers and that managerial roles offer attractive rewards, they may be more motivated to pursue such roles as their MTL increases. Finally, considering behavioral factors, as a person's MTL increases, they may set more ambitious career goals that involve managerial positions and work harder to acquire the necessary skills and experiences to achieve those goals. Therefore, it was reasonable to hypothesize as follows:

**Hypothesis 2a:** As a person's affective-identity motivation to lead increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases.

**Hypothesis 2b:** As a person's social-normative motivation to lead increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases.

### **An Employee's Level of Persistence**

Research has suggested that persistence, as a personality trait, plays a critical role in an individual's career success and advancement (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Researchers have found that individuals who exhibit high levels of persistence are more likely to pursue their career goals with greater determination and effort, leading to better career outcomes such as promotions and higher salaries. Persistent individuals are also more likely to engage in behaviors that enhance their career prospects, such as seeking feedback, learning new skills, and networking. Employees who are persistent and willing to take on challenging tasks are more likely to be viewed as high-potential candidates for managerial roles (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Employees who are persistent in seeking opportunities for career advancement are more likely to achieve their desired career outcomes (Kanfer et al., 2001). This relationship is supported by a study by Seibert et al. (2001) who found that employees who were persistent in developing their skills and seeking challenging assignments were more likely to achieve their career goals.

Brown and Lent (2005) stated that persistence relates to choosing stability in terms of an individual's decision to persist in performing an activity, such as a professional or educational task. It can also be considered as a measure of an individual's performance in activities they have been assigned or they have chosen to do. In work and academic settings, persistence can be a measure of performance as competent performers are expected to show more persistence, enabling them to attain more work-related or educational achievements.

The SCCT can also help explain how a person's persistence can influence their desire for managerial advancement. The SCCT emphasizes that individual factors, such as personality traits

and cognitive processes, play a crucial role in shaping career development. Persistence is a personality trait that describes a person's tendency to persevere in the face of challenges and setbacks. Therefore, if a person's persistence increases, they may be more likely to pursue a managerial career path, despite the challenges and obstacles that may arise. SCCT also suggests that a person's perception of the availability and the attractiveness of managerial roles (i.e., environmental factors) may influence their desire for managerial career advancement. If a person perceives that managerial roles are in high demand and offer attractive rewards, they may be more motivated to persist in pursuing such roles, causing their persistence to increase. According to SCCT, as a person's persistence increases, they may set more ambitious career goals and work harder to achieve them, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement (i.e., behavioral changes). They may also be more likely to seek out feedback and learning opportunities to improve their skills and increase their chances of success in a managerial role. Consistent with this stream of literature and theory, the following hypothesis was derived:

**Hypothesis 3:** As a person's persistence increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases.

### **An Employee's Exposure to Developmental Relationships**

In her article, Kram (1983) described developmental relationships as a dynamic process between two individuals, initiated to foster professional growth, where both parties work together toward shared goals. There is increasing concern about ongoing employee growth and development, which are crucial for good leadership. The employability and career advancement of individuals are similarly seen as important. Although the focus often falls on the practice of mentoring, researchers have started to look past conventional forms of mentoring to examine how developmental relationships can offer employees the assessment, challenge, and support

they need to develop (Douglas & McCauley, 1999). For example, sponsoring is a situation where a mentor does more than give advice and feedback, using their professional standing and personal connections to help their mentee advance and succeed, especially when the employee in question has only recently embarked on their career (Bell & Goldsmith, 2013). Developmental relationships ensure employees receive the support they need to grow in the organization. In such relationships, both sides are known to each other, and both mentee and mentor may derive benefits; developmental relationships have even been shown to be crucial to organizational success (Helms et al., 2016).

Studies have revealed that high-quality developmental relationships are positively related to career success and advancement (Eby et al., 2003; Ragins & Kram, 2007). Researchers have also found that the strength of the relationship between persistence and career success is influenced by the quality of developmental relationships (Scandura & Williams, 2004). Specifically, when individuals have high-quality developmental relationships, they are better able to persist through obstacles and challenges, leading to increased career success and advancement.

The SCCT emphasizes that individual factors, such as cognitive processes and self-efficacy, play an important role in shaping career development. Persistence is a personality trait that describes a person's tendency to persevere in the face of challenges and setbacks. The extent to which persistence translates into career success, however, may depend on the individual's self-efficacy beliefs and the level of support they receive from their developmental relationships. The SCCT also highlights the importance of environmental factors, such as social and economic contexts, in shaping career development. Developmental relationships, such as mentoring, sponsorship, and coaching, can provide individuals with guidance, feedback, and opportunities to learn and grow. The quality and frequency of these developmental relationships may vary



depending on a person's social and economic context, such as their organization or industry. The SCCT underscores the role of behavioral factors, such as goal setting and self-regulation, in career development. As a person's persistence increases, they may set more ambitious career goals and work harder to achieve them, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement. However, the extent to which they are successful in achieving these goals may depend on the support they receive from their developmental relationships. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formed based on the literature:

**Hypothesis 4:** A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high.

Developmental relationships play a crucial role in shaping an individual's career aspirations and advancement opportunities. Studies have revealed that individuals who have access to strong developmental relationships, such as mentoring and coaching, are more likely to have higher levels of MTL and desire for managerial career advancement. For example, Ragins and Kram (2007) found that the quality of mentoring relationships was positively related to career satisfaction, career commitment, and career success. Similarly, a study by Day and Allen (2004) revealed that developmental relationships were positively associated with career success and advancement.

The extent to which MTL translates into career success may depend on the individual's self-efficacy beliefs and the level of support they receive from their developmental relationships. Developmental relationships can provide individuals with guidance, feedback, and opportunities to learn and grow. The quality and frequency of these developmental relationships may vary depending on a person's social and economic context, such as their organization or industry. As a

person's MTL increases, they may set more ambitious career goals and work harder to achieve them, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement. However, the extent to which they are successful in achieving these goals may depend on the support they receive from their developmental relationships. Therefore, it can be argued that a person's developmental relationships may serve as an important moderator between MTL and desire for managerial career advancement. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were proposed:

**Hypothesis 5a:** A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high.

**Hypothesis 5b:** A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high.

Kram and Isabella (1985) found that developmental relationships are positively associated with career advancement and success. Higgins and Kram (2001) also found that developmental relationships moderate the relationship between career goals and career success, such that individuals with strong developmental relationships are more likely to achieve their career goals. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that individuals with high levels of ambition and strong developmental relationships would have a stronger desire for managerial career advancement. The reasoning is that developmental relationships can provide individuals with the support, guidance, and resources necessary to achieve their career goals, and may enhance their belief in their ability to succeed in managerial roles.

The SCCT emphasizes that individual factors, such as personality traits and cognitive processes (e.g., ambition) play an important role in shaping career development. Ambition is a

personality trait that describes a person's desire to achieve success and reach their full potential. However, the extent to which ambition translates into career success may depend on the individual's self-efficacy beliefs and the level of support they receive from their developmental relationships. From this literature, the following hypothesis was derived:

**Hypothesis 6:** A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high.

### **An Employee's Perceived Career Opportunities**

Perceived career opportunity is defined as an individual's perception of the potential for future career advancement within their organization (Greenhaus et al., 1995). Opportunities for promotion show employees that if they remain with the organization, they will be able to progress in their careers. Such opportunities also represent incentives for employees to take on challenges, thus acting as extrinsic and intrinsic motivating factors (Spector, 1985). In contrast, if an employee believes that they will have limited opportunities for advancement, their internal expectations will diminish, and they will experience an enhanced intention to leave. Rosen (1986) likened opportunities for career advancement to a competition within the firm, with the promotion serving both as the "prize" and as a way for the organization to secure commitment from its employees. Promotion opportunities are attractive as they offer employees a chance to obtain a higher salary as well as the benefits and prestige associated with a role with more responsibility. According to Holtom et al. (2008), opportunities for promotion increase employees' commitment and sense of belonging to the organization, fostering long-term attachment. Finally, DeConinck and Bachmann's (1994) study revealed that besides other job

satisfaction predictors, the existence of promotion opportunities has a considerable effect on employees' organizational commitment.

Ample research indicates that a person's perceived career opportunities have a significant impact on their career advancement goals and aspirations. Heslin and VandeWalle (2008) found that individuals who perceive high levels of career opportunities are more likely to set challenging career goals and persist in the face of obstacles. Similarly, another study by Seibert et al. (2001) suggests that individuals who perceive more career opportunities are more likely to engage in career planning behaviors, which, in turn, increase their career success.

Applying the SCCT in shaping career development, persistence is a personality trait that describes a person's ability to stay committed and work hard toward achieving their goals. However, the extent to which persistence translates into career success may depend on the individual's self-efficacy beliefs and their perception of the career opportunities available to them (Lent et al., 2000). Perceived career opportunity is an environmental factor that refers to a person's perception of the availability of career opportunities in their field. The perceived career opportunity may vary depending on the person's social and economic context, such as their industry or job market (Judge et al., 1995; Schneer & Reitman, 1995). Finally, the SCCT underscores the role of behavioral factors, such as goal setting and self-regulation, in career development. As a person's persistence increases, they may set more ambitious career goals and work harder to achieve them, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement (Crant, 2000; Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007). However, the extent to which they are successful in achieving these goals may depend on their perception of the career opportunities available to them. Consistent with these arguments, the following hypothesis was proposed:

**Hypothesis 7:** A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high.

Research has consistently shown that a person's perception of their career opportunities can significantly impact their motivation to seek career advancement, particularly in the context of managerial roles. For instance, Seibert et al. (2001) found that individuals with high levels of perceived career opportunities were more likely to engage in proactive career behaviors, including seeking out leadership roles and pursuing opportunities for career advancement. Similarly, Liang and Gong (2013) found that perceived career opportunities positively influenced individuals' career commitment, which, in turn, was associated with a greater desire for career advancement.

Perceived career opportunity is an environmental factor that refers to a person's perception of the availability of career opportunities in their field. The perceived career opportunity may vary depending on the person's social and economic context, such as their industry or job market (Judge et al., 1995; Schner & Reitman, 1995). As a person's MTL increases, they may set more ambitious career goals related to leadership and work harder to achieve them, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement (Crant, 2000; Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007). However, the extent to which they are successful in achieving these goals may depend on their perception of the career opportunities available to them. For example, individuals who perceive more career opportunities in their organization may be more likely to feel motivated to pursue managerial positions and take on leadership roles (Wang et al., 2016). Therefore,

**Hypothesis 8a:** A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high.

**Hypothesis 8b:** A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead and managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high.

Aryee et al. (2002) found that perceived career opportunities were positively related to career satisfaction and advancement among employees. Nguni et al. (2006) also found that employees with high perceptions of career opportunities had higher levels of career satisfaction and were more likely to report intentions to stay with their current organization. Ng and Feldman (2008) found that employees with higher levels of ambition were more likely to report a desire for career advancement and were more likely to engage in proactive career behaviors when they perceived greater opportunities for career advancement.

Ambition is a personality trait that describes a person's desire to achieve success and reach their goals. However, the extent to which ambition translates into career success may depend on the individual's self-efficacy beliefs and their perception of the career opportunities available to them. Perceived career opportunity is an environmental factor that refers to a person's perception of the availability of career opportunities in their field. The perceived career opportunity may vary depending on the person's social and economic context, such as their industry or job market (Judge et al., 1995; Schneer & Reitman, 1995). As a person's ambition increases, they may set more ambitious career goals related to achieving success and reaching their career aspirations, including pursuing opportunities for managerial career advancement (Judge et al., 1995; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). However, the extent to which they are successful

in achieving these goals may depend on their perception of the career opportunities available to them. Taken together, these findings suggest that a person’s perceived career opportunities play a significant role in their ambition and desire for career advancement, leading to the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 9:** A person’s perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person’s perceived career opportunity is high.

Table 1 contains a summary of the research hypotheses for this study. Table 2 depicts the constructs and their respective measurements.

