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# Exploring Factors Related to Customer Service Representatives' (CSRs) Performance in Call Centers.

Ruth R. Jayson-Polk

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Exploring Factors Related to Customer Service Representatives' (CSRs) Performance in  
Call Centers

by  
Ruth R. Jayson-Polk

An Applied Dissertation Submitted to the  
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova Southeastern University  
2019

## **Approval Page**

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## Statement of Original Work

I declare the following:

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Ruth R. Jayson-Polk

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Name

April 30, 2019

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Date

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## Abstract

Exploring Factors Related to Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) Performance in Call Centers. Ruth R. Jayson-Polk, 2019: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education. Keywords: ADKAR, individual change, change management, customer service representatives' (CSRs), call monitoring, performance, job satisfaction

This study provides critical research on individual change and its impact on individual performance using the ADKAR change management model. This applied dissertation was designed to research improvement in call monitoring performance scores between two groups of customer service representatives' (CSRs): the experimental group receiving the ADKAR change management intervention, and the control group, who did not receive the ADKAR change management intervention. The ADKAR change management model (Hiatt, 2006) provided the theoretical framework for the study.

The literature review revealed that change management is a critical component of organizational change but is driven by individual change. The literature informs that there are variables that impact an individual's performance that is often not addressed by management that should be viewed through the lens of change management. Further, it is revealed that there is no organizational change without individual change, which in turn can hinder business results.

This study used a quantitative research design. Quantitative data was used by obtaining monthly call monitoring scores available from the call center. Additional quantitative data was gathered to discover if the intervention impacted CSRs job satisfaction. A job satisfaction instrument was used to collect the job satisfaction information from the agents

The study took place in a southeastern city in the United States. Participants were part of a call center that was comprised of approximately 50 agents.

It is expected that the overall implications of the findings will indicate a positive effect on customer service representatives' call monitoring performance scores and overall job satisfaction. This research can be a source of information to call center management in various industries.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Statement of the Problem

Call center organizations are challenged to provide high-quality services in a timely manner. Organizations today have been forced to employ the latest technologies to achieve efficient operations to provide greater customer satisfaction. Customer service representatives (CSRs)/agents are required to know many procedures and policies in addition to the technology changes for the system that they use to serve the customer. This can be overwhelming for the agent and lead to low performance.

Performance monitoring is one way to measure an agent's performance and to assess whether the current information has been provided to the customer in accordance with prescribed policies and procedures. Consequently, the organization is always looking for ways to improve the performance scores for CSRs. The intent of this study was to measure the performance increase of CSRs after applying the ADKAR (awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement) change management model as an intervention (Hiatt, 2006).

**The research problem.** There is a need to know if ADKAR for change management concepts leads to improvements in customer service front-line supervisor's performance and subsequently customer service representatives (CSRs)/agent's performance in call centers. The number of call centers in the United States and abroad has grown over the last several years. The literature informs that the call center environment and agent performance are thwarted with many factors that affect agent job performance and therefore impact employee job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and business results and front-line supervisors are key.

**Background and justification.** During the last ten years, there has been a rise in customer service call centers both in the United States and globally (Annakis, 2012). Customer service call centers are manned by customer service representatives (CSRs) who are on the frontline. CSRs usually take inbound calls for various service providers in different industries. However, CSRs may have various tasks and often in today's technological driven society are expected to handle various communications from the customers from other channels such as the web, chat, and email. CSRs often-times are the only person that the customer may ever interact with and represent the face of the organization. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projected (2015) customer service representative's jobs as one of the fastest growing occupations and growth of 9.8 % is expected between 2014 to 2024.

The need for organizations to become flexible and more adaptable has become increasingly critical to an organization's survival during these times of globalization, technological advancements, higher customer demands, and interconnectedness (Lorenzi & Riley, 2012; Zafar & Naveed, 2014) and particularly for call centers. Customers are more technologically advanced, and competition has made customer satisfaction a sought-after goal. Call centers that want to stay competitive need to know how to address customer concerns and keep them satisfied. However, most customer service call centers are staffed with average paid employees that have lower skill sets. Not to mention that there must be leadership in the call center that is knowledgeable in dealing with the diversity of skill sets and personalities that usually encompasses call centers. Often at the supervisor levels leadership skills are lacking. Not only are leadership skills needed but change management skills are necessary to deal with the plethora of changes that

customer service call centers are confronted with. Organization changes for any organization can be challenging. Lorenzi and Riley (2012) noted that organizational change is hard and complex and cannot happen without individual change (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012).

According to kiani and Shah (2014), change is a normal occurrence and management has control over the changes they adopt. Further, they suggested that management must have the required change competency skills. Therefore, it is critical that call center management understand the underpinnings of change. There are many models for change, and one that this review will highlight is the ADKAR model (kiani & Shah, 2014). The ADKAR model hinges on tools that facilitate individual change which results in organizational change and therefore improve business results. Business results for a call center translate to survival for the organization and improved customer satisfaction.

In the ADKAR model, A stands for awareness, D – desire, K – knowledge, A – ability, and R – reinforcement (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012; kiani & Shah, 2014). Essentially, in this model, the elements of the ADKAR model occur within the order that an individual experience change. For example, Desire cannot come before Awareness, because awareness creates the desire for change (Hiatt, 2006). For example, a person cannot make a change to something that they have no understanding about, in ADKAR terms, they have no Awareness. The ADKAR model, when used correctly, can help organizations mitigate resistance to the change initiatives that may arise. Resistance to change is normal when employees do not understand what is going on (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012; Zafar & Naveed, 2014), but can improve job satisfaction and performance when

changes are related to them that impact their work (Annakis, 2012).

**Deficiencies in the evidence.** There is a plethora of studies and theories related to organizational change (Abbas & Asghar, 2010; Lorenzi & Riley, 2012; Smits & Bowden, 2015; Zafar & Naveed, 2014), job performance (Echchakoui, 2013; Liu & Batt, 2010; Markos & Sridevi, 2010), job satisfaction (Annakis, 2012; Echchakoui & Naji, 2013), and customer satisfaction (Abbas & Asghar, 2010; Chen, Zhu, & Zhou, 2014; Jahanshahi, Gashti, Mirdamadi, Nawaser, & Khaksar, 2011; Joia & Oliveira, 2010; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). However, there is a paucity of research related to individual change within a dynamic organization with respect to job performance improvement for employees. According to Karp (2006), transformative organizational change does not only depend on the leadership but on every individual, who is a leader-follower.

Cooper and Denney (2009) suggested that the six drivers of change: leadership, planning, customers, measurement, workforce, and processes lead to business results (p. 6). They discussed how other researchers had not included the people side of change into their research and yet even though they acknowledge that the workforce, i.e., people is a critical driver of change, there is no deep discussion on it or what framework to use for individual change.

Kiani and Shah (2014) researched the results of change using the ADKAR model on a sample group of head school officials in the district of Punjab. The research is interesting in that they use the ADKAR model as a change management competency scale (CMC) to assess and quantify the change competency levels of head school officials. Findings could compare to team leaders in call centers. However, this study is not in the United States and does not get to the individual level of change.

Valle, Varas, and Ruz (2012) conducted a study of 500 sales agents in a call center using a naïve Bayes classifier to predict job performance. The study involves pre-testing at various intervals to predict turnover and performance. This study hints at variables surrounding performance gaps but does not address changes that an individual would need to make to close performance gaps nor does it prescribe a model for change. Additionally, the role of a sales agent and a customer service representative are considerably different in terms of the demands and expectations for providing solutions to the customers.

Zafar and Naveed (2014) discussed the use of ADKAR to build change capacity as an intervention at various levels of change in the organizational. However, they only discussed the use of the ADKAR model in relationship to employee resistance to change and not the improvement in the employee's job performance.

Significant gaps in the literature related to increased job performance for customer service representatives using a change management model exist. The increasing rise in call centers in all industries and the importance of improved job performance for CSRs and the delivery of customer satisfaction to sustain business objectives makes this study an important contribution to the literature. The research extended the work of Kiani and Shah (2014) and Zafar and Naveed (2014) on their use of the ADKAR change management model.

**Audience.** The examination of the phenomena of individual change for front-line supervisors using the ADKAR change management model will help front-line supervisors and managers implement change and improve their performance and agent performance. This examination also benefits the agent by understanding how they can

change and the benefits of change to them personally when concepts are passed down to the agent from the front-line supervisor. Also, this awareness improves front-line supervisors job satisfaction. Additionally, this study will benefit the overall organizational business results and lead to improved customer satisfaction. Many of the principles and findings may be used in call centers in various industries.

### **Setting of the Study**

The study took place at a public utility company in the United States. The utility company has approximately 1000 employees with over 200 of them residing in the Customer Service Department. The customer service department handles services from meter to cash and has customer service call centers at multiple locations. The utility company provides over 20 services to their residential and commercial customers via the web, IVR or through a CSR. The residential call center is currently made of 7 teams with a span of control of 10 to 12 CSRs. Each team is managed by a front-line supervisor who came up through the ranks as a CSR. Front-line supervisors are expected to monitor agents calls, coach the agent, and evaluate their overall performance. Front-line supervisors may or may not continue to take calls based on the call center needs.

