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Federal employee views across administrations: An examination of the 2010 Obama and 2018

Trump leadership capital and the perceptions of the agency employees

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the

Department of Public Policy and Administration

West Chester University

West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Doctor of Public Administration

By

Dimple Sunayna Johnson

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Abstract

One of the many responsibilities of the president is the management of the expansive federal government. From agenda planning to reform implementation, a political leader can impact the federal employees' job role. The federal government, however, does not administer alone, top-down mandates are managed by tiers of management, with the front-line supervisors acting as the liaison to federal employees. Understanding a president's leadership capital alongside the federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support can provide opportunities to gain insight into establishing and maintaining a public sector landscape that is effective and efficient.

The study consisted of a quantitative analysis of secondary data to examine federal employee perceptions informed by the leadership capital of two political leaders. The Leadership Capital Index (LCI) was utilized to assess and identify whether there is a difference in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Subsequently, the 2010 and 2018 Federal Employee Viewpoint Surveys (FEVS) were used to examine federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, controlling for the perceptions of upper management. Together the LCI and FEVS were employed to draw conclusions about the impact a political leader's leadership capital can have on federal employee perceptions. Results found that there are differences in the leadership capital between the political leaders and that federal employee perceptions do vary.

Keywords: federal employees, job satisfaction, supervisory support, leadership capital

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research findings suggest that “the federal government’s human capital system is fundamentally broken” (Kettl et al., 2017, p. 1). The federal workforce is currently a very manual and reactive entity whereby the agencies are largely dependent on the commitment of an engaged workforce (Risher, 2019). A known problem that has led many academics and practitioners into endless discussions around the broken processes and looming outcomes, forcing many to identify the gaps and propose resolutions. However, what if understanding this breakdown extends beyond the problem-solution approach? What if understanding the root of the problem requires perspective into factors that contribute to this *fundamental breakdown in human capital*?

At the very top of the federal bureaucracy is the president, a political leader responsible for the expansive public agencies (Bingman, 1985). The actions and decisions of the political leader can impact the subsequent levels of management in the federal agencies, consequently influencing the public workforce (Goethals, 2005). Every president manages the government job pool differently, juggling the jobs needed to provide public services against managing the public budget and the taxpayers. For example, Obama placed federal employees on an extended pay freeze to aid in controlling the country’s deficit (Baker & Calmes, 2010). Alternately, Trump presided over better economic times and prioritized efficiency, making a commitment to reduce government jobs by freezing hiring (Shear, 2017) and then eliminating certain roles (Katz, 2017). Such actions have impacted the overall view of the presidents and influenced the federal workforce attitudes.

The political leader, however, is not a lone manager, the hierarchical bureaucratic government has varied levels of management ranging from the executive level, middle management, and front-line supervisors. Levels that lend themselves to the conflicting shared leadership within and between the government that is still very much a top-down entity (Choi,

2009). A hierarchical top-down bureaucracy that was deliberately set up to be inefficient (Stillman, 2010). The varied levels of management in the government can add to the inefficiencies in managing the federal workforce and the resulting public services that are planned and executed. The sitting American president, however, can both directly and indirectly influence the management of the public employees (Bingman, 1985).

This study makes inquiries about how the very top of the hierarchy influences the very bottom of the hierarchy. Focusing on the second year of the first term, this research will assess the leadership capital for Obama and Trump while exploring the federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support. Subsequently, the leadership capital scores will be used to explain the federal employee perceptions. Leadership capital may be an important determinant of federal employees' perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support.

Problem Statement

Federal workers are imperative to the productivity of the federal government. The backbone of the public agencies, these individuals are tasked with implementing and executing public services. Despite the crucial need for these workers, federal employment hit a record low in 2016, numbers so low leading to cause for concern about the basic operations in the government (Shapiro, 2017). Findings suggested a general disdain in the government along with a general decrease in the desire for public service, whereby trust and interest in government employment continues to be a challenge (Hill, 2020). These views, however, not only impact an entering federal workforce, but also impact the perceptions of the existing federal employees.

Political leaders come to office with varied agendas to solve the nation's problems. Each administration manages the government job pool differently, juggling the jobs needed to provide public services against the public budget. Assessing and implementing shutdowns, pay freezes,

hiring freezes, workforce reduction, agenda planning, and reforms. Rooted in economics, culture, social, and politics (Bourdieu, 1986), political leaders can present challenges in a top-down hierarchy, influencing how the varied levels of management operate within the bureaucracy and the direct/indirect impact they can have on the federal workforce.

Research Questions

The overarching goal of this study is to identify whether there are differences between political leaders' overall leadership capital that are associated with federal employee perceptions. This was undertaken by assessing the leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 and examining the federal employee perceptions under each of those political leaders. Leadership capital scores were then used to discuss the impact they can have on the outcomes of employee perceptions under Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Posing three primary research questions, this study examines whether the differences in a president's leadership capital will impact the perceptions of the federal employee. The three research questions that formed the basis of this study included:

RQ1: Are there significant differences in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018?

RQ2: Controlling for perceptions of upper management, are there significant differences between the 2010 federal employee perceived job satisfaction and the 2018 federal employee perceived job satisfaction?

RQ3: Controlling for perceptions of upper management, are there significant differences between the 2010 federal employee perceived supervisory support and the 2018 federal employee perceived supervisory support?

Significance of the Study

Federal agencies are tasked with implementing and executing strategic plans that are aimed to solve for the varied number of public needs and issues imperative to societal wellbeing. However, federal agencies are not self-governing entities. The federal government relies upon the varied levels of management, starting with a political leader's agenda planning and reform that can both directly and indirectly impact the agencies and the federal employees.

Political leaders past and present have justified the need to evaluate and improve on the management of the federal government (Kettl et al., 2017; Rainey, 2009). Direct influence from the political leader has largely been explored from the extent of their agenda planning and reform setting (Rainey, 2009). Thus, the significance of this study is that it exposes the impact leadership capital can have on the federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, factors known to impact agency productivity. The examination of information between the levels of the hierarchy can help rethink and enhance the political leader's overarching management of the federal agency operations, giving consideration for the impact leadership capital can have on the federal government.

Nature of the Study

Discussed in detail within the methodology of Chapter Three, a two-step process was undertaken to conduct this research. Step 1: The Leadership Capital Index (Bennister et al., 2017) was utilized to assess and compare the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Step 2: Secondary data from the 2010 and 2018 Federal Employee Viewpoint Surveys were used to conduct a multivariate analysis of covariance to examine federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, controlling for the perceptions of upper management. Subsequent chapters draw conclusions of leadership capital on federal employee

perceptions. Together the LCI and FEVS will aid in studying federal employee perceptions under Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018.

Definition of Terms

This section provides the definitions of key terms and constructs used through this study. While the subsequent literature review in Chapter Two elaborates on the key constructs, this lexicon is intended to provide an overarching holistic view of the terms used through this paper.

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)

The FEVS is a large-scale online annual survey administered by the OPM to federal employees across all agencies. The survey solicits feedback on “how to improve job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and ultimately the achievement of agency mission” (Caillier, 2012, p. 347).

Front-line supervisor

Front-line supervisors are conceptualized as the conduit between the daily operations of the employees and the overarching organizational goals and performance (Brewer, 2005; Knies et al., 2018).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is conceptualized as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience” (Locke, 1976, p. 1304).

Leadership

Leadership is an intangible social science relational term associated with the ideas of power, influence, and authority (Elgie, 1995).

Leadership Capital

Leadership capital aids in assessing how authority are attained and dispersed to accomplish tasks in office (Bennister et al., 2017) and is operationalized as a “reserve of leadership credibility [that] is collectively negotiated and allocated to certain individuals by societal groups and norms” (Sinclair, 2008, p. 84). It is in essence the act of *gathering and conserving*, exercising leadership and decision-making as a product of how to spend versus retain leadership capital (Bennister et al., 2014; Renshon, 2000).

Leadership Capital Index

A diagnostic and flexible tool that allows for measuring a president’s leadership capital in various capacities (Bennister et al., 2014), to evaluate the leader’s personal aptitude within their institutional and situational environment (Burrett, 2016).

Political Leader

A political leader can be conceptualized as an individual that imparts unbiased resolutions for the country’s problems using executive power (Bingman, 1985).

Supervisory Support

Supervisory support will be defined through this paper as “the degree to which supervisors value their [employee] contributions and care about their well-being” (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 700).

Upper Management

Executive management is responsible for the overall strategic planning and performance of an agency, and middle management is responsible for the implementation of plans, acting as the go-between the executive and front-line levels of management (Black et al., 2019). Despite these distinctions, the FEVS leaves these two levels open for interpretation. For example, the 2010

FEVS uses the terms *organization's leaders* and *managers* while the 2018 FEVS uses the terms *senior leaders* and *managers*. Thus, upper management has been conceptualized as the grouping of the executive and middle managers.

Organization of the Study

Chapter One provided an overarching view of the research. The chapter discussed the premise of the paper and the problem at hand. It was an introduction to the foundation of this study and a means to set the context for the subsequent sections. The rest of this paper is divided into four distinct chapters – Chapter 2: Literature Review, Chapter 3: Methodology, Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results, and Chapter 5: Discussion.

Chapter Two will review the literature, discussing the theoretical foundation of the constructs. The chapter begins with a discussion about the various levels of leadership, highlighting the shared nature of the leadership. The levels of management are then reviewed starting with a discussion about the front-line supervisor and ending with an assessment of the political leader. Leadership capital is then introduced and examined. Finally, the chapter reviews the constructs of job satisfaction and supervisory support. The information includes conceptualizing the terms and providing an overview of the impact the constructs can have on the employee and the workplace, framing the discussion within the public sector context.

Chapter Three delves into the methodology. The chapter starts with an overview of the methodological approach sought to answer the three primary research questions. Subsequently, a rationale for the years 2010 and 2018 is provided. This is then followed by a discussion about the specific measures undertaken in the two-step research design, highlighting the variables, and discussing the secondary data and methods of analysis. The subsequent section covers the reliability and validity of the instruments and scales used, closing with the limitations.

Chapter Four reviews the results uncovered in the previous chapter. The chapter starts by addressing the first research question to provide an analysis of Obama's 2010 leadership capital and Trump's 2018 leadership capital. Subsequently, the findings of research questions two and three are reviewed to discuss the results of employee perceptions in 2010 and 2018. The chapter closes with post hoc findings.

Finally, Chapter Five provides an overview of outcomes, expanding upon what was covered in the previous chapter. The findings are discussed in association with Chapter Two, to draw conclusions about the impact a political leaders' leadership capital can have on the perceptions of federal employees. The chapter explores general limitations and highlights future research to expand upon this overall topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Annually the federal government administers the FEVS across agencies to measure federal employee perceptions. While factors such as agency leadership, work environment, professional growth and supervisory efficacy largely make up the index (OPM, 2020), it is important to remember the role of the president. Fundamentally, the sitting president is responsible for managing the expansive federal government (Bingman, 1985), an institution that has long practiced an extensive top-down hierarchy in delivering public goods and services. Does a political leader's decision-making process; however, influence the perceptions of the agency employees? Research shows that leaders' behaviors can influence employees' perceptions of job satisfaction (Baker, 2004) and supervisory support (Kras et al., 2017).

Chapter Two begins by examining the existing literature on leadership and management, highlighting the shared leadership amongst these levels and its association with employees' attitudes of job satisfaction and supervisory support. Subsequently, an overview of each level of management is provided, starting at the bottom of the hierarchy the discussion will begin with the front-line supervisor and end with political leader. Leadership capital is then explored to discuss its relevance for a political leader. Finally, job satisfaction and supervisory support are defined, the concepts are discussed to review associated implications and the general impact of these constructs in the federal government. Together each of these elements contribute to the literature review and are key in understanding the concepts that will be explored in this study.

Review of Literature

Leadership and Management

Leadership is an intangible social science term associated with the ideas of power, influence, and authority (Elgie, 1995). Researchers generally agree that leadership is a

relationship based on influence (Elgie, 1995; Rost, 1991; Singh, 2016). However, the directional and coercive nature of leadership continues to differ. Rost (1991) outlines leadership occurring in a relationship whereby leaders influence members targeting a common purpose, striving for actionable change in a multidirectional and noncoercive manner. Singh (2016), on the other hand, outlines leadership as the act of a leader getting a member to do something whereby power is used to influence and coerce others. Political leadership, much like general leadership, is an intangible term that covers a myriad of types and forms, responsible for various tasks, including influencing policy decisions (Elgie, 1995).

Leaders are responsible for some level of planning, delegation, and monitoring between resources and goals (Black et al., 2019). Categorized in levels, the top-down hierarchical funnel in the government can include the political leader, the executive and middle manager, and the front-line supervisor (Black et al., 2019). At the very top of the hierarchy is the political leader who is responsible for various tasks including the expansive federal government (Bingman, 1985). Executive management is generally responsible for the overall strategic planning of the organization or agency. They are not involved in the day-to-day operations rather they manage the overall organization performance and decision-making that has an impact across the entity (Black et al., 2019). Middle management on the other hand can have more involvement in the day-to-day operations. Responsible for communicating between the levels of management, these leaders work closely with executive management while managing the front-line supervisors (Black et al., 2019). The front-line supervisors are responsible for day-to-day operations acting as the conduit with the front-line employee (Black et al., 2019). In many ways, there is a shared leadership component that needs to take place for the tiers to effectively operate.

Shared Leadership

Shared leadership is a framework that extends beyond the traditional top-down model, it is a framework that spans across job roles aimed at influencing synergy (Pearce et al., 2008). Pearce and Conger (2003) define shared leadership as “a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both. The influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence” (p. 1). The framework moves leadership from the conventional top-down structure to a multi-directional approach, facilitating operations for the betterment of the self and the organization (Pearce et al., 2008), whereby when used as a mechanism to coordinate antecedents it can positively impact outcomes (Ulhøi & Müller, 2014).

Shared leadership can be seen rooted in the philosophies of Mary Parker Follett whose progressive thoughts of management revolved around empowerment and democracy, emphasizing the need for a relational component (Martin, 2008). The framework is embedded in the belief that leadership extends beyond one specific leader (Sweeney et al., 2019) fostering an environment that is collective, supportive, and communicative (Carson et al., 2007). Review of modern-day research on shared leadership suggests that its application across an organization, regardless of role, can generate a level of empowerment to affect organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction (Ulhøi & Müller, 2014), findings also prevalent among the levels of management (Wood & Fields, 2007).

Applying the shared leadership framework is a challenging undertaking (Goldsmith, 2010), one that imparts power, vision, information, feedback (Bryson & Crosby, 1992), and trust (Goldsmith, 2010) beyond the specific organizational unit. The adoption of the shared leadership

model has only recently been supported (Pearce & Conger, 2003), with much clarity still needed as it relates to its use in the public sector (Choi, 2009). The hierarchical nature of the public sector has garnered leadership studies that have focused on presidents and public managers rather than shared leadership processes across public organizations (Choi, 2009). This has resulted in limited research on the application of shared leadership frameworks within the hierarchical bureaucracy.

