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Department of Business Administration

**Master in Human Resources Management**

**The role of Transformational Leadership in Greek  
enterprises during Covid-19 pandemic**

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## **Abstract**

The present study investigates the impact of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), in Greek enterprises during the covid-19 pandemic. In doing so, “Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)” was applied based on a convenient sample of 124 employees of Greek firms. The research depicts the relationship between transformational leadership, trust, employees’ attitudes and working behaviors. In summary, the study reveals at first, the important role of transformational leadership on employee trust. which in turn, influences positively work engagement and job satisfaction. As a consequence of work engagement, employees respond by exhibiting citizenship behaviors, while job satisfaction was not enough for that. This research highlights the value of how follower citizenship behaviors are indirectly affected by transformational leadership as an integrative construct, bringing together trust and employee attitudes.

## Contents

Abstract .....	2
List of Figures.....	4
List of Tables .....	4
1. Introduction .....	5
2. Theoretical Background .....	6
2.1 Transformational leadership (TFL).....	6
2.2 Transformational Leadership and Trust.....	8
2.3 Trust and Work Engagement.....	9
2.4 Trust and Job Satisfaction.....	11
2.5 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).....	12
2.6 Work Engagement and OCB .....	14
2.7 Job Satisfaction and OCB.....	14
2.8 The mediating role of Trust.....	15
3. Methodology.....	16
3.1 Procedure and Sample.....	16
3.2 Measures .....	17
3.2.1 "Transformational Leadership" .....	18
3.2.2 "Trust".....	18
3.2.3 "Work Engagement" .....	18
3.2.4 "Job Satisfaction" .....	19
3.2.5 "Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)" .....	19
3.3 Control Variables .....	19
3.4 Method of Analysis .....	19
3.5 Assessment of the measurement model .....	21
4. Results .....	23
5. Discussion and Conclusions .....	26
6. Practical and Theoretical Implications.....	28
7. Limitations.....	30
References .....	31

## List of Figures

Figure 1: The “Original” model .....	20
Figure 3: The “Final Model” conceptual framework .....	25

## List of Tables

Table 1 :Properties of the measurement model .....	21
Table 2 :Summary of Path Coefficients and Significance levels .....	23

## 1. Introduction

In recent years many researchers have examined the effects of transformational leadership on work outcomes and specifically on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Zhu et al., 2013). Undoubtedly, the concept of leadership has become a great concern to researchers in the last decades. The whole idea has been intrigued not only professionals but also theorists (Fiedler, 1996). That happens because of the fame leadership has, due to its significant influence on organizational success and performance (Yousef, 1998; Hennessey, 1998). However opinions differ on its exact definition. "Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (Burns 1978, p.2), but it can be "explained as the ability to effect followers to get tasks and assignments done in the workplace" (Khalili, 2017).

Through transformational style, "leaders elevate the desires of followers for achievement and self-development, while also promoting development of groups and organizations" (Bass and Avolio, 1990, p.22). More specifically, "a transformational leader is one who articulates a shared vision of the future, intellectually stimulates subordinates, provides a great deal of support to individuals, recognizes individual differences, and sets high expectations" ( Kirkman et al., 2009, p.744). These leaders, give followers a heightened awareness to basic issues, to the whole group and organization, while at the same time increase their confidence (Bass and Avolio, 1990).

Regarding OCB, it has indisputably been considered a positive behavior in the workplace, which helps the development of organizations, employees and work (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Koopman et al., 2016). Just because OCB is of great importance for promoting knowledge sharing in organizations and cooperative relationships, it has started to gain particular attention as an effect of transformational leadership (Kirkman et al., 2009 ; Pillai Schriesheim and Williams, 1999). The characteristics of OCB refer to behaviors which are outside of employees job description, and are not practically rewarded, but play a significant role in organizational performance (Organ, 1988).

Since we are dealing with the business sector, OCB is now essential for business success (Coldwell and Callaghan, 2014). More specifically, research has shown that Transformational Leadership is a significant factor that leads to employees OCBs in different organizational contexts (Cartel et al., 2014; Khalili, 2017).

Based on the above discussion, Greece is a very good case for investigation. Especially in this period, in which all organizations and firms have restrictions and strict policies, and the organizational climate has been shocked. Our outcomes could encourage researchers to focus more on how enterprises can maximize the effect of transformational leadership (Kim and Park, 2019) and promote engagement, trust and satisfaction to increase employees' citizenship behaviors.

All in all, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behavior in Greek enterprises during the pandemic, and the possible mediating roles of job satisfaction, trust and work engagement. At first, the study presents the theoretical framework accompanied by the relevant hypotheses. Subsequently, the paper analyses the data and the methodology of the research. Then, it lists the results of the analysis and after that, the conclusions. At last, practical implications are described followed by the limitations of the study.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### *2.1 Transformational leadership (TFL)*

Although there is a lot of research on leadership lately, transformational leadership has piqued the interest of many researchers and has been examined extensively (Zhu et al., 2013). Scholars categorized leadership in two fields: “transformational” and

“transactional” (Puni et al., 2020). Transactional leadership is considered to be simply the basis for effective leadership, as it is not interested in the full development of followers (Bass and Avolio, 1990). In addition, House (1996) indicated that transformational leadership can replace transactional leadership in order to challenge a positive work climate among employees. Moreover, according to Bass and Avolio (1990), transformational leaders are more effective than transactional leaders, and that has nothing to do with how "effectiveness has been defined or measured" (p.23).

Transformational leadership was developed by Bass (1985). According to Purvanova et al. (2006, p.3), “transformational leaders influence the way employees think about their work, leading them to view it as more rewarding, challenging, and meaningful, which affects the extent to which they engage in citizenship performance”.