**Table 1**

*Summary of Hypotheses*

<b>Research Hypothesis</b>	
<i>H1:</i> As a person’s level of Ambition (AM) increases, their Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) also increases	AM→DCA
<i>H2a:</i> As a person’s Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead (AffMTL) increases, their Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) also increases	AffMTL→DCA
<i>H2b:</i> As a person’s Social-Normative Motivation to Lead (SocMTL) increases, their Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) also increases	SocMTL→DCA
<i>H3:</i> As a person’s Persistence (PS) increases, their Desire for Managerial Career persistence (PS) and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when the Developmental Relationships (DR) are high	DR* PS→DCA
<i>H5a:</i> A person’s Developmental Relationships (DR) would moderate the relationship between Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead (AffMTL) and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when the Developmental Relationships (DR) are high	DR* AffMTL→DCA
<i>H5b:</i> A person’s Developmental Relationships (DR) would moderate the relationship between Social-Normative Motivation to Lead (SocMTL) and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when the Developmental Relationships (DR) are high	DR* SocMTL→DCA

<b>Research Hypothesis</b>	
<i>H6: A person's Developmental Relationships (DR) would moderate the relationship between Ambition (AM) and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when the Developmental Relationships (DR) are high</i>	DR* AM→DCA
<i>H7: A person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) would moderate the relationship between Persistence (PS) and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) is high</i>	PCOP* PS→DCA
<i>H8a: A person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) would moderate the relationship between Social-Normative Motivation to Lead (SocMTL) and Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) is high</i>	PCOP* SocMTL→DCA
<i>H8b: A person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) would moderate the relationship between Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead (AffMTL) and Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) is high</i>	PCOP* AffMTL→DCA
<i>H9: A person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) would moderate the relationship between Ambition (AM) and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (DCA) such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's Perceived Career Opportunity (PCOP) is high</i>	PCOP* AM→DCA

**Table 2**

*Summary of Constructs and Measures*

<b>Construct/Variable</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Source / Supporting Literature / Theoretical Background</b>	<b>Measure/Scale</b>
Ambition	IV	The persistent and generalized striving for success, attainment, and accomplishment	SCCT	5-item, 5-point Likert scale developed by Hirschi and Spurk (2021)
Motivation to Lead	IV	A cognitive and affective readiness to influence others through purposeful, organized, and socially acceptable means in the pursuit of a common goal or outcome. Reflects an individual's desire and willingness to take on a leadership role and influence others towards a common goal	SCCT	Modified 18-item, 7-point Likert scale developed by Chan and Drasgow (2001)



<b>Construct/Variable</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Source / Supporting Literature / Theoretical Background</b>	<b>Measure/Scale</b>
Persistence	IV	The personal tendency to endure through hardships to achieve goals	SCCT	Modified 8-item, 5-point Likert scale developed by Van Scotter et al. (2000)
Developmental Relationships	IV, <i>moderating</i> the effect of ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence on DV	A relationship that provides needed support for the enhancement of an individual's career development and organizational experience.  Having access to social relationships with those who can provide instrumental support in furthering the respondent's career	SCCT	Modified 7-item, 7-point Likert scale developed by Di Tomaso et al. (2007)
Perceived Career Opportunity	IV, <i>moderating</i> the effect of ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence on DV	Employees' perceptions of the degree to which work assignments and job opportunities that match their career interests and goals are available within their current organization	SCCT	7-point Likert scale developed by Kraimer et al. (2011)
Desire for Managerial Career Advancement	DV	Promotions and attainment of higher managerial levels and pay	Kelly & Marin, 1998)	Career Growth Scale (CGS) - 10-item, 7-point Likert scale developed by Greenhaus et al. (2010)
1. Age 2. Gender 3. Race 4. Industry 5. Tenure	Control Variables	Variables of survey participants' age, gender, race, industry, and tenure were controlled in the survey.		

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sample and Data Collection

In social science research, the unit of analysis includes individuals, groups, organization, countries, resources and objects the researcher is studying (Babbie, 2015). This study aims to understand what factors contribute to an individual's desire for managerial career advancement within an organization. Both the unit of analysis and the unit of observation of this study were at the individual level. The researcher conducted a pilot study to obtain feedback and assess the thoroughness and clarity of the information presented in the survey. Based on the comments received from participants in the pilot study, no major revisions to the survey were necessary.

The researcher obtained approval from Florida International University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to use a quantitative, internet-based survey as the primary data collection instrument for the study. The survey was created using Qualtrics and distributed through Amazon Mechanical Turk (Amazon Mturk) and LinkedIn. Participation was voluntary; however, participants received marginal compensation to encourage participation. Each participant had to consent to the study before advancing to the first item, and the researcher assigned all completed surveys a unique survey completion ID to aid in compensation. Data collection occurred over a four-month period from September 2023 to December 2023. Following IRB protocol, all responses were kept confidential and accessible to the researcher only.

The population of interest to this study was full-time (>35 hours/week) employed professionals in medium-sized (100 to 999 employees) and large-sized businesses (over 999 employees) in the United States. The final sample used for hypothesis testing was 1,315 participants.

The demographic information requested included participants' age-range, gender, race, job function, education level, industry, and tenure with the organization to minimize any possibility of determination of identity of any of the participants of the survey. Age-range was a multiple-choice selection with the following options: 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, or over 65. Gender was a multiple-choice selection between male or female. Race was also a multiple-choice selection classified based on five categories: White/Caucasian, African American/Black, Asian-Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, or Other. Also collected was information concerning the participants' industry, education level, job function, and tenure at the organization.

## **Measures**

The survey consisted of separate sections measuring three independent variables, two moderating variables, one dependent variable, and the last section with demographic questions. The sections of the questionnaire included items measuring certain factors contributing to career advancement. The survey questionnaire contained 32 items focused on the factors of ambition (five items), motivation to lead (18 items), and persistence (9 items). The questionnaire also contained 15 items focused on the moderating effects of developmental relationships (eight items) and perceived career opportunity (seven items), 11 items focused on the dependent variable of desire for managerial career advancement based on the Career Goal Scale, and 10 items on demographics.

The researcher adapted all items in the survey from previous studies for this study. Appendix C contains the complete list of items used in this study. In total, 2,066 individuals over the age of 18 attempted participation in the study. Of the 2,066 attempted participants, 751 cases were removed for the following reasons: 467 participants for not meeting the screening criteria

for working at a medium-sized or large-sized company, 57 participants for incomplete surveys; and another 227 participants due to duplicate surveys (i.e., the surveys being completed from the same IP address). Thus, the final sample used for hypothesis testing was 1,315 participants.

Each participant received via Amazon MTurk compensation ranging from \$1.00 to \$2.00, whereas participants via LinkedIn participated in a lottery where one randomly selected participant received a \$100 gift card. The survey included an informational letter (see Appendix B) to help participants understand the purpose of the study. To minimize potential issues with common method bias, the researcher included a psychological separator in the questionnaire between the items measuring the independent variables and the dependent variables (see Podsakoff et al., 2012).

### **Independent Variables**

**Ambition.** The instrument used to measure ambition was a 5-item scale developed and validated by Hirschi and Spurk (2021). The scale was scored using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

**Motivation to Lead.** Chan and Drasgow (2001) developed and validated a 27-item instrument to measure motivation to lead. This study included 18 items to capture affective-identity motivation to lead (nine items) and social-normative motivation to lead (nine items). The scale was scored using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

**Persistence.** The instrument used to measure persistence was a modified 8-item scale developed by Van Scotter et al. (2000). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

## **Dependent Variable**

**Desire for Managerial Career Advancement.** The instrument used was the Career Goal Scale (CGS), developed by Greenhaus et al. (2010). The CGS consists of 10 items and assesses the extent to which individuals desire growth and advancement in their careers, and includes items related to aspirations for promotion, challenging work, and increased responsibility. The scale was scored using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

## **Moderating Variables**

**Developmental Relationships.** The instrument used to measure the developmental relationships variable was a modified 7-item scale developed by Di Tomaso et al. (2007). All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

**Perceived Career Opportunity.** The instrument used to measure perceived career opportunity was a 7-item scale developed by Kraimer et al. (2011). All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

## **Control Variables**

The control variables for this study included age, gender, race, industry, and tenure. The researcher specified these control variables to control for or reduce the impact of other characteristics that were not part of the primary theoretical model being tested. By including control variables, the researcher could statistically remove the effects of confounding variables (i.e., variables related to both the independent and dependent variables) and allow a clearer understanding of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Including control variables improved the validity and reliability of a study.

## V. DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

### Descriptive Statistics

The collection of the data for the study occurred via Qualtrics, followed by analysis using IBM SPSS version 29. After a data reviewing and cleaning phase, the total sample size reduced to 1,315 participants. The descriptive statistics obtained are reported here. The control variables were age, gender, race, industry, and tenure. Of the 1,315 survey respondents, 54.9% (722) were male and 45.1% (593) were female. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to over 65. The highest frequencies were found in the 25 to 34 age range (37.6% or 494 respondents) and 35 to 44 age range (37.6% or 495 respondents). In terms of race, 67.2% (884) were White/Caucasian, 17.3% (227) were Black/African American, 11.0% (144) were Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.2% (55) were Hispanic/Latino, and 0.4% (5) identified as Other.

Respondents were also asked to indicate how long they had been employed by their current employer. In response, 1.4% (19) had been employed for less than a year, 3.0% (39) for 1 to 2 years, 41.1% (541) for 3 to 5 years, 34.1% (449) for 6 to 10 years, and 20.3% (267) for more than 10 years by their current employer. Most of the respondents (11.5% or 151) were employed in the information services sector with, followed by the finance sector (9.5% or 125), education (8.7% or 115), and health care (8.7% or 114).

Additional information collected on respondents included education level, company size, and job level. As for education, 26.2% (345) of the respondents had a bachelor's degree, 23.7% (311) had an associates or technical degree, 23.4% (308) had some college, but no degree, 10.0% (131) had a high school diploma or GED, 9.7% (128) had a graduate or professional degree, 4.7% (62) had some high school or less and 2.3% (30) had a doctorate or terminal degree. For company size, 82.6% (1,086) of the respondents were employed at companies classified as

medium-sized and 17.4% (229) were employed at large-sized companies. In total, 67.8% (891) of the participants reported their job title/level as managers.

The mean score and standard deviation for each construct and control variable are summarized in Table 3. The independent variables (ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence) and moderating variables (perceived career opportunity and developmental relationships) were mean-centered and had a mean of zero.

**Table 3**

*Descriptive Statistics*

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Age	2.9285	0.97584	1315
Gender	1.41510	0.49778	1315
Race	1.51323	0.87472	1315
Industry	7.5589	3.72414	1315
Tenure	3.6890	0.87576	1315
DCA	4.9818	0.95670	1315
Ambition	3.6344	0.85466	1315
Affective-Identity	4.6232	0.94105	1315
Motivation to Lead			
Social-Normative	4.5537	1.10703	1315
Motivation to Lead			
Persistence	3.5351	0.71896	1315
Perceived Career	4.9989	1.02045	1315
Opportunity			
Developmental	4.9954	1.04877	1315
Relationships			
Ambition x PCOP	0.4609	0.90175	1315
AffMTL x PCOP	0.4001	1.03610	1315
SocMTL x PCOP	0.5286	1.17933	1315
Persistence x PCOP	0.3142	0.75462	1315
Ambition x DR	0.4641	0.93147	1315
AffMTL x DR	0.3936	1.02775	1315
SocMTL x DR	0.5730	1.18545	1315
Persistence x DR	0.2970	0.79390	1315

*Note.* DCA = Desire for Managerial Career Advancement; PCOP = Perceived Career Opportunity; AffMTL = Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead; SocMTL = Social-Normative Motivation to Lead; DR = Developmental Relationships.

The analysis included a test of normality to view the distribution of data. To confirm the distribution of the data, the researcher performed the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk

tests. The results indicated significance levels in both tests ( $p < 0.001$ ) for all variables, which means the data were technically not normally distributed (see Table 4). However, in reviewing the Q-Q plots (Appendix D), the data looked fairly normally distributed.

**Table 4**

*Normality Tests*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
DCA	.054	1315	<.001	.987	1315	<.001
Ambition	.139	1315	<.001	.944	1315	<.001
Affective-Identity	.094	1315	<.001	.975	1315	<.001
Motivation to Lead						
Social-Normative	.045	1315	<.001	.989	1315	<.001
Motivation to Lead						
Persistence	.049	1315	<.001	.987	1315	<.001
Perceived Career	.081	1315	<.001	.978	1315	<.001
Opportunity						
Developmental	.074	1315	<.001	.972	1315	<.001
Relationships						

*Note.* a. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

**Hypothesis Testing**

The researcher performed a hierarchical linear regression analysis to assess the relationship between each of the factors of ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence (see Hypotheses 1 to 3 below) while controlling for age, gender, race, industry, and tenure of the respondent. The aim of the regression analysis was also to test the moderating effects of developmental relationships on the association between persistence, motivation to lead, and ambition and desire for managerial career advancement (Hypotheses 4 to 6) and the moderating effects of perceived career opportunity on the association between persistence, motivation to lead, and ambition and desire for managerial career advancement (Hypotheses 7 to 9). The variables for ambition, motivation to lead (i.e., affective-identity motivation to lead and social-normative motivation to lead), and persistence were mean-centered before performing the regression analyses. The researcher performed hierarchical linear regression in three blocks to



assess the incremental contribution of each block. The first block included the control variables of age, gender, race, industry, and tenure. The second block included entering the main effects (i.e., ambition, affective-identity motivation to lead, social-normative motivation to lead, and persistence). The third block consisted of entering the interaction variables between the independent variables (ambition, affective-identity motivation to lead, social-normative motivation to lead, and persistence) and developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity.

After data screening, exploratory factor analysis followed on the items measuring ambition, motivation to lead, persistence, perceived career opportunity, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career management. Specifically, the researcher conducted a principal axis factor analysis on the 58 items with oblique rotation (i.e., direct oblimin) as the extraction method. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis,  $KMO = 0.914$  (“marvelous” according to (Kaiser, 1974) and all KMO values for individual items were greater than 0.76, which is well above the acceptable limit of 0.50. The researcher conducted an initial analysis to obtain eigenvalues for each factor in the data. Eleven factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser’s criterion of 1 and, in combination, explained 52.48% of the variance. The scree plot was ambiguous and showed inflexions that would justify retaining both 10 and 11 factors. Eleven factors were retained because of the large sample size, the convergence of the scree plot, and Kaiser’s criterion on this value. According to Yong and Pearce (2013), model fit can be assessed by examining the reproduced correlation matrix. As a rule of thumb, a good fit model will have less than 50% of the non-redundant residuals with absolute values greater than 0.05. In this case, a good model fit was observed with 2% non-redundant residuals with absolute values greater than 0.05.