Shared leadership is prevalent in the public sector, coexisting alongside the hierarchical nature of the government (Choi, 2009). For example, the state of Oregon implements shared leadership within the strategic governance of their enterprise initiatives to facilitate accountability, support, and a reduction of redundancy and inefficiencies (Jordan, 2012). While the model exhibits progress at the state level, the federal government has been relatively resistant. The shared leadership model is a shift from a hierarchical approach to one that is shared across an organization, or in this case the agency (Choi, 2009; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Ulhøi & Müller, 2014). The federal government is uniquely positioned to utilize shared leadership, whereby more than one governing body aims to manage and maximize performance of its employees (Bergman et al., 2012). However, established on the premise of a top-down approach, attempts to empower within the federal government have generally resulted in agency supervisors reverting decision-making up the ladder.

Federal management is shared management to a degree not often paralleled in the private sector, and change is heavily contingent on the top-down capacity of the president to exert leadership that not only drives action but also motivates a sense of reform and improvement through his political appointees into the career bureaucracy (Bingman, 1985, p. 160).

Extending this application down the managerial hierarchy, shared leadership can empower the various levels of leaders to develop best practices that foster successful outcomes (Cawthorne, 2010). It is a leadership model that generates transparency and open communication, allowing for information to funnel up and down the various levels of leadership (Cawthorne, 2010). A necessary flow of information that provides the bottom of the hierarchy the means to efficiently manage and the top of the hierarchy to make effective reforms and policies.

The hierarchical environment of the federal government has fostered a restrictive environment where employees do not have the flexibility to use best judgment, requiring authorization for most every decision (Feeney & DeHart-Davis, 2009). However, shared leadership can leverage individuals to deliver on outcomes. “Shared leadership theory recognizes that as organizations change, individuals must also change if they are to understand and fulfill their role... and to sustain the organizational progress in meeting its mission” (Cawthorne, 2010, p. 151). Using the premise of the shared leadership framework that is rooted in empowering workers across all levels and roles. The rest of this leadership and management section will discuss each of the managerial levels, starting at the bottom of the hierarchy, the information will review the primary responsibilities for each of these roles, focusing the discussion from the perspective of the federal government.

Front-line Supervisor

A front-line supervisor is an employee that is responsible for the direct management of employees (Kras et al., 2017). The relationship between the front-line supervisor and the employee is one of power whereby the supervisor has been granted the authority to manage the day-to-day operations of the employee (Robbins & Judge, 2013). However, the role of the front-

line supervisor was not always viewed in this light, this function has evolved through the decades. Dating back to Frederick Taylor, supervisors were deemed to be a hinderance and monetary returns were believed to be the key to effective worker management (Rainey, 2009). However, Elton Mayo's studies uncovered that supervisors are integral to "an employee's work-group experiences, a sense of the importance of employee's work, and attention and concern" (Rainey, 2009, p. 27).

Research has since studied the integral role of supervisors; thus, this paper conceptualizes supervisors as the conduit between the daily operations of the employees and the overarching organizational goals and performance (Brewer, 2005; Knies et al., 2018) linking effective management strategies to overall organizational success (Townsend & Kellner, 2015). Particularly in the public sector, supervisors are a vital connection between the federal employees and performance (Brewer, 2005). Acting as the mediator, supervisors can impact the federal worker's attitudes, a role that plays an important part in public performance (Brewer, 2005). "Supervisors are among the most positive and optimistic members of the federal service, and they are important conduits for transmitting public service ethics and values to the next generation of public servants" (Brewer, 2005, p. 520). From effectively managing discretionary benefits to successfully managing performance measures, supervisors can impact how the public sector effectively operates (Brewer, 2005). How a front-line supervisor manages can influence an employee's perception of their supervisory support, ultimately impacting the workplace outcomes (Jin & McDonald., 2017).

The role of the front-line supervisor, however, is not without its challenges; and this is especially true for the public sector. While the government has its share of good supervisory leadership, the public sector is generally more prone to constraints that hinder the development

of the front-line supervisor (Rainey, 2009). The hierarchical nature of the government can result in several work units and hierarchies, generating numerous levels of supervisors, which “makes communication up, down, and across the organization very cumbersome, and it make it difficult to maintain clear, direct hierarchical lines of authority” (Rainey, 2009, p. 30). These added layers of supervisors in the government are further complicated by the steadfast importance on policies and procedures, impacting satisfaction, confounded as it goes up the hierarchy.

Executive and Middle Management

Sandwiched between the executive management and the front-line supervisor, middle management is responsible for funneling information through various parts of the hierarchy (Black et al., 2019). “The middle line includes the managers who link the apex to the core through supervision and implementation—the vice presidents down through the supervisors” (Rainey, 2009, p. 225). Alternatively, executive management is responsible for the overall company/agency performance, involved in strategic planning that extends beyond the day-to-day operations (Black et al., 2019).

Two distinct groups with distinct differences, these levels of managers share high-level tasks and challenges. Together these levels of management are critical to organizations across sectors, responsible for managing organizational change, these levels of management are both responsible and accountable for the advancements within an organization (Albrecht, 2002). Context, however, matters, these managerial levels in the public sector can differ from those within other sectors because the behaviors of government managers are moderated by numerous external factors such as jurisdiction-wide rules, legislature, media influence, short employment tenure, and the frequently debated performance measures (Rainey, 2009). Further exacerbating

the public workforce by exhibiting a continual lack of trust in senior management, outcomes that can have substantial impact on the workforce (Pate et al., 2007).

These two levels of management in the government have experienced several restructuring ebbs and flows. From reducing rules and regulations, to attempting to flatten the hierarchy by eradicating the middle managers efforts, to restructuring the levels of leadership in the government; these efforts have been an ongoing challenge (Rainey, 2009). Despite such attempts, government managers experience constraints and restrictions that hinder optimal performance. Neither of these levels of management have the necessary autonomy and eventually lose the aspiration to effectively manage within their constraints, adding to the complexities of the bureaucracy (Rainey, 2009).

Political Leader

A political leader can be conceptualized as an individual that imparts unbiased resolutions for the country's problems using executive power (Bingman, 1985). Fundamentally, the president's management obligations include 1) assuring the American people that the nation's problems are being effectively solved for; 2) managing public law that is an intertwined process of defining and implementing laws; and 3) managing her/his presidential self to ensure that as the president s/he is not just a glorified figurehead (Bingman, 1985). Obligations that extend into the management of the federal government (Bingman, 1985).

Agencies are largely left with undirected autonomy where public managers manage performance and cost effectiveness amidst the battle of powers in the quest to provide public services (Bingman, 1985). Ultimately, however, the expansive nature of the federal government is managed by the political leader who is responsible for the sizeable budgets and expenditures across the agencies. Beyond the budgets and expenditures, the political leader is also responsible

for the overall management of the federal personnel (Bingman, 1985). People management in the bureaucratic culture has a history of generating stressors and confusion from the heavy top-down bureaucracy, while still striving to maintain agency specific cultures to no avail (Bingman, 1985). The reality is that political leadership is complex (Bennister et al., 2017) and this can have an impact on the federal workforce. Even before taking office, the election and re-election of an administration has shown to impact the voluntary turnover rates of the federal workforce (Bolton et al., 2017). Once in office, how a political leader manages administrative affairs can be seen to have an impact on the general morale of the agency employees (Stratford, 2019). These factors can have an impact on the general federal workforce, influencing factors such as retention (Katz, 2020) and job satisfaction (Stratford, 2019).

Trump's 2017 inauguration resulted in a turnover of several civil servants, a behavior not uncommon when a new administration is sworn into office (Bolton et al., 2017). Research conducted by Bolton et al. (2017) found an administration change can impact personnel rates that extends beyond the direct presidential appointees to include voluntary turnover among public employees across the federal government. Agency turnover rates are not immune to an administration. Influenced by an incoming administration and contingent upon the party in office and the nature of the agency, turnover rates can also be impacted during a political leader's second term (Bolton et al., 2017). Findings generally showed that agency turnover was most experienced at the top of the hierarchy at the executive level, with a diminishing rate for each subsequent level of the hierarchy (Bolton et al., 2017). The departure of agency employees can have a negative impact in the overall operations of the federal government. Essentially, while presidents and their appointees at the top of the hierarchy frequently change, career officials down the hierarchy are viewed to instill the necessary stability and continuity. However, a

disproportionate turnover of civil servants' skills and knowledge can be harmful to an incoming president's ability to make decisions in response to the nation's needs (Bolton et al., 2017).

Additionally, personnel outcomes are closely related to the political leaders view on the reform and policies of the federal workforce and the general management of administrative affairs (Bolton et al., 2017). "Elections can bring significant changes to federal workplaces, from empowering new decision makers to changes in policies to hiring freezes. These can be significant career events, particularly for senior federal employees" (Bolton et al., 2017, para. 9). Trump, for example, experienced consecutive-year declines in the public workforce morale (Stratford, 2019). Generating a domino effect, a political leaders' general management of administrative affairs can have an impact on the leadership put in place to manage the public services, impacting employee perceptions of said leadership (Ogrysko, 2016; Stratford, 2019). This is an important consideration because such factors can have an impact on general performance and employee satisfaction (Stratford, 2019).

Bingman's (1985) analysis of political leaders dates back decades, but the examination of leadership is still central to the premise of the federal government (Elgie, 1995). The exploration of political leadership has in a sense gone out of style and the enthusiasm for conceptualizing leadership has been more of a focus in the corporate arena than the political arena (Elgie, 1995). Political leaders, however, play an important role in influencing the decision-making process and associated outcomes (Elgie, 1995). Ultimately, political leadership is a position of power, where one person directs its nation toward actionable outcomes (Blondel, 1987). Every political leader comes to office with their distinct styles and traits that impact their leadership, a practice that is already intricate and complex due to the varied processes, owners, and characteristics (Elgie, 1995). Additionally, a political leader's actions are by in large contingent upon its environment,

whereby power is used to deal with social and economic factors (Blondel, 1987) to manage the outcome.

Leadership Capital

A political leader's power is exercised through her/his leadership status, whereby the political and social systems of the environment encroach upon the political life to give the leader free rein to use power (Blondel, 1987). In essence, power is the main aspect of leadership that requires thorough assessment to identify leadership outcomes. Dating back to the Weberian era, power was assessed from the perspective of its origin of authority (Blondel, 1987), influencing the likes of Bourdieu whose works categorized capital to assess political power and outcomes. Bourdieu (1986) discussed political capital as a symbolic foundation where a political leader's credibility encompasses the range of economics, culture, social, and political capital. The political capital identifies with the symbolic power that a political leader leverages to manage and influence social and political events, a symbolic power that is necessary to political survival (Thompson, 2000). "In exercising symbolic power, leaders draw on various kinds of resources, including their reputation, popularity and accumulated prestige" (Burrett, 2016, p. 38).

Influenced by Bourdieu and Thompson, leadership capital (Bennister et al., 2017) harnesses the importance of leadership in the federal government. Such as that of the American government where the political leader is the central decision-maker in an ever-expanding centralized government (Renshon, 2000). Bennister et al. (2017) discuss political leadership through the lens of authority, whereby leadership capital aids in assessing how authority is attained and dispersed to accomplish tasks in office. Leadership capital is operationalized as a "reserve of leadership credibility [that] is collectively negotiated and allocated to certain individuals by societal groups and norms" (Sinclair, 2008, p. 84). It is in essence the act of

gathering and conserving, exercising leadership and decision-making as a product of how to spend versus retain leadership capital (Bennister et al., 2014; Renshon, 2000).

Leadership capital helps distinguish between being a political leader and being in power (Bennister et al., 2014). In the American government for example, alongside the separation of power (Stillman, 2010), political leaders have access to significant power that allows for setting up an administration, behaviors that interact between being in office and deciding how to leverage the use of power (Bennister et al., 2014). Assessing a political leader's leadership capital can aid in evaluating a leader's aptitude within the social and environmental context in conjunction with the various types of personalities that impact the decision-making and use of power (Bennister et al., 2014). Even from the periphery, the dynamics of leadership capital can be distinctly seen among American political leaders. For example, Bush challenged the law and claimed full power in the name of protecting the nation after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, subsequently Obama contended that no political leader is above the law, while Trump adopted a near-autocratic style regardless of the context (Goitein, 2017). However, the factors that impact a political leader do not work in a silo. The reality is that context, decision-making, and status work hand-in-hand to impact the power that is available and dispensed. Political leaders need skills to manage the context, but the power dispensed can implicate the context.

Grounded in the works of Bourdieu, Bennister et al. (2017) examined leadership capital in the realms of trust, network, and ethical belief, calculated through the perceived sum of a leader's *skills, relational, and reputational* capital (Bennister et al., 2017). These dimensions of capital are important in establishing and sustaining leadership in office. Skills are crucial in establishing and sustaining a political leadership role. Specifically, skills represent the perceived personal competencies that include cognitive, physical, communicative, and managerial

capabilities (Bennister et al., 2014). Greenstein (2005) categorized the skills performance through the examination of a leader's communication, organizational capacity, political skill, political vision, cognitive, and emotional intelligence. Relational capital is important to secure and sustain trust that can impact the perceptions of the political leader, comprised of a leader's followers both inside and outside the administration that are rallied to form the necessary authority and influence (Bennister et al., 2014). Burrett (2016) discusses relational capital as "the loyalties leaders mobilise, not only among voters but also among party colleagues, the media, business elites, bureaucrats and others possessing their own forms of capital that shape the leadership environment" (p. 39). Reputational capital is the cyclical nature of how a political leader manages outcomes while contending with the environmental and societal dynamics (Bennister et al., 2014). It encompasses the degree of trust and ability to influence, whereby a leader's reputation is deemed effective when their personal and observable between individuals align (Bennister et al., 2014). "A leader's reputation increases leadership capital when it meets two conditions: its normative core is seen by the observer as appropriate for the times; and the gap between perceived promise and observed performance is seen as limited or caused by exogenous, temporary circumstances. Effective reputations are coherent, believable narratives in which a leader's life story, espoused philosophy and observable in-office behaviour widely deemed to be in alignment" (Bennister et al., 2014, p. 7).

The mix of *skills, relational, and reputational* capital allow for assessing the highs and lows of leadership capital based on the perceptions of varied audiences, including the larger public (Bennister et al., 2017). It offers a systematic assessment to examine how political power is leveraged and it inspects the in-office effectiveness of a political leader. Leadership capital scores offer a means to assess "the traditional divide between leader-centric/personal and

contextual/situational approaches to understand how three key attributes of political leadership – skills, relationships, and reputation – interact to enhance or diminish the level of support a political leader enjoys” (Bennister et al., 2017, p. 6).

