Transformational Leadership, Interactional Justice, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Effects of Racial and Gender Dissimilarity Between Supervisors and Subordinates

Min Z. Carter, Kevin W. Mossholder, Hubert S. Feild and Achilles A. Armenakis

Group & Organization Management 2014 39: 691 originally published online 25 September 2014
DOI: 10.1177/1059601114551605

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://gom.sagepub.com/content/39/6/691
Transformational Leadership, Interactional Justice, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Effects of Racial and Gender Dissimilarity Between Supervisors and Subordinates

Min Z. Carter¹, Kevin W. Mossholder², Hubert S. Feild², and Achilles A. Armenakis²

Abstract
We examined the mediating influence of interactional justice on relations between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Because the relational context in which supervisors and subordinates interact could influence the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB, we developed a first stage moderation model and examined supervisor–subordinate dissimilarities in race and gender as potential moderating variables. Analyses performed using 230 supervisor–subordinate dyads showed that racial dissimilarity moderated the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB transmitted through interactional justice. As hypothesized, the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB was stronger for subordinates who were racially dissimilar to their supervisors. Gender dissimilarity did not moderate the mediation model.

¹Troy University, AL, USA
²Auburn University, AL, USA

Corresponding Author:
Min Z. Carter, Sorrell College of Business, Troy University, Troy, AL 36082, USA.
Email: mzcarter@troy.edu
Keywords
transformational leadership, interactional justice, relational demography, organizational citizenship behavior

Transformational leadership influences employees’ in-role (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) and extra-role performance (G. Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011). Because organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is vital in promoting knowledge sharing and cooperative relationships in organizations, it has begun to receive particular attention as an outcome of transformational leadership (cf. Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen, & Lowe, 2009; Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999). Due to their dependent position, subordinates should be appreciative when supervisors articulate compelling visions, inspire acceptance of work challenges, and show them personal consideration in dealing with task responsibilities. Such supervisory activity can encourage subordinates to internalize their supervisors’ values and beliefs and form higher quality social exchange relationships with them (H. Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, & Chen, 2005). According to social exchange theory tenets (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), subordinates will then be more likely to reciprocate their feelings through in- and extra-role performance behaviors. A recent meta-analytic study has revealed transformational leadership to have stronger effects on extra-role (i.e., OCB) than on in-role performance (G. Wang et al., 2011).

In response to repeated calls to better understand how supervisors’ transformational behaviors influence subordinates (e.g., Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009), researchers have begun to examine mediating mechanisms with this explanatory potential (e.g., Kirkman et al., 2009). Through their continuing interactions, subordinates likely value individual attention and positive regard from their supervisors, which, in turn, influence their cooperative behaviors. Interpersonal treatment that reflects respectful, sincere relational exchanges occurring between individuals has been labeled interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986; Roch & Shanock, 2006), and is the form of justice through which supervisors most directly affect subordinates’ everyday work life (e.g., Ambrose, Schminke, & Mayer, 2013; van Knippenberg, de Cremer, & van Knippenberg, 2007). Nevertheless, very few studies have examined the possibility that interactional justice mediates transformational leadership—outcome relations (e.g., Cho & Dansereau, 2010; Wu, Neubert, & Yi, 2007). This is somewhat surprising, as early transformational leadership proponents (e.g., Burns, 1978) accorded justice an integral role in conveying its effects. Moreover, reviews exploring the interface between leadership and justice suggest that interactional justice appears
to be a natural outcome of various leadership influences (van Knippenberg et al., 2007). Thus, a key goal of our study was to examine whether transformational leader behaviors affect subordinates’ interactional justice and their subsequent OCB.

While arguing the merit of investigating interactional justice as a mediator of transformational leaders’ influence, we acknowledge that the magnitude of this effect could depend on the relational context comprising supervisor–subordinate interactions. Due to demographically driven social identity effects, demographically similar individuals should tend to view each other as in-group members whereas dissimilar ones are more likely to perceive one another as out-group members (Jackson & Joshi, 2011). This means that differences in interpersonal attributes could constrain subordinates’ natural affinities with their supervisors (and vice versa). Thus, we suggest demographic dissimilarity between supervisors and subordinates affects the tenor of their relationship. In turn, demographic dissimilarity might evoke potentially disruptive social categorization processes such as a reduction in perceived commonalities, stereotypic attributions of behavior, guarded or muddled information processing, and less interpersonal communication or cooperation (Chatman & Spataro, 2005; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007).

As such, demographic differences between supervisors and subordinates can mitigate the development of strong ties between them (e.g., van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Subordinates are more likely to experience anxiety and feel psychological threat when interacting with their dissimilar supervisors (Avery, Richeson, Hebl, & Ambady, 2009; Chung, Ehrhart, Ehrhart, Hattrup, & Solamon, 2010; L. Roberson & Kulik, 2007). This makes supervisory behaviors that mollify subordinates’ trepidations about being different, especially critical. Transformational leaders exhibit several such behaviors. For example, they enhance subordinate feelings of efficacy and identification (Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008), and signal that subordinates’ needs are earnestly considered (Cho & Dansereau, 2010). We argue these behaviors provide relational evidence (DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011) to assure dissimilar subordinates their demographic differences can be surmounted. Therefore, a second goal of our study was to examine the potential moderating role of demographic dissimilarity in our mediation model. Figure 1 presents our theoretical model.