### **Researcher's Role**

My role in the organization is to provide training to the Customer Service Department which includes the residential and commercial call centers. The training covers a myriad of policies, procedures, and changes in technology. New hire training, as well as refresher training, is provided. My role also includes quality/performance monitoring of CSRs. Quality monitoring provides a means of providing call handling the information to management to ensure procedures are being followed.

Additionally, monitoring information is used as a coaching tool to improve front-line supervisor and agent performance. The information is one of the metrics that is used to evaluate agent performance and the performance of the front-line supervisors. It is important to note as an insider that I have no authority or power over the front-line supervisors or agents.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to provide a framework for change, particularly using the ADKAR model, to improve CSRs performance and job satisfaction and subsequently overall call center performance. Among many phenomena in the 21st century, the empowerment of the customer is one of them. The advent of globalness and technology has increased customers' demands and the need for organizations to remain competitive and provide customer satisfaction. The CSRs are the liaisons between the customer and the organization. The CSR is expected to handle a high volume of customer calls and respond to a myriad of customer questions. Technology has been both a blessing and a curse to the CSR. Organizations have installed the best technology to maintain customer information, the technology that CSRs are expected to keep up with and learn the intricacies of as quickly as possible. Organizations often forget that people use technology and the change may not happen as quickly as possible, and thus agent performance may be impacted.

Howbeit, there are numerous factors that impact agent performance, such as the call center environment, organizational climate, cognitive ability, leadership, team diversity, self-efficacy, propensity for critical thinking and innovation, technology, and resistance to technology changes. Furthermore, the supervisor's role in facilitating the

change to recent technology and support to the agent, in general, is another critical impact on the agent's performance.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the effectiveness of the ADKAR change management model in improving the CSR's job performance as determined by improvement in performance standards. In this approach two CSRs groups were randomly selected, one served as the control group and the other as the treatment group. The independent variable was the application of the ADKAR model and showing the CSRs the connection to the performance standards. The dependent variable was the improvement in performance standards as demonstrated by the posttest scores. Additionally, a job satisfaction survey using a Likert scale was used to determine if job satisfaction was impacted after the intervention.

### **Definition of Terms**

Several terms are defined as used in this study.

**Agent.** This term is used interchangeably with the term customer service representative and is an employee who takes inbound and or outbound calls.

**Boundary-spanning roles.** This term is used to describe roles that interface between the organization and its external customers (Davis, Allen, & Dibrell, 2010).

**Call center.** The term used to describe an organization that provides services usually using telephonic technology and by handling several call types taken by an agent (Avramidis, Chan, Gendreau, L'Ecuyer, & Pisacane, 2010; Gans, Liu, Mandelbaum, Shen, & Ye, 2010; Lin, Chen, Hong, & Lin, 2010; Yaslioglu, Ozaslan, & Sap, 2013). A call center is also referred to as a contact center (Rowe, Marciniak, & Clergeau, 2010).

**Call monitoring.** This term is used interchangeably with the terms performance



monitoring/quality monitoring and is an activity performed by the supervisor or outside agency to actively listen to an employee's call to provide feedback and improve performance (Holman, 2002; Holman, Batt, & Holtgrewe, 2007; Moradi, Nima, Ricciardi, Archer, & Garcia, 2014; Rose & Wright, 2005).

**Customer relationship management (CRM).** This term represents the 360 views of the customer in relation to the technology, processes, and people needed to serve the customer (Chen & Popovich, 2003).

**Customer satisfaction.** This term is defined as the perception of delivered products or services as indicated by the customer's response relative to the customer's experience (Helms & Mayo, 2008; Jahanshahi et al., 2011; Ram, Swapna, & Prabhakar, 2011).

**Customer Service Representatives (CSRs).** This term is used interchangeably with the term agent and is defined as an employee who serves customers by taking inbound/outbound calls or emails to provide services and answers the customers' questions (Gans et al., 2010).

**Front-line employee.** An employee who acts as an ambassador for the organization and manages the relationship with the customer (Davis et al., 2010).

**Front-line supervisor.** This term describes an employee who manages a team of employees and is used interchangeably with team lead and supervisor. In some organizational structures, this is a middle manager position (Berni, Iacono, & Martinez, 2011; Davis et al., 2010).

**Job satisfaction.** Job satisfaction and employee satisfaction are used interchangeably in this study. Job satisfaction is defined as the employee's emotional

assessment of their job experience (Çekmecelioglu, Günsel, & Ulutaş, 2012; Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012; Mukherjee & Maheshwari, 2012).

### **Organization of the Study**

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the following: the statement of the problem, background and justification deficiencies in the evidence, audience, definition of terms, the purpose of study, and organization of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature comparing various change management theories and a discussion of individual versus organizational change and other factors as it relates to an improvement in performance for call center agents. Chapter 2 also includes research questions. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to perform the investigation. It also includes a description of the participants, sampling approach, instrument, and data collection procedures. Also, ethical considerations are discussed. Chapter 4 includes a discussion of the findings. This chapter discusses the analysis of the data and the results of the research. Chapter 5 includes an overview of the study, relationship of the current study to prior literature, summary of findings, implications of the study, and limitations. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations for future research, and a conclusion is provided.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

The literature review discusses the factors that impact customer service representatives' (CSRs) job satisfaction in call centers and the effects on performance and customer satisfaction. The extant literature reveals emerging themes, well-being, call center environment, leadership, performance monitoring, team leader support, organizational climate, technology implications, critical thinking and innovation, and team diversity. Interventions are explored. The measurement instruments used for the various studies are discussed. Studies conducted more than ten years ago were more prevalent. The reviewer attempted to include literature within the last five years but did include older research if deemed critical to the review and topic. The literature review included several studies conducted by noted scholars in the field. Most of the studies involved using questionnaires, factor analysis, and regression modeling and other instruments and measures with an average CSR population of 500. The review also included a global perspective. Various studies noted a high correlation between an employee's wellbeing and job satisfaction. Research also informs on positive effects of team leaders support on agent performance and job satisfaction and likewise, customer satisfaction (Abbas & Asghar, 2010; Birkenmeier & Sanseau, 2016; Liu & Batt, 2010; Rose & Wright, 2005).

The peer-reviewed literature obtained primarily from the ProQuest database used various descriptors such as job performance, customer service representatives, ADKAR, change management, and job satisfaction in call centers. A review of the literature revealed that there is a myriad of factors affecting customer service representatives that

critical since they are on the front-line with customers and customer satisfaction can determine the survival of the organization. Available evidence suggests that middle managers have a significant role in improving CSRs job performance and leadership and trust are relevant determinants. However, the employee's awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement to change constructs are antecedents to improved job performance.

The literature review discusses factors related to call center employees. The extant literature reveals emerging themes, organizational change versus individual change, call center environment, leadership, technology impact on the call center, leadership, critical thinking and innovation, and diversity in the call center.

### **Historical Change Perspectives**

There is a myriad of studies and articles covering the topic of change management. Lewin built on earlier change management theorists and focused on motivation and the individual aspects of change (Lorenzi & Riley, 2012). Lewin's model published in 1951 involved three steps in the change process: unfreezing, moving, and refreezing (Appelbaum, Habashy, Malo, & Shafiq, 2012; Kazmi & Naaranoja, 2013). Lewin believed that you needed to rid employees of bad behaviors, move them to the desired behavior by motivation and creating a shared vision and then lastly solidify that the new behavior has taken hold.

Kotter is a modern-day theorist who developed the 8-step process for leading change. The eight steps are:

1. Establish a sense of urgency.
2. Create a guiding coalition.

3. Develop a vision and strategy.
4. Communicate the change vision.
5. Empower employees for broad-based action.
6. Generate short-term wins.
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change.
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture (Kotter, 1995).

Kotter's model endured over 15 years of testing and remained a prominent key resource for change management researchers (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

### **Organizational Versus Individual Change**

According to Fragouli and Ibidapo (2015), the world is constantly changing as we know it. Change is rampant, inevitable, and ubiquitous (Smits & Bowden, 2015). It affects our personal lives as well as our professional lives (Stanleigh, 2013). According to Smits and Bowden (2015), change itself is changing, and there are new strategies for winning with more dynamic complexity. Many articles and books have been written about the topic of change (Fragouli & Ibidapo, 2015) yet it is still evasive. Organizations must know how to handle the dynamic changes in the markets, in the workforce and other internal and external environmental factors to remain competitive. Remaining competitive means winning and to win organizations must have effective leadership that knows how to manage change (Fragouli & Ibidapo, 2015; Smits & Bowden, 2015) or they will be left behind as in the case the large booksellers like Dillons and Waterstones that were upstaged by Amazon (Cavalcante, Kesting, & Ulhoi, 2011).