Is there value in examining how the direct and indirect dispersion of a political leader’s capital can impact the levels down the hierarchy? Year after year media reports on FEVS outcomes to highlight how satisfied federal employees are under the president’s leadership (Grodén, 2015; Rein, 2018) with researchers discussing agency supervisors lack of authority to effectively manage and influence federal employees (Brewer, 2005). The questions posed, then, center around whether leadership capital can impact factors such as job satisfaction and supervisory support at the very bottom of the hierarchy. Before diving into these inquiries, the following sections will discuss the constructs of job satisfaction and supervisory support. The terms will be conceptualized, providing an overview of the impact the constructs can have on the employee and the workplace, framing the discussion within the public sector context.

Job Satisfaction

What is job satisfaction (Locke, 1968)? Job satisfaction is conceptualized as an employee’s attitude, commonly defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience” (p. 1304). Job satisfaction can include an array of elements including components that range from the organization and management to recognition and the work environment (Locke, 1976). The five largely used components of job satisfaction include “pay, promotions, coworkers, supervision, and the work itself” (Judge & Klinger, 2008, p. 395). Together these elements impact the relationship of job satisfaction between the worker and the workplace (Locke, 1968), affecting employee well-being (Judge &

Klinger, 2008) and other workplace outcomes such as productivity, commitment, and turnover (Matiaske & Grözinger, 2011).

Job satisfaction is a key construct in the connection between the worker and the workplace (Matiaske & Grözinger, 2011) and has garnered curiosity among theorists and practitioners interested in understanding the issues that affect the work environment (Kalleberg, 1977). The job satisfaction construct, however, was only first explored in the mid-1930s. Practitioner turned academic, Robert Hoppock leveraged his dissertation to examine the unexplored construct, conducting studies that researched job satisfaction across dimensions such as occupation and age (Bowling & Cucina, 2015). Despite these published works, job satisfaction, did not become mainstream until the 1939 Hawthorne Studies (Locke, 1968; Matiaske & Grözinger, 2011). The Hawthorne Studies initiated the discussion of job satisfaction as it relates to an employee's perception between what they desire and what is attained from the job (Locke, 1968).

In the scientific management period of the early 1900s, workers were viewed as mere cogs that were fueled by financial returns. "The implicit theory in the first quarter of that [20th] century was that money is the primary, if not sole, motive of the worker" (Latham & Budworth, 2007, p. 373). The 1930s, however, was a turning point, researchers questioned Taylorism and started to emphasize the need to explore factors that resulted in employee satisfaction. In 1934 Morris Viteles argued that worker satisfaction extended beyond economics, stating that the work context was important and that workers had a desire to feel valued, recognized, and respected (Latham & Budworth, 2007). Subsequently Houser's research in 1938 found that, initiative, safety, stable employment, and fairness were key factors in employee satisfaction (Latham & Budworth, 2007). Complementing the works of Hoppock in 1935 that explored related elements,

making inquiries about factors such as supervision, coworkers, and pay. Findings that “identified several potential causes of job satisfaction, including amount of social status conferred by one’s work, job autonomy, and interpersonal relationships with one’s supervisors and coworkers” (Bowling & Cucina, 2015, p. 110).

These early researchers gave rise to work motivation theories used to explain employee satisfaction. Theories that specified various workplace and personal motivators involved in generating employee satisfaction evolved over time, including models such as Maslow’s (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, McGregor’s (1957) Human Side of Enterprise, Herzberg’s (1968) Motivator-Hygiene Theory, Adam’s (1965) Equity Theory, Locke’s (1976) Range of Affect Theory, and Landy’s (1978) Opponent Process Theory (Latham & Budworth, 2007). These models have helped validate early ideas of worker motivators, extending beyond the employee-organizational relationship to include the supervisor-subordinate relationship. Supervisors play a role in motivating the employee to attain job satisfaction, by collaborating with subordinates to identify and set goals (Schaffer, 2008). Furthermore, research indicates that employee enthusiasm and motivation toward workplace productivity is largely driven by the fulfillment of their whole self (Toe et al., 2013) with findings confirming the need for organizations to prioritize job satisfaction through employee motivation (Naff & Crum, 1999).

Job satisfaction can be assessed by either isolating specific aspects (such as pay, supervision, coworkers, etc.) of the construct or by examining an overall measure of the construct (Kerber & Campbell, 1987; Mueller & Kim, 2008; Weiss, 2002). Locke’s (1968) approach to measuring job satisfaction as an overall composite of elements can help examine the general perceptions of job satisfaction within an organization (Kerber & Campbell, 1987). Alternately, Weiss (2002) discussed measuring the individual factors that contribute to the

construct in order to drill down to the specific aspects of job satisfaction in the workplace (Kerber & Campbell, 1987). These variations in measurements have generated a body of research exploring the impact a worker's job satisfaction level can have on various outcomes including motivation, absenteeism, and general satisfaction (Landy, 1978).

The construct, however, is complex and examining job satisfaction in the federal government can become convoluted and challenging because of the many levels of management in the bureaucracy (Frampton, 2014; Jung, 2014). Additionally, findings suggest that the dynamics of satisfaction in the federal government can be intricate (Palguta, 2015). Intricacies that arise from the numerous hurdles the federal government faces, including the “diminished resources, increased workloads, politically or ideologically driven denigration of public service, and on occasion, diminished pay and benefits packages” (Palguta, 2015, p. 490). Understanding job satisfaction in the federal government is important, especially as the public sector continues to lose skilled workers (Yang & Kassekert, 2010).

Research findings suggest that the higher the federal employees' *overall* job satisfaction the lower their propensity to move within or exit the federal government (Fernandez, 2008; Pitts et al., 2011). The levels of job satisfaction have been shown to vary when the elements of job satisfaction are compartmentalized (Caillier, 2016; Fernandez, 2008; Lee et al., 2020; Pitts et al., 2011). For example, federal employee satisfaction with pay is inversely related to job satisfaction (Pitts et al., 2011), impacting the job satisfaction levels of senior workers more than their junior counterparts (Lee, 2019). Alternately, worker satisfaction with employer offered benefits are directly related to job satisfaction as is the same with their advancement opportunities (Pitts et al., 2011), having a larger impact on the more junior employees. Furthermore, the various stages of career can also be a driving factor “significantly explain[ing] the difference in the

determinants of job satisfaction” (Lee, 2019, p. 735). Additionally, the diverse federal workforce population has displayed various outcomes in relation to job satisfaction. For example, seasoned new federal employees derived their satisfaction from relational factors such as their relationship with their supervisor when compared to the other groups in the federal workforce (Lee, 2019). From a gender and race perspective, the federal government does not appear to find much difference in the levels of job satisfaction because such issues have been aggressively addressed within the public sector (Lee et al., 2020). Levels of satisfaction are also impacted by the workplace elements, with research findings suggesting that agencies that have greater access to resources tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Fernandez, 2008).

Alternately, researchers have also explored the impact of intrinsic factors on job satisfaction in the government, examining elements such as work-life programs (Caillier, 2016) and person-job fit (Lee, 2019). Findings suggested that work-life balance aimed to fulfil an intrinsic need should meet the needs of the employee as opposed to the general worker (Caillier, 2016). Also, studies that explored job satisfaction from the person-job fit perspective (Lee, 2019) found that employees perceived to be more satisfied when their expertise and experiences were more directly aligned with the job (Fernandez, 2008; Wang & Brower, 2019). Additionally, workers that feel empowered to partake in the process of collaborating over job and organizational related duties and goals are shown to have a positive outlook on job satisfaction (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015).

Regardless of the factors that can impact job satisfaction, the construct is not linearly attained within the federal government. In essence, job satisfaction can be impacted by the levels of management within the bureaucracy. Federal employees at the bottom of the hierarchy can be impacted by their supervisors who play a crucial in in boosting job satisfaction (Wang & Brower,

2019). Supervisors can aid in harnessing job satisfaction by respecting, interacting, and engaging with the workers (Wang & Brower, 2019). However, the autonomy a public supervisor is granted to manage their direct reports can be impacted by the top-down government reform that gets mandated at the federal level, without potential due concern for the employee and the associated impact on job satisfaction (Yang & Kassekert, 2010). These reforms can vary from political leader to political leader and can enforce mandates that result in varied job satisfaction outcomes (Park et al., 2018). For example, Clinton started the managing-for-results reform that was positively associated with job satisfaction (Yang and Kassekert, 2010). Meanwhile flexible work reforms that have continued to be adjusted between political leaders have shown to have a direct impact on job satisfaction (Park et al., 2018). Reforms, however, are funneled from the top-down and can limit supervisory actions that may positively impact employee job satisfaction (Rainey, 2009).

Supervisory Support

Organizational behaviors are oftentimes extended down to the supervisors who are viewed as an extension of the organization rather than as a direct representation of the entity (Levinson, 1965). In essence, an organization's enforced practices can influence the supervisor's support extended upon the direct reports (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). It is important to note that supervisory support differs from a related construct, organizational support, because supervisory support is focused on being the liaison to communicate and encourage efforts of support whereas organizational support is focused on developing and implementing efforts of support. Supervisory support will be defined through this paper as "the degree to which supervisors value their [employee] contributions and care about their well-being" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 700). These evaluative perceptions are outwardly shared up the chain, providing employees a means to

communicate tribulations and pleasantries from the front-line, further impacting the concept of perceived organizational support through the front-line supervisor (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The connection between perceived organizational and supervisory support is an important consideration, oftentimes directly affected by the level of formality a supervisor extends (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

The support demonstrated by front-line supervisors can make or break the superior-subordinate relationship with resulting implications on job performance outcomes (Townsend & Kellner, 2015). In fact, a supervisor's level of support can directly influence factors such as employee job satisfaction, attendance, productivity, and retention (Allen, 2001; Brunelle, 2013; OPM, 2018). Workers that perceive to attain higher supervisory support are more likely to experience greater levels of job satisfaction (Allen, 2001). These supervisors that extend support toward employees foster an environment that benefits the employee and the organization.

“Strong supervisor support improves the quality of employment and is associated with increased job satisfaction, perception of a better fit between the employee and the organization” (Bhate, 2013, p. 2). Research findings suggest that supervisors who positively manage discretionary benefits such as work-life balance (Allen, 2001; Choi, 2018; Thomas & Ganster, 1995) can aid in reducing conflict between the demands of work and home, while allowing for positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bhate, 2013). Additionally, an employee's perception of supervisory support can directly impact voluntary turnover (Eisenberger et al., 2002). However, supervisors that leverage their authority for a restrictive or even abusive environment can negatively impact employee trust that can in turn negatively impact outcomes including employee job satisfaction (Ji & Jan, 2020). In the case of work-life

balance, for example, employees may be less prone to use these benefits in fear of supervisor retribution (Choi, 2018).

Much of the discussion around supervisory support involves ensuring adequate training to equip and empower supervisors to leverage their authority for the betterment of the employee and the organization (Brewer, 2005; Eisenberger et al., 2002). Supervisory action that extends support toward employees is a behavior that can be learned with findings suggesting that supervisors across sectors need adequate training to effectively practice support toward employees (Ji & Jan, 2020). This is especially true in the federal government where supervisors have been poised to positively influence a worker that can impact agency outcomes. While a supervisor is largely responsible for subordinate workplace compliance, these responsibilities extend to include accurate interpretation and implementation of organizational mandated procedures (Kras et al., 2017), emphasizing the importance that the skills and effectiveness of the federal supervisor are fundamental to operations (Brewer, 2005).

The discussion on job satisfaction closed with a brief prelude about supervisory support. While training is key, autonomy is important. Federal supervisors largely feel *disempowered* in their roles, feeling powerless in the necessary day-to-day decision-making (Kras et al., 2017). The power authority between the supervisor and the employee are at odds. Employees view their superiors to have the necessary power to make decisions, however, supervisors are oftentimes the go-between that generally leave them feeling powerless in managing daily operations while ensuring fulfilment of policies and procedures (Kras et al., 2017). Various administrations have made efforts to grant supervisors the autonomy, however, the reality has been complicated and restrictive. Federal supervisors largely do not believe they have the necessary autonomy to

manage agency outcomes and while efforts have been made to ensure supervisors feel more empowered, the federal government still has a long road ahead (Bledsoe et al., 2003).

The nature of the public sector shows that the role of the front-line manager poses several challenges. The bureaucratic and hierarchical environment of the federal government imparts a top-down decision-making structure, which impacts the discretionary latitude commonly available to most front-line supervisors in the private sector (Townsend & Kellner, 2015). A front-line supervisor's use of discretion within the bureaucracy may vary based on the political administration in office at that time. Obama, for example, practiced a participative leadership style whereby even within the confines of an expansive bureaucracy, government employees were challenged to solve for problems rather than implement a predetermined solution (Wayne, 2011). Alternatively, Trump largely practiced an authoritative leadership style whereby government employees were instructed to adhere to prescribed actions, with little to no variance or ability to independently solve a problem (Burn, 2019). While political leaders are the representative head of the administration, they do not operate within a silo. Alternate management approaches can result in varied outcomes. "Leadership does not operate in a vacuum but in a context colored by the tasks assigned to agencies and the level of political support provided by agency bosses and clients" (Balla & Gormley, 2017, p. 294).

Front-line supervisors are important in accomplishing the administration's plans and are predicted to be even more important as the dynamics of the workforce are expected to evolve (Carlyle, 1992). However, there is a level of micro-management that prohibits these supervisors from effectively leading (Carlyle, 1992). Recent political leaders have placed an emphasis on *strategic human capital* to provide levels of autonomy (Rigas et al., 2020). A level of autonomy that is necessary and imperative to be able to effectively support the front-line employee.

Supervisory support is instrumental to a worker's attitude and can help characterize an employee's experience (Allen, 2001; Brunelle, 2013). Public managers are especially crucial to the operations of the public sector and are the link to improving public administration overall (Behn, 1998).

Summary

Chapter Two started by reviewing the literature on leadership and management, highlighting the idea of a shared leadership in the federal government, and discussing the levels of management, including: the front-line supervisor, executive and middle management, and the political leader. Leadership capital was then reviewed to discuss ways in which political leaders may distribute their capital. Finally, existing literature on job satisfaction and supervisory support was reviewed. Constructs were defined and concepts were discussed, reviewing associated implications, and the general impact of these variables in the federal government. Together each of these elements made up the literature review, concepts, and constructs that are key in understanding the leadership capital of political leaders and the federal employee perceptions.