The present study makes several contributions to the inchoate line of research focusing on examining how and under what circumstances transformational leadership affects subordinate behavior (Avolio et al., 2009). Because they examined only one transformational leadership dimension
(individual consideration) at the individual level and data were collected from an Eastern-culture sample, Cho and Dansereau (2010) called for additional research examining their findings. Our first contribution extends this research stream using more comprehensive measures of focal constructs and a Western-culture sample. Second, ours is the first study of which we are aware to investigate the moderating effect of relational demographic differences on links between transformational leadership, interactional justice, and OCB. Few studies have investigated the moderating (rather than simple direct) role of relational demographics on work outcomes. For example, Elfenbein and O’Reilly (2007) found person–group fit had a stronger impact on the retention rate for individuals with lower gender dissimilarity but higher racial dissimilarity, whereas Avery, Wang, Volpone, and Zhou (2013) found individual empowerment had a weaker association with performance for employees who were more gender dissimilar to their coworkers. Determining how relational demography affects leadership-outcome links can provide a more complete understanding of transformational leadership effects (van Knippenberg et al., 2007). Finally, by assessing transformational leadership effects on OCB, we focus on complexities associated with employee cooperative behaviors. Cooperation in the face of relational dissimilarity is critical given an increasingly diverse workforce (Chatman & Spataro, 2005) and accompanying justice concerns of those comprising it (e.g., Stone-Romero & Stone, 2005).

Figure 1. Hypothesized first stage moderation model.
Model Development and Hypotheses

Interactional Justice as a Mediator of Transformational Leadership–OCB Relations

Transformational leaders exert influence by sharing a compelling vision with followers, inspiring their aspirations, and coaching them to enhance their capabilities and perform beyond expectations stemming from the economic exchange agreement with the organization (Bass, 1999). Such behaviors should facilitate subordinates’ acceptance of beliefs and norms that are consonant with supervisors’ actions. By motivating subordinates to accept new and challenging goals, transformational leaders enhance subordinates’ sense of obligation to reciprocate with greater work effort. One defining feature of transformational leadership is its ability to stimulate followers to perform beyond prescribed job roles for the sake of the organization (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). Evidence from G. Wang and colleagues’ (2011) meta-analysis suggests that transformational leadership is associated more strongly with extra-role behavior than with task-related performance.

Transformational leaders align their own and subordinates’ behaviors with higher order values and aspirations in mind. Such idealized influence provides a role model for subordinates to emulate, and shows that supervisors can be relied on “to do the right thing” (Avolio, 1999, p. 43). Transformational leaders demonstrate concern and appreciation for individual subordinates (Bass, 1999; DeRue et al., 2011). Supervisors who manifest these behaviors in interpersonal interactions likely prime subordinates’ feelings of being treated with equality, respect, and dignity. These feelings are hallmarks of interactional justice, the fairness employees experience in interpersonal exchanges (Bies & Moag, 1986; Roch & Shanock, 2006).

Its proactive character renders transformational leadership a natural precursor to subordinates’ perceptions of interactional justice, the justice type most under supervisors’ discretionary control (Scott, Colquitt, & Paddock, 2009). Given that transformational leadership should induce interactional justice perceptions, two theoretical frameworks may explain why these perceptions lead to subordinates’ OCB. From a social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), transformational leadership could be interpreted as supporting subordinates’ personal and work-related needs for respect and consideration. Reciprocity norms underpinning social exchanges should encourage subordinates to exert extra efforts to recompense their supervisors’ actions. Alternatively, from a social identity perspective, just treatment should encourage subordinates’ identification with supervisors (Johnson & Lord, 2010; Lord & Brown, 2004). As subordinates’ identification with supervisors...
increases, they become intrinsically motivated to improve their supervisors’ standing because this fulfills concerns about close others and enhances their own sense of self-worth. In a work context, a likely behavior subordinates will use to accomplish this is OCB (Blader & Tyler, 2009). Indeed, Fassina, Jones, and Uggerslev’s (2008) meta-analysis found that interactional justice affects OCB more strongly than other justice forms.

Some research findings have indirectly suggested interactional justice mediates relations between transformational leadership and OCB-related work attitudes. Pillai and colleagues (1999) tested a measure comprising a mix of interactional and procedural justice items as a mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and trust. In a similar vein, Wu et al. (2007) supported a partial mediation model showing that interactional justice components (interpersonal, informational justice; Colquitt, 2001) mediated relations between transformational leadership and attitudes about organizational change. Elsewhere, Cho and Dansereau (2010) found the relationship between OCB and a single transformational leadership dimension—individualized consideration—was mediated by interpersonal justice, a component of interactional justice (Greenberg, 2011).