Transformational leadership has four basic dimensions: “idealized influence”, “individualized consideration”, “intellectual stimulation” and “inspirational motivation” (Kim and Park, 2019). The first one, helps leaders have a clear vision and mission, and can achieve the highest levels of development and performance of their followers. Individualized consideration specializes in capabilities and needs of followers (Bass and Avolio, 1990). In intellectual stimulation, leaders foster creativity and use specific strategies in order to solve any problem that might occur. Last but not least, inspirational motivation is overwhelmed by enthusiasm and will for work, and these behaviors are what leaders expect from their followers (Bass and Avolio, 1990).

A transformational leader acts like a coach to his followers and contributes decisively to their development and progress (Cho and Donsereau, 2010). He also acts as a role model and this is proved by the fact that his behavior is exemplary and admired by everyone (Bass and Avolio, 1994). This includes exceptional ethical behavior, the adoption of personal goals which are not self-centered, and lastly a willingness to achieve these goals despite the possible personal cost and self sacrifice (Walumbwa and Hartnell, 2011). In addition, a transformational leader’s behavior generates respect and trust by his followers, and makes them more proud of the organization and more able to work harder. This happens because these leaders encourage followers to be creative and make innovative proposals and thoughts (Zhu et al., 2013). For them learning is valuable and problems can be converted to opportunities (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

## *2.2 Transformational Leadership and Trust*

In this study, trust concerns the employee-manager relationship. With a cursory look at the models of transformational leadership (e.g. Bass, 1985 ; Kark and Shamir, 2002), everyone can see that trust in leader often plays a significant role. One power central to the procedure of effective transformational leadership is the development of employee trust in the leader (Jung and Avolio, 2000 ; Kark et al., 2003). Trust has been generally used to measure the quality of social exchange between employee and leader (Pillai et al, 1999 ; Schaubroeck, Lam and Peng, 2011 ; Lavelle et al, 2007). According to Rousseau et al., (1998, p.395), “trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another”. In fact, when working relationships are governed by trust, followers tend to work more in order to get the wanted results (Konovsky and Pugh, 1994). It is also important to mention that interpersonal trust generally, is a very important factor for organizations. In addition, according to Lyu and Ferrin (2018, p.67), “ interpersonal trust refers to the trust that one individual has toward another specific individual”.

It has many perspectives such as cognitive, affective and behavioral (Lewicki et al., 2006). McAllister (1995) indicated that there are two dimensions of trust, cognitive and affective. Colquitt et al., (2012) mentioned that affect-based trust and cognition-based trust tend to represent two different functions. The cognitive dimension of trust, concerns issues of honesty, integrity and justice. It also gives employees a sense of confidence about managers' decisions and actions, reducing their uncertainty and risk rooted in a hierarchical relationship (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002 ; Yang et al., 2009). In simple words, cognition-based trust, affects follower attitudes by making them believe more in their leader's ability to guide their task performance (Mayer et al., 1995). A failure of the leader to meet these expectations, may lead to diminished trust (McAllister 1995). Consequently, employees conclude a lot of things about their managers' characteristics, like ability and integrity which are components of cognitive trust (Zhu and Akhtar, 2014). On the other hand, affective aspects concern emotional relationships between manager-employees. More specifically, affect-based trust as a social exchange process (Blau, 1964), refers to our obligation to reciprocate and enhance emotional bonds between leaders and followers. These bonds are related to empathy and familiarity (Kim and Park, 2019). An employee develops affective trust towards a



manager, when (s)he understands that the motives of the latter are sincere and selfless (Chen et al., 2011). It also increased over time as the trustor and the trustee engage in a process of social exchange through the mutual support and concern (McAllister, 1995 ; Rempel, Holmes and Zanna, 1985).

When employees realize that their leader really cares about them and their progress, they try to show their trust in practice (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002). Finally, according to Lewicki et al., (2006), behavioral aspects are based on good attitudes and behaviors that prevail among the involved sides. For example, employees are so sure that their manager would keep his word for an issue. Trust evokes reciprocity, and therefore when we show absolute trust in someone it is quite possible that he will behave reliably and as a result, trust us too (Mayer et al., 1995).

A transformational leader who acts as a role model to his followers, should logically elicit higher trust levels (Jung and Avolio, 2000). Trust is a basic component of good leadership. It has been proven that when employees have trust in their managers and believe in them, they try hard to give their best self for their work in order to achieve more (Mayer et al., 1995). As a result, the following hypotheses are formulated.

**Hypothesis 1:** Transformational leadership is positively related to Trust.

### *2.3 Trust and Work Engagement*

Nowadays, many researchers have an eye on work engagement, as what is well known about it is that it has positive results for organizations (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Researches depicted that work engagement is a special, distinct and valid construct (Shantz et al., 2013 ; Hallberg and Schaufeli 2006 ; Seppala et al. 2009). Schaufeli et al. (2002), proposed a definition for work engagement in which it's appeared as "a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption (p.74). More specifically, vigor is a special dimension of work engagement

as it consists of great levels of energy at work, mental resilience and persistence in the face of job difficulties (Shaufeli and Bakker, 2004). As for dedication, that specific element is characterized by enthusiasm, pride and inspiration. Finally, the third dimension of work engagement, absorption, describes a person fully dedicated to his/her job, and fully concentrated (Shaufeli and Bakker, 2004). They also argued that work engagement is not a state that can be concretized but it is "a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior" (p.74).

In addition, Christian et al. (2011, p.95) described it as "a relatively enduring state of mind referring to the simultaneous investment of personal energies in the experience or performance of work". Work engagement is not just a factor that looks like a trait, but it may vary within the same person as time goes by (Tims, Bakker and Xanthopoulou, 2011 ; Sonnentag, 2003; Sonnentag et al., 2010). It is well known that organizations and management generally have to deal with many necessary goals, but engagement belongs to the top ones (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2015). All in all, engaged followers are enthusiastic and have high levels of energy. It is also important to mention that they are often too absorbed in their work that most of the time pass without realizing it (May et al., 2004). Furthermore, engaged employees have high self-efficacy and energy and that helps them to control some events that influence their lives (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008).