Subsequently, Chapter Three will review the methodology employed and the specific approaches taken. The chapter begins by discussing the rationale for the years 2010 and 2018. Then outlining each of the steps undertaken to assess the research questions, highlighting the variables and methods of analysis. Followed by a discussion about the validity and reliability and closing with the limitations. Chapter Four will provide a synopsis of the data analysis and results. Chapter Five then reviews the results, summarizing the findings and drawing conclusions as it relates to employee perceptions between political leaders, explained by the leadership capital scores. The final chapter also highlights limitation and future recommendations.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The study consisted of a quantitative analysis of secondary data to examine federal employee perceptions informed by the leadership capital of two political leaders. The research was undertaken in a two-step process (see Figure 1). First, secondary empirical data (chronology timelines, polls, opinion surveys, etc.) and secondary interpretative data (biographies, interviews, speeches, etc.) were assessed and quantified to analyze and compare the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Subsequently, secondary federal employee data for the years 2010 and 2018 were used to examine and compare worker perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, holding the perceptions of upper management constant. The application of this procedure was conducted to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Are there significant differences in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018?

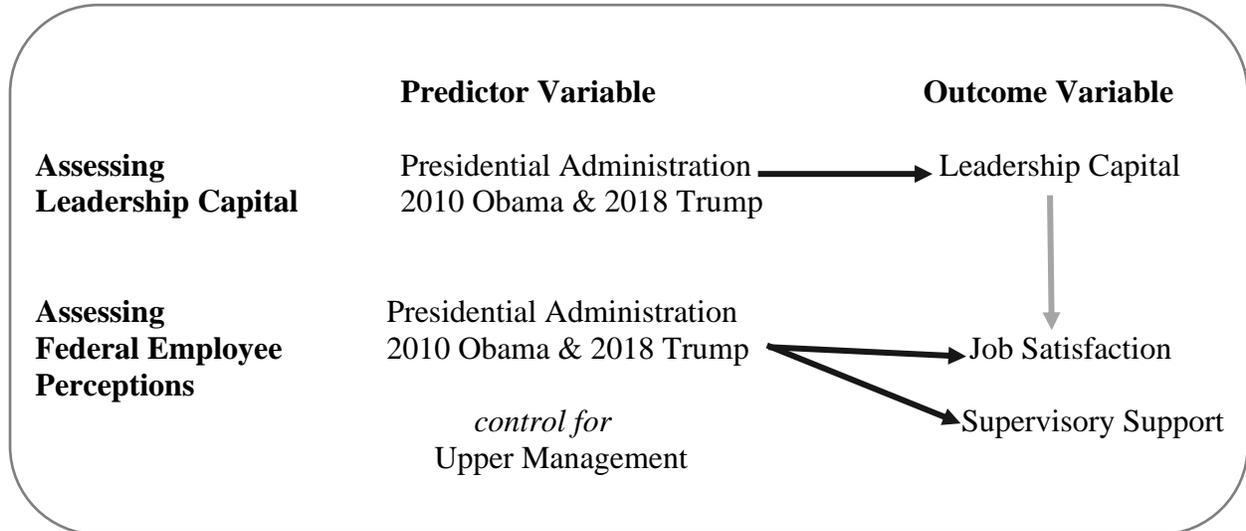
RQ2: Controlling for perceptions of upper management, are there significant differences between the 2010 federal employee perceived job satisfaction and the 2018 federal employee perceived job satisfaction?

RQ3: Controlling for perceptions of upper management, are there significant differences between the 2010 federal employee perceived supervisory support and the 2018 federal employee perceived supervisory support?

The remainder of this chapter reviews the methodology employed and the specific approaches taken. Chapter Three begins by discussing the rationale for the years 2010 and 2018. Subsequent sections highlight each of the steps undertaken to assess the research questions, outlining the variables and methods of analysis. Followed by a discussion about the validity and

reliability and closing with the limitations. Combined, this chapter sets the stage for the methodology used to answer the research questions.

Figure 1: Research design



Political Leadership of Obama 2010 and Trump 2018

Secondary data from the second year of the first term of two consecutive political leaders was utilized, specifically, data for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 was examined. The years 2010 and 2018 were selected to ensure data availability and relative comparability between the two political leaders’ time in office – i.e., second year of the first term. The second year provided a full year of FEVS data under the respective political leader, and it captured a period where the leader should have settled into the presidential role and transitioned from the preceding political leader.

The first year of the first term was not selected because it is a period of transition where the dust is still settling. Findings suggest that over the decades political leaders have become less productive during the first 100 days in office (Azari, 2017). Azari (2017) indicates that this decline in productivity can be assessed from the drastic decrease in the number of laws passed and the executive orders signed in the first hundred days of office. Furthermore, while the FEVS

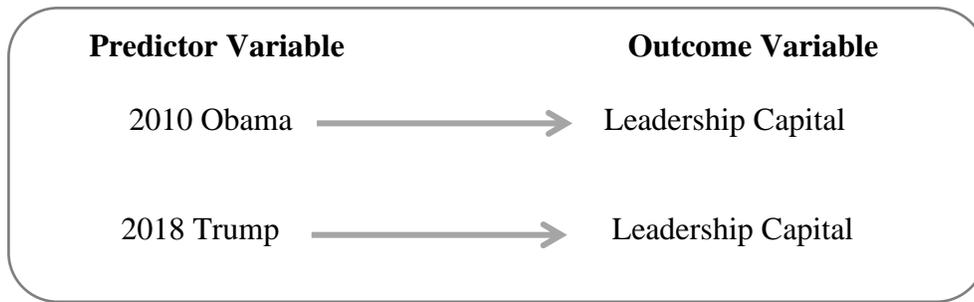
for the first year was captured under the respective political leader, there may be the residual feelings of the preceding leader which may influence outcomes of the employee perceptions. Thus, given the impact of the transitions involved in the first year of the first term, analysis of the first year was eliminated.

The third year was not selected due to anomalies in the federal government as experienced by the extended partial government shutdown during Trump's third year of his first term. To ensure compatibility in climate within which the federal employee survey was disseminated, analysis of the third year was eliminated. This was further supported by the additions to the 2019 FEVS whereby several new questions and categories were added to the instruments that reduced the comparability of the instruments between political leaders (OPM, 2019). An already lengthy survey, the addition of new questions can prove to be problematic (Callahan, 2015). To allow for a fair comparison between the political leaders, the fourth year of the first term had to be eliminated because there was insufficient data about Trump. At the time this study started, Trump was in the fourth year of his first term which meant that an entire year's worth of secondary data had not yet been captured and reported.

Assessing Leadership Capital

Step one was undertaken to answer research question one that made inquiries about the differences in the leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 (see Figure 2). Leadership capital is grounded in the realms of trust, network, and ethical belief that is operationalized as the perceived sum of a leader's skills, relational, and reputational capital (Bennister et al., 2017). The Leadership Capital Index (LCI) (Bennister et al., 2017) was used to assess and measure secondary data that was subsequently used to compare the leadership capital scores between Obama and Trump.

Figure 2: Assessing Leadership Capital



Political leaders (Obama and Trump) served as the predictor variables to explain the leadership capital outcome as captured by the skills, relations, and reputation criteria during the years 2010 and 2018. The LCI was selected because it allows capturing a dimensional yet holistic view of a leader’s skills, relations, and reputation that aids in identifying the intricacies of a political leader (Bennister & Worthy, 2014). For example, the tool can help to uncover “a leader who may have communication abilities but be a poor manager. It may also show apparently strong leaders, winning elections but hobbled by poor party unity or challenger, which may in turn affect the passage of legislation” (Bennister & Worthy, 2014, p. 7-8). Furthermore, the tool helps to assess a political leader’s personal aptitude within their institutional and situational environment (Burrett, 2016) facilitating discussions around the premise of leadership that extends beyond the use of leadership theories (Bennister et al., 2017). The LCI is also a flexible index that allows measuring a political leader’s capital in various capacities, including assessing leaders during different points in time or comparing various political leaders (Bennister et al., 2014). In this study the index was leveraged to compare two American political leaders during the second year of their first term.

Method of Analysis

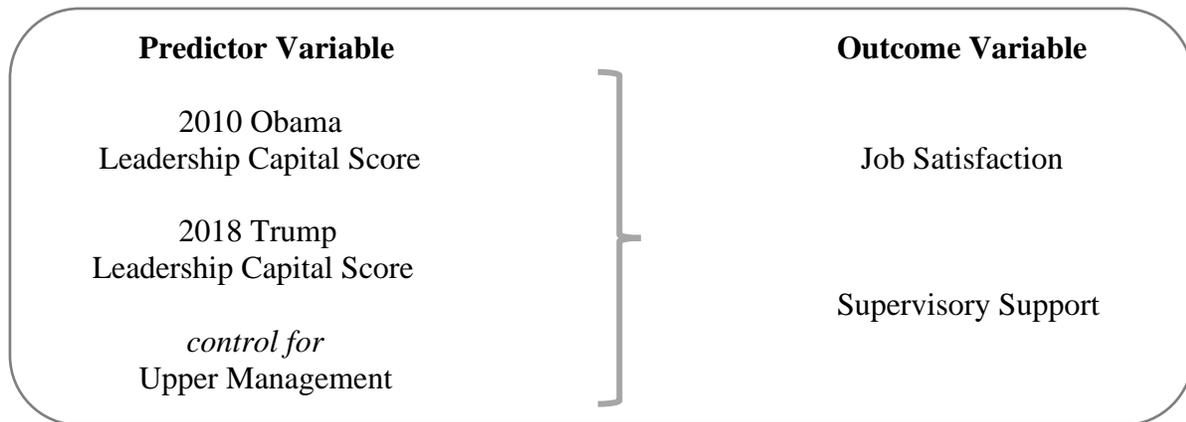
The LCI was leveraged to answer research question one that sought to measure and compare the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Ten-indicator measures,

categorized to capture a leader's perceived skills, relation, and reputation (Bennister et al., 2017), were examined using secondary information derived from interpretative sources (biographies, writings, speeches, interviews, policy documents, etc.) and empirical sources (chronology timelines, polls, opinion surveys, survey data, etc.). Coders consisted of four public administration field experts (comprised of practitioners, educators, and doctoral students) who independently applied the tool guided by a code book, see Appendix A. Except for indicator 08 that was adapted from Burrett's (2016) revisions, all parameters were measured using the guidelines established by Bennister et al. (2017). The scores for each indicator spanned from 1-5, with 1 being low and 5 being high. The leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 was then calculated by averaging and rounding the coder scores to derive each criteria score. The averaged perceived skills, relation, and reputation components captured through the 10 indicators were then aggregated for a composite leadership score (Bennister et al., 2017). The composite scores can range from 0-50, accompanied by associated classifications to aid users in determining the leadership capital, see Appendix B.

Assessing Federal Employee Perceptions

Step two was undertaken to answer research questions two and three that examined whether there were differences in employee perceptions between political leaders. As shown in Figure 3, secondary data from the FEVS was used to assess employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018, holding upper management constant. The second year of the first term for Obama and Trump (i.e., years 2010 and 2018) was used as the predictor variable, later interpreted in the discussion utilizing the leadership capital scores identified in step one. Job satisfaction and supervisory support were used as the outcome variables.

Figure 3: Assessing Federal Employee Perceptions



Data from the 2010 and 2018 FEVS was utilized to explore employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, while controlling for upper management under Obama and Trump. The FEVS is a large-scale online annual survey administered by the OPM to federal employees across all agencies. The survey solicits feedback on “how to improve job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and ultimately the achievement of agency mission” (Caillier, 2012, p. 347). Except for some minor variations, the 2010 and 2018 surveys largely include all the same questions that were also listed in the same order. The 2018 FEVS questions used a slightly different verbiage, and some items were no longer accessible to the public. However, these changes did not impact the nature of the items used in this study across both years.

Predictor Variables

Obama 2010 and Trump 2018 – in Conjunction with Leadership Capital

Political leaders Obama and Trump served as the predictor variable. As indicated above, the years 2010 and 2018 were selected to accommodate the availability of secondary data and provide time for the dust to settle from one administration to another. Additionally, these political leaders were leveraged in conjunction with the leadership capital that was examined in step one. The resulting leadership capital scores for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018

subsequently help provide informed discussion insight into what was uncovered about employee perceptions between the political leaders.

Upper Management

Upper management, derived from the FEVS secondary data, also acted as the independent variable, and was used as a covariate. Agency executive management and agency middle management are two distinct groups. Executive management takes a macro approach, managing the overall operations of an entity, while middle management is the intercessor among the levels of management adopting a more micro-managerial approach (Black et al., 2019). Though distinct, these groups share high-level tasks and challenges that are crucial to an organization (Albrecht, 2002). Despite overall differences between these managerial groups, the first two levels of management in the hierarchy funnel are ambiguously referenced in the FEVS. Apart from the front-line supervisor, the executive manager and middle manager labels are open for interpretation. For example, the 2010 FEVS uses the terms *organization's leaders* and *managers* while the 2018 FEVS uses the terms *senior leaders* and *managers*.

The terms used in the FEVS make it hard to decipher when an executive manager versus a middle manager is referenced. For that reason, the executive managers and middle managers have been grouped together as upper management in this study. Federal employee perceptions of upper management comprised of nine items from the 2010 and 2018 FEVS. These items involve content exploring employees' perceptions of upper management from a collaboration, communication, and support viewpoint. See Appendix C and Appendix D for the complete list of upper management FEVS items utilized in this study. Individual employee responses to these items ranged from Very Satisfied (5) to Very Dissatisfied (1), apart from one question that included responses that ranged from Very Good (5) to Very Poor (1).

Outcome Variables

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction served as an outcome variable to examine the federal employee's emotional state of their perceptions of their job experience (Locke, 1976). Locke (1968) discusses evaluating the job satisfaction construct as a composite. "A valid overall index of satisfaction would... be a sum of the evaluations of all job aspects to which the individual responds... [because] individuals may not see the same number of values in their jobs" (Locke, 1968, p. 28). Using this as the premise, federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction were derived from OMP's pre-determined global satisfaction index that comprised of four items in the 2010 and 2018 FEVS. These items involve content that explores employees perceived satisfaction in their overall job, pay and organization, see Appendix C and Appendix D for the complete list of job satisfaction FEVS items used in this study. Individual employee responses to these items ranged from Very Satisfied (5) to Very Dissatisfied (1).

Supervisory Support

Supervisors have the authority to impact the federal worker's attitudes and are important liaisons in ensuring compliance to meet policy and plans (Brewer, 2005). Through the management of discretionary benefits and performance measurement, supervisors can impact how the public sector effectively operates (Brewer, 2005). Federal employee perceptions of their supervisory support served as an outcome variable to measure the extent to which a front-line supervisor values and cares about the employee (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The variable included 11 items from both the 2010 and 2018 FEVS that covered an assessment of employees' individual perceptions of their supervisor's support, trustworthiness, listening, and respectfulness. See Appendix C and Appendix D for the complete list supervisory support FEVS

items used in this study. Individual employee responses to these items ranged from Strongly Satisfied (5) to Very Dissatisfied (1), apart from one question that included responses that ranged from Very Good (5) to Very Poor (1).