In sum, we argue that by exhibiting transformational leadership, supervisors can elicit subordinates’ respect and identification. Because of this influence, subordinates should feel fairly treated in their interactions with their supervisors. In turn, subordinates will feel an intrinsic sense of responsibility and obligation to reciprocate their supervisors’ actions by exerting increased OCB efforts. We therefore expect that interactional justice will serve as a substantive link between supervisors’ transformational leadership behavior and subordinates’ OCB.

**Hypothesis 1:** Interactional justice will mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB.

**The Moderating Role of Supervisor–Subordinate Race and Gender Dissimilarity**

The idea that contextual factors affect transformational leadership has been widely recognized (Avolio et al., 2009). As have other researchers, we suggest the supervisor–subordinate dyad represents a critical work context for assessing the impact of relational demographics (e.g., Tsui, Porter, & Egan, 2002). How demographic dissimilarity shapes this relational context can be partially understood through the process of social categorization. Social categorization theory holds that individuals classify themselves and others into
social categories based on salient attributes, and then use these classifications in deriving their social identities (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Being demographically different from the supervisor could influence subordinates’ attitudinal and performance reactions, a notion supported by relational demography research (e.g., Tsui, Egan, & O’Reilly, 1992; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). We therefore used relational demography as a contextual variable and examined its moderating influence in our proposed mediation model.

Easily observable demographic characteristics are more likely to evoke basic social categorization responses (Bell, Villado, Lukasik, Belau, & Briggs, 2011), especially where leaders and followers are involved (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). Race and gender are the most frequently examined diversity attributes (Jackson & Joshi, 2011). These demographics are also often the basis on which individuals spontaneously assess similarity/dissimilarity in the social context of the workplace (Riordan & Shore, 1997; Q. M. Roberson & Stevens, 2006), and are relevant to personal identity (McCann, Ostrom, Tyner, & Mitchell, 1985). Thus, either could be particularly salient when examining the mediated effects of transformational leadership on OCB via interactional justice.

Although the social dynamics associated with race and gender are complex, negative stereotyping clearly occurs with these attributes (e.g., see Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008; Wood & Eagly, 2010). Both minority and majority members generate negative stereotyping in reference to one another, implying all employees in the workplace are potentially vulnerable (L. Roberson & Kulik, 2007). Why supervisor–subordinate dissimilarity on these attributes should moderate the mediated effect of transformational leadership (through interactional justice) on OCB is rooted in social categorization processes.

Stone-Romero and Stone (2005) noted that stereotypes might be weighed in the process of socially categorizing others. Inferences made during this process generate expectations about others’ prospective attitudes or behaviors, with greater apprehension being anticipated by subordinates who perceive they are different from their supervisors. These negative inferences could have deleterious effects. Given subordinates’ resource dependencies on supervisors, the impact of such effects would likely be greater for dissimilar subordinates. For example, employees with racially or sexually dissimilar supervisors perceived lower levels of support from their supervisors than those with racially or sexually similar supervisors (Foley, Linnehan, Greenhaus, & Weer, 2006). Wesolowski and Mossholder (1997) found the same pattern of racial dissimilarity effects in connection with subordinates’ job satisfaction. Alternatively, Avery and colleagues (2008) documented that
employees with racially dissimilar supervisors were more likely to perceive racially/ethnically based discrimination than those with racially similar supervisors.

Demographic dissimilarity can generate psychological threats to individuals’ race- or gender-based identity and provoke anxiety in the workplace (e.g., Avery et al., 2009; Avery et al., 2013; Chung et al., 2010). Such feelings can reinforce dissimilar subordinates’ tendencies to anticipate injustice in future interactions (Johnson, Selenta, & Lord, 2006). Relatedly, van Prooijen, Van den Bos, and Wilke (2005) examined the effect of individuals’ uncertainty about their approval by others (i.e., in-group status). They found that individuals for whom status was a salient concern exhibited stronger fairness reactions than those for whom it was not.

Johnson and colleagues (Johnson, Chang, & Rosen, 2010; Johnson & Lord, 2010) have noted that self-worth threats cause individuals to be more concerned about their own welfare and adopt a prevention self-regulatory focus. Such actions provide a defense against psychological harm from others, but diminish regulatory resources that would be better applied toward performance efforts (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998; Baumeister, Vohs, & Tice, 2007). Subordinates who are demographically different from their supervisors are especially likely to experience regulatory resource depletion, increasing the likelihood that they will hold tighter to negative expectations growing from their dissimilarities (Fischer, Greitemeyer, & Frey, 2008).

Ameliorative supervisory actions that counter these conditions could be vital. Regulatory resources are likely renewed by the kinds of positive social behaviors (e.g., showing respect, honest communication, supportiveness) at the core of interactional justice (Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014). Supporting this notion, Kim, Bhave, and Glomb (2013) reported that positive social interactions could protect employees’ regulatory resources from being diminished by race-based social categorization. The social bonds and supportiveness arising through such interactions not only protect but can also replenish subordinates’ capacity to direct social and psychological regulatory resources toward performance-related behavior (Chan & Wan, 2012).