The researcher calculated the measures for the overall and individual Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin to measure sample adequacy (see Table 5). The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.914 (i.e., marvelous). Another analysis performed was Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity to assess the hypothesis that a correlation matrix is an identity matrix. The test returned a value of <.001.

**Table 5**

*Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett’s Test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.914
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	38882.521
	Df	1653
	Sig.	<.001

**Data Analysis and Results**

Cronbach’s alpha calculations as a measure of scale reliability were performed to check how closely related a set of items were as a group. For Cronbach’s alpha, a score above 0.70 is deemed reliable (James et al., 1984). The researcher used the following guide to assess the Cronbach alpha values: 0.70 to 0.79 = *acceptable*, 0.80 to 0.89 = *good*, and 0.90 to 0.99 = *excellent* (Habidin et al., 2015). The study’s questionnaire consisted of six scales measuring each of the six factors of desire for managerial career advancement, ambition, motivation to lead (i.e., affective-identity motivation to lead and social-normative motivation to lead), persistence, perceived career opportunity, and developmental relationships. Based on the ratings, Cronbach’s alpha values for the scales measuring the desire for managerial career advancement, social-normative motivation to lead, and developmental relationships were good. The scales for affective-identity motivation to lead and perceived career opportunity were acceptable. The scale for ambition was excellent. The values for each scale are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6***Reliability Statistics*

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	N of Items
Desire for Managerial Career Advancement	0.832	0.833	11
Ambition	0.903	0.802	5
Affective-Identity	0.747	0.750	9
Motivation to Lead			
Social-Normative	0.838	0.839	9
Motivation to Lead			
Persistence	0.775	0.778	9
Perceived Career	0.798	0.802	7
Opportunity			
Developmental Relationships	0.831	0.834	8

A correlation coefficient analysis was also conducted to assess the relationship among the variables in the study. Hinkle et al. (2003) provided a rule of thumb for interpreting the size of a correlation coefficient (i.e., .90–1.00 = *very high*; .70–.90 = *high*; .50–.70 = *moderate*; .30–.50 = *low*; and .00–.30 = *negligible*). None of the scales had very high correlations. All the correlations were either moderate or low (see Table 7).

**Table 7***Pearson's Correlations*

	DCA	AM	AffMTL	SocMTL	PS	PCOP	DR
DCA	-						
AM	0.610**	-					
AffMTL	0.434**	0.323**	-				
SocMTL	0.528**	0.453**	0.554**	-			
PS	0.459**	0.416**	0.487**	0.552**	-		
PCOP	0.615**	0.529**	0.417**	0.468**	0.429**	-	
DR	0.598**	0.518**	0.399**	0.494**	0.394**	0.658**	-

*Note.* DCA (desire for managerial career advancement); AM (ambition); AffMTL (affective-identity motivation to lead); SocMTL (social-normative motivation to lead); PS (persistence); PCOP (perceived career opportunity); DR (developmental relationships)

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

A hierarchical linear regression analysis was also conducted to examine the relationship between ambition, motivation to lead, persistence, perceived career opportunity, and developmental relationships while controlling for the respondent's age, gender, race, industry, and tenure. The regression analysis also helped examine the interaction between ambition, motivation to lead and persistence and perceived career opportunity (moderator 1) and developmental relationships (moderator 2) as predictors of desire for managerial career advancement while controlling for age, gender, race, industry, and tenure. All results are based on mean-centered predictors as well as their products.

**Model Comparison**

In summary, Model 1 contained the control variables, Model 2 contained the main effects, Model 3 contained the interaction variable perceived career opportunity, Model 4 contained the interaction variable developmental relationships, and Model 5 included the comprehensive model (see Table 8 and Table 9).

**Table 8***Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age <sup>b</sup>	.	Enter
2	Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Persistence, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Perceived Career Opportunity <sup>b</sup>	.	Enter
3	Ambition x Perceived Career Opportunity, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Persistence x Perceived Career Opportunity <sup>b</sup>	.	Enter
4	Ambition x Developmental Relationships, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Persistence x Developmental Relationships <sup>b</sup>	.	Enter
5	Ambition x Developmental Relationships, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Persistence x Developmental Relationships, Ambition x Perceived Career Opportunity, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Persistence x Perceived Career Opportunity <sup>b</sup>	.	Enter

*Note.* a. Dependent Variable: Desire for Managerial Career Advancement; b. All requested variables entered.

**Table 9***Regression of Coefficients for all models*

Variable list	Model 1 (Controls)		Model 2 (Direct Effects)		Model 3 (Interaction 1)		Model 4 (Interaction 2)		Model 5 (Full model)	
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.
Age	.233	<.001	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Gender	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.041	.043
Race	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.041	.043
Industry	-.065	<.001	-.023	<.001	---	---	---	---	-.022	<.001
Tenure	-.311	<.001	-.139	<.001	---	---	---	---	-.138	<.001
Ambition			.296	<.001	.395	<.001			.373	<.001
Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead			.083	<.001	.065	.009			.057	.023
Social-Normative Motivation to Lead			.087	<.001	.110	<.001			.102	<.001
Persistence			.118	<.001	.082	.012			.073	.027
Perceived Career Opportunity			.183	<.001	.256	<.001			.191	<.001
Developmental Relationships			.144	<.001	---	---	.228	<.001	.129	<.001
AM x PCOP					.174	<.001			.158	<.001
AffMTL x PCOP					---	---			---	---
SocMTL x PCOP					---	---			---	---
PS x PCOP					---	---			---	---
AM x DR							.093	<.001	---	---
AffMTL x DR									---	---

Variable list	Model 1 (Controls)		Model 2 (Direct Effects)		Model 3 (Interaction 1)		Model 4 (Interaction 2)		Model 5 (Full model)	
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Sig.
SocMTL x DR									---	---
PS x DR									---	---

*Note.* a. Dependent Variable: Desire for managerial career advancement; AM (ambition); AffMTL (affective-identity motivation to lead); SocMTL (social- normative motivation to lead); PS (persistence); PCOP (perceived career opportunity); DR (developmental relationships).

Based on the model summary in Table 10, the researcher assessed the hypotheses using the data from primarily Model 5, as well as Model 3 and Model 4. Each analysis showed evidence of support for two separate hypotheses (discussed below). The full model (Model 5) was significant [ $F(19, 1295) = 37.779, p < .001$ ] and explained 59.7% of the variance in desire for managerial career advancement (see Table 10 and Table 11). Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of marked multicollinearity (see Table 12).

**Table 10**

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.463 <sup>a</sup>	.214	.211	.84969	.214	71.366	5	1309	<.001
2	.760 <sup>b</sup>	.578	.574	.62416	.364	187.139	6	1303	<.001
3	.766 <sup>c</sup>	.587	.583	.61781	.022	17.046	4	1300	<.001
4	.756 <sup>d</sup>	.571	.567	.62983	.011	8.636	4	1300	<.001
5	.773 <sup>e</sup>	.597	.591	.61190	.019	7.593	8	1295	<.001

*Note.*

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity, Ambition x Perceived Career Opportunity, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Persistence x Perceived Career Opportunity
- c. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity
- d. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity, Ambition x Developmental Relationships, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Persistence x Developmental Relationships
- e. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity, Ambition x Developmental Relationships, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Persistence x Developmental Relationships



Relationships, Ambition x Perceived Career Opportunity, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Persistence x Perceived Career Opportunity

**Table 11***Analysis of Variance (ANOVA<sup>a</sup>)*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
1	Regression	257.620	5	51.524	71.366	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	945.061	1309	.722		
	Total	1202.681	1314			
2	Regression	695.056	11	63.187	162.192	<.001 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	507.625	1303	.390		
	Total	1202.681	1314			
3	Regression	706.480	14	50.463	132.208	<.001 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	496.201	1300	.382		
	Total	1202.681	1314			
4	Regression	686.989	14	49.071	123.701	<.001 <sup>e</sup>
	Residual	515.692	1300	.397		
	Total	1202.681	1314			
5	Regression	717.800	19	37.779	100.898	<.001 <sup>f</sup>
	Residual	484.881	1295	.374		
	Total	1202.681	1314			

*Note.*

- a. Dependent Variable: Desire for Managerial Career Advancement
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age
- c. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity
- d. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity, Ambition x Perceived Career Opportunity, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Persistence x Perceived Career Opportunity
- e. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity, Ambition x Developmental Relationships, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Persistence x Developmental Relationships
- f. Predictors: (Constant), Tenure, Race, Gender, Industry, Age, Ambition, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead, Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead, Persistence, Perceived Career Opportunity, Ambition x Developmental Relationships, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Developmental Relationships, Persistence x Developmental Relationships, Ambition x Perceived Career Opportunity, Affective-Identity Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Social-Normative Motivation to Lead x Perceived Career Opportunity, Persistence x Perceived Career Opportunity

**Table 12***Regression of Coefficients and Multicollinearity Diagnostics<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	<i>VIF</i>
1	(Constant)	5.867	.133		44.213	<.001		
	Age	.233	.025	.238	9.232	<.001	.904	1.106
	Gender	-.003	.048	-.001	-.058	.954	.981	1.020
	Race	.049	.028	.045	1.746	.081	.922	1.085
	Industry	-.065	.007	-.252	-9.965	<.001	.936	1.068
	Tenure	-.311	.028	-.285	-11.060	<.001	.904	1.106
	2	(Constant)	1.689	.160		10.543	<.001	
	Age	.015	.021	.015	.687	.492	.694	1.440
	Gender	-.024	.035	-.012	-.675	.500	.968	1.033
	Race	.040	.021	.036	1.921	.055	.902	1.109
	Industry	-.023	.005	-.088	-4.524	<.001	.858	1.166
	Tenure	-.139	.022	-.127	-6.456	<.001	.833	1.201
	AM	.296	.026	.264	11.490	<.001	.612	1.633
	AffMTL	.083	.024	.082	3.514	<.001	.598	1.672
	SocMTL	.087	.022	.101	3.939	<.001	.492	2.033
	PS	.118	.032	.088	3.684	<.001	.563	1.777
	PCOP	.183	.024	.195	7.475	<.001	.475	2.107
	DR	.144	.024	.158	6.122	<.001	.487	2.052
3	(Constant)	1.822	.171		10.675	<.001		
	Age	-.002	.022	-.002	-.096	.924	.652	1.533
	Gender	-.029	.035	-.015	-.822	.411	.959	1.043
	Race	.038	.021	.034	1.826	.068	.892	1.121
	Industry	-.025	.005	-.096	-4.990	<.001	.857	1.167
	Tenure	-.148	.022	-.136	-6.876	<.001	.814	1.228
	AM	.395	.027	.353	14.542	<.001	.538	1.858
	AffMTL	.065	.025	.064	2.620	.009	.528	1.895
	SocMTL	.110	.024	.127	4.517	<.001	.401	2.493
	PS	.082	.033	.062	2.517	.012	.527	1.896
	PCOP	.256	.023	.273	11.265	<.001	.539	1.854
	AM x PCOP	.174	.024	.164	7.184	<.001	.611	1.636
	AffMTL x PCOP	-.022	.023	-.024	-.944	.345	.490	2.040
	SocMTL x PCOP	.038	.022	.047	1.704	.089	.417	2.399
	PS x PCOP	-.056	.031	-.044	-1.803	.072	.524	1.907
4	(Constant)	2.015	.177		11.387	<.001		
	Age	-.006	.022	-.006	-.252	.801	.644	1.553
	Gender	-.037	.036	-.019	-1.040	.299	.953	1.049
	Race	.031	.021	.029	1.505	.132	.902	1.108
	Industry	-.025	.005	-.099	-5.001	<.001	.849	1.178
	Tenure	-.164	.022	-.150	-7.454	<.001	.814	1.228
	AM	.368	.027	.329	13.663	<.001	.569	1.758

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
	AffMTL	.071	.025	.070	2.815	.005	.536	1.867
	SocMTL	.108	.024	.124	4.398	<.001	.412	2.426
	PS	.123	.033	.092	3.712	<.001	.536	1.866
	DR	.228	.022	.250	10.178	<.001	.548	1.824
	AM x DR	.093	.024	.091	3.831	<.001	.590	1.694
	AffMTL x DR	-.029	.025	-.031	-1.148	.251	.454	2.201
	SocMTL x DR	.064	.023	.080	2.749	.006	.391	2.556
	PS x DR	-.036	.030	-.030	-1.206	.228	.551	1.816
5	(Constant)	1.619	.180		9.016	<.001		
	Age	.003	.022	.004	.161	.872	.638	1.567
	Gender	-.031	.035	-.016	-.900	.368	.952	1.050
	Race	.041	.020	.038	2.025	.043	.890	1.123
	Industry	-.022	.005	-.086	-4.471	<.001	.842	1.187
	Tenure	-.138	.022	-.127	-6.394	<.001	.795	1.258
	AM	.373	.028	.333	13.294	<.001	.497	2.013
	AffMTL	.057	.025	.057	2.282	.023	.508	1.970
	SocMTL	.102	.025	.118	4.091	<.001	.372	2.691
	PS	.073	.033	.055	2.216	.027	.512	1.954
	PCOP	.191	.028	.204	6.942	<.001	.362	2.765
	DR	.129	.026	.141	4.937	<.001	.380	2.631
	AM x PCOP	.158	.026	.149	5.965	<.001	.502	1.992
	AffMTL x PCOP	-.017	.030	-.019	-.571	.568	.293	3.411
	SocMTL x PCOP	.010	.025	.012	.386	.700	.328	3.052
	PS x PCOP	-.049	.037	-.039	-1.328	.184	.366	2.732
	AM x DR	.014	.026	.014	.550	.582	.488	2.049
	AffMTL x DR	-.022	.031	-.023	-.691	.490	.276	3.620
	SocMTL x DR	.047	.025	.059	1.862	.063	.313	3.198
	PS x DR	-.035	.034	-.029	-1.020	.308	.384	2.603

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Desire for managerial career advancement; AM (ambition); AffMTL (affective-identity motivation to lead); SocMTL (social-normative motivation to lead); PS (persistence); PCOP (perceived career opportunity); DR (developmental relationships).