I posit that organizational change starts with individual change (Cavalcante et al., 2011; Ferrazzi, 2014) or as described by Cavalcante et al. as "individual agency" (p.

1328). According to Hiatt and Creasey (2012), large scale organizational change at its core is an individual phenomenon (p. 4). The ADKAR model has five pillars for change. The pillars are awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement (Hiatt, 2006, p. 2). Interestingly once the model has been explained it seems common sense, but these simple principles have been overwhelmingly overlooked in the plethora of organizational literature on strategic implementation, project management, and change management. The perspective is simple and comparable to Senge's thinking on systemic thinking. The respect and examination of the parts will render solutions to the whole. In other words, an organizational review of the smaller parts of the organization – that is the individual. At a minimum, it could be teams, divisions and or departments.

**Change Patterns.** Studies show that change is complex and dynamic, and patterns of change emerge yet stay the same. The literature informs that change is caused by a myriad of factors (Glor, 2014). According to Glor (2014), the organizational practice of isomorphism will call some organizations to remain the same (p.3). Further Glor (2014) noted eight complex organizational change patterns of organizations that do change. The eight patterns are imposed, reactive, active, buy-in, proactive, necessary, transformation and continuous innovation/change (p. 6). Comparably Cavalcante et al. (2011) noted strategic organizations would follow change patterns of creation, extension, revision, and possible termination (p. 1334). In summary, an organization can either let the changes happen to them, be adaptive, creative, innovative, and flexible and or be proactive.

**Change Resisters.** According to Hiatt (2006), the information age allows for more educated employees and therefore their need for understanding. Lack of

understanding of the reasons for change can cause resistance and barriers to change. Similarly, Hiatt and Creasey (2012) noted that resistance to change is a normal reaction, but healthy (Stanleigh, 2013). The fear of the unknown can be daunting, and according to Stanleigh (2013), past changes that were difficult can be a barrier to new change initiatives. Being asked to perform new tasks when you are comfortable with the old ones can make employees feel insecure and can cause them to feel threatened. According to Stanleigh (2013), change is hard due to globalization and less money. Also, leadership is spread-out across the globe and makes it more difficult.

**Mitigation Strategies.** Human interventions are the best mitigation strategies. Showing people that you care and are supportive can go a long way. According to Ferrazzi (2014), peer mentoring and coaching can ease the pains of change and create accountability and increased pressure on employees that may be resistant to the change. Further, he noted that 70% of Fortune 500 companies use it with their salespeople. Also, pairing role models with slow adopters can be more effective than outside experts. Another mitigation strategy is using informal leaders, employees who can influence others.

**Training for change agents.** All leaders will not have the knowledge of how to approach change. Upper management must ensure that they bring leadership on board with the change. Leadership that does not embrace the change cannot be effective change agents themselves. According to Stanleigh (2013), change managers must review and understand how past changes were handled. A thorough review of past successes and or failures can provide the change manager with a baseline. Stanleigh (2013)

suggested that change leaders must be adaptive and help employees become more adaptive as well.

Create a continuous learning environment. A learning organization environment is a mitigation strategy for resistance. A culture that is built on organizational learning is ripe for change. Employees are already accustomed to change by the very nature of continuous learning. A learning organization is also one that spawns and supports creativity and innovation (Smits & Bowden, 2015).

Further Smits and Bowden (2015) noted that developed systems of learning revealed the importance of knowledge management as an essential element of change. Cavalcante et al. (2011) suggested preliminary modeling of changes to determine the extent of the impact of change on core business processes which would lead to being more proactive. They further suggest that an organization must not be rigid and have a strategic framework for business model change that is flexible.

Communication can be an effective mitigation strategy. Leadership should have clear communication and opportunities to gain employee feedback. Communication should be early, continuous, and frequent and delivered by the appropriate sender. Research studies inform that the initial communication is sought from the CEO, but employees desire for most communication to come from their direct supervisor. According to Stanleigh (2013), communication needs to clearly define the need for change and be open and honest.

Employee engagement is a great mitigation strategy. During and after the change initiatives there should be a process for a feedback loop. Organizations can use newsletters, town halls and Facebook like forums. Forums like “Ask the Experts” can be



a valuable tool to field employee questions after a major change initiative. This type of communication flow will make employees feel supported.

### **Theoretical Framework**

**The ADKAR Change Model.** The ADKAR change model addresses the people side of change and is the framework for discussion. Organizations are confronted with the business dynamics of constant change and the need to stay competitive. Today's world is more connected and technological advanced than ever before, and customers are more demanding. However, it is the people that make organizational change happen (Hiatt, 2006).

Leadership must not work in silos and not be narrowly minded. It is important to have effective leadership communication that can reach down to the individual levels. Leaders like it or not are automatic change agents and need to be trained and developed as such. This too is often a fact overlooked by the higher leadership, therefore, leaving change to chance or in the hands of those that have not had any instructions as to their roles and responsibilities as agents of change. This absence of attention leads to change failure (Kotter, 1995; Stanleigh, 2013) which continues to be above 60 %.

**Awareness.** In the ADKAR model, you must first start with awareness. An individual must have a reason for the change and awareness for the change. The person wants to know "what's in it for me." Hiatt and Creasy call this WIIFM (2012, p. 9). According to Hiatt and Creasey (2012), the human need to know why a critical element of is managing change and hence is why the right leadership communication style is inextricable to change management initiatives.

Similarly, Ferrazzi (2014) noted that people cannot be made to change; they must want to change. In agreement, Cavalcante et al. (2011) noted that a change in business practices takes an individuals' will and their perception for the need to change. Hiatt and Creasey recanted a study in 2005 with 411 companies and the number one reason for resistance to change was the lack of awareness.

However, leadership communication is not the only thing needed to create awareness for change. Other factors include the person's view of the current state, how they perceive problems, the credibility of the sender, circulation of rumors and contestability of the reasons for change (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012).

**Desire.** The next element of the ADKAR model is desire. An individual may have an awareness of the change but not the desire to change. According to Hiatt (2006), desire cannot be forced on an individual; and it depends on their personal situation and their understanding of the change and their motivators. Unfortunately, how a person related to past changes impacts desire and their acceptance or resistance to the change.

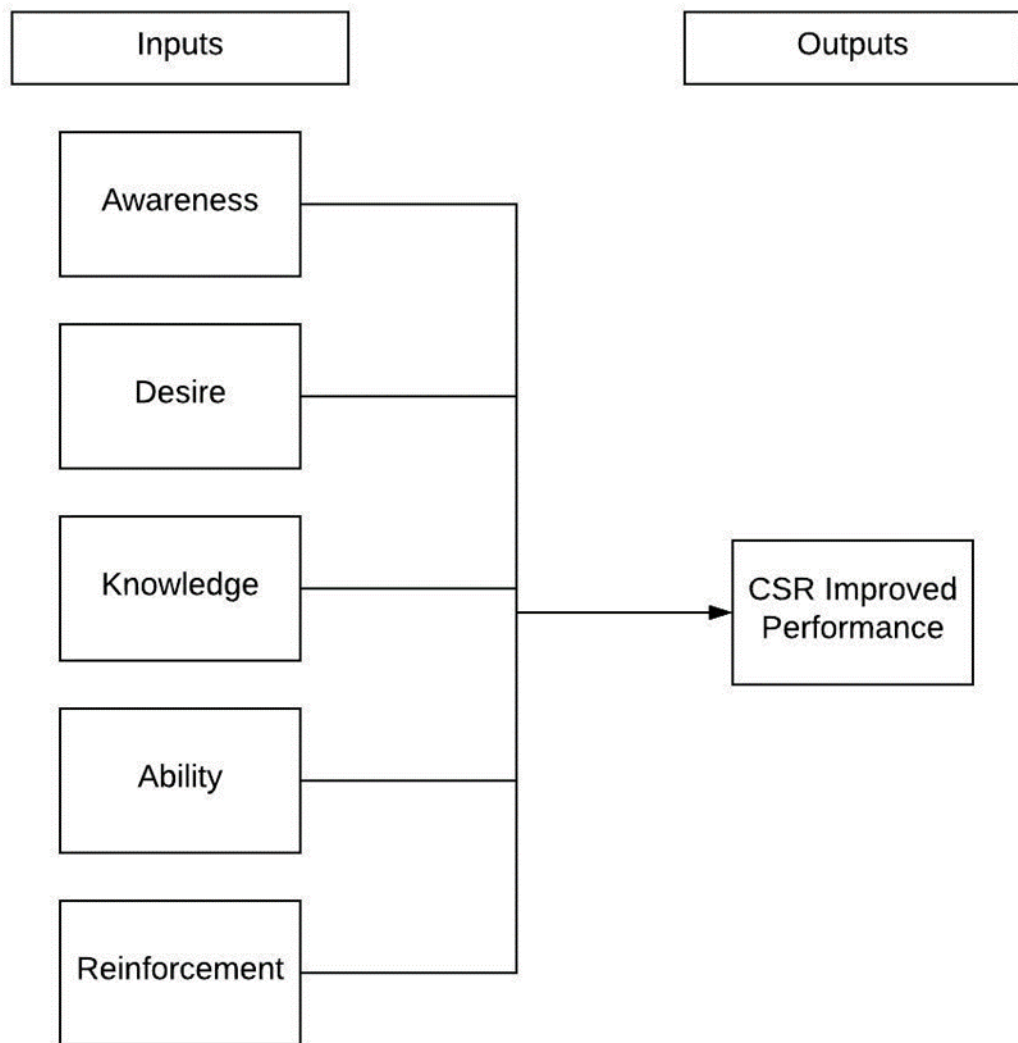
**Knowledge.** Knowledge is the next element in the ADKAR model. Knowledge can be impacted by the person's capability to learn and their current learning base (Hiatt, 2006). Training and the resources available to train can impact knowledge gains for employees as well. Knowledge does not necessarily mean the person has the ability. Ability is the next element in the ADKAR model.