As an example, we can present the fact that because of their whole positive attitude engaged followers create positive feedback for themselves , concerning success and appreciation. In addition, so as not to create misunderstandings, engaged employees do have a life outside work and they feel weakened after a day of hard work. For them, working is fun and despite the fact that they are engaged in their work, they are not workaholics (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). Nevertheless, although work engagement is a personal attitude, with positive results for the enterprises, it should bring at first, positive outcomes to each employee individually (Saks, 2006). It has even been supported that employees who show greater engagement to their work, think more positively, and are mentally healthy (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008).

For effective leaders, trust is very important and necessary because through this, they can shape work engagement (Fleig-Palmer et al., 2018). It is proven that relationships

based on trust exude respect and engagement. After all, when employees realize that the manager is interested in their progress and wants to help them grow, they immediately show their commitment to the job (Costigan, Iiter and Berman, 1998). The relationship between trust and work engagement is strongly connected and leads to desired results. Studies have shown that as trust grows, more positive workplace behaviors are created, like employee work engagement and organizational commitment (Hassan and Ahmed, 2011). Findings of Liou (1995) showed that trust in manager was predictive of engagement to the organization. Moreover, research of Wong et al (2010) found that trust has positively influenced work engagement. In fact, increased trust can lead to a situation in which employees are actively engaged in their work (Engelbrecht, Heine and Mahembe, 2016). Based on the preceding discussion, the second hypothesis is stipulated as follows:

**Hypothesis 2:** Trust is positively related to work engagement.

#### *2.4 Trust and Job Satisfaction*

The term job satisfaction refers to people's feelings about their work, and is the combination of emotions and perceptions that employees have for their current job (Havold and Glavee-Geo, 2021). It is the consequence of success in work, which leads to recognition. Job satisfaction according to Locke (1970) is "the form in which an individual experiences his appraisal of an object or situation against the standard of what he considers good or beneficial" (p.485). Recent theories describe it as a function of two factors: 1) dispositional, which has to do with the employee personality, and 2) situational, referring to various work factors (Gyekye and Haybatollahi, 2015). However, what is most commonly accepted is that job satisfaction is a positive emotion that an employee feels for his/her job, and consequently a measure of the working conditions (Judge et al, 2000).

Moreover, according to Pillai et al. (1999), although transformational leadership might be a significant antecedent of trust, consequences of trust include satisfaction and citizenship behaviors. Furthermore, Lagace, (1991) in his research found that trust influences job satisfaction. Many researchers have found a positive relationship between trust and job satisfaction (Brockner et al., 1997 ; Davis, Schoorman, Mayer and Tan, 2000 ; Cho and Park, 2011; Kim and Park, 2014). Leaders apply some practices like reward, coaching etc, that have an effect on employee satisfaction (Asencio, 2016). For that reason, when managers apply such practices, employees feel safer and realize that their leader can be trusted (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002). As Gill (2008) indicated, employees with higher levels of trust will probably have higher levels of job satisfaction. According to Nasomboon (2014), trust is a very important factor for organizational satisfaction and performance. Studies have shown that when employees trust their managers, they are more satisfied with their job (Perry and Mankin, 2007; Testa et al., 2003). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is stipulated as follows:

**Hypothesis 3:** Trust is positively related to Job Satisfaction.

### *2.5 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)*

OCB is defined as an "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988, p.4). This kind of behaviors "lubricate the social machinery of the organization", "provide the flexibility needed to work through many unforeseen contingencies", and help employees in an organization "cope with the otherwise awesome condition of interdependence on each other" (Smith et al., 1983, p. 654). This definition as Podsakoff et al., (2000) indicated, have its roots in Barnard's (1938) concept of personal's willingness to cooperate and Katz's (1964) separation between an employee's performance of work functions and "innovative and spontaneous behaviors". Generally, according to Organ (1990), OCB concerns all these "organizationally beneficial behaviors and gestures that can neither be enforced on the basis of formal role obligations nor elicited by contractual guarantee of recompense"

(p.46). In addition, OCBs represent specific employee behaviors that “do not support the technical core itself as much as they support the organizational, social and psychological environment in which the technical core must function” (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993, p.73). These discretionary behaviors have an effect in the organization by creating social environment which is suitable for the accomplishment of work. They include attending functions, advocating to the organization, which are not formally required from the organization (Borman and Motowidlo, 1977 ; Organ, 1997).

OCB has a plethora of features and dimensions that have been analyzed by various researchers (Kim and Park, 2019). More specifically, significant to be mentioned are the five dimensions of OCB proposed by Organ (1988): “altruism”, “conscientiousness”, “courtesy”, “civic virtue”, and “sportsmanship”. These mainly concern good behavior initiatives of employees related to their every day work activities. For example helping their colleagues with their duties, encouraging them and generally a willingness to do more than what their job description requires (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Employees develop new strategies in order to achieve alternative goals that concern the organization (Fay and Sonnentag, 2012).

OCB concerns the extra-role performance in comparison with in-role performance which depicts how each employee performs his required work duties (Christian et al., 2011). It also leads to organizational effectiveness (Coldwell and Callaghan, 2013). Lam et al., (1997) provided significant information about in-role and extra-role behaviors and clarified which behaviors constitute organizational citizenship behaviors. Many researchers have also reported that citizenship behaviors are related to significant organizational outcomes (Podsakoff, Ahearne and Mackenzie, 1997). In addition, according to Organ (1988), extra role behaviors also known as “the concept of the good soldier”, contribute to individual and collective development. As a result, if employees go beyond their necessary tasks in order to support their colleagues with their problems, and their organization in general, organizational performance will definitely be increased (Messersmith et al., 2011).