As argued above, transformational leadership behavior should help dispel dissimilar subordinates’ apprehensions (through interactional justice) because it demonstrates that supervisors personally value and respect their subordinates. Transformational leaders are prone to use an inclusive emphasis when communicating with subordinates about their importance in formulating and reaching performance goals (Kark & Eagly, 2010). Moreover, transformational leadership might boost hesitant subordinates’ performance efforts because it induces them to view challenging conditions as surmountable and
signals positively about supervisors’ future fairness (Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014). Supervisors using transformational leadership to energize demographically different subordinates tangibly demonstrate their belief in these subordinates. The psychological safety that can emerge under such circumstances has been recently found to amplify extra-role behaviors exhibited by minority employees (Singh, Winkel, & Selvarajan, 2013).

In sum, dissimilar subordinates should react more strongly to supervisors’ transformational leadership (via interactional justice) because it portends their demographic differences can be overcome. Confident that this is possible, subordinates should be inclined to exhibit OCB subsequent to fair interpersonal exchanges with their dissimilar transformational leaders. Therefore, we propose demographic dissimilarity in race or gender will moderate the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB through interactional justice.

**Hypothesis 2a:** Supervisor–subordinate race dissimilarity will moderate the mediated effect of transformational leadership (transmitted through interactional justice) on OCB such that the mediated effect will be stronger for those who are racially dissimilar to their supervisors.

**Hypothesis 2b:** Supervisor–subordinate gender dissimilarity will moderate the mediated effect of transformational leadership (transmitted through interactional justice) on OCB such that the mediated effect will be stronger for those who are sexually dissimilar to their supervisors.

**Method**

**Procedure and Participants**

To recruit study participants, we sent an electronic announcement to college of business alumni of a large Southeastern university in 2008. In the announcement, we described the nature of our study and assured potential participants of the confidentiality of their responses. We also noted that to be eligible, individuals had to be employed full-time and have formal supervisors. Similar procedures have been used by other researchers (e.g., Bernerth, Armenakis, Feild, Giles, & Walker, 2007; Tepper, Henle, Lambert, & Duffy, 2008). Although we initially targeted the announcement at upwards of 4,000 alumni, database issues (i.e., invalid or out-of-date email addresses) rendered indeterminate the number of eligible individuals who received and read it. Nevertheless, this approach attracted 391 alumni who met the eligibility qualifications and volunteered to participate. We sent each alumnus a packet containing two confidential surveys. Each packet included two information...
letters and two self-addressed stamped envelopes labeled as either “Employee Survey” or “Supervisor Survey.” Alumni participants completed the employee survey and gave the information letter and supervisor survey to their formal supervisors. We used a coding scheme to match subordinate and supervisor data. Subordinates and supervisors completed the surveys and mailed them directly to the researchers.

A total of 243 subordinates and 237 supervisors returned their surveys in separate mailings. We matched 230 of the returned supervisor and subordinate surveys, representing a response rate of 59% (i.e., 230/391) of alumni initially volunteering. The average age for subordinates was 32.92 ($SD = 7.04$), average organizational tenure was 4.90 years ($SD = 4.76$), average dyad tenure was 2.65 years ($SD = 2.60$), 64% were male, and 90% were White. For supervisors, their average age was 45.42 ($SD = 9.94$), mean organizational tenure was 11.88 years ($SD = 9.19$), 67% were male, and 93% were White. The industries in which the respondents worked included banking/financial services (20%), education (14%), government (12%), manufacturing (10%), retail (7%), transportation (5%), professional consulting services (4%), and others (28%).

Given the database constraints accompanying our recruiting announcement, we took extra steps to examine the representativeness of our sample within the context of the larger U.S. employee population. More specifically, we compared the race and gender demographics of our subordinate sample with those of the U.S. workforce in the same occupational category at the time our data were collected. Other diversity researchers have recently relied on comparisons with Bureau of Labor Statistics data as a means of demonstrating sample representativeness (e.g., Triana, Porter, DeGrassi, & Bergman, 2013). For management, business, and financial operations occupations in 2008, the racial demographics were 86% White and 14% non-White, and the gender demographics were 57% male and 43% female (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). Our alumni sample racial (90% White and 10% non-White) and gender (64% male and 36% female) demographics were not widely different from the U.S. business professional workforce.

**Measures**

Subordinates and supervisors used a 7-cell response format ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to answer all items, unless noted otherwise. Subordinates rated their supervisors’ transformational leadership, contingent reward behavior, and their perceptions of interactional justice, whereas supervisors rated their subordinates’ OCB. Both supervisors and subordinates self-reported demographic information.
Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership was measured with the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Form–5X Short), a 20-item scale developed by Avolio and Bass (2004). Subordinates rated their supervisors on a 5-cell response format ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently, if not always).