Method of Analysis

The second step consisted of a between-groups multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA). Used to answer research questions two and three, this analysis was performed to investigate whether there was a difference in employee perceptions between political leaders while holding upper management constant. A preliminary investigation examined whether there was a relationship among the covariate (upper management) and outcome (job satisfaction and supervisory support) variables for 2010 and 2018. Subsequently an analysis was conducted to see if there were differences in employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support between political leaders, holding upper management constant. A MANCOVA was selected because it facilitates calculating this difference. Specifically, the MANCOVA allows examining “the mean difference between levels of one or more [nonparametric] independent variables on two or more [parametric] dependent variables” (Abu-Bader, 2010, p. 258).

Validity

The LCI is a new tool that relies on the use of varied secondary data derived from interpretative and empirical sources – an approach that can bring about validity challenges. To mitigate issues of validity, this study adopted guidelines from Bennister et al. (2017). A code book was established, and independent coders were provided with a list of empirical and interpretative secondary dataset with guidelines on how to review and score the political leader when using the index (see Appendix A).

The FEVS also faces validity challenges. Job satisfaction is one of the few constructs that has been consistently studied though the use of a global indicator with opportunities to include additional items to measure the varied dimension of satisfaction (Fernandez et al., 2015). Researchers outline ways to succumb concerns of validity through measurement and testing (Fernandez et al., 2015; Resh et al., 2019; Somers, 2018). To overcome the issue of validity in this study, a factor analysis was performed to measure and examine the validity for each of the scales. The factor analysis confirmed one unidimensional factor for upper management, one unidimensional factor for job satisfaction, and one unidimensional factor for supervisory support with all the items loading on the appropriate factor. Findings showed that the factor analysis for each of the scales supported the items being measured, Appendix E and F include the loadings for each of the items.

Reliability

The LCI was selected because it is a holistic index that offers an analysis of varied secondary interpretative and empirical information. An analysis that allows rating political leaders by using intersubjective measurement sources across the skills, relation, and reputation criteria (Bennister & Worthy, 2014). To overcome the reliability of the secondary information used, intercoder reliability was applied to establish four independent coders that examined the dataset of secondary empirical and interpretative information to derive the conclusion.

In the case of the LCI independent coders for this study, findings displayed a fair to moderate agreement reliability as displayed by both the Fleiss' Kapp and percent agreement of intercoder reliability (see Table 1 and Table 2). It is important to note that a low Kappa does not indicate low agreement, coder prevalence and bias needs to be taken into consideration (Shweta et al., 2015) and levels of reliability can vary across disciplines and satisfactory levels of

“reliability depends on how a measure is being used” (Drost, 2011, p. 114). While measures have been taken into account for the intercoder reliability, the outcomes are consistent with the gaps widely seen in the works of varied social science publications (Lombard et al., 2002).

Table 1: Fleiss’ Kappa Intercoder Reliability

Administration	Coder Agreement
Obama 2010	0.338
Trump 2018	0.258

Table 2: Percent Agreement

Administration	Coder Agreement
Obama 2010	0.53
Trump 2018	0.45

The FEVS was selected because it presented an optimal secondary dataset that included items directly addressing federal employee perceptions of upper management, job satisfaction, and supervisory support. Academic researchers using scales derived from multiple items in the FEVS have relied on statistical measures to confirm reliability to ensure items are measuring the same construct through inter reliability (Fernandez et al., 2015; Resh et al., 2019). The Cronbach alpha is a widely applied measure amongst academic researcher measuring for reliability to ensure a composite scale (Fernandez et al., 2015; Resh et al., 2019). The upper management, job satisfaction, and supervisory support scales from the 2010 and 2018 FEVS were measured to identify the internal reliability. Research indicates that alphas of .70 or higher provide sufficient levels reliability (Cronbach, 1951; Fernandez et al., 2015). In the case of the constructs measured for this study, findings displayed a sufficient and even high levels of reliabilities with scores exceeding .80 (see Table 3 and Table 4).

Table 3: Scale Reliability 2010 FEVS Questionnaire Items

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha	Mean	SD
*Upper Management	.95	31.96	8.53
*Job Satisfaction	.84	15.09	3.48
*Supervisory Support	.96	38.08	9.39

**See Appendix C for the list of 2010 scale items.*

Table 4: Scale Reliability 2018 FEVS Questionnaire Items

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD
*Upper Management	.95	32.14	9.9
*Job Satisfaction	.86	14.65	3.7
*Supervisory Support	.97	44.34	10.36

**See Appendix D for the list of 2018 scale items.*

Limitations

The LCI relies on secondary empirical and interpretative information. These sources were derived from various avenues including media outlets that can be political-party dominant. While broadened outlet of sources were leveraged to provide a balanced poll of sources; these news outlets were not void of media biases. Additionally, when using empirical secondary data such as reputable polls, there is no acceptable means to confirm the validity of such measures.

Furthermore, both the interpretative and empirical secondary information can be driven by personal values. For example, a public's response to a societal issue may be viewed positively by some but not by others (Traugott, 2003), generating a level of subjectivity that can be context dependent (Bennister & Worthy, 2014). Finally, the independent coding was conducted with a small number of coders and occurred during a very polarized and controversial political time, making way for potential bias and challenge in effectively reflecting upon the code book to score each dimension for years prior.

Similarly, the FEVS experiences comparable issues. OPM administers the annual FEVS and generates a yearly report that discusses the survey and the findings, but does not highlight validity (Fernandez et al., 2015). The validity is also rarely explored among academic researchers that use this secondary dataset (Fernandez et al., 2015). The quality and quantity of the items measuring a construct in the government administered survey is a limitation that makes it "difficult for researchers to show their measurement approach captures all or most of the key

dimensions that make up a concept's content" (Fernandez et al., 2015, p. 389). Additionally, from a reliability standpoint, while the scales used to develop the variables are not a precise measure, research indicates that this is generally the case with government survey research (Caillier, 2012). The measures do, however, provide a premise to initiate discussion (Caillier, 2012). "FEVS items are grouped by thematic area... however, very few, if any explanations are provided in the technical notes as to how these batteries of questions were developed or selected" (Fernandez et al., 2015, p. 389).

Summary

A quantitative analysis of secondary data was undertaken to assess the impact political leaders can have on the perceptions on federal employees between political leaders. Essentially, the study examined whether the very top of the hierarchy can have an impact on the perceptions at the very bottom of the hierarchy between political leaders. The methodology consisted of a two-step approach. Step 1: The LCI was used to quantify, measure, and compare the leadership capital of the political leaders. Step 2: The FEVS secondary data was used to conduct a MANCOVA to calculate and compare employee perceptions between political leaders, controlling for their perceptions on upper management. This methodology allowed exploring whether political leaders (as explained by the leadership capital scores) have an impact on federal employee perceptions within a hierarchical bureaucracy. Findings are key to understanding the dynamics of the federal workforce. Information that is especially valuable as the general disdain of the government continues.

Subsequently, Chapter Four will provide a synopsis of the data analysis and results. The discussion will begin by reviewing the LCI measurement ratings, cumulative scores, and interpretation of said measures. Conducting post hoc analysis as deemed relevant. Followed by

the MANCOVA analysis that will highlight the findings of employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, controlling for upper management. Chapter Five then reviews the results, summarizing the findings and drawing conclusions as it relates to employee perceptions between political leaders, as explained by the leadership capital scores. The final chapter also highlights limitation and future recommendations.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Analysis was undertaken using a two-step process. Step one assessed and compared the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Independent coders reviewed predetermined sources and scored each political leader using the LCI. Scores were preliminary evaluated for intercoder reliability. Indicator scores were calculated to determine the cumulative leadership capital score for each political leader, conducting post hoc analysis as deemed relevant. Step two explored federal employee perceptions under Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Using the 2010 and 2018 FEVS, under political leaders Obama and Trump respectively, data was assessed to examine the federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support, holding upper management constant. Analysis began by conducting a correlation to investigate the relationship among the covariate (upper management) and outcome (job satisfaction and supervisory support) variables. A MANCOVA was then conducted to compare the outcome variables of job satisfaction and supervisory support between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018, using upper management as the covariate.

The multistep methodology yielded interesting results. The data analysis and results will be presented in sequence of the research design. The results discussion begins with a review of the data analysis that assesses the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Followed by a review of the FEVS quantitative analysis, presenting results for the subsequent research questions that explore whether there are differences in federal employee perceptions between political leaders. These questions specifically ask:

RQ1: Are there significant differences in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018?

RQ2: Controlling for perceptions of upper management, are there significant differences between the 2010 federal employee perceived job satisfaction and the 2018 federal employee perceived job satisfaction?

RQ3: Controlling for perceptions of upper management, are there significant differences between the 2010 federal employee perceived supervisory support and the 2018 federal employee perceived supervisory support?

Analysis of the Leadership Capital

Four public administration field experts comprised of practitioners, educators, and doctoral students independently scored each of the 10 criteria for Obama in 2010 and again for Trump in 2018. The measure for each indicator across the independent coders was aggregated, averaged, and then rounded to derive the score for each of the 10 indicators for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. A composite score was then generated by aggregating all the criteria measures to identify the leadership capital for each political leader during the second year of their first term. As shown in Table 5, the remainder of this section outlines the calculated scores for each indicator and defines the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018.

In the second year of his first term, Obama was found to have (5) *over four years* of experience in establishing a powerhouse of networks and on-the-job knowledge. In 2010 he was found to have a robust political plan and a policy vision that was deemed (5) *very clear and consistent*, with a (5) *very good* ability to communicate “argue, explain, and persuade constituents and publics when it matters most” (Bennister et al., 2017, p. 15). During that year, Obama had a (3) *moderate* personal poll rating, exhibiting a (2) *small (1-5%)* re-election margin within his affiliated democratic party. He was found to have a (3) *-2.5 to 2.5 percent* support among the democratic party he led. The public trust Obama garnered in 2010 ranged at the lower

end of (2) 20-40 percent and his work within the bureaucracy of democratic and republicans was deemed (2) *poor* at best. During that year Obama was found to have a (2) *low* outcome in the perceived ability to share the political platform with the democratic party, exhibiting a (2) *low* effectiveness in his ability to influence and gain support to operate in office. Together the cumulative measure of the 10-criteria score resulted in a score of 31, displaying a *high capital* for Obama in 2010, indicating “*momentum* derived from robust political performance and party cohesion” (Bennister et al., 2017, p. 16).

In the second year of his first term, Trump was found to have between (2) 1-2 years of experience in the “building of experience and power base, and on-the-job honing of skills” (Bennister et al., 2017, p. 15). In 2018 he displayed a (3) *moderately clear and consistent* ability to generate a convincing political set of ideas and visionary plan. Trump was found to have an (3) *average* communication skillset in his ability to publicly connect with various stakeholders on his intent and narrative. His personal poll ratings were found to be (3) *moderate* and he displayed a (3) *moderate* position of support and level safety within the republican party with a (4) 2.5% to 10% “measure of current party fortunes which affect its leader’s authority and what can be achieved” (Bennister et al., 2017, p. 15). The level of trust in Trump was on the lower end of the spectrum ranging from (2) 20-40% and his working relation within the bureaucracy was found to be (1) *very poor*. While he displayed a (4) *high* ability to perceive and shape the republican party’s platform, he was deemed to present a (2) *low* office effectiveness. Taken together the cumulative measure of the 10-criteria score resulted in a score of 27, displaying a *medium capital* for Trump in 2018, indicating his overall stance in “*muddling through* in the face of significant obstacles and division, yet with provisional license to operate from (a small majority within) the authorizing environment” (Bennister et al., 2017, p. 16).

Table 5: Average Criteria & Composite Leadership Capital Scores for Obama and Trump

Criteria	Indicator	Measurement	Obama 2010 Score	Trump 2018 Score
S1	01 Political/policy vision	(1) Completely absent (2) Unclear/inconsistent (3) Moderately clear/consistent (4) Clear/consistent (5) Very clear/consistent	(5) Very clear/consistent	(3) Moderately clear/consistent
S1	02 Communication skills	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good	(5) Very good	(3) Average
S2	03 Personal poll rating	(1) Very low (<20%) (2) Low (20-34%) (3) Moderate (35-49%) (4) High ((50-64%) (5) Very high (>65%)	(3) Moderate (35-49%)	(3) Moderate (35-49%)
S2	04 Longevity - time in office	(1) <1year (2) 1-2 years (3) 2-3 years (4) 3-4 years (5) >4 years	(5) >4 years	(2) 1-2 years
S2	05 (Re)election margin as party leadership	(1) Very small (<1% electors) (2) Small (1-5%) (3) Moderate (5-10%) (4) Large (10-15%) (5) Very large (>15%)	(2) Small (1-5%)	(3) Moderate (5-10%)
R1	06 Party polling relative to most recent election result	(1) <-10% (2) -10% to -2.5% (3) -2.5% to 2.5% (4) 2.5% to 10% (5) >10%	(3) -2.5% to 2.5%	(4) 2.5% to 10%
R1	07 Levels of public trust in leader	(1) 0-20% (2) 20-40% (3) 40-60% (4) 60-80% (5) 80-100%	(2) 20-40%	(2) 20-40%
R1	08 Working relations with the bureaucracy	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good	(2) Poor	(1) Very poor
R2	09 Perceived ability to share party's policy platform	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high	(2) Low	(4) High
R2	10 Perceived office effectiveness	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high	(2) Low	(2) Low
TOTAL			31	27

Post Hoc Analysis

The five items of the LCI skills criteria were subjected to principal components analysis (PAC) using SPSS. Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The initial analysis revealed a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .44, not quite meeting the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) was not quite statistically significant. The initial principal component analysis revealed a presence of two components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 61 percent and 20 percent of the variances, respectively.

To interpret these two components a Varimax rotation was performed (see Table 6). The rotated solution revealed the presence of one legitimate component with three items and showing a strong substantial loading on only one component. In interpreting the rotated factor pattern an item was said to load on a given component if the factor loading was .50 or greater for that component, and less than .20 for the other. Using these criteria only one component was retained consisting of three items from the skills criterion of the LCI.

Table 6: Component Matrix

Indicators	Component 1	Component 2
Political/policy vision	.909	-.100
Communication skills	.836	-.484
Personal poll rating	.461	.870
Longevity – time in office	.871	.026
(Re)election margin as party leadership	-.744	-.096
% of variance explained	61%	20%

The three remaining items of the LCI skills criteria were subjected to second principal components analysis (PAC) using SPSS. Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for

factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .6 and above. The second analysis revealed a Kaiser-Meyer-Okin value was .66, meeting the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and the Barlett’s Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) statistically significant, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. The second principal component analysis revealed a presence of a one component with an eigenvalue exceeding 1, explaining 83 percent of the variance. Subsequently, the Varimax rotation supported the presence of one component (see Table 7 for the factor loadings). The results of this analysis, further supported by a reliability that returned an alpha of .89, provide evidence for further considerations to leverage an updated skills criterion as a unidimensional instrument measuring the skills component of the LCI (see Table 8).