Hiatt (2006) suggested that knowledge by itself is not enough and employees may not demonstrate immediate proficiency in the change. He further noted that ability is the demonstrated achievement of the change. Similarly, individuals develop new ways of completing their tasks and developing new abilities and innovative ways of thinking

(Cavalcante et al., 2011). Available resources support those psychological blockers can be barriers to ability.

**Reinforcement.** The last element in the ADKAR model is reinforcement. Hiatt (2006) noted that in a study of customer service employees the number one thing that they wanted was a personal thank you from their supervisor. Reinforcement lets employees know that their contributions matter.

The ADKAR change management framework (see Figure) will be used as an intervention for improvement in customer service representatives' performance and job satisfaction in light of mediating variables related to the call center environment, the impact of technology, the creativity and innovation in the call center, the role of leadership, and the diversity in the call center.



*Figure.* Logic model for CSR improvement in performance standards using the ADKAR change management model

### **Call Center Overview**

A call center is a name commonly used for a service operation that provides answers and services to customers via the telephone (Gans et al., 2010; Khudyakov, Feigin, & Mandelbaum, 2010). Employees that handle the calls are called customer service representatives (CSRs). Khudyakov et al. (2010) noted that annually \$300 billion is spent globally on call centers (Berkbigler & Dickson, 2014). Berkbigler and Dickson

(2014) noted that there are over 50,000 call centers in the United States. They further noted that call centers in the United States employ on average 289 employees. The call center can be the part of an organization that answers questions about products the company sells, or it can just be a service-oriented call center where the service is the product provided to other organizations. This review focused only on call centers that receive telephone calls, which is called an inbound call center and are service oriented call centers.

Call center organizations are challenged to provide high-quality services in a timely manner. Organizations today have been forced to employ the latest technologies to achieve efficient operations to provide greater customer satisfaction. Increased competition and rising costs have been factors as well. The technology employed today in most call centers to handle the incoming calls is called the Interactive Voice Response system is known as the IVR (Khudyakov et al., 2010).

**Interactive Voice Response (IVR).** The IVR allows organizations to handle many calls without human intervention. The largest costs for call centers are their employees. According to Khudyakov et al. (2010), two-thirds of an organization's costs are spent on employees' salaries. Therefore, the IVR is a cost mitigation strategy used in call center organizations, but many other organizations use the IVR system as well. For example, utility companies, insurance agencies, airlines, and rental car companies. As a result, service levels and profits for the organization should increase (Khudyakov et al., 2010). One of the main goals of a call center manager is to balance the service level with staffing costs while considering the number of calls that can be handled by the IVR.

Organizations use queueing models to analyze the IVR and workforce management (WFM) systems to manage staffing levels (Gans et al., 2010; Khudyakov et al., 2010).

**Operational Performance.** Call center performance is heavily measured, and there are several metrics used. Forecasting the volume of calls is one performance metric (Gans et al., 2010; Gomez, 2017). Calls come into the call center randomly. Not only do they come in randomly, but the mix of the calls are random.

Consequently, tools that can help managers predict call timing and mix are important (Gomez, 2017). An understanding of this information can assist in providing the right skill sets at center times. For example, in some organizations based on historical information, it is known that Mondays are a busy day and the day after holidays are even busier. Additionally, peak hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Organizations have various systems to provide this information which include the IVR and workforce management systems.

The workforce management system helps to predict staffing levels and capture historical call patterns (Gans et al., 2010; Gomez, 2017). Lunchtimes, breaks, and other statuses are captured to identify how the employee has used their time in 24 hours. This information helps with future forecasting and can be used as justification to Human Resources for additional staffing needs. According to Gomez (2017), forecasting your staffing levels with accuracy will lead to a more effective call center and improve operational efficiency.

### **Technology Impact on the Call Center**

Organizational change is complex, challenging, and constant (Fragouli & Ibidapo, 2015; Gorgani, Nasiri, Jafari, & Tabar, 2014; Karp, 2006; Lorenzi & Riley, 2012).

Organizations that want to stay competitive must keep up with technology and the demands of customers. According to Lorenzi and Riley (2012), technology changes today are more expansive and touch multiple organizational departments but are more people related. In many industries, people make up most of the major budget costs and are the major driver of value creation (Karp, 2006). The people side of technology change is often the most forgotten aspect of technology implementation, yet the most important. However, without individual change, there is no organizational change (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012) and every person in the organization is needed to transform the organization (Karp, 2006). The most sophisticated system usually needs a human somewhere in the process to adapt to the change in processes (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012).

Karp (2006) noted that most change initiatives fail and that organizations continue to look for the panacea for implementing change. He further noted that the diversity and complexities of organizations and their cultures dictate that there is not one solution. Additionally, the reactions, perceptions, internal and external factors related to an employee's behavior related to the change and the continuous and intertwining loops lead to many variations of change. This dynamic web of relationships and communication network frames the contextual framework or lens from which the individual sees the change and responds or not respond to the change. Additionally, intrinsic components, such as the person norms, values, biases, etc., are webs in the network as well as adding to the complexity of change on an individual level.

Most changes are met with resistance (Lorenzi & Riley, 2012). Organizational changes must be communicated to mitigate resistance. Individuals need to know what is in it for them. Hiatt and Creasy (2012) noted this as "WIIFM," "what's in it for me?" (p.

69). Employees want to feel valued, and often uncommunicated change can threaten an employee's job security. A well thought out and communicated change management plan will include obtaining the employees' input and involving them in the process. This can be done by newsletters and holding town hall meetings. Hiatt and Creasey (2012) further noted that change only occurs when individuals do their jobs differently. It is important the employees change the way they think about change and embrace innovative ways of performing their tasks. It is critical that training is provided to ensure proper knowledge of tasks is provided. Often if leadership does not stay in tune with the current changes' employees will revert to old behaviors. Transformational leadership is needed to inspire employees to adopt organizational changes (Fragouli & Ibidapo, 2015). Also, using change agents is another mitigation strategy and can help the employees with the change while realizing that change is a process.

### **Critical Thinking and Innovation in a Call Center**

**Critical Thinking.** The phenomenon of change in our environments and its impact on businesses is greatly discussed and recognized (Hoever, van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, & Barkema, 2012; Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Sanz-Valle', 2011). Business today is more complex and operates much faster than years ago (Whitney, 2015). The success of organizations today in our global economy requires organizations to deviate from the norm and use critical thinking to produce innovative results and solve problems (Hoever et al., 2012; Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2011; Whitney, 2015). Great leaders think strategically and are critical thinkers and innovators (Whitney, 2015). According to Whitney (2015), critical thinking is needed when judgment is needed for



successful innovation. Most innovative outcomes are a result of incremental ideas by critical thinkers which is needed in the call center due to constant changes.

**Innovation.** Naranjo-Valencia et al. (2011) noted that based on the market orientations of the organization that the company could be considered a leader in innovation or a follower of innovation. The literature denotes the differences in market orientations as the leader spending the time and resources to come up with something new, while the follower or imitator is merely struggling to survive and not willing to make investments in the discovery of new products (Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2011). Several variables impact innovation, such as organizational culture (Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2011), creativity (Whitney, 2015), and organizational learning (Imran, Rehman, Aslam, & Bilal, 2016).

Naranjo-Valencia et al. (2011) noted that depending on the market orientation of the organization and the level of innovation needed that there may be different organizational cultures. Naranjo-Valencia et al. contended that an organization's culture through the socialization of what is accepted by individuals can foster innovation. Customer service representatives can learn through socialization whether creativity and innovation are acceptable norms. Further support for innovation can be manifested by the organization utilizing its culture to contribute to innovative creations because of activities, policies, and procedures as in the case of the use of the ADKAR change management model to improve job performance.

Whitney (2015) noted that the innovation process consists of problem identification, brainstorming practical solutions, researching prioritized solutions, piloting the top solution, and implementing the solution and obtaining feedback. This can

particularly useful for CSRs that have to do ad hoc problem solving on the numerous inbound calls that they receive. Whitney commented that critical thinkers are successful innovators because they are disciplined and know how to create transformative processes. It takes unique skill sets to learn the act of creation, creation from nothing and creation from the pieces of ideas not fully developed. Similarly, Hoever et al. (2012) noted the importance of taking various perspectives to achieve higher creativity performance.