Hypothesis 1 was that as a person's level of ambition increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between ambition as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. Of interest for Hypothesis 1, the unstandardized coefficient for ambition was .373, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase

in ambition leads to an increase of .373 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = 13.294, p < .001$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2(a) was that as a person's affective-identity motivation to lead increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. The unstandardized coefficient for affective-identity motivation to lead was .057, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in affective-identity motivation to lead results in an increase of .057 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = 2.282, p = .023$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 2(a).

Hypothesis 2(b) was that as a person's social-normative motivation to lead increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. The unstandardized coefficient for social-normative motivation to lead was .102, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in social-normative motivation to lead results in

an increase of .102 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = 4.019, p < .001$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 2(b).

Hypothesis 3 was that as a person's persistence increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between persistence as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. For Hypothesis 3, the unstandardized coefficient for persistence was .073, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in persistence leads to an increase of .073 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = 2.216, p = .027$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 was that a person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. For Hypothesis 4, the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between persistence and developmental relationships was -.035, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between persistence and developmental relationships leads to a decrease of .035 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the

opposite direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = -1.020, p = .308$ ]. These results do not support the positive relationship between the interaction of persistence, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 5(a) was that a person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of developmental relationships on the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. For Hypothesis 5(a), the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between affective-identity motivation to lead and developmental relationships was  $-.022$ , indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between affective-identity motivation to lead and developmental relationships leads to a decrease of  $.022$  units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the opposite direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = -.691, p = .490$ ]. These results do not support the positive relationship between the interaction of affective-identity motivation to lead, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 5(a).

Hypothesis 5(b) was that a person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental

relationships are high. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of developmental relationships on the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. Two models were obtained: Model 4 and Model 5.

Model 4 depicts that developmental relationships moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead as the predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. For Hypothesis 5(b), the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between social-normative motivation to lead and developmental relationships was .064, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between social-normative motivation to lead and developmental relationships leads to an increase of .064 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1300) = 2.749, p = .006$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between the interaction of social-normative motivation to lead, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 5(b).

Additionally, Model 5 (the full model) depicts that developmental relationships moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead as the predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Of interest to Hypothesis 5(b), the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between social-normative motivation to lead and developmental relationships was .047, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between social-normative motivation to lead and developmental relationships leads to an increase of .047 units in desire for managerial



career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = 1.862, p = .063$ ]. These results do not support the positive relationship between the interaction of social-normative motivation to lead, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 5(b).

Hypothesis 6 was that a person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of developmental relationships on the relationship between ambition as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. Two models were obtained: Model 4 and Model 5.

Model 4 depicts that developmental relationships moderate the relationship between ambition as the predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. For Hypothesis 6, the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between ambition and developmental relationships was .093, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between ambition and developmental relationships leads to an increase of .093 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1300) = 3.831, p < .001$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between the interaction of ambition, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 6.

Model 5 (the full model) depicts that developmental relationships moderate the relationship between ambition as the predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Of interest to Hypothesis 6, the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between ambition and developmental relationships was .014, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between ambition and developmental relationships leads to an increase of .014 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = .550, p = .582$ ]. These results do not support the positive relationship between the interaction of ambition, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 6.

Hypothesis 7 was that a person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of perceived career opportunity on the relationship between persistence as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. For Hypothesis 7, the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between persistence and perceived career opportunity was -.049, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between persistence and perceived career opportunity leads to a decrease of .049 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the opposite direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = -1.328, p = .184$ ]. These results do

not support the positive relationship between the interaction of persistence, perceived career opportunity, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 7.

Hypothesis 8(a) was that a person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of perceived career opportunity on the relationship between motivation to lead as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. For Hypothesis 8(a), the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between social-normative motivation to lead and perceived career opportunity was .010, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between social-normative motivation to lead and perceived career opportunity leads to an increase of .010 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = .386, p = .700$ ]. These results do not support the positive relationship between the interaction of social-normative motivation to lead, perceived career opportunity and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 8(a).

For Hypothesis 8(b), the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between affective-identity motivation to lead and perceived career opportunity was -.017, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between affective-identity motivation to lead and perceived career opportunity leads to a decrease of .017 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the opposite direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is not significantly different from zero [ $t(1295)$

= -.571,  $p = .568$ ]. These results do not support the positive relationship between the interaction of affective-identity motivation to lead, perceived career opportunity, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 8(b).

Hypothesis 9 was that a person’s perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person’s perceived career opportunity is high. A regression analysis was conducted to examine the moderating effect of perceived career opportunity on the relationship between ambition as a predictor and desire for managerial career advancement as the outcome. Neither tolerance nor VIF statistics indicated the presence of multicollinearity issues. For Hypothesis 9, the unstandardized coefficient for the interaction between ambition and perceived career opportunity was .158, indicating that, while holding age, gender, race, industry, and tenure constant, each unit increase in the interaction between ambition and perceived career opportunity leads to an increase of .158 units in desire for managerial career advancement, in the same direction as predicted in the research model. This relationship is significantly different from zero [ $t(1295) = 5.965, p < .001$ ]. These results support the positive relationship between the interaction of ambition, perceived career opportunity, and desire for managerial career advancement, as predicted in Hypothesis 9. A summary of the supported and not supported hypotheses based on Model 4 and Model 5 is shown in Table 13.

**Table 13**

*Hypotheses Results*

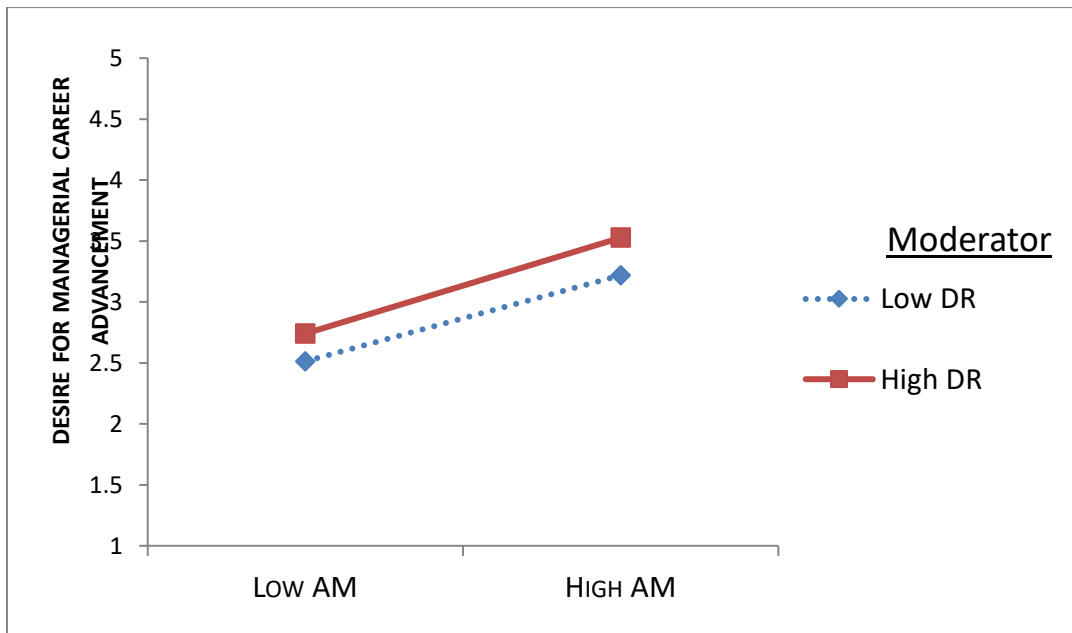
Hypotheses	Supported/Not Supported
<i>H1</i> : As a person’s level of ambition increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases	Supported

Hypotheses	Supported/Not Supported
<i>H2a</i> : As a person's affective-identity motivation to lead increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases	Supported
<i>H2b</i> : As a person's social-normative motivation to lead increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases	Supported
<i>H3</i> : As a person's persistence increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases	Supported
<i>H4</i> : A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high	Not Supported
<i>H5a</i> : A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high	Not Supported
<i>H5b</i> : A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high	Supported
<i>H6</i> : A person's developmental relationships would moderate the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when the developmental relationships are high	Supported
<i>H7</i> : A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between persistence and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high	Not Supported
<i>H8a</i> : A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between social-normative motivation to lead and managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high	Not Supported
<i>H8b</i> : A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between affective-identity motivation to lead and managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high	Not Supported
<i>H9</i> : A person's perceived career opportunity would moderate the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement such that the relationship would become stronger when a person's perceived career opportunity is high	Supported

The researcher performed simple slope analyses for significant interactions. The plot of the relationship between ambition, developmental relationships, and desire for managerial career advancement (see Figure 2) indicated that the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement, which is positive, is strengthened (i.e., the slope takes on a steeper angle) for higher values of developmental relationships. Conversely, the relationship is weakened for lower values of developmental relationships. The plot of the relationship between ambition, perceived career opportunity, and desire for managerial career advancement (see Figure 3) indicated that the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement, which is positive, is also strengthened (i.e., the slope takes on a steeper angle) for higher values of perceived career opportunity. Conversely, the relationship is weakened for lower values of perceived career opportunity.

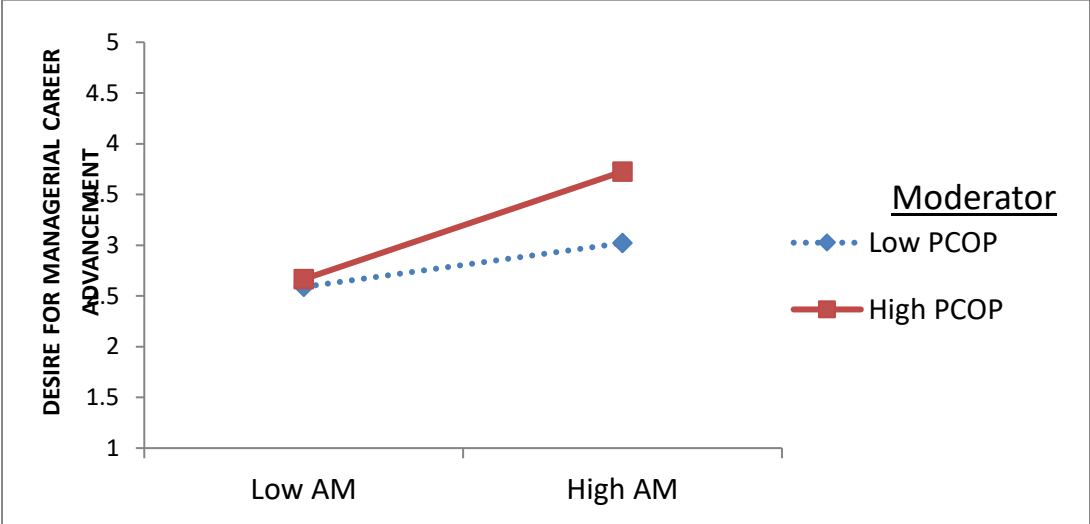
**Figure 2**

*Slope Analysis of Ambition, Developmental Relationships, and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement*



**Figure 3**

*Slope Analysis of Ambition, Perceived Career Opportunity, and Desire for Managerial Career Advancement*



## VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the United States, the pursuit of managerial career advancement is motivated by various variables, including individual motives, organizational dynamics, and societal influences. Despite the hurdles caused by job market competition and opaque promotion processes, people continue to aspire for higher positions of authority and responsibility. The attraction of increased influence, decision-making authority, recognition, and financial rewards acts as powerful motivators, compelling individuals to persist in their ambitious journey. A significant amount of research has been done on career advancement but not on the pursuit of managerial roles specifically. The purpose of this study was to investigate the direct effects of ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence on the desire for managerial career advancement, and to analyze the indirect effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity on the desire for managerial career advancement.