Although some researchers argue that transformational leadership dimensions (i.e., idealized attribution, idealized behavior, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) are conceptually distinct, the dimensions are often highly correlated (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). In contrast to Cho and Dansereau’s (2010) study, our theoretical framework posits overall transformational leadership behavior will influence other variables in the model. Other researchers have also treated transformational leadership as a global construct (e.g., Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Kirkman et al., 2009). We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the dimensionality issue in our data. This CFA considered whether the sub-dimension model plus an overall higher order factor fit our data. Our results showed that the fit indices fell within an acceptable range ($\chi^2 = 291.32$, $df = 157$, comparative fit index [CFI] = .95, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .06, standardized root mean square residual [SRMR] = .05), suggesting that the data were consistent with a global, higher order structure of transformational leadership. We therefore combined the dimensions into a single factor having a coefficient alpha of .94.

Interactional justice. Moorman’s (1991) interactional justice measure was used to assess interactional justice. Framing interactional justice as unidimensional is considered appropriate and useful (Greenberg, 2011). Coefficient alpha for this six-item scale was .84.

Relational demographic variables. We obtained race and gender information from both supervisors and subordinates. Gender was coded “1” for male and “0” for female. For the purpose of creating racial control variables for both supervisors and subordinates, race was coded “1” for White and “0” for non-White (cf. Hekman et al., 2010; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Tsui et al., 2002). As in prior relational demography studies (e.g., Avery et al., 2008; Tsui et al., 2002), we treated the non-White categories (African American, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Other) as distinct racial groups in creating dichotomous race dissimilarity scores. A 0 indicated the subordinate and supervisor were of the same race and 1 indicated they were different. Similarly, dichotomous dissimilarity scores on gender were created with 0 indicating the subordinate and supervisor had the same gender and 1 indicating they were different. Thus, for the relational demographic variables, a
higher value indicated greater dissimilarity. With respect to gender, 70% were same-gender and 30% were different-gender dyads. Concerning race, 89% were same-race and 11% were different-race dyads.

OCB. OCB was measured by a 24-item scale developed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990). We conducted a CFA to examine the dimensionality of OCB, and our results showed that the fit indices fell within an acceptable range (χ² = 361.83, df = 239, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05). These results suggested the data were consistent with a higher order structure, and we operationalized OCB as a single factor. Coefficient alpha was .90.

Control variables. In assessing the impact of race and gender relational demography on the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB, we controlled for the race and gender of supervisors and subordinates. As these four demographic variables were used to derive the relational variable scores, the effect of the simple demographic measures should be controlled (Avery et al., 2008; Tsui et al., 1992).

Because our participants were from organizations representing a variety of industries, we examined whether industry had an impact on the mediator and dependent variables in our study. We calculated intraclass reliability (ICC1) for the mediator and dependent variables, and both ICC1s were low (<.01), suggesting that industry membership did not explain variance in the mediator (i.e., interactional justice) or dependent (i.e., OCB) variable. Therefore, we did not use industry as a control variable.

Last, research has suggested that transformational leadership builds on the foundation of transactional leadership (Bass, 1999), and that transformational leadership adds to the effect of transactional leadership (i.e., augmentation effect; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Because of our focus on transformational leadership, the potential theoretical confounding effect of transactional leadership should be controlled (Spector & Brannick, 2011). To do so, we used the positive transactional leadership dimension contingent reward as a control variable, which was measured with the four-item MLQ-5X scale. Coefficient alpha was .69.

Marker variable. Because responses for transformational leadership and interactional justice came from the same source, we conducted a marker variable analysis (Lindell & Whitney, 2001) as a gauge of potential common method variance (CMV) effects. Locus of control, defined as beliefs about the causes of events in one’s life (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003), served as our marker variable. We used two items from the core self-evaluations scale.
("I determine what will happen in my life" and "I am confident I get the success I deserve in life"; Judge et al., 2003) to measure locus of control. Coefficient alpha was .65.

Results
Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the study variables. There were a few missing values (less than 0.1%), and these were replaced with means.

Given that transformational leaders exhibit a range of positive behaviors toward employees, we performed a structural equation modeling discriminant validity test to examine the distinctiveness of transformational leadership and interactional justice. We compared a two-factor model in which covariance between the two variables was freely estimated with a one-factor model in which the correlation between the two variables was fixed to one. The comparison yielded a significant chi-square difference ($\Delta \chi^2 = 20.82$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$), indicating that transformational leadership and interactional justice were distinct.

Before testing the hypotheses, we conducted Lindell and Whitney’s (2001) marker variable analysis. Following their procedure, we located the smallest observed correlation between the marker variable and a focal study variable, which was the correlation between locus of control and interactional justice ($r_S = .19$). We used this correlation to estimate CMV in the partial-correlation adjustment to the simple correlation between transformational leadership and interactional justice ($r = .77$, $p < .01$). The corrected correlation after partialling out CMV was still significant ($r_{yi,M} = .72$, $p < .01$), indicating that CMV was not strongly manifested in our study. As a further CMV check, we computed a disattenuated correlation after adjusting for scale reliabilities as suggested by Lindell and Whitney (2001). The disattenuated partial correlation of transformational leadership and interactional justice was significant ($r_{yi,M} = .83$, $p < .01$). Altogether, these results suggest CMV was not likely a major concern in our study.