## *2.6 Work Engagement and OCB*

Engaged employees are persistent, energetic, very concentrated in their work and have a sense of pride. Most of the times they view their work as interesting and challenging instead of demanding, boring or stressful ( Bakker, Demerouti and Sanz-Vergel, 2014). Thus, work engagement plays a significant role in employees well being, in-role and extra-role performance (Ng et al., 2019). It is a significant factor for improving OCB among employees across several organizations. It is well known that engaged employees always try to do something more for their work, help their colleagues and make innovative suggestions to improve their department. This willingness and desire for more called extra-role behavior (Reijseger et al., 2017). Concerning OCB, it is perfectly natural to expect that work engagement is directly related to attitudes and behaviors of employees. The very good mood and will for success that engaged employees have, is possible to result in citizenship behaviors (Saks, 2006). There is also some empirical research which has highlighted relationships between work engagement and outcomes.

A characteristic example is that work engagement has shown to be positively related to organizational commitment and negatively to intention to quit (Schaufeli and Bakker,2004). Therefore, we can expect that work engagement will also be positively related to extra role performance and OCB (Saks, 2006). For the above reasons it is assumed that work engagement will be related to OCB as follows:

**Hypothesis 4:** Work engagement is positively related to OCB.

## *2.7 Job Satisfaction and OCB*

The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior has been analyzed by many researchers and exists in autonia in the literature (Foote and Tang, 2008). As we know from the literature, job satisfaction has been related to many

positive work outcomes like organizational citizenship behavior, in different cultural contexts and occupations (Ng et al., 2019). In addition, Smith et al. (1983) proposed that job satisfaction, because of its positive characteristics, could possibly lead to citizenship behaviors. Organ (1988) indicated that satisfied employees can be driven to extra-role behaviors (eg, organizational citizenship behaviors). Satisfaction motivates employees to engage in behaviors they would not have if the things were different (Messersmith et al, 2011).

In fact, a meta analysis of Organ and Ryan (1995) confirmed the relationship between job satisfaction and OCB. Increased job satisfaction may lead to high levels of commitment and ultimately to enhance the volume of organizational citizenship behavior that exists in organizations (Bolino et al., 2002 ; Wilke and Lanzetta, 1970). The more employees have something to gain from their work and see that their efforts matter and are rewarded, the more likely it is to have citizenship behaviors (Ilies et al., 2009). Hence, the fifth hypothesis is stipulated as follows:

**Hypothesis 5:** Job Satisfaction is positively related to OCB.

## *2.8 The mediating role of Trust*

In view of all the above, it is natural to expect that trust mediates the relationship between TFL, with work engagement and job satisfaction. Podsakoff et al., (1990), found that trust in leader mediates the impact of transformational leadership on follower outcomes. In addition, trust should actually mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee outcomes because it captures the whole procedure that occurs as managers engage in social exchange with their followers (Yang and Mossholder, 2010). When leaders believe they are authentic, and their followers perceive this, it might lead followers to have more trust in their leaders and therefore a bigger level of work engagement (Hsieh and Wang, 2015).

Moreover, employees who feel they gain managers' favorite treatment, are possible to trust them and to have positive affective responses, like job satisfaction (Liu et al., 2010 ; Zhu and Akhtar, 2014). When leaders consistently reward followers for increased

performance, all types of employees, high and low performance, will increase their trust to them (Greenberg, 2003). As a result, followers who trust their managers will be more satisfied in their jobs (Davis et al., 2000), just because they are sure that their leaders will continue to honor their contracts (Avolio et al., 1999).

If employees have close ties with their leaders, share their feelings and emotions with them and trust leaders' actions, they might develop special attachments and experience positive emotions in the workplace that increase their job satisfaction (Yang et al., 2009 ; Braun et al., 2013). Last but not least, when leaders show their care and concern for their employees, the latter become more satisfied and engaged with their job and try to improve their work performance (Karatepe, 2011). Based on the preceding discussion, the last hypothesis is stipulated as follows:

**Hypothesis 6:** Trust mediates the relationship between transformational leadership with a) work engagement and b) job satisfaction.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 Procedure and Sample*

Taking into account all the needs for the research, the data was collected across a severe amount of Greek enterprises (convenient sample process), located in many cities of Greece, in Autumn 2021. During the difficult period that we are experiencing due to the pandemic covid-19, enterprises are trying to adapt into the new reality, faithfully implementing the government's measures. The pandemic has certainly affected the



profits and the organizational climate of Greek enterprises, however with will and hard work they meet their obligations as best as possible, giving their best for customer service. Furthermore, in the first stage of the research, and before the questionnaire was even created, we communicated with the HR managers of the firms in order to inform them and get their approval for our research. It was very important to talk to them about our research objectives. In addition, an electronic questionnaire was developed in which the anonymity of the respondents was completely preserved. Due to the difficult situations, we could not use a handwritten one. The participating enterprises are manufacturing firms, multinational food and beverage companies and accounting organizations. Shortly after the initial communication, the link to our questionnaire was sent to the HR managers who forwarded it to their company employees, taking care to inform them about their voluntary participation and anonymity.

The total number of employees who participated in the survey was 124. As for the demographics, 32,3% of the sample were male and 67,7% were female, while at the same time, the average age of the employees was 28,12 years ( $SD= 4.997$ ). Regarding the educational level, 67,7% held a bachelor's degree while only 4% were high school graduates. Moreover, a significant percentage of 29% held a master's degree. In addition, 71,5% of employees were working under a full time contract, whereas 12,2% were working under a part time contract. Last but not least, 17,1% of employees were working under a fixed-term contract. Regarding job positions, employees held production positions, administrative positions, accounting positions, sales positions etc.

### *3.2 Measures*

For all measures, employees provided responses on a five-point likert scale (“1= totally disagree, 5= strongly agree”). Furthermore, “Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)” was conducted through SmartPLS.

### 3.2.1 *"Transformational Leadership"*

"Transformational Leadership" was assessed by six items, based on the seven item scale of Global Transformational Leadership (GTL) developed by Carless, Wearing and Mann, (2000). Sample items include "How often your manager fosters trust, involvement and cooperation among team members?" and "How often your manager is clear about his/her values and practices what he/she preaches?". Cronbach's alpha was 0.917.