The study's results indicated that ambition, motivation to lead and persistence were positively related to the desire for managerial career advancement. As previously discussed, the moderation analyses exhibited mixed results. This section includes a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of the findings. Based on these limited findings, organizations can develop or enhance strategies to support employees in their pursuit of career advancement.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The study's finding that as a person's level of ambition increases, their desire for managerial career advancement also increases (H1) aligns well with SCCT. According to SCCT, individuals' beliefs about their abilities (self-efficacy) and their goals shape their career-related behavior. This finding is also supported by Locke and Latham (2006) who posited that higher levels of ambition reflect stronger goal orientation, which, in turn, increases individuals'



motivation to pursue managerial roles. Both hypotheses regarding affective-identity and social-normative motivation to lead (H2a and H2b), were supported, indicating that individuals with stronger motivations to lead are more likely to desire managerial career advancement. SCCT suggests that individuals' outcome expectations and personal goals, including their motivation to lead, influence their career aspirations. Based on this, it is reasonable to conclude that higher levels of motivation to lead likely reflect stronger self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations related to leadership roles. The results also supported the third hypothesis (H3), indicating that increased persistence is associated with a higher desire for managerial career advancement. This finding aligns with SCCT, as persistence reflects individuals' ability to persevere in the pursuit of their goals, which is essential for career advancement. Duckworth et al. (2007) argued that individuals with higher levels of persistence are likely to exhibit greater determination and resilience, even in the face of setbacks and adversity to achieve their goals. This study's results also provide theoretical support for the idea that individuals with higher levels of persistence are more likely to exhibit determination and resilience in pursuing challenging long-term goals, which could include advancing to managerial positions in organizations.

The two hypotheses (H6 and H9) regarding the moderating effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity on the relationships between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement, were supported. This suggests that strong developmental relationships and perceived career opportunities enhance the positive relationship between ambition and desire for managerial roles. SCCT emphasizes the importance of social support and environmental factors in shaping individuals' career-related behavior, highlighting the role of supportive relationships and perceived opportunities in fostering career aspirations. The findings underscore the significance of nurturing developmental relationships within organizations and

creating environments that offer perceived avenues for career growth. Individuals with ambitious career goals are more likely to translate their aspirations into actionable steps towards managerial roles when they perceive supportive networks and promising career prospects, aligning with the tenets of SCCT that stress the interplay between personal characteristics and contextual factors in career development.

Hypotheses H4, H5a, H5b, H7, H8a, and H8b, regarding the moderating effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity on the relationships between various factors and desire for managerial career advancement, were not supported. Although these findings may suggest that other factors beyond developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity play a more significant role in shaping individuals' career aspirations, further exploration is needed to understand the underlying mechanisms. These results highlight the complexity of career advancement determinants and underscore the need for a more nuanced approach to understanding the interplay between individual characteristics, environmental factors, and career aspirations. Future research could delve deeper into alternative moderating variables that may influence the relationships between ambition, motivation to lead, persistence, and the desire for managerial roles, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of career development processes.

The theoretical implications of these results within SCCT highlight the importance of personal characteristics, motivation, persistence, and environmental factors in shaping individuals' desire for managerial career advancement. Although some hypotheses were not supported, these findings provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of career aspirations and the factors that influence them. Further research is needed to explore additional

moderators and mechanisms underlying individuals' career-related behavior, contributing to the ongoing development of SCCT and our understanding of career advancement processes.

### **Practical Implications**

The significance of identifying perceived factors that contribute to the desire for managerial career advancement is its potential to inform various stakeholders, including individuals, organizations, career development professionals, and policymakers.

For individuals, understanding the role of ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence can provide insights into their career development and inform career decisions. By recognizing these personal characteristics as key determinants of career aspirations, individuals can assess their strengths and areas for development, thereby setting realistic goals and pursuing appropriate career paths.

Organizations can use this knowledge to develop more effective career development programs, retain talented employees, and foster a more motivated and engaged workforce. Organizations can use the findings to tailor coaching and counseling services to individuals' specific career aspirations and strengths. By helping individuals enhance their self-efficacy beliefs, clarify their career goals, and develop strategies for overcoming obstacles, organizations can support their career advancement goals.

Policymakers can use the findings to design policies and programs that support career development and promote economic growth. By fostering an environment that emphasizes the value of continuous learning and professional growth, they can ensure the workforce remains adaptable and competitive in a rapidly changing global market. Programs that provide access to mentorship, leadership training, and career counseling can empower individuals to navigate their career paths more effectively, aligning personal ambitions with market needs. Furthermore, by

investing in sectors with high growth potential and promoting diversity in leadership roles, policymakers can stimulate innovation and enhance organizational performance across industries.

Overall, the practical implications of these findings underscore the importance of individual characteristics, organizational support, and targeted interventions in fostering career advancement. By aligning personal aspirations with organizational goals and investing in professional development initiatives, individuals and organizations can work together to create pathways for career progression and enhance overall success and satisfaction in the workplace.

### **Study Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

It is important to also acknowledge this study's limitations. These limitations can highlight avenues for future research to further enhance the understanding of this area of research. First, the study's findings may be limited in their generalizability due to factors such as sample characteristics, geographical location, and industry context. Because the study sample predominantly consisted of individuals from two specific industries (Information Services and Financial Services ) and two geographical regions (Florida and California), the findings may not be applicable to broader populations or different organizational contexts. To address the generalizability limitation, future research could aim to diversify the study's sample by expanding the geographical scope to include participants from different regions or countries, incorporating a wider range of industries and organizational types, or include a broader demographic representation in terms of career stages.

Second, this study on career advancement used a cross-sectional design (i.e., data were captured at a single point in time). Although cross-sectional studies are valuable for examining relationships between variables, they do not capture changes in individuals' career aspirations

over time. A longitudinal study design could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamic nature of career advancement.

Third, the reliance of self-reporting measures in assessing variables may introduce common method bias. The researcher attempted to minimize potential issues with common method bias by including a psychological separator in the questionnaire between the items measuring the independent variables and the dependent variables (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The individuals, however, still could provide responses that they perceived to align with their idealized self-concept, potentially influencing the accuracy of the data collected. To mitigate this limitation, future researchers could consider using a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both self-reporting measures and objective measures or observations.

The fourth limitation relates to the examination of the moderating effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity. There are multiple other potential moderating variables which were not included in this analysis. To enhance the comprehensiveness of the study's analysis on moderating variables, future research could explore additional moderating variables to provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the desire for managerial career advancement. For example, exploring the moderating effects of variables such as organizational culture, work-life balance, and job autonomy could provide a more multifaceted understanding of the complexities surrounding career progression.

Fifth, some other relevant constructs related to career advancement, such as emotional intelligence and proactive behavior were not considered and addressed in the study. Investigating how emotional intelligence — the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and those of others — impacts an individual's ability to navigate the complexities of managerial roles

could yield valuable insights. Additionally, exploring the role of proactive behavior, or the initiative taken by individuals to effect change and anticipate future challenges in the workplace, could significantly enrich our understanding of the dynamics of career progression. Exploring these and other constructs could provide deeper insights into the complexities of the desire for managerial career advancement.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings shared previously, this study on the desire for managerial career advancement provides valuable insights into the factors influencing individuals' aspirations for leadership roles within organizations. The study, framed within the SCCT, encompassed an examination of the roles of ambition, affective-identity motivation to lead, social-normative motivation to lead, persistence, developmental relationships, and perceived career opportunity in shaping individuals' desire for managerial career advancement.

The supported hypotheses indicate that higher levels of ambition, motivation to lead (both affective-identity and social-normative), and persistence are positively associated with individuals' desire for managerial career advancement. These findings align with SCCT, which emphasizes the importance of personal characteristics, outcome expectations, and goal setting in career development.

The study also highlights the moderating effects of developmental relationships and perceived career opportunity on the relationship between individual characteristics (ambition, motivation to lead, and persistence) and desire for managerial career advancement. Although some moderating effects were supported (e.g., developmental relationships moderating the relationship between ambition and desire for managerial career advancement), others were not

(e.g., perceived career opportunity moderating the relationship between motivation to lead and managerial career advancement).

In conclusion, this study underscores the significance of individual attributes, social interactions, and environmental factors in shaping individuals' career aspirations and trajectories. By understanding the complex interplay of these factors, organizations can develop more targeted strategies for talent development, succession planning, and employee engagement. Individuals can leverage insights from this study to enhance their self-awareness, set realistic career goals, and navigate their career paths more effectively. Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of career advancement and provides practical implications for both individuals and organizations striving for professional growth and success.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Amazon Mechanical Turk Advertisement

Answer a survey about your desire for managerial career advancement  
Requester: Stacy      Reward: \$1.00 per task      Tasks available: 0      Duration: 1 Hours  
Qualifications Required: Location is US, HIT Approval Rate (%) for all Requesters' HITs greater than 95, Number of HITs Approved greater than 500, Employment Status - Full time (35+ hours per week) equal to true, Already completed survey has not been granted, Masters has been granted


Survey Link Instructions (Click to expand)

Survey link:

Provide the survey code here:

Submit

## LinkedIn Post



**Stacy Howell** • You  
Director at ACA Group  
3mo • 🌐

🎤 Do you have career aspirations? Ready to propel your career forward?  
🚀 Contribute your valuable insights to my dissertation research for a chance to win a \$100 gift card\*! Your input is crucial. The survey is quick, anonymous, and mobile-friendly. Spend just 10 mins sharing your expertise. 🇺🇸 Don't forget to repost and help me gather diverse perspectives. Thank you for being part of this important study! 🙌

<https://lnkd.in/gqgbutfU>

\*Only first time participants who fully complete the survey after 12/7/2023 are eligible for the raffle. Save the code you receive after survey completion.

[#leadership](#) [#leadershipdevelopment](#) [#careergrowth](#)  
[#careerdevelopment](#) [#careeradvancement](#) [#research](#) [#dissertation](#)  
[#talentdevelopment](#) [#talentmanagement](#) [#dba](#) [#fiu](#) [#management](#)  
[#careeropportunities](#) [#careerresearch](#) [#survey](#) [#professionalinsights](#)  
[#win100dollars](#)

**Desire for Managerial Career Advancement (Dissertation Final Study)**  
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Thank you so much for your willingness to provide your insights into my academic resea...

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## APPENDIX B

### Informational Letter

This is a fully online qualtrics survey supporting academic research. I am currently a student working towards my Doctorate of Business Administration at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, FL. As part of the Doctoral program, I am working on a research project of my design.

**The purpose of the study** is to explore the relationship between certain factors on the desire for managerial career advancement and to understand whether and how these factors helped and/or hindered the advancement of individuals in the workplace. This information is important because both individuals and organizations will be better able to make decisions regarding what factors can promote and/or constrain career advancement, thereby leading to employee retention. Participation is voluntary and you can withdraw your consent and exit the survey at any time.

The study is meant for individuals who are adults, 18 and older, full-time (>35 hours/week) employed professionals in the United States. Self-employed individuals are not within the scope of this study. Once successfully screened and you've consented to participate in the study, a series of questions/statements will be presented that should take **approximately 10-20 minutes to complete**.

**You are not permitted to complete this survey more than once.**

Thank you for your time and consideration or participation. It is only with the support and thoughtful responses from participants like you that my study can be successful.

Please expand and review the [Survey Link Instructions](#) above for more details about this academic research survey. **Make sure to leave this window open as you complete the survey.** When you complete the survey, you will return to this page to paste the code into the box below.

## APPENDIX C

### Survey Questionnaire

#### *Dependent Variable: Desire for career advancement*

The Career Goal Scale (CGS) was developed by Greenhaus et al. (2010). The CGS consists of 10 items and assesses the extent to which individuals desire growth and advancement in their careers, and includes items related to aspirations for promotion, challenging work, and increased responsibility. The scale is scored using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) and includes the following questions:

1. I want to advance as far as I can in my career
2. I want to be in a job that offers me opportunities for career growth and advancement
3. I want a career in which there are good opportunities for promotion
4. I want to be very successful in my career
5. I am highly motivated to achieve my career goals
6. I have set clear, specific goals for my career
7. I am willing to make sacrifices in my personal life to achieve my career goals
8. I am willing to work very hard to achieve my career goals
9. I am willing to take risks to achieve my career goals
10. I am willing to move to another city or state to advance my career

#### *Independent Variable: Ambition*

Hirschi and Spurk (2021) developed and validated a 5-item instrument to measure ambition. The scale is scored using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5):

1. I am ambitious
2. I strive for success
3. I have challenging goals
4. It is very important for me to achieve outstanding results in my life
5. It is very important for me to accomplish great things

*Independent Variable: Motivation to Lead*

Chan and Drasgow (2001) developed and validated a 27-item instrument to measure motivation to lead. This study will use a modified scale of 18 items to include Affective-Identity MTL and Social-Normative MTL. The scale is scored using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7):

*Affective-Identity MTL*

1. Most of the time, I prefer being a leader rather than a follower working in a group
2. I am the type of person who is not interested to lead others
3. I am definitely not a leader by nature
4. I am the type of person who likes to be in charge of others
5. I believe I can contribute more to a group if I am a follower rather than a leader
6. I usually want to be the leader in the groups that I work in
7. I am the type who would actively support a leader but prefers not to be appointed as leader
8. I have a tendency to take charge in most groups or teams that I work in
9. I am seldom reluctant to be the leader of a group

*Social-Normative MTL*

10. I feel that I have a duty to lead others if I am asked

11. I agree to lead whenever I am asked or nominated by other members
12. I was taught to believe in the value of leading others
13. It is appropriate for people to accept leadership roles or positions when they are asked
14. I have been taught that I should always volunteer to lead others if I can
15. It is not right to decline leadership roles
16. It is an honor and privilege to be asked to lead
17. People should volunteer to lead rather than wait for others to ask or vote for them
18. I would never agree to lead just because others voted for me

*Independent Variable: Persistence*

Persistence is measured using a modified 8-item scale developed by Van Scotter et al. (2000). All items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly Agree (5):

1. I put in extra hours to get work done on time
2. I pay close attention to important details
3. I work harder than necessary
4. I ask for challenging work assignments
5. I exercise personal discipline and self-control
6. I take the initiative to solve a work problem
7. I persist in overcoming obstacles to complete a task
8. I tackle difficult work assignments

*Independent Variable (Moderator): Developmental Relationships*

Developmental Relationships is measured using a modified 7-item scale developed by Di Tomaso et al. (2007). All items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

1. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to help me by providing me with better job assignments
2. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to help me by providing me with advancement opportunities
3. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to help me by providing me with increased visibility
4. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to help me by providing me with other assistance not previously mentioned
5. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to show me how to improve my job skills
6. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to show me how to overcome weakness
7. My career has been aided by a relationship with a higher-level person in this company who has been able to provide guidance and advice about how to get ahead in my career

*Independent Variable (Moderator): Perceived Career Opportunity*

Perceived Career Opportunity is measured using a 7-item scale developed by Kraimer et al. (2011). All items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

1. How much opportunity do you have for career and advancement in your current organization?
2. To what extent do you have the opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge in your current job?
3. How much opportunity do you have to take on new and challenging assignments in your current job?
4. To what extent do you feel that your current organization values and rewards high performance?
5. How much opportunity do you have to build relationships with people who could help advance your career?
6. How much opportunity do you have to move into different positions or departments within your current organization?
7. To what extent do you feel that your current organization provides opportunities for career development and growth?