We tested the proposed hypotheses in two steps. First, we examined a mediation model (H1) following the multi-step logic suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). We also used Preacher and Hayes’ (2004) procedure to estimate confidence intervals of the indirect mediated effect with both a normal sampling distribution approach (i.e., the Sobel test; Sobel, 1982) and a bootstrap approach.

Second, using Edwards and Lambert’s (2007) path analytic procedure, we tested the first stage moderation model for race and gender (Hypotheses 2a and 2b). Edwards and Lambert’s (2007) approach allows simultaneous
### Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate race&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate gender&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor race&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor gender&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent reward</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.08 (.69)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformational leadership</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.07 .77**(.94)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional justice</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.02 0.60** (.77** (.84)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race dissimilarity&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-0.63**</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.40**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender dissimilarity&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.26**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.18**</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational citizenship behavior</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.14*</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>(.90)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of control</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.07 .28**</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>0.18** (.65)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 230. Values in parentheses on the diagonal represent coefficient alphas for the variables.

<sup>a</sup>1 = White; 0 = non-White.

<sup>b</sup>1 = male; 0 = female.

<sup>c</sup>0 = same; 1 = different.

<sup>*</sup>p < .05, two-tailed tests. **p < .01, two-tailed tests.
testing for the moderation of our proposed indirect mediation effects. We used 5,000 bootstrap samples to construct bias-corrected confidence intervals for all significant path estimates reported (Edwards & Lambert, 2007).

**Test of Mediation**

Hypothesis 1 posited that interactional justice mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB. As shown in Table 2, the results of Steps 1 to 3 indicate that Baron and Kenny’s (1986) three required relationships were significant: (a) between transformational leadership and interactional justice (β = 1.00, \( p < .001 \)); (b) between transformational leadership and OCB (β = .21, \( p < .05 \)); and (c) between interactional justice and OCB (β = .18, \( p < .001 \)). The results of Step 4 in Table 2 show that the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB was not significant (β = .05, ns), whereas significant relationships existed between interactional justice and OCB (β = .16, \( p < .05 \)). The Sobel test confirmed this evidence of mediation such that the indirect effect of transformational leadership on OCB (transmitted through interactional justice) was significant (Sobel \( z = 2.30, p < .05 \)). Bootstrap results (using 5,000 bootstrap samples) further confirmed
the Sobel test such that the 95% confidence intervals excluded zero [.02, .31]. In sum, our results supported Hypothesis 1.

**Test of First Stage Moderation**

Hypothesis 2a predicted race dissimilarity moderates the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB through interactional justice such that the mediated effect is stronger for those who are racially dissimilar to their supervisors. Hypothesis 2b proposed gender dissimilarity moderates the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB through interactional justice such that the mediated effect is stronger for those who are sexually dissimilar to their supervisors. Before testing the moderation hypotheses, we centered the continuous independent variable before calculating the interaction terms (Aiken & West, 1991).

Following Edwards and Lambert’s (2007) approach, we first performed two procedures for each of our hypotheses (Models 1 and 2 in Table 3; Models 3 and 4 in Table 4). We then used the path estimates produced from these two procedures to compute the indirect effect of transformational leadership on OCB (via interactional justice) for subordinates who were racially (or sexually) dissimilar to their supervisors as well as for subordinates who were similar to their supervisors. Last, we computed the differences in the strength of these indirect effects (see Tables 3 and 4). For Hypothesis 2a, Table 3 shows that the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB (transmitted through interactional justice) was stronger for subordinates who were racially dissimilar from their supervisors than for those who were similar ($d = .10, p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 2a was supported. Regarding Hypothesis 2b, Table 4 shows there was no significant difference in the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB (transmitted through interactional justice) for subordinates who were sexually dissimilar to supervisors than for those who were similar ($d = .02, ns$). Hypothesis 2b was therefore not supported.

For Hypothesis 2a, we plotted the mediated effects of transformational leadership on OCB (transmitted through interactional justice) for subordinates who were racially similar to their supervisors and for those who were racially different from their supervisors. The plot was created using points that were one standard deviation above and below the mean of transformational leadership across two levels of the moderator. Figure 2 shows that the mediated effect of transformational leadership on OCB (transmitted through interactional justice) was stronger for subordinates who were racially dissimilar from their supervisors than those who were similar.
Discussion

Despite progress in understanding why and when transformational leadership is more effective, few studies have investigated both moderating and mediating mechanisms linking transformational leadership to followers’ work-related outcomes (Avolio et al., 2009). Focusing on the dyadic level, our study contributes to the transformational leadership domain by simultaneously examining these mechanisms in a theory-based model. To our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate the mediating influence of interactional justice on global transformational leadership–OCB relations. More importantly, we demonstrated that this mediation varied depending on the relational context of the leader and follower. By modeling transformational leadership effects in a more theoretically detailed fashion, our study addresses the transformational leadership “black box” issue (cf. Jung & Avolio, 2000).