### 3.2.2 *"Trust"*

The initial intention in our research was to measure "Interpersonal Trust" and its sub factors "affect-based trust" and "cognition-based" trust. However, we chose to measure trust with a single variable, as it fits better in our case. "Trust" was measured by four items, based on the affect-based trust scale developed by Mc Allister's (1995). Sample items for trust include "We have a sharing relationship. We can both freely share our ideas, feelings, and hopes" and "I can talk freely to this individual about difficulties I am having at work and I know that (s)he will want to listen". Cronbach's alpha for trust was 0.891.

### 3.2.3 *"Work Engagement"*

"Work Engagement" was measured by six items based on the work vigor scale developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004; based on Schaufeli et al., 2002). Sample items include "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work" and "At my work, I feel bursting with energy". Cronbach's alpha was 0.850.

### 3.2.4 “*Job Satisfaction*”

Job Satisfaction was measured by three items based on the scale developed by Seashore et al., (1983). Sample items include “All in all, I am satisfied with my job”, and “In general, I like working here”. Cronbach’s alpha was 0.872.

### 3.2.5 “*Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)*”

“OCB” was measured by nine items based on the scale developed by Smith et al., (1983). Sample items include “ I assist my supervisor with his or her work” and “I make innovative suggestions to improve my department”. Cronbach’s alpha was 0.723.

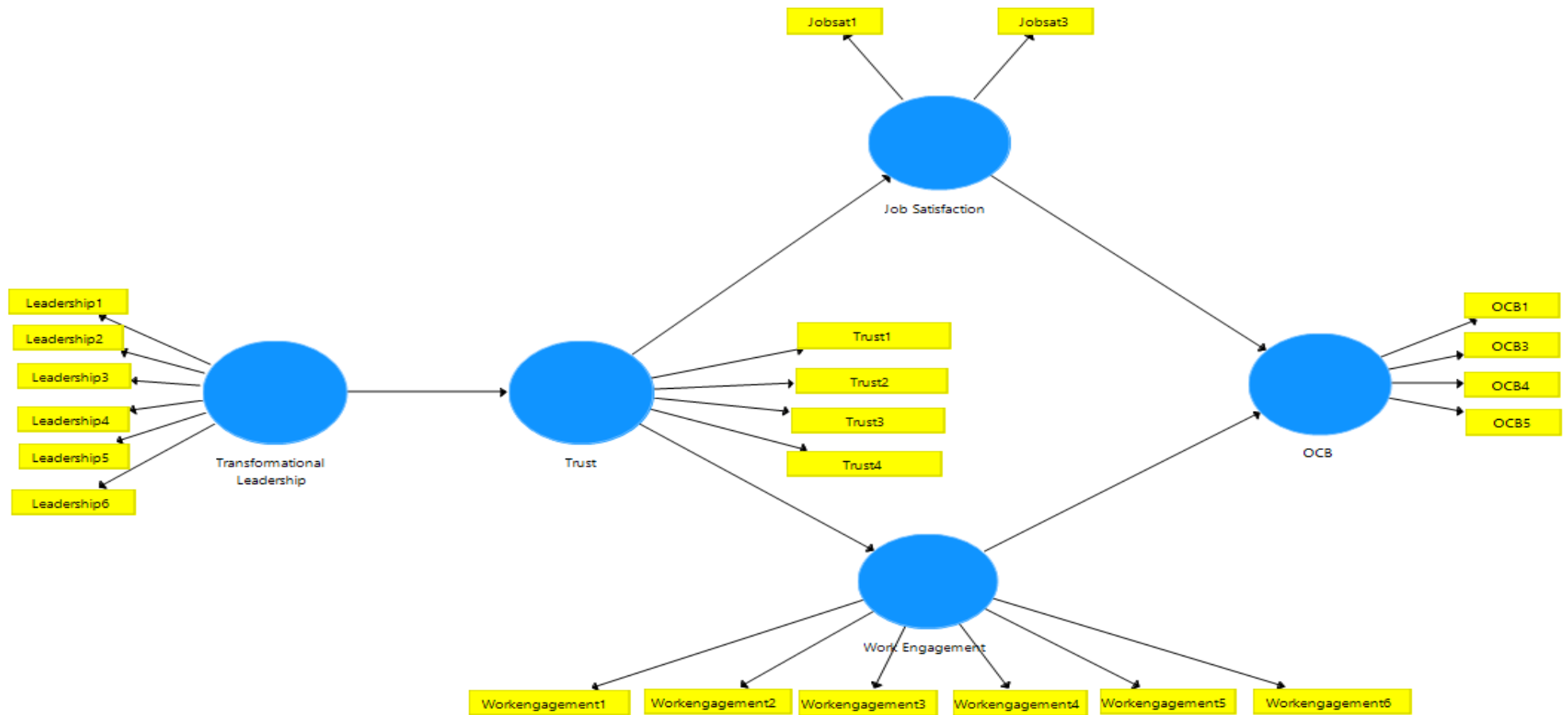
## 3.3 *Control Variables*

A few individual-level variables were controlled, including “gender” where (“1= male”, “2= female), and the “level of education” (“1= High School Diploma”, “2= Bachelor’s Degree”. “3= Master’s Degree). The majority of the employees however, were working under a full time contract (71,5%), so type of employment was not included as a control variable.

## 3.4 *Method of Analysis*

For the needs of the survey, “Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)” was attributed with the “SmartPLS 3.2” (Ringle et al., 2014) which is very widespread lately. In addition PLS-SEM can also include hierarchical component models. These models are comprised by formative and reflective constructs, which was very important for our research. Figure 1 depicts the original model. In the end,, the final model emerges (see Fig. 2).

Figure 1: The "Original" model



### 3.5 Assessment of the measurement model

According to the above, the conceptual model consists of all reflective indicators. About them, validity and reliability was counted by Hair's et al., (2014, p95) instructions, which include "individual indicator reliability", "composite reliability (CR)", and "Average Variance Extracted (AVE)". Regarding Table 1, all factor loadings were above 0.5 threshold, while at the same time, the AVE and CR scores were also above the threshold of 0.5 and 0.70 respectively.