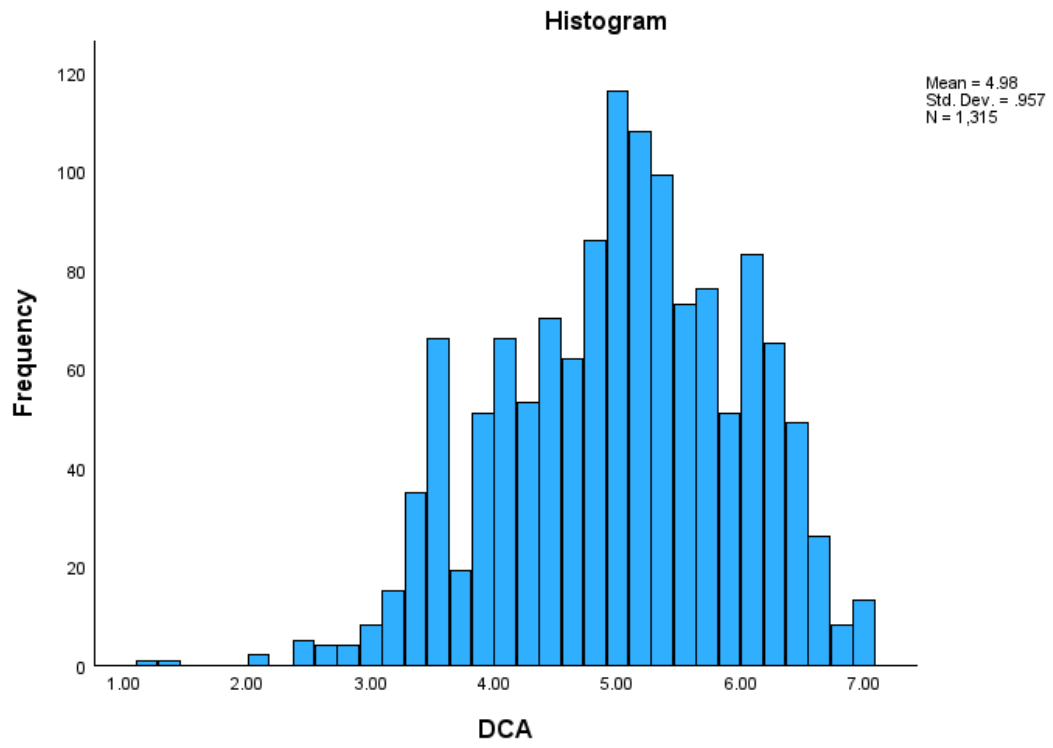
*Demographics and Control Variables:* The questionnaire included items capturing demographic data, including the participants' age, race, and gender. Data were also collected on performance, education level, industry sector, income, job level/title, tenure, and experience.

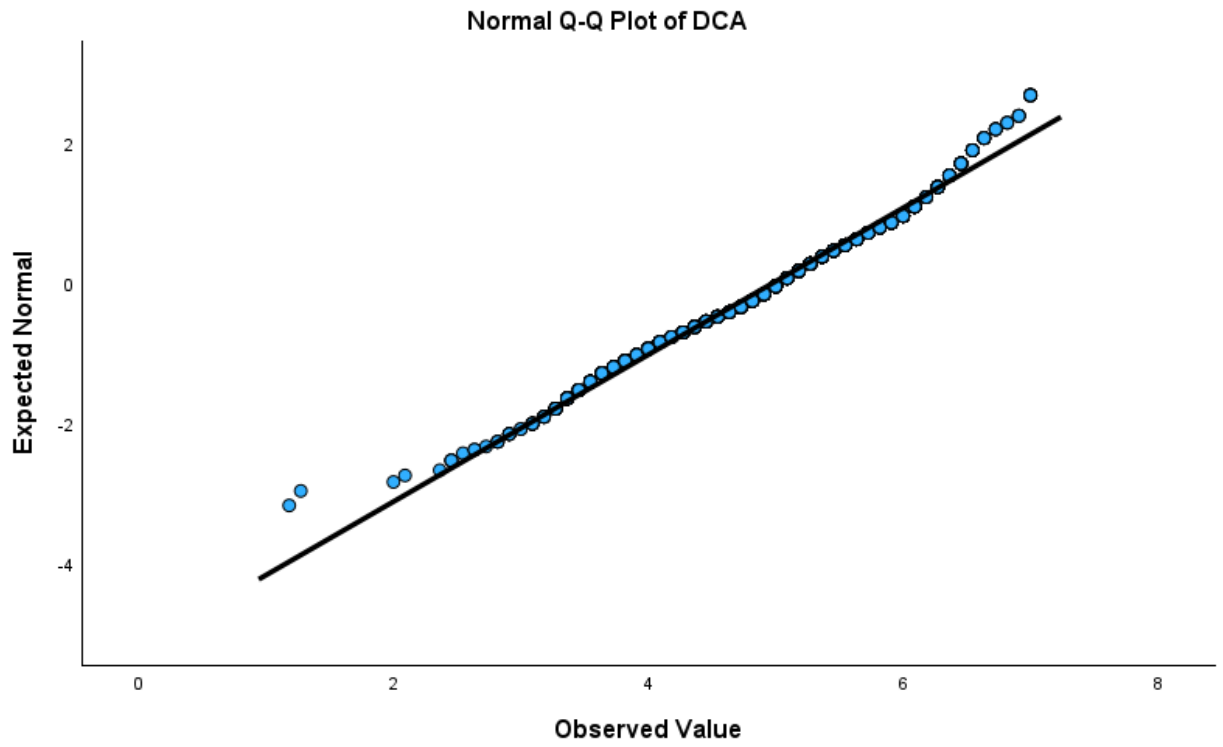


APPENDIX D

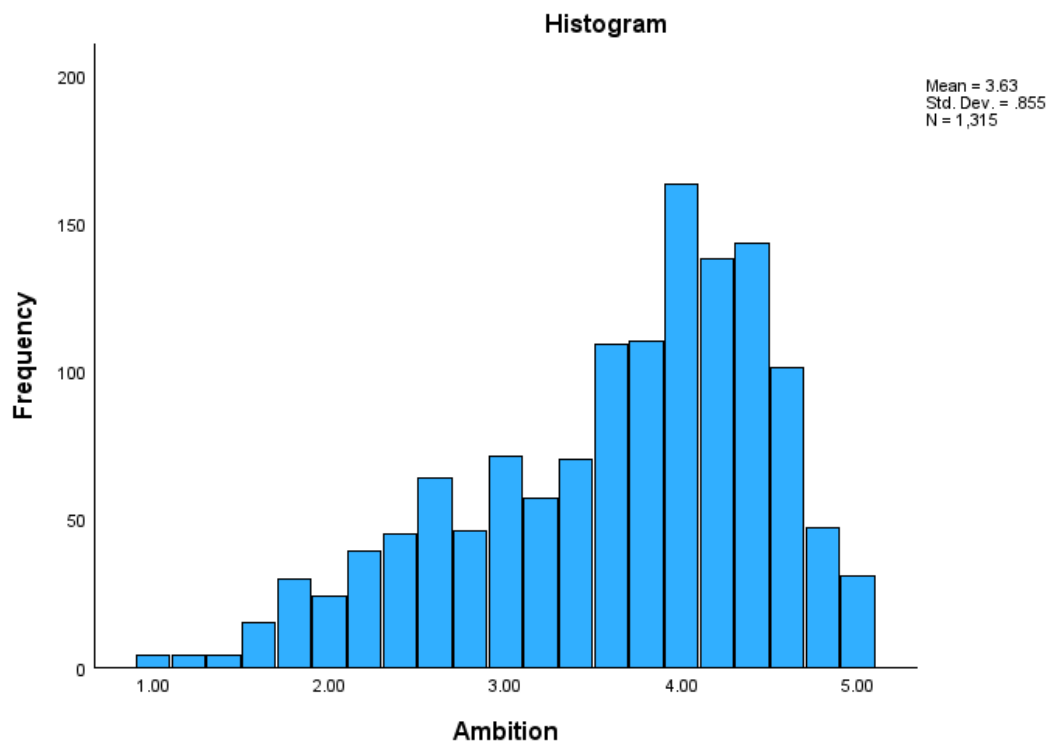
Tests of Normality

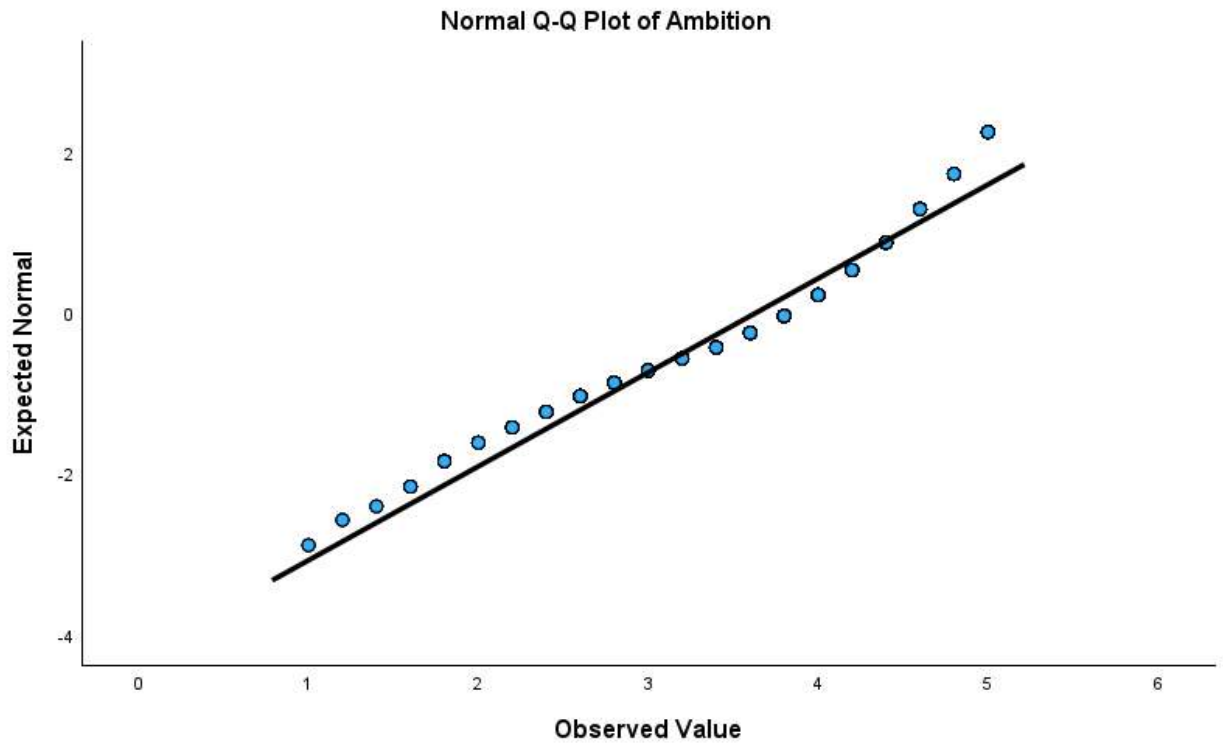
*Desire for Managerial Career Advancement*