In the discussion of innovation, it is significant to mention the critical component of teams. In most organizations today, teams are used to solve problems and innovate. Therefore, the culture that an organization creates around teams is important. Hoever et al. (2012) discussed that there is diversity in working on teams and introduced the concept of perspective taking to facilitate creativity in teams. Perspective taking is the idea that we can all learn from our teammates, and we can converse in an arena not thwarted with conflict (Hoever et al., 2012). This concept is important to call centers in that most are structured by teams.

Similarly, Carmeli, Gelbard, and Riter-Palmon (2013) noted that organizations that seek a competitive edge look for ways to facilitate creativity within their organizations. Carmeli et al., further suggested that knowledge sharing across and outside the organizational departments often produce quicker creative and quality solutions. Knowledge sharing enables employees to capitalize on existing knowledge and expands the organization's creative capacity.

Imran et al. (2016) noted that organizational learning is a facilitator of innovation. Imran et al. commented on other studies that indicated the importance of organizational learning as an organizational strength to maintain competitiveness and obtain business

results. Organizational learning also is a mitigation strategy to change resistance. Change of any kind is hard and an organization moving its employees to a culture of innovation, creativity, and critical thinking is not exempt from what Imran et al. described as change cynicism. A decrease in change cynicism increases learning in the organization by sharing the benefits of the changes and facilitates organizational change readiness (Imran et al., 2016).

It is important that leaders model behaviors of collaboration, knowledge sharing and sharing of information to build and foster such an organizational culture and support employees problem-solving and creativity reach. Leaders must understand the value of teams and the diversity of thought that comes from teamwork to facilitate the creativity and innovation throughput for the organization. Hoever et al. (2012) noted that information elaboration benefits teams. Information elaboration is the sharing of information, discussion, and idea exchanges that happen within teams assigned to a specific task (Hoever et al., 2012). Additionally, Carmeli et al. (2013) noted that internal and external knowledge-sharing are both critical to creativity and innovation. Leaders must create a risk-taking environment and instill a shared vision with employees to a commitment to innovation. The strategies enumerated in this discussion will be helpful in the change process toward creating a cultural shift to an innovative and critical thinking workforce.

### **The Role of Leadership**

Leadership styles and their motivational impact have been studied extensively (van Dierendonck, 2011; Wieseke, Kraus, Alavi, & Kessler-Thones, 2011), some more than others. Transformational, servant leadership, and charismatic leadership styles are

styles that are similar in their concepts and inspire, encourage, and motivate the employee (van Dierendonck, 2011) and yet have their differences. It is important to have compatible and motivating leadership in the service industry, particularly in call centers where employees are representatives for their organizations (Birkenmeier & Sanseau, 2016; Ruggier & Abbate, 2013). According to van Dierendonck (2011), there is an elevated level of consciousness in organizations for innovation and employee well-being that requires caring and ethical leadership. Leadership for call centers is challenging due to the numerous organizational factors affecting the organizational climate and the nature of the job itself. Call centers are plighted with high turnover, routine work, small spaces, strict performance monitoring criteria, and a multitude of policies and procedures that must be exercised when providing service to the customers. Often the pay for customer service representatives is low.

Researchers have found that the charismatic leader has the best outcomes and is the best leadership style when leading a call center (Wieseke et al., 2011), while others argue it is the transformational leader who is most effective in call center management (Ruggier & Abbate, 2013). Employees in the call center environment need a lot of psychological support. Therefore, I argue that it is the servant-follower leadership that is most needed and more effective in bringing about individual change and consequently leading to organizational change.

The servant leader is more concerned with the needs of the follower and therefore has motivational credits ascribed to him by the follower. The servant leader puts themselves in a better position to build a trusting relationship with the follower (van Dierendonck, 2011). Trust in the employee-manager relationship is essential to

facilitating change in the organization (Birkenmeier & Sanseau, 2016; van Dierendonck, 2011).

**Transformational Leadership.** Transformational leadership is one of the most widely used and researched leadership theories (MindTools.com, 1996-2018). According to Taher, Krotov, and Silva (2015), transformational leadership is most effective in change management initiatives. In agreement, Simmelink (2012) stated that transformational leadership is successful for change initiatives because they make employees an active participant in the change process. Transformational leaders inspire followers to deliver business results and are better motivators (Abbas & Asghar, 2010; Grant, 2012; MindTools, 1996-2018). In contrast, the transactional leader focuses only on rewards and management expectations and emphasizes procedures (McDermott, Conway, Rousseau, & Flood, 2013; Smits & Bowden, 2015; Taher et al., 2015) but does not consider the needs of the employees (McDermott et al., 2013).

Abbas and Asghar (2010) noted that leadership is critical in change initiatives and two key characteristics of leadership are the ability to have and create a vision and to be an innovator and inspire others to be innovative as well. Vision illuminates the purpose of the employee's job, special project or change initiative being introduced. Vision helps an organization and individual move from a current state to the desired future state (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

Other qualities of transformational leadership may include:

- Ability to influence and create change.
- Risk taker.
- Trust.

- Good values.
- Ability to learn.
- Ability to work in critical situations.
- See the big picture (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

Transformational leaders can communicate the vision of the organization and or a change initiative to an employee in a way they can understand it (Abbas & Asghar, 2010; McDermott et al., 2013; MindTools, 1996-2018) therefore resulting in a shared vision. Employees are more motivated and engaged when they understand the goals, mission, and vision of the organization. Today it is important that organizations instill vision, creativity, and innovative thinking in their employees to survive (Abbas & Asghar, 2010). The transformational leadership style appeals to the intrinsic motivators that an employee may have. Transformational leaders increase follower performance by increasing self-efficacy, illumination of tasks or goals, encouragement of goal attainment, and enhanced group identification (Grant, 2012).

According to Grant (2012), transformational leaders can enhance acceptance when benefits are communicated and actualized by employees. Further, he noted that the beneficiary contracts enhance the employees' job performance by relating tangibles to the vision. Communication is critical in building trust with your employees and trust is essential to the change process (Simmelink, 2012). Transformational leaders know that they must communicate often and frequently to keep employees engaged and informed (MindTools, 1996-2018.).

There is no one size fit all leadership style that will fit all situations. There are times when the same leader may take on several leadership styles. Just as well, there may

be times that a long-term change initiative will require different leaders using their unique leadership style to bring a change or project to successful implementation.

According to Smits and Bowden (2015), substantial change initiatives often require both the transformational leader and the transactional leader but at distinct phases of the change initiative.

**Servant Leadership.** The servant leader sacrifices for the follower and puts their needs in front of the leaders. According to Chen et al. (2014), the relationship that the leader has with their employees promotes improvement in job performance, self-efficiency, and other benefits. Further, they noted that servant leaders influence their employees to obtain their full potential. Chen et al. contended that the people-centered nature of the service industry and the emotional issues that can come with that environment makes the servant leader a logical choice for leadership.

Similarly, van Dierendonck (2011) suggested that the servant leader is more connected with their employees because of their authenticity. Employees trust and believe the servant leader more than any other leadership style. Servant leadership characteristics are humility, authenticity, stewardship, and acceptance (van Dierendonck, 2011). Van Dierendonck also commented on other servant leadership characteristics of ethical behavior, care for people, open-mindedness, and respectful communication.

**The Role of the Front-line Supervisor.** The call center environment is constantly bombarded with environmental and technological changes. In addition, in the 21st-century customers' demands have increased, and customers are technologically advanced (J.D. Power, 2011). It is imperative that organizations keep pace with the demands of customers to survive. Customer service representatives (CSRs) often are the

ones put on the front-line to interface with the customers (Echchakoui, 2013; Moradi et al., 2014).

In many call centers, the CSRs are divided into teams. The teams are managed by a front-line supervisor/team leader who often was promoted up through the ranks but with little or no training on how to supervise (McDonnell, Connell, & Hannif, 2013). Howbeit, they are expected to be a coach, trainer and the liaison between staff and upper manager. A typical job description lists numerous responsibilities including employee engagement, planner, attainment of strategic goals, reduction of escalated calls, improvement in overall customer job satisfaction, providing resources to maintain service levels and a host of other responsibilities that they do not receive any detailed training for.

The call center climate can be stressful and very chaotic due to the duties of the CSR. Call centers usually provide either inbound call services or outbound call services (Lin et al., 2010). The agent is tethered to a phone, usually with some type of headset (Echchakoui, 2013) and answers various customer calls received from a computer system and usually from irate customers during an average 5 hours on the phone work day. Calls are expected to be handled in a relatively brief time frame while at the same time providing accurate information to the customer (J.D. Power, 2011) and remaining emotionally balanced. The metric for call handle time by an agent is called average handle time (AHT) and is a key industry metric. This metric measures the amount of time the agent spends on the call.