As for discriminant validity, two criteria were followed, which are available in SmartPLS (Hensler, Ringle and Sarsted, 2014), namely the "Fornell-Lacker", and the "Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio" (HTMT<0,85). Just because all the HTMT values were below 0.85, discriminant validity was held.

Table 1: Properties of the measurement model

Dimension	Item	Loading	Mean	SDs	CR	AVE
<b>Transformational leadership</b> , <i>Carless, Wearing and Mann, 2000</i>	How frequently your manager communicates a clear and positive vision of the future?	0.822	3.952	1.038	0.935	0.707
	How frequently your manager treats staff as individuals, supports and encourages their development?	0.887	3.893	0.954		
	How frequently your manager fosters trust, involvement and cooperation among team members?	0.854	3.992	1.020		
	How frequently your manager encourages thinking about problems in new ways and questions assumptions?	0.798	4.113	0.935		
	How frequently your manager is clear about his/her values and practices what he/she preaches?	0.808	4.185	0.928		
	How frequently your manager instills pride and respect in others and inspires you by being highly competent?	0.872	4.081	1.013		
	<b>Cronbach's a</b>		<b>0.917</b>			

Table 1 (continued)

Dimension	Item	Loading	Mean	SDs	CR	AVE
<b>Trust, Mc Allister, 1995</b>	We have a sharing relationship. We can both freely share our ideas, feelings, and hopes.	0.856	4.089	0.916	0.755	0.925
	I can talk freely to this individual about difficulties I am having at work and know that (s)he will want to listen.	0.902	3.863	0.995		
	We would both feel a sense of loss if one of us was transferred and we could no longer work together.	0.818	4.121	1.082		
	If I shared my problems with this person, I know (s)he would respond constructively and caringly.	0.897	3.887	0.961		
	<b>Cronbach's a</b>	<b>0.891</b>				
<b>Job Satisfaction, Seashore et al., 1983</b>	All in all, I am satisfied with my job	0.945	4.089	0.852	0.940	0.887
	In general, I like working here	0.939	4.347	0.871		
	<b>Cronbach's a</b>	<b>0.872</b>				
<b>Work Engagement, Vigor Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) based on Schaufeli et al. (2002)</b>	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	0.827	4.032	0.782	0.889	0.577
	At my work, I feel bursting with energy	0.842	4.056	0.910		
	At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well	0.599	4.210	0.754		
	I can continue working for very long periods at a time	0.607	4.145	0.868		
	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally	0.764	4.089	0.889		
	At my job I feel strong and vigorous	0.871	4.258	0.739		
	<b>Cronbach's a</b>	<b>0.850</b>				
<b>OCB, Smith et al. (1983)</b>	I volunteer for things that are not required	0.641	3.782	0.921	0.825	0.545
	I help others who have heavy work loads	0.633	4.323	0.702		
	I assist my supervisor with his or her work	0.825	4.242	0.874		
	I make innovative suggestions to improve my department	0.829	3.992	0.963		
	<b>Cronbach's a</b>	<b>0.723</b>				

Item loadings are based on Exploratory Factor Analysis made on SmartPLS

SDs: Standard Deviation; CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted

## 4. Results

In analyzing the structural model (Figure 2), the bootstrapping procedure was applied (2000 randomly drawn samples). Table 2 and figure 2 shows the path coefficient along with their significance levels.

*Table 2: Summary of Path Coefficients and Significance levels*

<b>Direct Hypotheses and Corresponding Paths</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>	<b>T-Statistics</b>	<b>Hypothesis Support</b>
Transformational Leadership --> Trust	0.770	15.991	H1 supported
Trust --> Work Engagement	0.594	6.921	H2 supported
Trust --> Job Satisfaction	0.687	8.345	H3 supported
Work Engagement --> OCB	0.614	5.720	H4 supported
Job Satisfaction --> OCB	-0.060	0.454	H5 not supported
Transformational Leadership --> Work Engagement	0.457	5.671	-
Transformational Leadership--> Job Satisfaction	0.528	6.461	-

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**Mediation hypotheses and corresponding path**

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Transformational Leadership -> Trust -> Work Engagement	0.457	5.671	H6a supported
Transformational Leadership -> Trust -> Job Satisfaction	0.528	6.461	H6b supported

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More specifically, table 2 shows that transformational leadership positively influences trust ( $\beta = 0.770$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), therefore Hypothesis 1 is supported. Furthermore, trust is positively associated with both work engagement ( $\beta = 0.594$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.687$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), thus supporting Hypotheses 2 and 4.