Table 7: Component Matrix

Indicators	Skills Criteria
Political/policy vision	.956
Communication Skills	.883
Longevity – time in office	.884
% of variance explained	82.5%

Table 8: Scale Reliability Skills Criterion

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha	Mean	SD
Skills Criterion	.89	11.13	4.02

Since both Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 attained the same score for the relational criteria, a post hoc analysis was not conducted on this dimension. A post hoc was also not conducted for the reputational criteria. To have a legitimate measure, three items are needed to conduct an analysis, and the reputational criteria only includes two indicators.

Analysis of the Federal Employee Perceptions

Respondents from the 2010 FEVS included 263475 government employees, 131629 (50%) males and 118378 (44.9%) females with 13468 (5.1%) not reporting their sex. The largest group in the sample had been employed with the government for more than 20 years 104139 (39.5%) followed by groups that had spent 6 to 10 years of time with the government 40322 (15.3%) and 15 to 20 years of time with the government 33609 (12.8%), with 15578 (5.9%) not reporting time spent with the government. Respondents from the 2018 FEVS included 598003 government employees, 293014 (49%) males and 225889 (37.8%) females with 79100 (13%) not reporting their sex. The largest group in the sample had been employed with the government for 10 years or less 221712 (37.1%) followed by groups that had spent 10 to 20 years of time with the government 162634 (27.2%) and more than 20 years of time with the government 140581 (23.5%), with 73076 (12.2%) not reporting time spent with the government. Overall significance of the main effects was tested at multivariate analyses at $p = .05$. As shown in Table 9, intercorrelation among the variables of upper management, job satisfaction, and supervisory support were calculated. The analysis between the outcome job satisfaction and supervisory support variables revealed a significant correlation ($r = .63$).

Table 9: Correlation Matrix

Variable		Upper Management	Job Sat.	Supervisory Support
Upper Management	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.759**	.647**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	668183	657007	628288
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.759**	1.000	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	657007	822253	736040
Supervisory Support	Pearson Correlation	.647**	.633**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	628288	736040	754596

A two-way MANCOVA was utilized to investigate the effects of the perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 among a sample of 861478 federal employee while controlling for the perceptions of their upper management.

Covariate Effect – Upper Management: The results of the two-way MANCOVA show a significant covariate effect on federal employee perceptions between political leaders (Wilks' lambda = .38, $F_{(2, 618101)} = 503762.65$, $p < .001$). In this study, upper management accounted for 38 percent of the variance in overall federal employees ($\eta^2 = .38$).

The results of the post hoc between subjects' effects show a significant upper management effect on job satisfaction ($F_{(df=1, 618102)} = 852293.85$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .58$) and on supervisory support ($F_{(df=1, 618102)} = 446431.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .42$)

Main effect – political leader: The results of the two-way MANCOVA show an overall significant difference between the federal employee under political leader Obama in 2010 and political leader Trump in 2018 on their overall comparison of perceptions between administrations controlling for perception of upper management (Wilks' lambda = .98, $F_{(2, 618101)} = 6221.32$, $p < .010$). Political leadership accounted for almost 98 percent of the variance in overall federal employee perceptions ($\eta^2 = .98$).

As shown in Table 10, the results of the post hoc between subjects' effects, indicate that federal employee perceptions were significantly different on job satisfaction ($F_{(df=1, 618102)} = 4711.40$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .008$) and supervisory support ($F_{(df=1, 618102)} = 3770.88$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .006$).

In this study, when controlling for perceptions of upper management federal employees under the political leadership of Obama in 2010 experienced slightly greater perceptions of job

satisfaction (mean = 15.34, SE = .005) than under the political leadership of Trump in 2018 (mean = 14.95, SE = .004). On the other hand, federal employees under the political leadership of Obama in 2010 experienced slightly lower perceptions of supervisory support (mean = 43.28, SE = .018) than under the political leadership of Trump in 2018 (mean = 44.61, SE = .012). See Table 11.

Table 10: MANCOVA Summary Table

Source	Dependent Variable	SS	Df	MS	f	p
Covariate ^a	Job Satisfaction	4660251.790	1	4660251.790	852293.853	.580
	Supervisory Support	27353216.846	1	27353216.846	446431.330	.419
Political Leadership ^b	Job Satisfaction	25761.420	1	25761.420	4711.398	.008
	Supervisory Support	231045.046	1	231045.046	3770.882	.006
Error	Job Satisfaction	3379715.741	618102	5.468		
	Supervisory Support	37871620.825	618102	61.271		
Corrected Total	Job Satisfaction	8058134.416	618104			
	Supervisory Support	65519733.110	618104			

^aWilks' lambda = .38, $F_{(2, 618101)} = 503762.65$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .62$

^bWilks' lambda = .98, $F_{(2, 618101)} = 6221.32$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$

Table 11: Estimated Means of Political Leadership on Employee Perceptions

Variables		Mean	SE	N
Employee Perceptions	Political Leadership			
Job Satisfaction	Obama 2010	15.39	.005	190714
	Trump 2018	14.95	.005	427391
	Total	15.17	.003	618105
Supervisory Support	Obama 2010	43.28	.018	190714
	Trump 2018	44.61	.012	427391
	Total	43.95	.011	618105

Summary

Chapter Four focused on analyzing the secondary data and reporting the results for each of the research questions. The chapter started with an overview of the process and research questions. Subsequently, the results were presented in a two-step process to provide results for each of the questions. Results for research question one included assessing and comparing the leadership capital for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. The process started by analyzing the intercoder reliability for each of the independent coder scores. The process was then followed by aggregating and averaging the each of the 10 LCI indicator scores for Obama 2010 and Trump 2018. The indicator scores were then summed to identify the LCI score for each political leader. Results indicated that Obama was found to have a high leadership capital in 2010 and Trump was found to have a medium leadership capital in 2018. Subsequently, a post hoc factor analysis was discussed to present considerations for the skills criteria of the index.

Upon identifying the leadership capital, research questions two and three were analyzed and reported on. The descriptive statistics were first reported followed by a correlation analysis to test the overall significance of the main effects among the variables of upper management, job satisfaction, and supervisory support. Findings suggested a significant correlation. A two-way MANCOVA was then utilized to investigate the effects of the perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 while controlling for the perceptions of their upper management. Federal employees under Obama in 2010 displayed slightly higher perceptions of job satisfaction than under Trump in 2018. Alternately, federal employees under Obama in 2010 experienced slightly lower perceptions of supervisory support than under Trump in 2018.

Subsequently, Chapter Five will provide a synopsis of the data analysis and results. The discussion will begin by reviewing the LCI results and the two-way MANCOVA findings. Next, outcomes will be discussed, and conclusions will be drawn to explain employee perceptions between the political leaders Obama (in 2010) and Trump (in 2018), explained by the leadership capital scores. Chapter Five will also outline limitations and future recommendations.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study offers a two-step approach to analyzing secondary data that answers three research questions. First an analysis of secondary information derived from interpretative and empirical sources was conducted to examine research question one, which made inquiries as to whether there are significant differences in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Step two then followed with a secondary analysis of the FEVS to examine the differences in federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support between the years 2010 and 2018.

Research question one found a moderate intercoder reliability with findings supporting the premise of the index (Bennister & Worthy, 2014). Additionally, findings aided in providing a holistic view of a political leader's skills, relations, and reputation to uncover how a leader distributes capital during a specified period. Further, findings highlighted opportunities for future research into the skills criteria of the tool. Subsequently, the second two research questions tested for federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support under each of these political leaders. Findings provided insight into the differences of job satisfaction and supervisory support, while holding upper management constant under two different political leaders.

The remainder of this chapter will discuss the outcomes. Starting with an assessment of the leadership capital, this section will review each of the indicators and discuss the overall differences in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Subsequently, the perceptions of federal employees will be discussed to explain the outcome differences in job satisfaction and supervisory support between the years 2010 and 2018. The chapter then closes

by highlighting the limitations and future research considerations, presenting a roadmap that includes opportunities to enhance the tools used and the research design applied.

Discussion and Implications

Assessing Leadership Capital

An assessment of Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018 uncovered that there is a difference in leadership capital between the two political leaders during the second year of their first term. Findings showed that Obama displayed a high leadership capital while Trump exhibited a medium leadership capital. Obama was also found to have higher outcomes in the skills dimension, while Trump displayed a proportionately higher reputational criteria with an overall more evenly distributed capital across the index. The remainder of this section will start by providing a comparison overview of each of the 10 indicators and close by discussing considerations in the overall difference in leadership capital.

Skills: 01 Political/policy vision - The first African American president, Obama's overall vision was one that was based on unity (Sugrue, 2010). Obama was tasked with managing the aftermath of the Great Recession to provide stable employment while simultaneously impacting job growth. Despite these challenges he displayed clear and succinct plans that reinforced the aspiration of hope and change that aimed to tackle some of society's wicked problems (Rodrigues, 2017). Plans such as Obamacare that envisioned universal healthcare for all and the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act that was designed to ensure inclusion across the American military. However, this all-inclusive all-encompassing vision was not without its critics. Obama's "political vision of unity discredits those who cling bitterly to notion of racial superiority and, at the same time, rebukes those who harbor a divisive identify politics fueled by an exaggerated sense of racial grievance" (Sugrue, 2010, p. 1). Conversely, Trump's *America*

Frist approach included a political vision that was largely filled with ignorance and confusion, making it hard to even see the half-way decent plans (Blackwill, 2019). Trump's erratic nature made it hard to decipher whether today's vision would be tomorrow's policy (Blackwill, 2019). Whereby foreign affairs policy vision on China, North Korea and Russia are examples of plans "driven by sporadic fits of belligerence or enthusiasm, unrelated to any coherent set of objectives or methods for achieving them" (Cohen, 2019, para. 8). Trump's policy vision was moderate at best, with a consistently economic driven vision. He spoke to blue-collar Americans and was able to effectively connect with this group on his vision (Thiessen, 2019).

Skills: 02 Communicative performance - An eloquent speaker, Obama took a relational communication style to effectively connect with society (Theodoropoulou, 2020). While his communicative performance regularly scores high points, questions remain about whether he was a strong communicator or merely a gifted speaker (Squeo, 2013). While Obama oftentimes delivered a moving speech, even he admits that his communication oftentimes did not clearly articulate his policy vision (Keith, 2016). The low economic approval ratings of 2010, by Obama's own accord, can be attributed to the poor communication (Liptak, 2015). While Obama flared very well with his communication in 2010, he became "the candidate who was so compelling [that he] need[ed] to get his mojo back by reconnecting with how he got to where he is" (Sears, 2010). Trump, on the other hand, often said *off-the-cuff things* (Graham, 2020) such as when he ridiculed the protection of immigrants from what he labeled as "*shithole*" countries (Dawsey, 2018). Such messages that resulted in bypassing the topic of immigration and instead turning them into one of race. Messages that only further divided the republicans and democrats. However, what some viewed as a communication shortcoming was welcomed as a change of

pace by others, deeming Trump to be an average communicator. The reality is that Trump spoke to his base, many of whom communicated in much the same way.

Skills: 03 Personal poll rating relative to opposition leaders - Obama and Trump each continued to reach a new level of political polarization. Despite the growing divide between the democratic and republican parties, Obama still rated high at 81% among the democrats, with republicans coming in at about 15 % in 2010 (Gallup, n.d.). Comparably, Trump also rated high among the republicans, while the democrats came in at 8% for the year 2018 (Jones, 2018).

“Presidents today may now be judged simply by Americans on shared or divergent partisanship rather than on the president’s accomplishments in office or on the state of the nation” (Jones, 2018, para. 20). From a leader-to-leader comparison, Obama came into office with gusto. His campaign provided the country a message of *Hope*. However, by the time Obama reached the second year of his first term his job approval had gradually declined. Gallup polls showed that he started the year at a 50% percent poll rating, averaging, and ending the year at about a 47% rate (Jones, 2010; Gallup, n.d.). Trump on the other hand experienced a significantly lower job approval rating, impacted by actions such as those that included the immigrant family separation and travel ban on Muslim-dominant countries. While he experienced a steady and more average rating through the year, Trump ended the second year of his first term in 2018 at about 39% (Jones, 2018).

Skills: 04 Longevity - In 2010 Obama only had a year’s worth of experience as a political leader. However, his exposure, and related experiences, dated back to well over five years. Even prior to running for president, Obama had related education and experiences. His network included politicians and public officers across the administrations, and he had experiences that allowed him to be a flexible leader rather than one that managed on a whim (Blondel, 1987). In

comparison, Trump came into office with an Ivy League education and an impressive private sector resume, however, he held no direct political or military experience nor a relevant network. He was the first political leader of his kind. While Trump had been deemed fit to serve as the political leader, the only political experience was the one year he had gained after being elected to office.

Skills: 05 (Re) election margin for the party leadership - While averaging a low job approval rating through the year, Obama's unfavorable ratings likely resulted in Republicans winning the House during the 2010 mid-term elections. The win, however, was not without other considerations, such as the Great Recession. Obama was brought into office to help restore the economy, a challenge that continued well into the second year of his first term (Campbell, 2011). However, "the election results [were] as much of a withdrawal of the performance-based rejection of Republicans in 2006 and 2008 as they were the mix of the performance and value-based rejection of Democrats in 2010" (Campbell, 2011, p. 13). Alternately, an unexpected reality for many, Trump's 2016 election victory resulted in an impressive voter turnout for the 2018 mid-term elections (Galston & Hendrickson, 2019). Through the first two years Trump focused on his voter base delivering on both policy and rhetoric (Zurcher, 2018). Leading during a time of economic growth, the outcome of the 2018 mid-term election resulted in Democrats winning the House and the Republicans winning the Senate.

Relations: 06 Party Polling relative to most recent election results - The Democratic Party lost the House in 2010 and Obama's poll rating trended downward with the party failing to sympathize with their leader (Zeleny, 2010). In fact, during this time of conflict and inability to reach consensus, the Democratic Party was one that required the president to take measures to *ease tensions* (Zeleny, 2010). The stimulus package is an example of in-party disruption whereby

“a dozen Senate Democrats joined Republicans in voting against a stimulus package” (Trumbull, 2010, para. 4). However, the first president challenged since FDR, Obama was tasked with the lofty deliverable of reviving a bad economy. 2018 experienced continued divergence between political parties. Amid these between party battles, the Democrats won the House in the 2018 mid-term election and Trump’s approval ratings, while lower than other administrations, proved to be steady, with Republicans largely approving of their political leader (Dunn, 2020).