Similarly, the quality of the call is measured by the accuracy of the knowledge shared to the customer and constitutes a quality metric for the agent. Also, there is added



stress of knowing that each call interaction with a customer is monitored (Lin, et al., 2010; Moradi et al., 2014). The monitoring of an agent's call is known as call performance monitoring. Depending on the way the information is delivered the supervisor can turn this into something that is often seen as a negative into a positive. It is critical that the supervisor delivers performance call monitoring feedback in a way that closes the agent's knowledge gaps and motivates them to do better. According to McDonnell et al. (2013), the supervisor is critical to how CSRs perceive the work environment and may help with CSRs performance and satisfaction. These activities in the call center can be less stressful for the agent based on their supervisor/team leader (McDonnell et al., 2013).

It is the expectation of upper management that the front-line supervisor continually motivates the employees and coach their team in a way that they meet customer quality call center approved metrics (McDonnell et al., 2013). However, for the supervisor to provide the guidance that their team needs they must be knowledgeable themselves in call center policies and procedures and the use of the various technology systems. If the employees perceive that the supervisor lacks the knowledge and cannot be relied on for accurate information when help is sought, then trust in the supervisor will erode and the employee will feel unsupported. Consequently, supervisors must not only offer continuous training to their employees but must be in a constant learning mode themselves and take the necessary and available training classes offered by their organization to make sure they stay on top of the information. The front-line supervisor must remember that they are a role model and their influence on their team can positively impact the members on the team and subsequently improve employee and customer

satisfaction.

**Trust.** The research informs that the relationship between the supervisor and the customer service representative has a high correlation to a CSR's job performance and job satisfaction. If there is no relationship, no trust, then the performance of the CSR is low or at a minimum negatively impacted. Birkenmeier and Sanseau (2016) noted that employees have to trust that their supervisor will lead them to competency to be successful. Said another way, employees want to know, that their supervisor cares about their success. Studies reviewed by Birkenmeier and Sanseau and others suggested that a supervisor's ability, benevolence, and integrity all affect the employee's trust quotient.

Similarly, Mahmood, Saman, and Azam (2014) argued that communication between the employee and manager is vital, enhances the employees' satisfaction, and leads to better performance. Comparably, Bellow (2007) believed that leaders needed to create a learning culture and make employees feel safe which in turn increases their self-esteem. The supervisor is the coach and Liu and Batt theorized (2010) their involvement is a necessity for positive affectivity on performance. The leadership skills mentioned above seem ancillary but are not. Mahmood et al. (2014) presented several researcher's arguments that provide a conceptual framework for the employee-manager relationship that supports this construct. In the article "Communities of Practice or Communities of Coping?", Raz (2007) stated that in the absence of team leader support the customer service representative would result in using the peer group for direction.

### **Organizational Climate and Employee Engagement**

**Organizational Climate.** Organizational culture starts with the organizational mission and vision. The mission and vision statements along with the strategic plan

provide the foundation for setting organizational goals along with the core values of the organization. The mission statement shares the organizations' reasons for being (Marci, 2015) and the vision communicates the roadmap for the future (Invernizzi, Romenti, & Fumagalli, 2012). Customer satisfaction is normally a strategic goal for a call center. Customer service representatives are in contact with the customer and management should develop strategic goals relative to the employees' well-being (D'Alleo & Santangelo, 2011).

It is important to create the right service climate to facilitate employee and customer satisfaction (Invernizzi et al., 2012; Ram et al., 2011). Service climate is an environment that fosters caring both for the employee and the customer and is defined by the employees' perception. Researchers argue that organizational or service climate is the same as organizational culture (Ram et al., 2011; Santos, Hayward, & Ramos, 2012).

Employees observe the practices, procedures, and organizational structure that is presented to the employees and or customers. Employees measure the actions of management by the words scribed in a mission and vision statement. The gaps in practice and formal strategic documents can have an impact on organizational culture, organizational performance, job satisfaction, and cause a reduced trust in the organization, management, and lead to employee disengagement.

Employee engagement is one of the top challenges in organizations (Markos, & Sridevi, 2010; Ram et al., 2011). There is disagreement in the literature on whether employee disengagement is correlated to customer satisfaction.

**Employee Engagement.** Business today is very challenging and complex (Mahmood et al., 2014; Mutuku & Mathooko, 2014) in our globally interconnected

world. Amongst one of the critical challenges is the management of human resources and employee engagement. Employee engagement can be defined by how deep the employee is entrenched in the organization and how committed they are to the culture, norms, and beliefs of the organization (Anitha, 2014). Service industries such as a call center are highly labor intensive (Echchakoui & Naji, 2013). Therefore, the concept of employee engagement is a derivative of the need to have satisfied customers who are mostly interacted with by the front-line employees. As a result, leaders in all industries understand that people are a valuable resource and employee engagement must be understood (Crabtree, 2013; Mutuku & Mathooko, 2014) and is critical to organizational profitability, sustained competitiveness, growth (Crabtree, 2013; Mahmood et al., 2014), employee performance (Anitha, 2014), and customer satisfaction.

A 2013 Gallup study revealed that worldwide that only 13% of employees are engaged at work. In other words, 63% are disengaged (Crabtree, 2013). Disengaged workers are nonproductive, dissatisfied, and negatively impact some organizations' bottom line as well as its customer satisfaction if it is a service industry (Anitha, 2014; Crabtree, 2013). According to Anitha (2014), a disengaged employee is different than an actively disengaged employee. She further noted that a disengaged employee is not tied into the goals of the organization and suggested that an actively disengaged employee is like cancer in the organization and a hindrance to performance.

**Global Impact.** Employee engagement is not just a problem for organizations in the United States. The importance of employee engagement is global. A Gallup study revealed employee engagement based on differences in job types and education levels within countries (Crabtree, 2013). Leadership must understand the differences to build a

diverse and engaged workforce. Theoretically understanding the various workplace characteristics will help managers better assess the barriers to employee engagement (Crabtree, 2013). The study further suggested that the level of disengagement had a direct impact on the economic productivity and the quality of life of those workers in those countries and subsequently has a global impact (Crabtree, 2013).

The Gallup findings revealed the Middle East and North Africa had the highest percentage of disengaged employees, 35% and 33%, respectively. Overall findings revealed that most workers globally have a negative experience at work (Crabtree, 2013). Crabtree (2013) argues that leaders worldwide must take employee engagement to another level. Similarly, Mahmood et al. (2014) noted that the Pakistan services economy had increased and that the motivational needs of the employees, which he called the internal customer is important and links to business outcomes.

**Customer Service Representatives.** Customer service representatives are faced with a robotic job that lacks job autonomy and decision-making (Desai, 2010). Further, Desai noted that the lack of control and explicit detail of tasks is known as modern-day Taylorism. Customer service representatives are the main point of contact for their organizations and interface with customers continually (Mahmood et al., 2014). The nature of the job can lead to employee disengagement. Increasing job autonomy, providing support, and involving employees in the decision-making process has shown to serve as motivational constructs that can influence employee engagement. According to Mutuku and Mathooko (2014), communication that involves upward and downward communication can be effective in employee engagement. Further, they stated that having employees make suggestions can be beneficial to management as well as

encouraging to the employees. Also, it is worth noting that frequent and effective downward communication reduces gossip and provides employees with actionable information (Mutuku & Mathooko, 2014).

Study results indicated that when employees have control over work life and have input into work processes, as opposed to having their work deskilled (Desai, 2010) that employee job satisfaction increased and hence improved employee engagement (Mutuku & Mathooko, 2014). When employees are engaged, they are more committed, and job performance improves, which usually results in increased customer satisfaction in the service industry and subsequently impacts business results (Anitha, 2014).

### **Diversity in the Call Center**

Organizational culture is defined by the organization's norms and practices and the composition of their workforce (Merchant, 2017). In today's global and technological driven world, the workforce has become more diverse than ever (Kaifi et al., 2012). Diversity includes age, gender, religion, and cultural differences. There are definite benefits of diverse teams (Merchant, 2017), as well as challenges (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012), and even more so if it is a diverse virtual team (Pinjani & Palvia, 2013). Diversity in the organization can lead to creativity and innovation if managed correctly. Employees with a diverse background can bring a wide range of skill sets for problem solving and creativity. Age diversity is one such example. Presently, the workforce is flooded with baby boomers ready to retire leaving an organization full of millennials (Kaifi et al., 2012). However, the concept of reverse engineering allows for generation Xers to learn from the millennials who are more technological savvy (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012) and mitigates the challenge of mixing the two generations. Managers must

establish training sessions for boomers to buy into the learning process. Also, this might make boomers stay longer to learn something new, presenting a win for both generations of the employees as well as the organization.

Diversity brings challenges in dealing with time zones if the team is virtual and cultural customs (Pinjani & Palvia, 2013). Also, knowledge sharing can be an issue in virtual teams' due to distrust, but distrust can happen in face to face teams as well. Distrust can be caused by cultural ignorance and age biases (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012), which is why diversity training in organizations is recommended (Merchant, 2017). Therefore, leadership that is skilled to deal with diversity is necessary to deal with the challenges of diversity while providing an environment of inclusiveness (Khan, Clear, Al-Kaabi, & Pezeshki, 2010; Merchant, 2017; Randel, Dean., Ehrhart, Chung, & Shore, 2016).