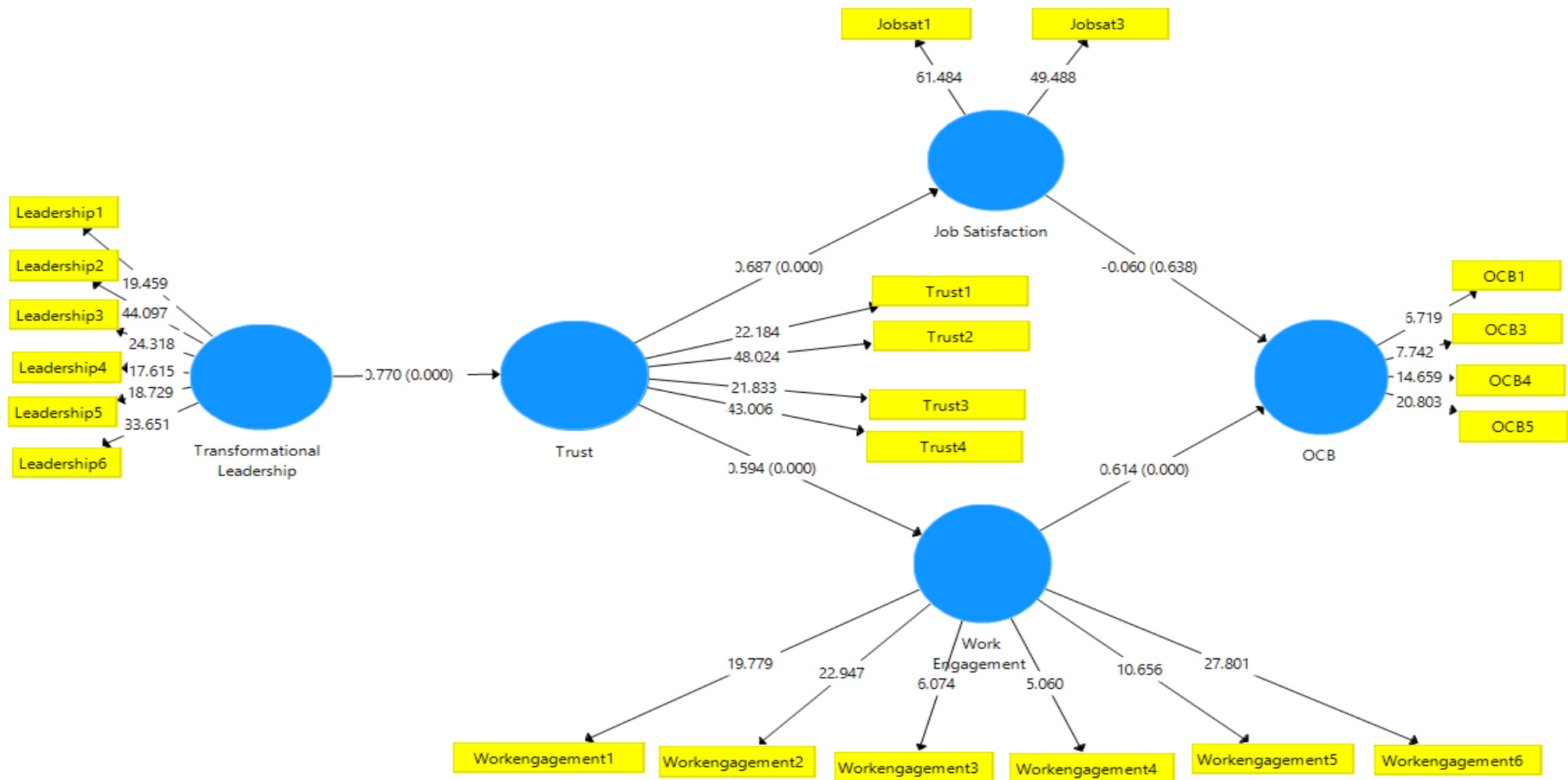
Moreover, work engagement is positively related to OCB ( $\beta = 0.614$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) so Hypothesis 3 is supported. On the other hand, job satisfaction is negatively related to OCB ( $\beta = -0.228$ ,  $p > 0.001$ ), thus the 5th Hypothesis is not supported.

In addition, Hypothesis 6 proposed that trust mediates the relationship between transformational leadership with work engagement and OCB. Based on the process that is followed regarding mediation, the “indirect effects” between the “independent” (i.e. Transformational Leadership) and the “dependent” (i.e. work engagement, job satisfaction) variables should be statistically significant (Zhao, Lynch and Chen, 2010, p. 204).

These indirect relationships were calculated based on the “product-of-coefficient ( $\alpha\beta$ ) approach” (MacKinnon et al., 2002), via the bootstrap analysis (2000 samples) option in SmartPLS. As stated in Table 2, the indirect effects between TFL and work engagement ( $\beta = 0.457$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and with job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.528$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), through trust were statistically significant, thus Hypotheses 6a and 6b are supported.



Figure 2: The "Final Model" conceptual framework



## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

The present study is an effort to approach the mechanism of transformational leadership on Organizational citizenship behavior (Podsakoff et al., 1990), and to investigate the relationships between transformational leadership, trust, work engagement and job satisfaction in organizations. COVID-19 has created economic problems which must be overcome (Amoah and Simpeh, 2020). However, in this difficult period we are in, we analyzed the role of transformational leadership in the business sector which had to change their policies in order to adapt to the new reality.

First of all, we analyzed the relationship between transformational leadership and trust. According to Bass (1985), trust in leader is a very important element in organizations. When transformational leaders act as role models and exhibit admired behaviors, they provide idealized influence ( Judge and Piccolo, 2004). It is proven that when there is effective and fair leadership, the levels of trust are increasing constantly (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002), and employees trust their managers more easily. Organizations must take the responsibility for ensuring that trust is developed through specific functions and policies (Engelbrecht et al., 2016). Our study confirmed the hypothesis that transformational leaders are able to positively influence employees' trust in enterprises. Therefore, when transformational leaders show respect and encouragement to their followers, the trust levels of the latter increase (Burke et al., 2007).

Moreover, the study investigated the connection between trust and work engagement. About trust, there is evidence confirming the connection with employees' engagement to the company (Mayer and Gavin, 2005). The relationship between trust and work engagement is very important and of course necessary in an organization, as it may affect work outcomes (Walton, 1985). In addition, according to Schneider et al., (2010), although a lot of factors at the workplace contribute to engagement, engaged behavior appears under conditions of trust. That happens because engaged employees risk by showing their real self and do not care about the possible negative consequences (Holland et al., 2016). The results of our analysis confirmed that theory and showed that trust is positively associated with employees' levels of work engagement. Furthermore, the study tried to shed light on the relationship among trust and job satisfaction. It goes without saying that employees who trust their managers and express what they really

feel, as we said before, will probably have higher levels of satisfaction in their work. Pillai et al., (1999), referred to the fact that an expected consequence of trust in organizations is job satisfaction. Indeed our research confirmed that hypothesis. Employees, feeling this connection with their managers and knowing that they can count on them, they find ways to make their work easier for them and consequently increase the levels of their job satisfaction.