Republicans are more bullish (Geiger, 2018, para. 3) and the party stayed close to their president (Kamarck et al., 2018). Ultimately, Trump delivered on the promises of his policy plan (Norman, 2018).

Relations: 07 Levels of public trust in leader – Issues of trust in the public sector have been an ongoing debate for decades (Liasson, 2010). By the time Obama reached the second year of his first term public trust in the leader had reached an all-time low (Pew Research Center, 2019) and it showed during the mid-term elections. Issues of trust can be attributed to the public simply not being assured that national problems were been solved (Liasson, 2010). While public trust in the government was challenged, many middle-class Americans still entrusted Obama to solve for some of the country’s issues (Teixeira, 2010). Trump in 2018, much like Obama in 2010, experienced low levels of trust during the second year of his first term, confirming the partisan divide and mere voter agreement (Halpin et al., 2018). Trust was also negatively impacted by the looming and ultimate government shutdowns at the end of 2018 (Wu, 2019). The start of a long and brutal battle for months that proceeded. However, 2018, unlike years prior, experienced new issues of trust, namely a leader’s personal behavior (Halpin et al., 2018). White House press briefings had near stopped by the end of the 2018 and tweets from the

president became commonplace, leaving the public to decipher fact from fiction (Breuninger, 2018).

Relations: 08 Working relations with the bureaucracy - Mitigating the partisan divide was one of Obama's many agendas, but the divide only worsened (Parsons & Mascaro, 2017). The working relation between Obama and the republicans was contested on several topics. Republicans complained about not receiving an olive branch and, Obama blamed the GOPs for not welcoming gestures of good will (Bash & Silverleib, 2010). Furthermore, several Democrats felt overlooked on issues like healthcare, the tax deal, and Afghanistan (Stolberg, 2010). "Nearly all of his major accomplishments resulted from party-line votes or executive actions... Republicans accused him of paying too much attention to Democratic interests, allies blamed him for neglecting his party" (Parsons & Mascaro, 2017, para. 2-3). The partisan divide was extreme, and the working relationship exhibited this divide (McCoy, 2018). Alternately, Trump appeared to rule with an iron fist. Despite the unruly and unconventional leadership (Ball & Elliott, 2018) there was still standing power with the republicans, especially for those that supported their leader's path to *Make America Great Again* (Montanaro, 2018). The Democrats on the other hand appeared to gain even more unity as a party in their quest to ensure Trumpism did not dominate. Trump made claims of prioritizing unity between the parties, half-hearted sentiments negated after claims of winning the mid-term elections (Bennett & Berenson, 2018).

Reputation: 09 Perceived ability to share party's policy platform - The executive order was widely used by both leaders during the second year of their first term. Obama was tasked with solving for a bad economy by managing for some wicked and controversial problems. However, issues on policy agreement arose as economic issues continued and district related problems worsened, causing some democrats to distance themselves from their leader (Nicholas,

2010). Trump and the Republicans, on the other hand, were well-aligned on varied issues ranging from domestic to foreign affairs. His radical ideas were not his alone, they were part of a larger Republican agenda that made immense headway (Denning, 2018).

Reputation: 10 Perceived office effectiveness – Vetoes were minimal to none for both Obama in 2010 (1) and Trump in 2018 (0). However, Trump enforced several government shutdowns with the last one of 2018 resulting from disagreements over funding the southern border wall (Bouchard, 2018). Spilling into the following year, 2018 ended the year with what would be longest shutdown in the federal government. Furthermore, both leaders took liberties with executive power during the second year of their first term. While not a new practice, Trump's 2018 use of the executive order was centered around himself as a leader rather than toward the effectiveness of a nation (Graham, 2018). Alternately, Obama's approach limited signing statements that made tracking statutes harder (Savage, 2010).

Overall leadership capital - Obama was found to have a high leadership capital in 2010 in comparison to Trump who scored a medium leadership capital whereby he largely *muddled* (Bennister et al., 2017) his way through the second year of his first term in office. The outcomes of how these leaders expended their capital needs to be taken into context with the continued political polarization that was prevalent during both administrations. Additionally, the environmental and societal events of the time may have driven how each of these leader's distributed their capital.

Obama was tasked with solving for a broken economy and moving the pendulum on issues of racial inequity. Alternately, Trump was entrusted by his voters to instill principles and policies that were once the foundation of the county. Apart from these and other obvious differences, however, it is noteworthy to discuss each of the interpretative differences in

leadership styles that may have contributed to their varied leadership capital outcomes. Obama took a very inclusive and collaborative approach to improving America; while Trump took an authoritative approach to re-envision America as it may have once been (D'Ambrosio & Raffaella, 2019).

Obama has been described as an even-keel progressive and intelligent individual with a history of political involvement (Greenstein, 2009). Obama had a personality that was immensely popular (Edwards, 2012) and he displayed a portfolio of political experiences that allowed him to acquire new skills and become a persuasive political figure globally (Greenstein, 2009). He was a political leader of substance and detail (Greenstein, 2009), known to impart a participative leadership style by embracing the participation of his personnel in his administration (Wayne, 2011). Obama was an excellent communicator who was fluent and expressive as a president (Edwards, 2012; Greenstein, 2009). He was progressive and took pride in change, a hard endeavor in a divided bureaucratic culture (Alter, 2010). While Obama's was a popular administration among many, his leadership received mix-reviews. On the opposing side, he was identified as an administrator of no significant successes, but rather as one that was inexperienced and mistake-prone in his political decision and actions (Singh, 2016). Potentially explaining the outcome of how Obama distributed the relational and reputational dimensions of his capital.

Trump, on the other hand had been compared with the likes of Nixon even before becoming the president (McAdams, 2016), he garnered a reputation that lacked trust or ethical behavior by some, while revered by others in hopes of a better nation. An entrepreneur and a television personality prior to becoming president, he lacked the political portfolio most candidates/presidents have displayed prior to entering office. His lack of political experience,

however, probably helped him, where his “lack of public service is part of the “outsider” appeal that may have contributed to his success: Polls have shown that most Americans, especially Trump supporters, distrust the government” (Crockett, 2017, para. 14). Across the LCI criteria, Trump appeared to display a relatively even distribution of capital. The outcome of his capital allocation can be supported by his actions and behaviors. Known to be straightforward and arrogant with a condescending communication style (Wang & Liu, 2018), Trump held views that were either respected or loathed by the American people, without much else in between. He had been described as having an authoritarian style, using power and coercion to manage the resources in his administration (Burn, 2019), potentially explaining the high turnover rates when compared to administrations prior (Tenpas, 2020).

The two very different political leaders between these administrations exercised different approaches to solve for the country’s problems. Additionally, these two leaders governed through similar yet different political and environmental issues that resulted in differences in how each of them dispersed their capital. So, yes, there are significant differences in leadership capital between the Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018.

Federal Employee Perceptions

In an era of political polarization and public service derision, this study highlighted that a political leader’s leadership capital and the distribution of their capital can have a systematic effect on the federal employee perceptions. Findings displayed a difference in federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support between the years 2010 and 2018. Though upper management displayed a significant effect on the perception of federal employee, controlling for these levels of management found that slightly higher perceptions of job satisfaction in 2010

than those in 2018. Alternately, federal employees displayed slightly higher perceptions of supervisory support in 2018 than those in 2010.

Federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction were higher under Obama in 2010 than Trump in 2018. This may be explained by Obama's high leadership capital in 2010 versus Trump's medium capital in 2018. Employees at the bottom of the hierarchy may have found solace in Obama's higher leadership capital as they maneuvered through the intricacies of public service. Additionally, in 2010 Obama displayed a significantly higher skills criterion than his other criteria, and when compared to Trump in 2018. A more skilled political leader, as outlined by the LCI, is a leader that generally displays a clear and consistent plan, with excellent communication, tenure in the field of politics, and other qualities (Bennister et al., 2017). The attributes of a well-poised political leader may have contributed to providing federal employees comfort in aligning the desires of the job with what is attained from the job (Locke, 1976). However, it is important to discuss that while these results were significant, they were not meaningful. Essentially, while it is unclear whether leadership capital had a considerable real impact on the federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction, there is a statistically significant outcome on the perceptions. In such an instance, tiers of management within an agency may warrant investigation to pinpoint the specific level of management that may facilitate a significant and meaningful impact on the perceptions of job satisfaction.

On the other hand, the higher federal employees' perceptions of supervisory support under Trump in 2018 than Obama in 2010 may be explained by employees finding support at the ground level, turning to the front-line supervisor when the very top of the hierarchy is figuring their way through. Important to note, however, is the climate of the times. In 2010 Obama was focused on fixing a broken economy he had inherited. His participative style, even within a

bureaucracy, may have allowed for federal employees to attain what they need from the top-down, as exhibited in the higher perceptions of job satisfaction. Trump, however, led during a time of economic growth, expanding the government and using an authoritative leadership style that provided the front-line more autonomy, causing federal employees to turn to their immediate supervisor. Furthermore, proportionately Trump displayed a higher reputation criterion than Obama during the second year of the first term. This high reputation dimension may have provided federal employees the confidence of the alignment between the top and the front-line, providing affirmation that the immediate supervisors were successfully acting as the liaison.

When comparing the political leaders during the second year of their first term, findings suggest how a leader distributes the skills, relations, and reputation of their capital can have an impact on federal employee perceptions. In 2010 Obama expended his capital on the skills driven criteria, that appeared to positively impact the federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction. While in 2018 Trump displayed a higher reputational criterion that exhibited a positive federal employee perception of supervisory support. But as Bennister et al. (2017) discuss, how a political leader distributes skills, relations, and reputation capital can change and can be impacted by the issues a nation experiences during that given time. For example, in 2010 the nation was working to fix a broken economy while in 2018 the economy was on the upswing. Ultimately leadership capital has a systematic effect for all people in the organization, including those at the very bottom of the organizational structure. Findings of this study suggest that the leadership capital of a political leader can impact the federal employee perceptions of where they look for support and satisfaction. This information can positively impact the levels of upper management to gain insight about how to effectively lead based on awareness of how a political leader distributes their capital

and the implications that can have at the ground-level. Information that is especially valuable as the increase in the general disdain of the government continues (Hill, 2020).

Limitations and Future Studies

As alluded to in Chapter Three, this study was conducted during a time when political polarization was accentuated and all-consuming. In fact, research suggests that party-polarization in recent years has been so severe “that it is a threat to the health of the nation” (McConnell et al., 2017, para. 1). This *affective polarization* imparts distrust and dislike, likely contributing to the hindering dysfunction in the United States among politicians and civil community members alike. This phenomenon may have contributed to a limitation in this study, whereby independent LCI coders may have inadvertently (and inevitably) extended their political biases as they coded each indicator on the index. Future research that replicates this study may benefit from increasing the number of independent coders and further scrutinizing the sources to help equalize the polarization of the political climate and the environment a political leader is entrenched in. Additionally, there are opportunities for future research to mitigate concerns of biases by including measures to assess the coders affective polarization. Future studies may consider using Druckman and Levendusky’s (2019) four metrics that include the “feeling thermo-meters for each party, trait ratings for each party, trust scores for each party, and the three social-distance items (comfort with the other party as friends, neighbors, or as a son/daughter-in-law)” (p. 116). Investigating the use of one or all four of these measures may aid in understanding the cause and magnitude of the coder affective polarization to better explain the outcomes of the LCI.

In addition to the FEVS instrumentation limitation briefly touched on in Chapter Three, the survey also presents gaps in the type of information captured and what is made publicly available. Comparable to the FEVS, the Australian Public Service (APS) Employee Census

noticeably categorizes information to provide a robust dataset that can contribute to a holistic view of the employee outcomes across the government. Alternately, the FEVS does not collect some categories of information, nor does it distinctly organize the information that it does collect for each related tier of leadership. Furthermore, some information collected in the FEVS has been restricted and is no longer available to the public. These gaps make it harder to effectively inquire about the impact each level of the bureaucracy can have on the perceptions of the federal employees. It also makes it hard to attain a holistic view of the federal employee workforce. Future research studies could benefit from a full assessment of the FEVS against other comparable surveys such as the APS Employee Census to identify opportunities for enhancement.

There may also be opportunities to enhance the research design by supplementing the inquiries of this study with qualitative components that directly explores the learned experiences of federal employees. Such a qualitative approach can aid in providing clarity around the varied levels of management, information that is not distinctly categorized in the FEVS. Also, such information can lend itself to be instrumental in understanding the perceptions garnered of each of the levels of public management, helping provide additional insight to explain how a political leader's capital distribution can impact the bottom of the hierarchy. Consideration should be given to evaluating the effect political leaders can have on the perceptions of federal employees by assessing their leadership capital along with the FEVS across an entire term rather than during a segment of a term. An evaluation over an entire term can aid in providing a more robust analysis that may not be attainable during a subset of that tenure.

Future researchers should also consider exploring alternate ways to leverage the LCI. Post hoc findings displayed the greatest disparity within the skills criterion where factor analysis showed that the removal of the polls rating and the (re)election indicators provided a stronger

dimension with the potential to be developed into its own measure. Specifically, there may be opportunities to pilot test the development of a unidimensional construct with a high reliability to test the creation of a Likert type psychometric instrument. Exploring the new construct of a skills instrument can pave the way to measure a political leader on the premise of their vision, communication, and tenure. This may provide a base to better understand the impact of a political leader's skills capital and the associated effect on the federal employee perceptions. This may also open the door to further examine instrumentation opportunities with the relational and reputational criteria. Leadership capital and the distribution of the criteria have already shown to have a trickle-down effect on the perceptions of the federal workforce. Thus, working to enhance the indices into an instrument can aid in further explaining the current and future dynamics of the federal workforce. Information that is especially valuable as the increase in the general disdain of the government continues.

Summary

Chapter Five focused on summarizing the results, discussing the outcomes, and highlighting explainability. The chapter started with a review of the leadership capital results for Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018, reviewing each indicator followed by a general overview about the differences that may have contributed to the high and medium leadership capital, respectively. Next the federal employee perception results were reiterated, outlining the use of upper management as a control, findings displayed slightly higher perceptions of job satisfaction in 2010 versus the slightly higher perceptions of supervisory support in 2018. Implications of these results were then examined in conjunction with the leadership capital outcomes. Specifically, discussing Obama's high skills criteria in 2010 to explain the slightly higher

perceptions of job satisfaction, and Trump's higher reputational criteria in 2018 to explain the slightly higher perceptions of supervisory support.

The chapter then outlined opportunities for future studies. Discussing the need to assess affective polarization, increase the number of coders, and furthering the efforts to scrutinize code book sources when replicating this study. A qualitative component was also recommended to enhance future studies while managing for the gaps in the FEVS data. Finally, opportunities were highlighted to identify ways to improve future FEVS and considerations for further exploration into criterion related instruments derived from the leadership capital indices.