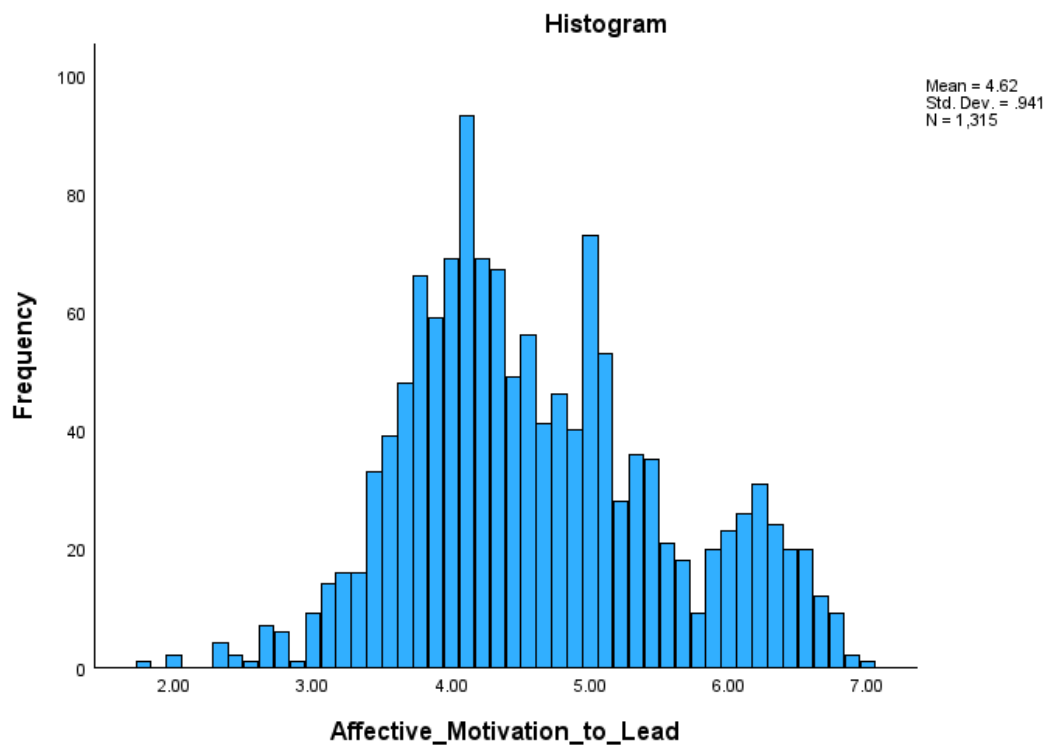


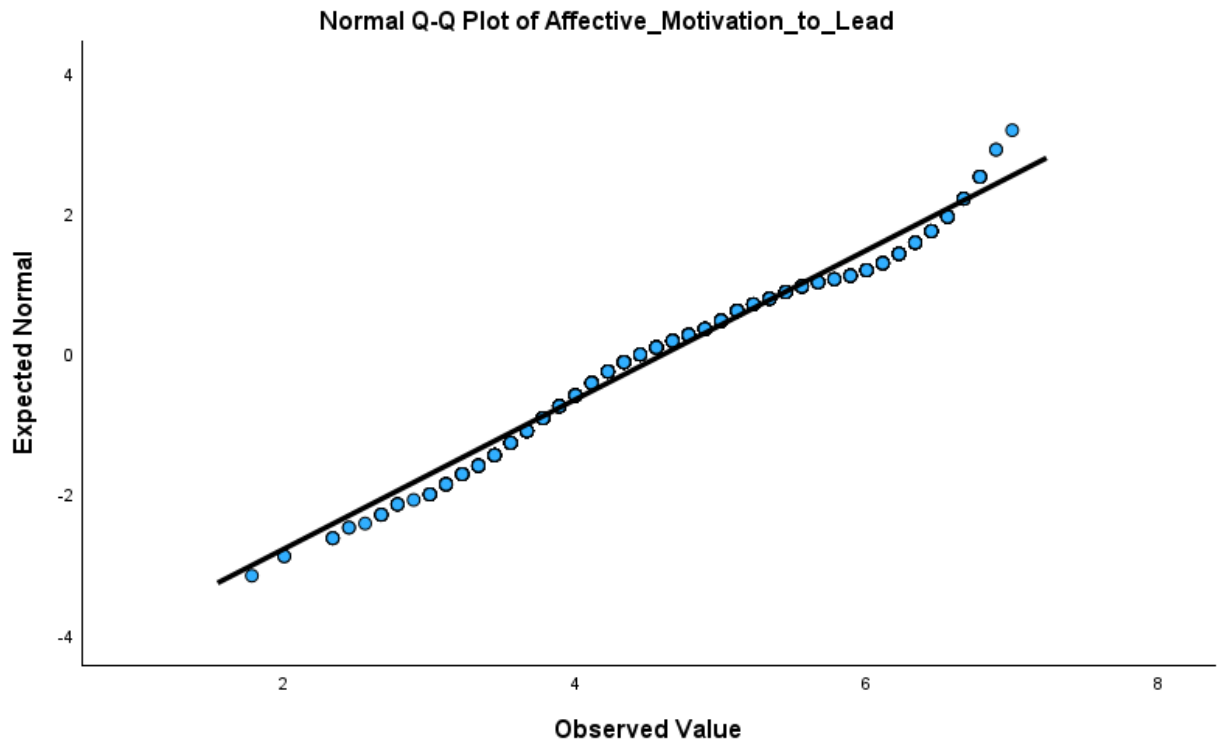
*Ambition*



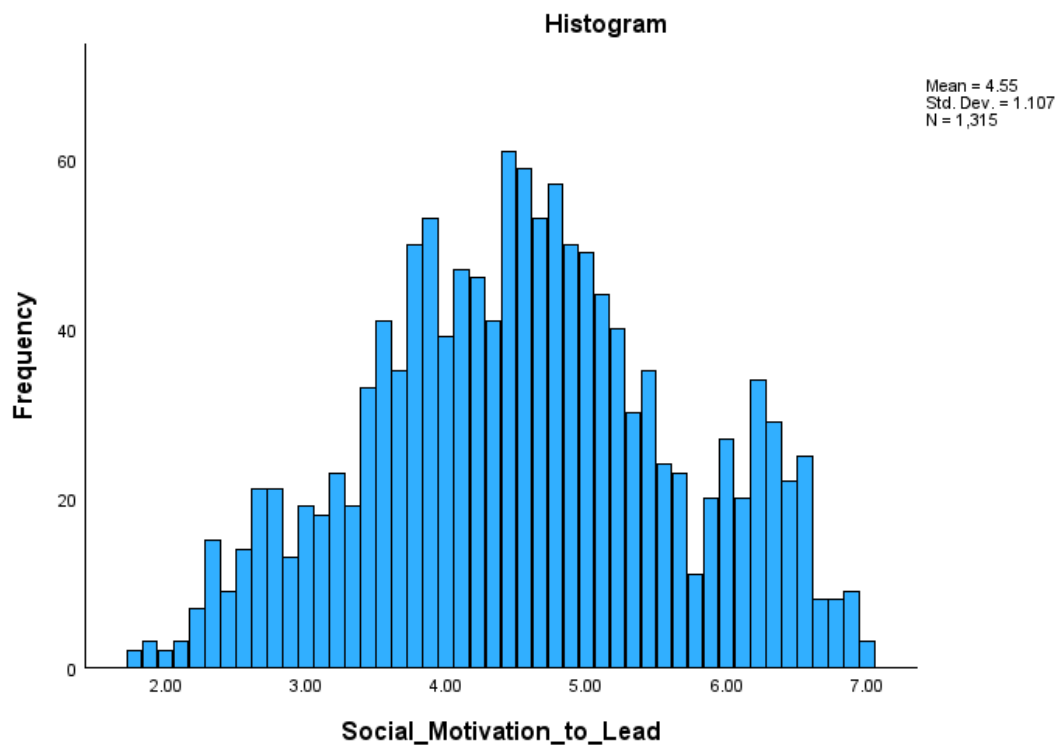


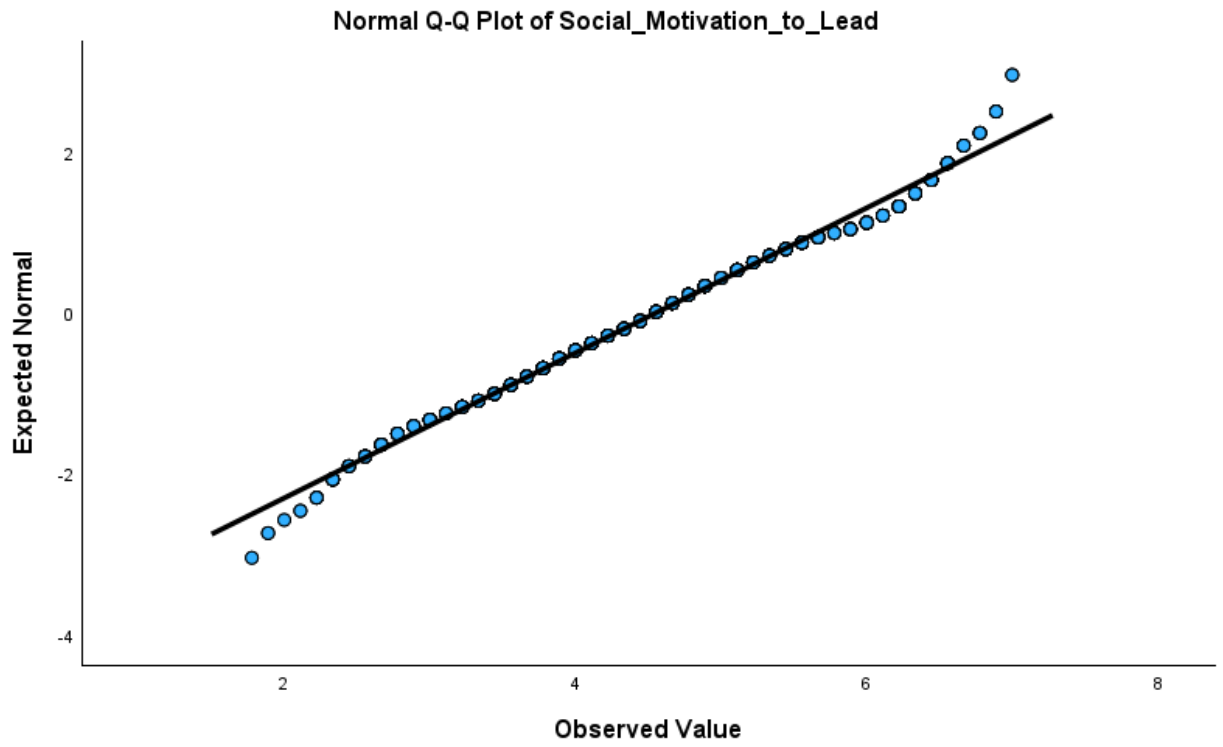
*Affective -Identity Motivation to Lead*