In addition, we tried to examine the role of work engagement, and its consequences on organizational citizenship behavior. As indicated above, there is a general thought which supports the existence of a relationship between employee engagement and business results (Harter et al., 2002). Engaged employees feel that they want to reciprocate all the things that their work offers them, and thus, they seek for better solutions to their problems, support their colleagues and exhibit OCBs (Aryee et al., 2016; Luu, 2019; Reijseger et al., 2017). Moreover, according to Saks (2006), employees who are more engaged with their work, are able to be in more high quality and trusting relationships with their colleagues and show extra role behaviors. It is true that employees who are in a positive state like engagement, fully understand the knowledge they acquire at their workplace, so the levels of their creativity are increased and pay more attention to organizational goals and their own development (Fredrickson, 2001). The hypothesis that examines the positive relationship between work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior was tested and confirmed during the analysis.

Furthermore, the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) was examined. As Smith et al. (1983) indicated, it is natural to expect that an employee who is satisfied with his/her job, will show extra role and citizenship behaviors. In the present study, we stated an hypothesis which referred to the positive influence of job satisfaction on OCB. However, because of the fact that our research could not prove this positive influence, that hypothesis was not confirmed. In order to solve that issue, leaders should focus on increasing their leadership competencies in order to build a more motivated and productive workforce. As we know, employees who are satisfied enough with their jobs, can be more productive and motivated (Dumdum et al., 2002 ; Howell and Fost, 1989 ; Wofford et al., 2001), and why not some time appear citizenship behaviors. Nevertheless, a possible explanation that we can give, is that if an employee is just satisfied with his/her job, that's not enough in

order to have extra role behaviors. On the contrary, as we said before OCB has a strong relationship with work engagement.

Finally, there was a hypothesis which referred to the mediating role of trust towards linking transformational leadership with work engagement and job satisfaction. Podsakoff et al. (1996) indicated, trust is a very important factor and plays a significant role in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee outcomes. Our results indeed proved that trust mediates the relationship with both work engagement and job satisfaction.

All in all, the sample of this research consisted of 124 employees' in various Greek enterprises, during Autumn. The evidence of the present study showed that transformational leader behaviors influence employees' citizenship behaviors indirectly. We showed the important role of the leader in order to increase employees' feelings of trust. Subsequently, trust proved to be associated both with work engagement and with job satisfaction. On the contrary, the relationship between job satisfaction and OCB was not strong enough in order to be statistically significant. It is not enough for someone to be just satisfied with his/her work. Other elements needed for extra role behaviors. Other factors like work engagement were more important for employees in order to have such behaviors.

We also hope to help others understand the important role of trust as a mediator to the relationship between transformational leadership with work engagement and job satisfaction. Social relationships are characterized by steady emotional underpinnings, and are developing as both parts engage in a process of social reciprocity (Tan and Chee, 2005). Lastly, HR departments of the enterprises and also the management, should focus on practices and strategies that have positive effects on employees, and increase their citizenship behaviors.

## **6. Practical and Theoretical Implications**

The present study quotes some practical and theoretical implications which can lead to organizational success and performance outcomes. It is well known that all leaders want the best not only for their team, but also for the whole organization. In our study, the

nature of the leader and his policies proved to influence employees' performance. The suitable leadership style can make them more engaged and consequently show extra role behaviors (Li and Hung, 2009). Employees exposed to transformational leaders obtain the leaders' care, develop emotional attachment and embrace the promise to respond to leaders by exhibiting helping behavior towards coworkers (Li and Hung, 2009; Song, Tsui and Law, 2009). In addition, in order to improve the work outcomes of their followers, leaders should pay attention to how in the end their transformational leadership behavior may contribute to the creation of trust. They should also try to create a social exchange relationship with their followers, which will lately help to the development of trust (Zhu et al., 2013). Moreover, according to Fleig-Palmer et al., (2018), when there is trust in the manager-employee relationship, employees feel more comfortable, express themselves freely and are more engaged with their work. Specific strategies that may be used by managers to enhance the process of trust might include encouragement to followers and empowerment of followers to take responsibility in decision making (Avolio and Bass, 1995 ; Dirks and Ferrin, 2002 ; Jung and Avolio, 2000 ; Schaubroeck et al., 2011). These findings consequently highlight the value of examining trust as a multidimensional construct (Zhu and Akhtar, 2013).

Furthermore, this study also indicates that work engagement has positive and significant effects on OCB. Studies have shown that when an organization provides employee opportunities to engage in several activities, followers are likely to be more involved in plenty of activities as citizens of the organizations they belong to (Chang et al., 2011). In that way, organizations should take into consideration to put extra effort in order to create a great working environment, suitable for all employees in which they can increase their knowledge, achieve self development and goals, not only personal but also collective.

Enterprises could also adopt certain socialization practices according to Grant (2007,2008), in order to activate employees' prosocial motivation. Finally, most of the enterprises suffered major problems during the pandemic, so future research could focus on examining crisis management.

## 7. Limitations

All things considered, despite our great effort for theoretical material, the research has some limitations that are worthy of further investigation. First of all, since the present study is cross-sectional in nature with the data collected at one point in time, the directions of the causality cannot be examined. However, it is well known that “a lot of good work can still be done cross-sectionally, as in the exploration of different theories of employee well-being, especially when a strong theory-driven model is tested through structural equation modelling” (Boxall, Guthrie and Paauwe, 2016, p.109).

In addition, the data of the analysis was collected from several enterprises of Greece, but as expected, there is a whole Greek business sector that needs to be investigated further. Furthermore, it was very difficult for us to collect answers because of the pandemic, and that is obvious from the low number of answers to our questionnaire. During these tough times, many enterprises employ a smaller number of people than before, and that was an obstacle for our research. Moreover, just because our findings were derived from the Greek business sector, we recommend future research to focus on examining similar concepts in other circumstances.

At last, further research should also examine how leader and organizational support could influence employees' level of involvement with organizational citizenship behaviors (Kim and Park, 2019). Also, future studies should adopt a “multi-level” approach, combining answers of both managers and employees (Ang et al., 2013, p.3089).

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