Table 3. Results for Race Dissimilarity First Stage Moderation (Hypothesis 2a).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>IJ</th>
<th>OCB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate race&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate gender&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor race&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor gender&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent reward</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFL</td>
<td>.96**</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFL × RD</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indirect effect of TFL on OCB (via IJ) for racially dissimilar subordinates: .25*

Indirect effect of TFL on OCB (via IJ) for racially similar subordinates: .15*

Difference in the strength of these two indirect effects (d): .10*

Note. N = 230. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported. All path estimates were tested using bias-corrected confidence intervals in 5,000 bootstrap samples. IJ = interactional justice; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; TFL = transformational leadership; RD = race dissimilarity.

<sup>a</sup>1 = White; 0 = non-White.

<sup>b</sup>1 = male; 0 = female.

<sup>c</sup>0 = same; 1 = different.

*p < .05, two-tailed tests. **p < .01, two-tailed tests.
We focused on dissimilarity in race (Avery et al., 2009) and gender (Riordan & Shore, 1997) because they are salient aspects of the supervisor–subordinate relationship. Drawing from social categorization theory, we examined moderating mechanisms of the indirect link between transformational leadership to subordinates’ OCB. As hypothesized, the mediated effect was stronger for those who were racially dissimilar rather than similar to their supervisors. This result demonstrates the importance of context theorizing (Bamberger, 2008), which builds situational conditions directly into the broader theory being tested. Although transformational leadership affects subordinates’ OCB through interactional justice, our results demonstrated that this influence does not necessarily affect all subordinates in the same fashion.

Researchers have noted interracial interactions can provoke anxiety that might constrain the prospective benefits of diversity (Chung et al., 2010).

Table 4. Results for Gender Dissimilarity First Stage Moderation (Hypothesis 2b).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>IJ Model 3</th>
<th>OCB Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate race(^a)</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate gender(^b)</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor race(^a)</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor gender(^b)</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent reward</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFL</td>
<td>.96**</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD(^c)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFL × GD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect effect of TFL on OCB via IJ for sexually dissimilar subordinates</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect effect of TFL on OCB via IJ for sexually similar subordinates</td>
<td></td>
<td>.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference in the strength of these two indirect effects (d)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 230. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported. All path estimates were tested using bias-corrected confidence intervals in 5,000 bootstrap samples. IJ = interactional justice; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; TFL = transformational leadership; GD = gender dissimilarity.

\(^a\)1 = White; 0 = non-White.

\(^b\)1 = male; 0 = female.

\(^c\)0 = same; 1 = different.

*p < .05, two-tailed tests. **p < .01, two-tailed tests.
Such reactions stem from ambiguities sometimes experienced by majority and minority racial group members interacting with each other (Ibarra, 1995). For subordinates who are racially dissimilar from their supervisors, the absence of familiar behavioral scripts could make interactions with their supervisors tinged with uncertainty (Avery et al., 2009). The potential for unintended consequences could loom large in such situations. de Cremer (2003) posited that individuals harboring concerns about their belongingness in such relationships will respond more strongly to relational cues. In particular, subordinates who are demographically dissimilar from their supervisors might have such concerns, and therefore might be sensitive to leader behaviors that are principled and communicate respect for others. Such behaviors help assure subordinates they are valued and will be treated with dignity, and positively affect their desire to exert OCB. Supervisors in such contexts should devote more attentional resources in regulating their behavior to avoid the appearance of being biased or operating based on stereotypes (L. Roberson & Kulik, 2007).

In contrast to our hypothesis regarding racial dissimilarity, we did not find support for the hypothesized moderating influence of gender dissimilarity. Social role theory (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) argues that differential role occupancy fosters stereotypes describing how members of each sex are expected to function in particular occupations. However, as greater numbers

**Figure 2.** Mediated effects of transformational leadership on OCB for racially similar and dissimilar subordinates.
of women have entered the workforce, sex-role differences may have eroded to some degree. Women comprise 51% of persons in management, professional, and related occupations (Eagly, 2009). In a study involving more than 60,000 participants, Elsesser and Lever (2011) found evidence of expanding acceptance and reduced negative stereotyping of female leaders. They also suggested that managerial styles have shifted toward shared responsibility and cooperation, behaviors that are prototypical of female influence tactics. We speculate that supervisor–subordinate gender dissimilarities in our study might not have evoked the same level of tension experienced in the past years.

**Limitations**

Our study is not without limitations. First, data for transformational leadership and interactional justice came from the same source. However, supervisors provided data for OCB, and both supervisors and subordinates provided relational demographic data. Although marker variable analysis (Lindell & Whitney, 2001) suggested CMV was not excessive in our study, future research might benefit by obtaining transformational leadership and interactional justice data from different sources or at different points in time. Second, we also note there is a potential for bias in the OCB ratings in that subordinates might have provided surveys to their supervisors if the subordinates expected positive ratings. Although we stressed confidentiality of the survey responses and provided separate mailing envelopes to subordinates and supervisors, this possibility cannot be overlooked. Third, we examined race and gender separately due to our sample size and available methodological procedures. We felt it more important to find evidence of single relational demographic effects as an initial step. A more fine-grained combination of supervisor–subordinate demographics (e.g., White, male supervisor—non-White, female subordinate) could yield further insight regarding relational demography.