## **Conclusion**

This research can help call center leadership understand and mitigate agents whose performance is low that are more susceptible to the determinants. According to Hiatt and Creasey (2012) "change is a process" (p. 22). The ADKAR model looks at how one person goes through the change process, but it reveals its organizational impact. Hiatt and Creasey (2012) noted that change management should not be looked at as simply a strategy to reduce resistance. Leadership should view it as an opportunity to introduce new skill sets and to change behavior that will drive business results. They further noted that change management should leverage the normal mechanism within the organization and broaden activities such as communication, training, and sponsorship.

Also noteworthy is the unsuspecting change agents. Without question change managers include executives, managers, and front-line supervisors. However, the unsuspecting change agents are the employees, peer mentors and maybe even the converted disruptor. Hiatt and Creasey (2012) noted that change agents could move an individual from their current state to the future state (p. 8). Leaders must approach change as a sustainable effort and not just a onetime event. Change managers also should remember that the adoption rate for employees will vary.

Finally, Fragouli and Ibidapo (2015) stated that change and all its dynamics is really crisis management. I argue not so much, but I understand the basis for their argument. Their argument is founded in the chronicles of organizations that have gone under because they did not manage change and were caught off guard by globalization and the external influences, the internet, and knowledgeable consumers (Stanleigh, 2013). According to Fragouli and Ibidapo (2015), most crises are seen as threats, but the effective leader will see it as an opportunity to bring about organizational change.

Limitations of the review include the omission of other factors such as personality, cognitive ability, the impact of change management and character strengths that may impact improved job performance. There is a paucity of research in these areas. However, the literature review did find a small amount of information on character strengths. Moradi et al. (2014) noted that “character strengths clusters, Wisdom and Knowledge and Temperance are the only clusters that were positively related to agents’ performance” (p.7). The cluster represents strengths for someone that loves to learn and to help others, as well as someone who is creative and is open in their thinking (p.7).



Temperance is the control of your emotions, which an agent needs in dealing with the customers.

In his study, Bellow (2007) asked the question, “How does the lack of customer service affect organizational growth?” (p. 54). His study revealed that there is a clear link with the employees’ satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and profits. Other studies revealed the correlations between customer service representatives’ satisfaction and performance and the customers’ satisfaction. The Liu and Batt (2010) study confirmed that team leader support is vital to customer service representatives’ success. The research showed that way the supervisor coaches and handles workgroup activities have a “direct impact on the individualized performance of employees” (p. 286). This review confirmed the need for continued research on factors related to job satisfaction and job performance for customer service representatives in a call center environment. There is limited research for this topic in the service industry.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to understand improvement in CSRs performance in call centers when the ADKAR change management model is used as an intervention. Subsequently, to understand if improvement in the front-line supervisor’s performance produces improvement for the agents on their team. The following questions guided this research study.

1. Does the ADKAR change model enable customer service representatives to show more improved call monitoring standard scores than the control group CSRs between the pretest and posttest time periods?
2. Does the ADKAR change model enable agents to show more improved job

satisfaction than the control group agents between the pretest and posttest time periods?

3. Is there an association between increasing levels of call center agents' job satisfaction and the agents' performance call monitoring standard scores?

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### Overview

The researcher obtained approval from Nova Southeastern University's Internal Review Board for this applied dissertation study. Additionally, the researcher obtained written permission from the appropriate parties at the utility site where the research was conducted. The problem addressed in this study is the need to improve performance standards scores for CSRs.

A major utility company in the United States needed to improve the performance of their customer service representatives (CSRs). CSRs are the liaisons for the organization and are the ones that deal the most with the customers. Customer satisfaction is an important measurement of an organization's business results. Consequently, it is important to understand if CSRs are executing the call monitoring standards correctly and improve their performance, which will lead to excellent customer satisfaction. The researcher facilitated the training intervention of the ADKAR change management model and the review the performance standards.

The experimental research study included one of the organizations' sites where there were approximately 60 CSRs. For purposes of this study, it is assumed that all CSRs worked an 8 to 5 shift with 1 hour for lunch. The group also consisted of different tenures.

The independent variable for this study was the application of the ADKAR change management training, and the dependent variable was the performance score achieved on the call monitoring standards evaluation after the treatment group has received the training. The independent variable (IV) was the variable that was

manipulated (Creswell, 2015; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017). In this study, the training entailed a review of the ADKAR change management model. The training was instructor-led training and was held onsite. The treatment intervention included one four-hour training session that included a review of each of the pillars of the ADKAR model, awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement. The training was conducted by the researcher. The control received no training. However, both the control group and treatment group have access to various resources that help with the customer interaction that are located in the organization's SharePoint site. The resources are available as needed and the agents are not monitored on the resources they use. Additionally, agents can reach out to their supervisor if they have a question. However, for both groups, there were other independent variables that cannot be controlled for, such as the demographic variables, of race, gender, and age. The dependent variable is the outcome variable (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017) and was represented in this study by the pretest and posttest performance call monitoring scores and job satisfaction survey results using Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (1994). The performance call monitoring scores reflect how well each call center employee performs in their job with respect to several standards as described in the measures section. Edmonds and Kennedy (2017) noted that it is important to conceptually define the dependent variable so that it can be measured.

In this chapter, ethics, and confidentiality considerations are addressed, the sample and sampling procedures are explained, details regarding the data collection instrument used for the study, including validity and reliability information are provided and procedures used to analyze the data are described.

## **Participants**

Before beginning the study, I received site approval from the Vice President of the Department and the call center leadership. The target population for this applied dissertation study was a call center with over 60 CSRs responsible for taking inbound calls from customers and providing excellent customer service. The units of analysis for this study were 50 CSRs. The study was conducted by randomly selecting two groups: a control group and an experimental group. The control group did not receive the training intervention while the other group did. The experimental group was also surveyed to determine the outcome of job satisfaction based on the training intervention.

To conduct this study, the researcher employed simple random sampling for CSR assignments. The sample population was obtained from a pool of 60 call center agents that were then randomly assigned to the treatment or control groups. The inclusion criteria for these call center agents were employees who took calls 100% of the time or those that took calls a minimum of 4 hours a day. Agent names were alphabetized and assigned a number 1 through 60. A random number generator was used to select the control team and the experimental group to obtain the target sample of 50 agents. The first number was assigned to the control group and the second number to the experimental group. The process continued until both groups consisted of 25 agents each. If agents opted out the random number generator was used to select the next agent. Usually, the goal of sampling is to generalize the findings (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017).

After the random assignments were completed, I worked with WorkForce Management (WFM) to schedule time to meet with the selected agents. The meetings took place with both the treatment group and the control group and several one on ones as

the agent schedules permitted. During the meetings, I presented the agents with a consent form. There were separate consent forms for the treatment group and the control group (see Appendix A). The benefits of the study were explained, as well as their role in the study.

### **Instruments**

There were two instruments used to collect data for this study: Performance call monitoring scores and Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (1994). The call monitoring scores were developed by the utility company in partnership with their outside vendor. The second instrument was an already validated job satisfaction survey.

**Job Satisfaction Survey.** The job satisfaction survey assessed whether the application of the treatment impacted CSRs job satisfaction. The survey consisted of Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (see Appendix B) (Spector, 1994) and additional demographic questions. The JSS (1994) website noted that the survey could be used for educational purposes. The JSS contains 36 Likert questions ranging from one, disagree very much to six, agree very much. The 36 questions are categorized by 9 subscales that represent facets of job satisfaction, pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work, and communication,

The survey instrument has been verified for validity and reliability in several instances (Dhamija, Gupta, & Bag, 2019; Ogunkuade & Ojiji, 2018; Spector, 1994; Springer, 2011). The 9 subscales are based on 4 items. Each item is scored from 1 to 6, with 1 being Disagree very much to 6, Agree very much. Each subscale can have a score from 4 to 24, and total job satisfaction scores can range from 36 to 216. In this study, the

highest total job satisfaction score for the pretest was 200, and 176 was the highest score for the posttest survey. High scores on the scale represent job satisfaction, so scores negatively worded are reversed. The reversed items can be found in Appendix A.

Negatively worded items are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, and 36. Table 1 depicts questions included in the 9 subscales and Total satisfaction.