Overall, the dissertation set out to identify whether there were differences in leadership capital between Obama in 2010 and Trump in 2018. Subsequently exploring whether there was a difference in federal employee perceptions of job satisfaction and supervisory support. Perception outcomes were then discussed using the political leaders' leadership capital to infer findings. Outcomes suggest that differences in a president's leadership capital can impact the perceptions of federal employees, further explained by how capital is distributed among the criteria. Furthering these lines of inquiries are important to aid in better understanding the dynamics of the hierarchical bureaucratic structure, especially as the negative connotations of working for the federal government increases and the growing disparities impact the dynamics of the current and prospective public servant.

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Appendix A

Leadership Capital Code Book: Obama 2010 & Trump 2018

Email Communication:

To get started please watch this 8-minute video for a brief walk-through on completing the LCI - https://youtu.be/_xeh4rqg2-E Then please use the attached leadership capital index coder document to review the *Getting Started* process and subsequently code your scores. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions through the process. Leadership capital is grounded in the realms of trust, network, and ethical belief that is operationalized as the perceived sum of a leader's skills, relational, and reputational capital (Bennister et al., 2017). As an independent coder you will review and score pre-determined sources to assess a total of 10 indicators - once for Obama in 2010 and once for Trump in 2018. Coders will only be brought together if a need arises to discuss and clarify the coding guidelines.

Code Book Guidelines:

To get started, please review the process listed below. Feel free to contact me at dj922013@wcupa.edu/703-615-3434, with any questions at any point through the process.

Step 1: Assess the leadership capital for Obama 2010

1. Visit the Obama 2010 worksheet.
2. Review the indicator [Column B] to ascertain what is being measured [Column C] and how to interpret [Column D] the measurement
3. Visit and review the provided measurement source links [Column E] for each indicator. [NOTE: Sources have been identified and selected by myself using the guidelines provided by Bennister et al. (2017), regardless of media bias. The sources are not intended to be context driven. Rather the sources are intended to provide a snapshot overview of Obama in 2010.]
4. Code your measurement in Column F by highlighting your selected response score in yellow - identify ONE collective score per indicator. Scores should not be context specific, rather your scores should reflect an overall assessment of the political leader in that year for that indicator.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 until all indicators have been scored.

Step 2: Assess the leadership capital for Trump 2018

1. Visit the Trump 2018 worksheet.
2. Review the indicator [Column B] to ascertain what is being measured [Column C] and how to interpret [Column D] the measurement
3. Visit and review the provided measurement source links [Column E] for each indicator. [NOTE: Sources have been identified and selected by myself using the guidelines provided by Bennister et al. (2017), regardless of media bias. The sources are not intended to be context driven. Rather the sources are intended to provide a snapshot overview of Trump in 2018.]
4. Code your measurement in Column F by highlighting your selected response score in yellow - identify ONE collective score per indicator. Scores should not be context specific, rather your scores should reflect an overall assessment of the political leader in that year for that indicator.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 until all indicators have been scored

Step 3: Return the completed document. Once you have completed scoring all the indicators for both Obama 2010 and Trump 2018, please save and return your completed excel coding document to Sunayna Johnson at dj922013@wcupa.edu

Obama 2010

Criteria	Indicator	What is	Interpretation	Measurement Sources	Score
S1	01 Political policy vision	Ability to create a persuasive idea/plan	Grand design/ideas set out in their leadership - may be practical/pragmatic & more abstract	03/13/2010 Weekly Address 05/12/20 Remarks 06/20/2010 Remarks 07/01/2010 Remarks 12/22/2010 New Conference	(1) Completely absent (2) Unclear/inconsistent (3) Moderately clear/consistent (4) Clear/consistent (5) Very clear/consistent
S1	02 Communication Skills	Ability to argue, explain, and persuade constituents & publics when it	How ably the leader explains and creates a narrative around intent &/or key actions	01/27/2020 State of the Union 07/13/2020 Interview 08/14/2010 Remarks 09/14/2010 Remarks 12/07/2010 Proclamation	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good
S2	03 Personal poll rating	Poll ratings	Poll ratings	2010 Presidential Rating 2010 Presidential Approval Center 2010 Quarter Update Rating Approval Rating Comparison	(1) Very low (<20%) (2) Low (20-34%) (3) Moderate (35-49%) (4) High (50-64%) (5) Very high (>65%)
S2	04 Longevity - time in office	Building of experience and power base, and on-the-job honing of skills.	Time in office (as leader)	Career timeline Chronological timeline Biography Life and career	(1) <1 year (2) 1-2 years (3) 2-3 years (4) 3-4 years (5) >4 years
S2	05 (Re)election margin as party leadership	Safety of position in party and support.	Extent of victory in leadership election against rival or rivals	2010 Midterm Snapshot 2010 Midterm Results 2010 Midterms Analysis 2010 Midterm Elections 2010 Foreshadows 2010	(1) Very small (<1% electors) (2) Small (1-5%) (3) Moderate (5-10%) (4) Large (10-15%) (5) Very large (>15%)
R1	06 Party polling relative to most recent election result	Support among the electorate for the party they lead.	A measure of current party fortunes which affect its leader's authority and what can be achieved	2010 Democratic View by Proxy 2010 Proxy Analysis of Democrats 2010 Ratings by Party by Proxy 2010 Party Rating by Proxy 2010 Democratic Party Overview by F	(1) <-10% (2) -10% to -2.5% (3) -2.5% to 2.5% (4) 2.5% to 10% (5) >10%
R1	07 Levels of public trust in leader	Public support for the leader themselves, also linked to press coverage	Extent to which leader is (dis)trusted and respected by the public	2010 Public Trust 2010 Trust in the Government 2010 Government Trust Over Time	(1) 0-20% (2) 20-40% (3) 40-60% (4) 60-80% (5) 80-100%
R1	08 Working relations with bureaucracy	Working relations in the bureaucracy	Working relations in the bureaucracy	2010 Deep Rifts Divide 2010 Political Party Collaboration 2010 Obama Plans Collaborate 2010 Working in the democracy 2010 Collaboration Agenda	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good
R2	09 Perceived ability to share party's policy platform	Degree to which leaders can determine the direction & choices of their parties	Office-holders who have a demonstrated ability to take on their party and its "sacred cows" are in a better position to exercise	2010 Democrats & Distance 2010 Angry Dems 2010 Dem Loss	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high
R2	10 Perceived office effectiveness	Influence over legislature, signal of support from own party and/or cabinet, relative strength of	Extent to which leaders are seen to have the ascendancy in parliament and can obtain its assent for policy proposals and	2010 Obama Use Executive Power 2010 Expanding Presidential Power 2010 Obama & the Nation 2010 Executive Orders	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high

Trump 2018

Criteria	Indicator	What is	Interpretation	Measurement Sources	Score
S1	01 Political policy vision	Ability to create a persuasive idea/plan	Grand design/ideas set out in their leadership - may be practical/pragmatic & more abstract	01/16/2018 Remarks 01/23/2018 Remarks 03/22/2018 Remarks 10/25/2018 Remarks 12/19/2018 Remarks	(1) Completely absent (2) Unclear/inconsistent (3) Moderately clear/consis: (4) Clear/consistent (5) Very clear/consistent
S1	02 Communication Skills	Ability to argue, explain, and persuade constituents & publics when it	How ably the leader explains and creates a narrative around intent &/or key actions	01/16/2018 Proclamation 01/30/2018 State of the Union 11/08/2018 Proclamation 07/02/2018 Remarks 09/18/2018 Proclamation	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good
S2	03 Personal poll rating	Poll ratings	Poll ratings	2018 Presidential Rating 2018 Presidential Approval Center 2018 Approval Rating Slip Approval Rating Comparison	(1) Very low (<20%) (2) Low (20-34%) (3) Moderate (35-49%) (4) High (50-64%) (5) Very high (>65%)
S2	04 Longevity - time in office	Building of experience and power base, and on-the-job honing of skills.	Time in office (as leader)	Career Timeline Chronological timeline Life & Career Accomplishments & Failures	(1) <1 year (2) 1-2 years (3) 2-3 years (4) 3-4 years (5) >4 years
S2	05 (Re)election margin as party leadership	Safety of position in party and support.	Extent of victory in leadership election against rival or rivals	2018 Trump Midterm 2018 Midterm Results 2018 House Election Results 2018 Midterm Elections 2018 National Results	(1) Very small (<1% electors) (2) Small (1-5%) (3) Moderate (5-10%) (4) Large (10-15%) (5) Very large (>15%)
R1	06 Party polling relative to most recent election result	Support among the electorate for the party they lead.	A measure of current party fortunes which affect its leader's authority and what can be achieved	2018 Republican View by Proxy 2018 Party Rating by Proxy 2018 Republican Ratings by Proxy 2018 Republican Party Rating by Proxy 2018 Party Ratings by Proxy	(1) < -10% (2) -10% to -2.5% (3) -2.5% to 2.5% (4) 2.5% to 10% (5) >10%
R1	07 Levels of public trust in leader	Public support for the leader themselves, also linked to press coverage	Extent to which leader is (dis)trusted and respected by the public	2018 Public Trust 2018 Trust in the Government 2018 Public Trust in Gov post issue	(1) 0-20% (2) 20-40% (3) 40-60% (4) 60-80% (5) 80-100%
R1	08 Working relations with bureaucracy	Working relation in the bureaucracy	Working relation in the bureaucracy	2018 Extreme Political Polarization 2018 Party Division 2018 Trump work with Democrats 2018 Party Rift 2018 Republican Democratic 2018 Republican Party	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good
R2	09 Perceived ability to share party's policy platform	Degree to which leaders can determine the direction & choices of their parties	Office-holders who have a demonstrated ability to take on their party and its "sacred cows" are in a better position to exercise	2018 Republican Party & Trump 2018 Trump Meets Republican Le	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high
R2	10 Perceived office effectiveness	Influence over legislature, signal of support from own party and/or cabinet, relative strength of	Extent to which leaders are seen to have the ascendancy in parliament and can obtain its assent for policy proposals and	2018 Trump Approach to Power 2018 Trump Calls Legislation 2018 Trump and Power 2018 Executive Orders	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high

Appendix B

Interpretation of the LCI Aggregated Scores (Bennister et al., 2017)

Rating	Description
0-10	Depleted capital: edge of removal or 'lame duck'
11-20	Low capital: 'politically weakened' but still capable of some action
21-30	Medium capital: 'muddling through' in the face of significant obstacles and divisions, yet with provisional license to operate from (a small majority within) the authorizing environment
31-40	High capital: 'momentum' derived from robust political performance and party cohesion
41-50	Exceptional capital: 'political weather marker' boosted by electoral landslide, and/or personal dominance and/or 'good crises to have'

Appendix C

Items used from 2010 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

FEVS Items used to measure upper management.

1. In my organization, leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce. [Question 53]
2. My organization's leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity. [Question 54]
3. Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization [Question 56]
4. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives [Question 57]
5. Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources). [Question 58]
6. Managers support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives [Question 59]
7. Overall how good a job do you feel is being done by the manager directly above your immediate supervisor/team leader? [Question 60]
8. I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders. [Question 61]
9. Senior leaders demonstrate support for work/life support. [Question 62]

FEVS Items used to measure job satisfaction.

1. I recommend my organization as a good place to work. [Question 40]
2. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job? [Question 69]
3. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay? [Question 70]
4. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization? [Question 71]

FEVS Items used to measure supervisory support.

1. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues. [Question 42]
2. My supervisor/team leader provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills. [Question 43]
3. Discussions with my supervisor/team leader about my performance are worthwhile. [Question 44]
4. My supervisor/team leader is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society. [Question 45]
5. My supervisor/team leader provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance. [Question 46]
6. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit support employee development. [Question 47]
7. My supervisor/team leader listens to what I have to say. [Question 48]
8. My supervisor/team leader treats me with respect. [Question 49]
9. In the last six months, my supervisor/team leader has talked with me about my performance. [Question 50]
10. I have trust and confidence in my supervisor. [Question 51]
11. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor/team leader? [Question 52]

Appendix D

Items used from 2018 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

FEVS Items used to measure upper management.

1. In my organization, senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce. [Question 53]
2. My organization's senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity. [Question 54]
3. Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization [Question 56]
4. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives [Question 57]
5. Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources). [Question 58]
6. Managers support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives [Question 59]
7. Overall how good a job do you feel is being done by the manager directly above your immediate supervisor/team leader? [Question 60]
8. I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders. [Question 61]
9. Senior leaders demonstrate support for work/life support. [Question 62]

FEVS Items used to measure job satisfaction.

1. I recommend my organization as a good place to work. [Question 40]
2. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job? [Question 69]
3. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay? [Question 70]
4. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization? [Question 71]

FEVS Items used to measure supervisory support.

1. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues. [Question 42]
2. My supervisor provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills. [Question 43]
3. Discussions with my supervisor about my performance are worthwhile. [Question 44]
4. My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society. [Question 45]
5. My supervisor provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance. [Question 46]
6. Supervisors in my work unit support employee development. [Question 47]
7. My supervisor listens to what I have to say. [Question 48]
8. My supervisor treats me with respect. [Question 49]
9. In the last six months, my supervisor has talked with me about my performance. [Question 50]
10. I have trust and confidence in my supervisor. [Question 51]
11. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor? [Question 52]

Appendix E

Varimax Rotation of Three Factor Solution for 2010 FEVS Scales

Item	Component 1 Supervisory Support	Component 2 Upper Management	Component 3 Job Satisfaction
Q40			.53
Q69			.61
Q70			.75
Q71			.59
Q53		.75	
Q54		.72	
Q56		.81	
Q57		.81	
Q58		.83	
Q59		.81	
Q60		.73	
Q61		.75	
Q62		.68	
Q42	.74		
Q43	.77		
Q44	.83		
Q45	.76		
Q46	.81		
Q47	.75		
Q48	.84		
Q49	.83		
Q50	.66		
Q51	.84		
Q52	.83		
% of variance explained	33.6%	29.33%	9.91%

Appendix F

Varimax Rotation of Three Factor Solution for 2018 FEVS Scales

Item	Component 1 Supervisory Support	Component 2 Upper Management	Component 3 Job Satisfaction
Q40			.60
Q69			.65
Q70			.69
Q71			.65
Q53		.72	
Q54		.70	
Q56		.83	
Q57		.83	
Q58		.84	
Q59		.82	
Q60		.65	
Q61		.68	
Q62		.60	
Q42	.75		
Q43	.79		
Q44	.85		
Q45	.80		
Q46	.84		
Q47	.75		
Q48	.86		
Q49	.85		
Q50	.71		
Q51	.87		
Q52	.84		
% of variance explained	34.48%	26.53%	12.94%