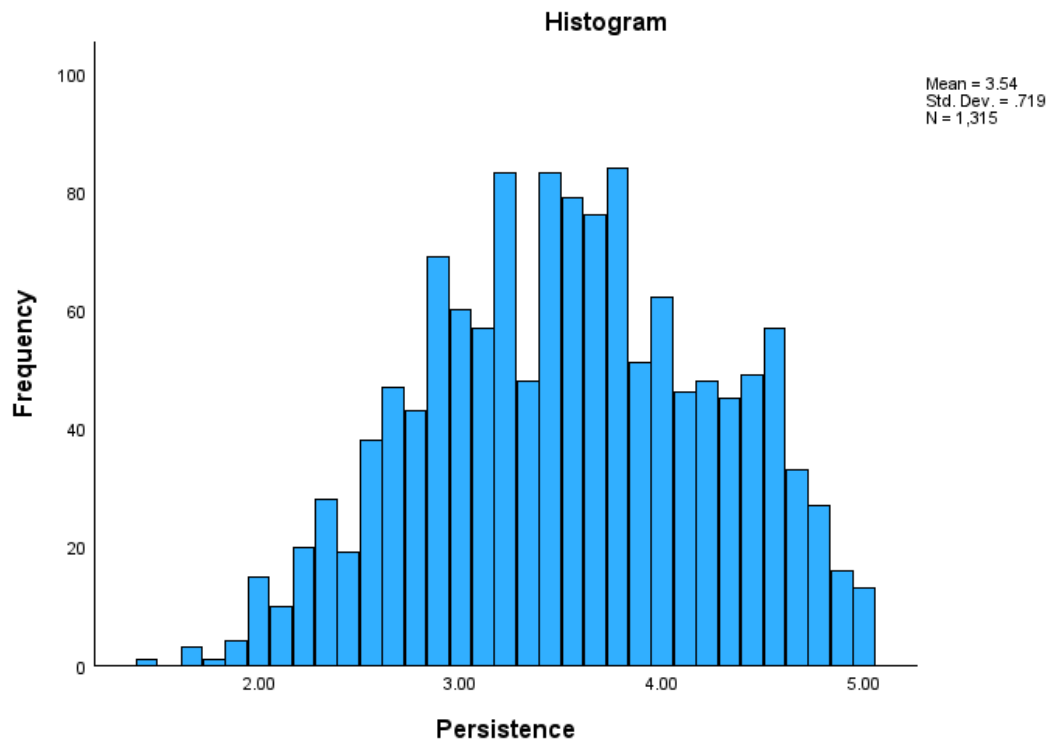


*Social-Normative Motivation to Lead*

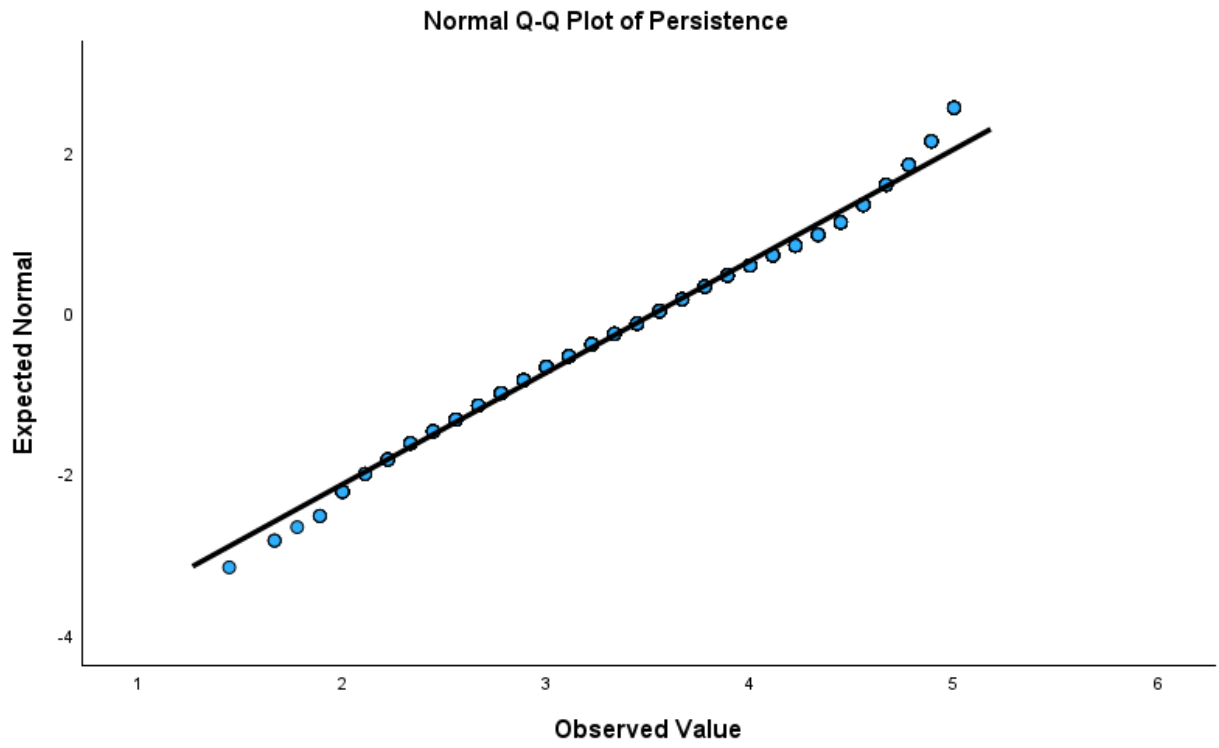




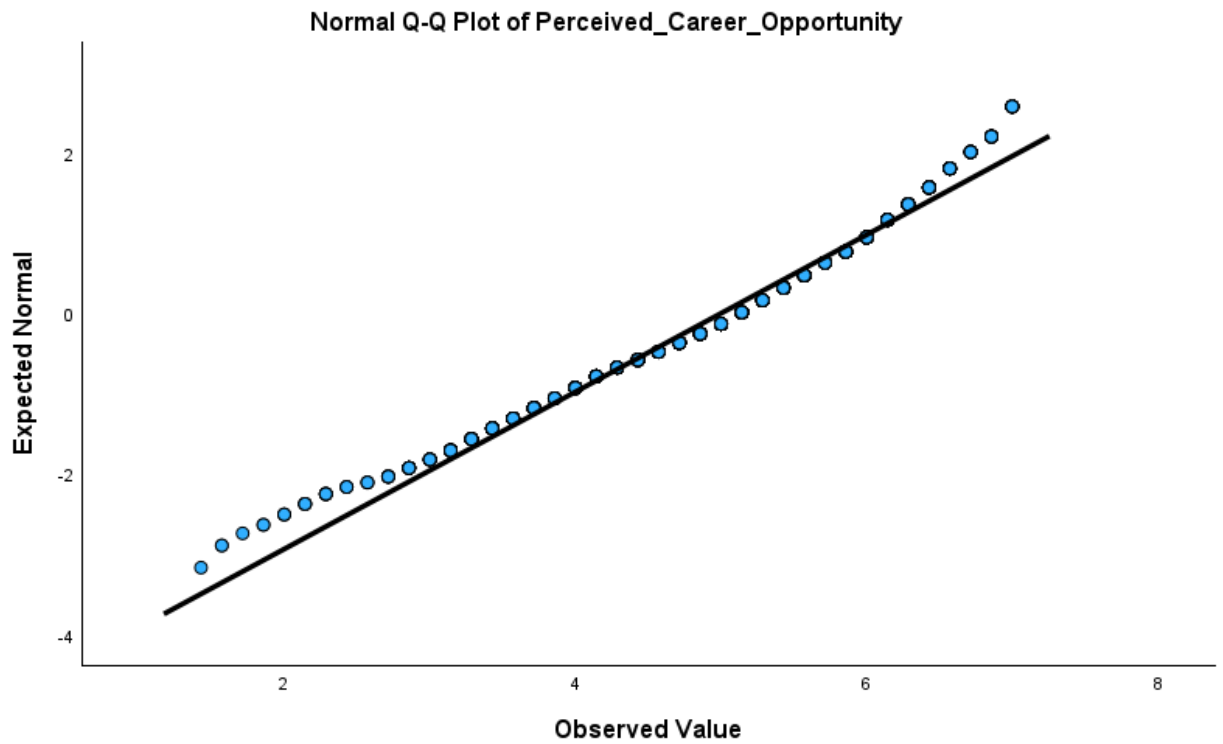
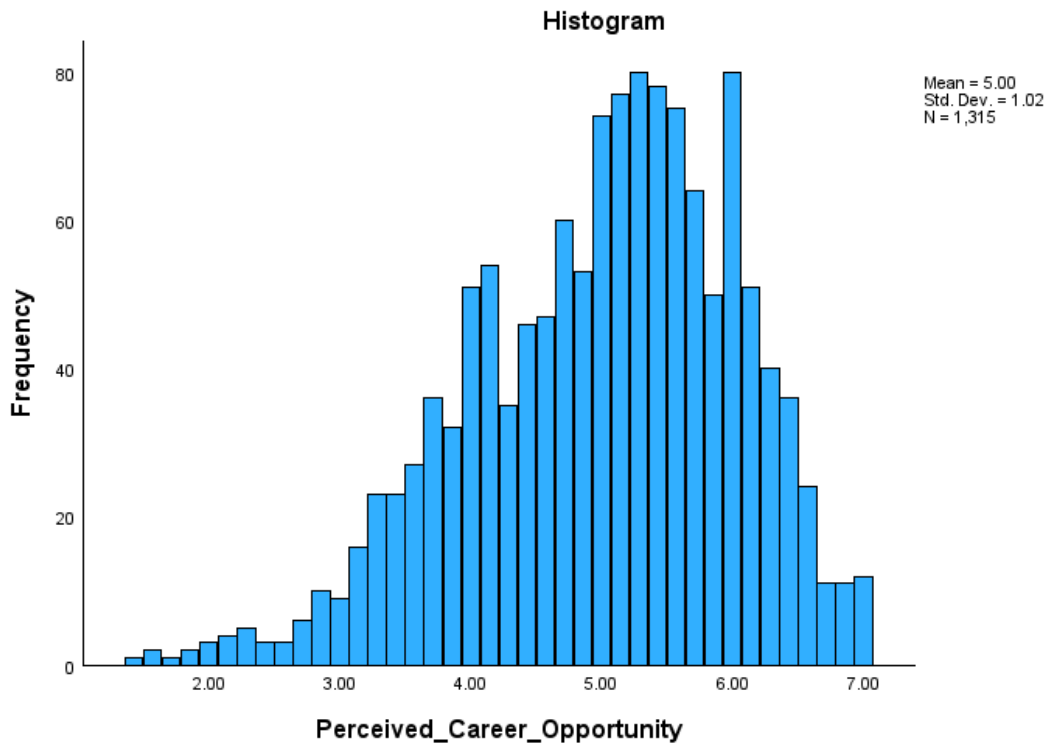
*Persistence*



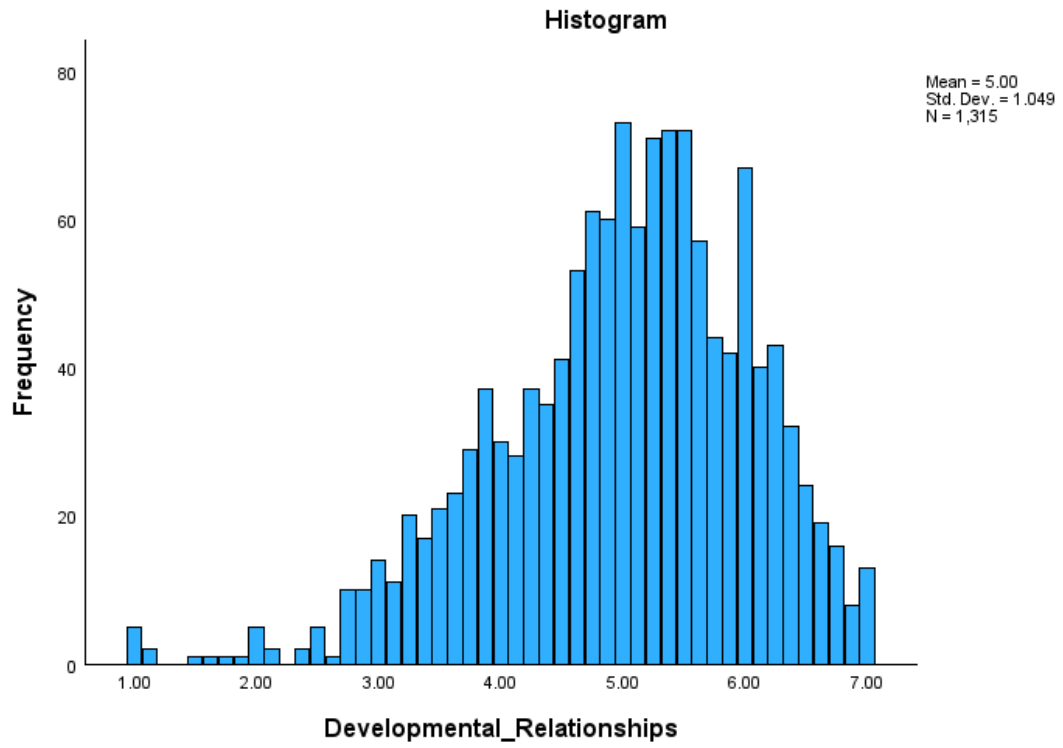
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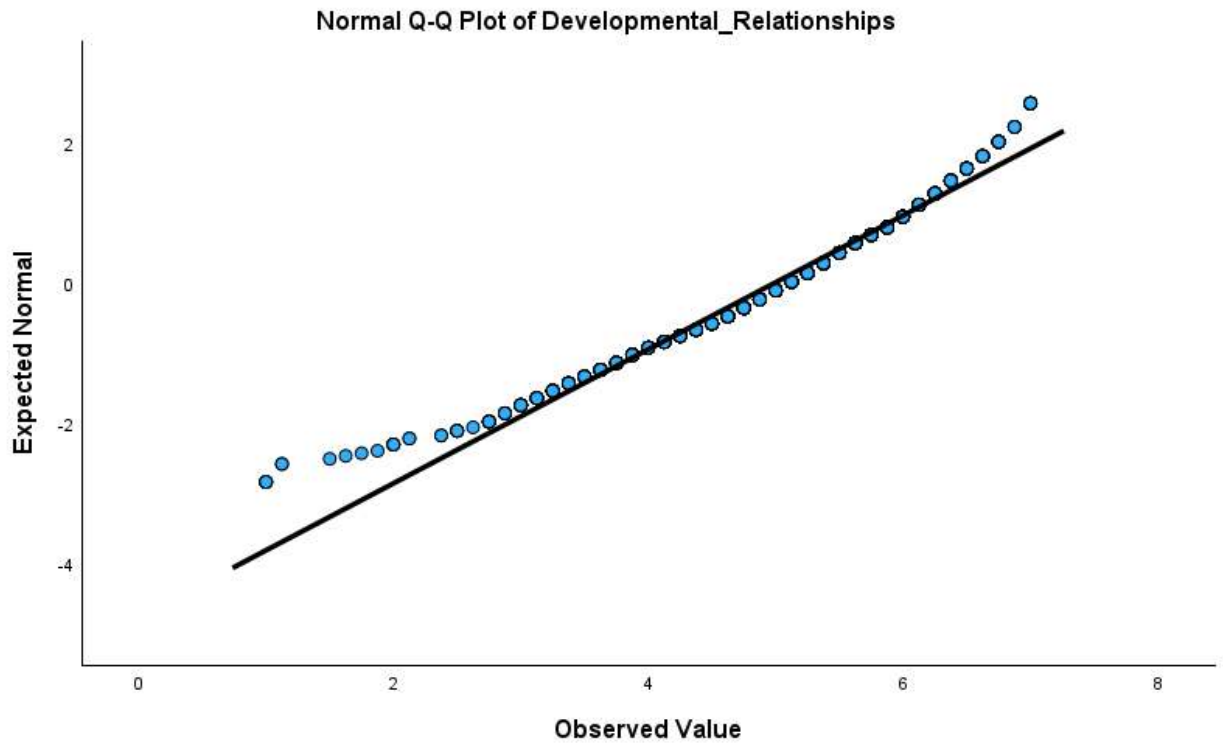
*Perceived Career Opportunity*



*Developmental Relationships*







## VITA

STACY HOWELL

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