**Future Research and Practical Implications**

We chose race and gender as focal demographics because they represent recognizable relational attributes of supervisors and subordinates (Q. M. Roberson & Stevens, 2006; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Future efforts exploring moderating effects of supervisor–subordinate dissimilarities on transformational leadership effects should consider deeper level attitudinal variables such as value orientation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (e.g., Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998), as well as other demographic
variables such as age and organizational tenure (see Shore et al., 2009). Attitude and value differences between supervisors and subordinates may be particularly worthy of consideration because these tap directly into self-perception and identification dynamics that may underlie transformational leadership effects.

Although minority employees might cope with the ill effect of dissimilarity by managing their self-identities (e.g., identity switching, identity redefinition; Shih, Young, & Bucher, 2013), such tactics are short-term in effect and contingent on the organization’s diversity climate. We believe challenges presented by dissimilarity are better addressed by supervisory behaviors that benefit both minority and majority group members. Our study supports this belief, showing the generally positive effects of transformational leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Perhaps more importantly, our study suggests that such positive effects are particularly beneficial for subordinates having salient demographic dissimilarities with their supervisors. Our results are consistent with the broader idea that minority and majority group members value diversity management programs they perceive as instrumental in attaining important needs (Olsen & Martins, 2012).

Our study has practical implications for supervisors operating within a racially diverse workforce. First, Barling, Christie, and Hoption (2011) noted that in connection with transformational leadership, subordinates who have greater difficulties and guidance needs are most likely to benefit from it. When uncertainty is higher, individuals form fairness impressions from readily available information and use them heuristically to interpret and guide reactions to events (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002). We offer that transformational leadership could provide indirect future relational dividends, by increasing racially dissimilar subordinates’ perceptions of interactional justice and thereby reducing their apprehensions. There is some evidence that transformational leadership skills can be taught (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002) and positively influence outcomes of demographically diverse teams (e.g., Kearney, 2008). From their study of team diversity, transformational leadership, and team performance, Kearney and Gebert (2009) recommended that organizations with diverse teams consider training supervisors to use transformational leadership behaviors. In line with this research stream, our results suggest that organizations having a broad racial or ethnic mix of employees should consider providing such supervisory training.

Considering racially diverse dyads as one proxy for a racially diverse social context, a second and broader implication is that managers need to be aware of the role social context can play in shaping subordinates’ OCB (cf. Ospina & Foldy, 2009). Although race dissimilarity was not correlated with
OCB in our study, it moderated the influence of processes leading to OCB. Managers exhibiting positive diversity role behavior (e.g., knowing subordinates personally and being inclusive with all) are more likely to develop sound subordinate relationships (Chrobot-Mason, 2004), which should bolster interactional fairness perceptions and OCB. This result comports with the idea that diversity might produce negative outcomes unless steps are taken to counteract potentially dysfunctional dynamics.

Because the workforce is becoming increasingly diverse, it is important for scholars to continue attempts at understanding complexities and difficulties that accompany this phenomenon. The present study contributes in this regard by examining a fundamental link in the organization, the supervisor–subordinate relationship. It has long been noted that supervisor fairness is important to subordinates generally. Our study shows supervisors’ transformational leadership might be a means for them to demonstrate interactional fairness that is especially important for racially dissimilar subordinates. Supervisors are a direct conduit for implementing organizational policies and must be adept at managing diverse subordinates to achieve effectiveness. In organizations interested in effecting a supportive diversity climate, transformational leadership may provide an operational means for initiating this goal.

Acknowledgments
We thank Michael Cole for his comments on an earlier draft of this article and Steven Brown for his assistance in collecting the data.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding
The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References


**Author Biographies**

**Min Z. Carter** is an Assistant Professor of Management in the Department of Management at Troy University. She received her PhD in Management from Auburn University. Her research interests include leadership and motivation, organizational justice, social exchange, and contextual and multilevel issues.

**Kevin W. Mossholder** is the C. G. Mills Professor of Management in the Department of Management at Auburn University. He received his PhD from the University of Tennessee. His research interests include organizational behavior, human resource management, interpersonal workplace interactions, and high-quality work relationships.

**Hubert S. Feild** is the Torchmark Professor of Management in the Department of Management at Auburn University. He received his PhD from the University of Georgia. His research interests include human resource selection and research methods in human resource management.

**Achilles A. Armenakis** is the James T. Pursell, Sr. Eminent Scholar in Management Ethics in the Department of Management at Auburn University. He received his doctorate from Mississippi State University. His research interests include diagnosing, planning, and implementing change, and management ethics.