Table 1

*Job Satisfaction Subscales with Question Item Numbers*

Subscale	Item numbers
Pay	1, 10, 19, 28
Promotion	2, 11, 20, 33
Supervision	3, 12, 21, 30
Fringe Benefits	4, 13, 22, 29
Contingent rewards	5, 14, 23, 32
Operating conditions	6, 15, 24, 31
Coworkers	7, 16, 25, 34
Nature of work	8, 17, 27, 35
Communication	9, 18, 26, 36
Total satisfaction	1-36

**Performance Call Monitoring Scores.** The average call monitoring score is the result of the average score of all standards. There are twenty standards that are ascribed point values based on its importance of answering the customer's questions. These scores are captured in a database by the outside vendor and are available to the supervisors and customer service leadership for coaching opportunities and metrics. The

database provided data for a month to month comparison of average scores by teams, individual and by each standard. Dimensions of the performance call monitoring scores used to obtain the performance index are not available. The dimensions included in the call monitoring performance standards are greeting, emotions, security, communication and professionalism, knowledge and execution, and closing.

### **Procedures**

**Design.** The design that was employed was a randomized controlled with participants randomly assigned to the ADKAR treatment group and the control group. Performance standard scores for both groups were obtained from the performance standards database prior to the intervention for the treatment group. Participants of the treatment group received ADKAR training and re-training of the call monitoring performance standards. This design included the control group to perform their normal job functions. Both the treatment group and the control group were expected to use the training resources that are available to all agents in the organization's SharePoint site. The SharePoint site includes a number of resources, such as the "Customer Service Guidelines", which gives scripting to the agents to handle different segments of the call, various job aids, and a call monitoring checklist. Agents also have access to their supervisor if difficult questions arise.

**Data collection procedures.** The utility maintains a call monitoring spreadsheet, tracking individual and team call monitoring performance standards scores for all CSRs. The utility uses monthly performance monitoring by an outside vendor to determine CSRs adherence to performance standards. An average score is the result of the vendor's examination of a CSRs adherence to the call monitoring standards. Each standard is



assigned point values based on its importance. After approval from the internal review board, the researcher used call monitoring performance scores before the intervention as historical control and then obtained call monitoring performance scores from all agents after the intervention was completed with the treatment group.

Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (1994) was the instrument used to collect data on CSRs perceptions of job satisfaction. The summed scores of the Likert responses were used. Behavioral statisticians have closely examined the appropriateness of applying both parametric and nonparametric statistical approaches for analyzing data from Likert scales (Carifio & Perla, 2008; Murray, 2013; Norman, 2010). Researchers have discussed and supported the use of the Likert scale as interval data as far back as the 1930s (Carifio & Perla, 2008; Norman, 2010). Meanwhile, other researchers have suggested that nonparametric statistics are more appropriate for analyzing data that is initially measured on an ordinal scale (Jamieson, 2004). Regardless of the initial intent and arguments for using non-parametric statistics for ordinal data, the current consensus is that parametric statistics has overwhelming been shown to be robust to violations from departures of assumptions, including non- normality of data (Murray, 2013; Norman, 2010). In particular, measured, the resultant score obtained from summing the items results in a score that is appropriate for parametric statistics (Norman, 2010). According to Murray (2013) and Norman (2010), Likert scale data when summed actually results in interval data. Even when individual ordinal level items are analyzed, these researchers found that Likert scales using both parametric and non-parametric statistics result in no differences in terms of statistical decisions. It is important to note, that prior work has used parametric methods to both establish the reliability and conduct substantive

analyses, pertaining to the Job Satisfaction Survey (Ogunkuade & Ojiji, 2018; Spector, 1994; Springer, 2011)

**Description of the intervention.** The ADKAR change management intervention is based on Prosci's change management model (Hiatt, 2006). Through this intervention, the researcher shared with the CSRs the transformative pillars of the ADKAR model of awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement in relationship to the call monitoring performance standards. The intervention took place during a four-hour training session. The intervention was not only predicted to increase performance in the CSRs call monitoring performance standards, but in overall performance in general, and increase job satisfaction.

The researcher functioned as the facilitator of the ADKAR training intervention. The ADKAR training included PowerPoint presentations, change management activities, and review of the call monitoring standards (see Appendix C). The participants were provided a copy of the "Employee's Survival Guide to Change," which describes of the pillars of the ADKAR change model and can be used as a tool for the application of the model for the CSRs.

The training was divided into 5 units, The ADKAR Model, A deep dive into ADKAR – awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement, Review of Performance Standards, Connecting ADKAR to the performance standards, and last the Wrap. The training began with the researcher thanking the class for their participation in the research and explaining how important the research was. Next, I asked the participants to write on a sheet of paper what they knew or wanted to know about ADKAR and then ball it up and throw it in a basket. This was used as an icebreaker and

provided a light-hearted way to warm up the class. As I took each one out of the basket, I posted it on a huge sticky note. This was my parking lot to ensure that I addressed all of their questions. Unit 1 started with an activity to introduce them to the concept of change. The participants were paired into twos and asked to face each other. After a couple of minutes, they were asked to face back to back and make one change and then turn around. After facing each other again, they were asked to describe the change that their partner made. The activity went on for three to four rounds. The exercise revealed that change was hard, and most people took items off and did not add to their attire.

I next gave them a brief overview of the “Employee Survival Guide,” which we used as our workbook for the training. I had them complete the activity on page 45 of the workbook that asked them to describe a personal change that they were trying to make. Again, they were asked to pair up with a partner and discuss the change. Unit 2 was a deep dive into ADKAR. A video was played explaining the pillars of ADKAR. The video can be accessed at [https://youtu.be/f\\_FY8L5xJLE](https://youtu.be/f_FY8L5xJLE). I then went through each acronym explaining the enablers and the outcome. For example, for Awareness, enablers are easy access to information communication. The outcome of awareness is employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

Unit 3 discussed the performance standards explaining to the participants why they should use ADKAR delineating the benefits. Some benefits include personal benefits such as the achievement of personal goals and a better approach to crucial conversations. Further discussion ensued on the professional benefits of using ADKAR to reach the company’s vision and strategic plan. Also, I discussed that ADKAR was a proven change management model and it is the official model used in our organization.

The ADKAR model has been proven by 14 years of research with over 2600 companies in various industries such as utilities, telecommunications, manufacturing, and government.

Unit 4 was the real essence of the research entitled Connecting ADKAR Performance Standards. I presented a chart that detailed every pillar of the ADKAR by the employee view and the customer view. For example, under Desire in the employee column, it indicated improve performance, and in the Customer's column, it indicated Solving the customer's issue. The employee should have the desire to want to improve their performance, and when the agent answers a call, they should have the desire to solve the customer's issue. The next activity was interesting, and the agents did a great job with it. I created an animated chart (see Appendix C) that revealed each call monitoring performance standard one at a time. As one was revealed, I asked the agents to guess which ADKAR pillar applied. The agents 9 out of 10 selected the same ones that I identified on the chart. Unit 4 continues by providing examples of poor customer service and good customer service under the umbrella of ADKAR.

Unit 5 was the last unit where I discussed barriers to change and asked the participants to write down their barriers on an ADKAR worksheet. They were also asked to do reflections with a partner. I ended the training with an assessment and the participants taking a survey (see Appendix C).

**Description of the control group.** The control group received no training and instead carried out normal job function conditions. The control group was asked to follow their normal procedures of using their training resources to handle calls such as the "Customer Service Guidelines" and their call monitoring checklists. The guidelines

and call monitoring checklists provide guidance on the interaction with customers. The agent is expected to use all available resources that are in the organization's SharePoint site as well as reaching out to their supervisor.

**Ethics and Confidentiality.** The researcher conducted the study in an ethical manner. The researcher ensured that CSRs know that no descriptive personal data will be included in the study. The researcher ensured that all personal information pertaining to the study is kept confidential within the researcher's authority.

**Design and Data Analysis procedures.** The design of this study is a true experiment using a between-subjects approach with a pretest and posttest. A between-subjects approach allows each CSR to be exposed to the treatment once (Charness, Gneezy, & Kuhn, 2012; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017). Based on this study, the CSRs in the treatment group were trained on ADKAR, during a four-hour block of training. The training for the treatment group was delivered by the researcher. SPSS was used to analyze and compare data between the control group and the experimental group. Inferential data analysis was used to investigate the research questions and determine if the independent variable, the ADKAR change management model, positively impacted the dependent variable (i.e., the call monitoring scores). The data analysis procedures for each research question are described below:

Research question one asked: Does the ADKAR change model enable customer service representatives to show more improved call monitoring standard scores than the control group CSRs between the pretest performance scores and posttest performance scores? In order to answer RQ1, an analysis of variance was conducted with the group as the fixed factor. The dependent variable was the posttest performance score with pretest

performance scores as the covariate.

The second research question asked: Does the ADKAR change model enable CSRs to show more improved job satisfaction than the control group CSRs between the pretest and posttest time periods? An analysis of covariance was conducted with the group as the covariate. The independent variable was the sum of the survey items for the pretest. The dependent variable was the sum of the post-test survey items that index job satisfaction. Additionally, each of the 9 job satisfaction subscales pre and posttest were tested.

The third research question asked: Is there an association between increasing levels of call center agents' job satisfaction and the agents' performance call monitoring standard scores? A Pearson product moment correlation,  $r$ , was obtained between total scores on both the job satisfaction index and the agents' performance call monitoring standard scores. There does not seem to be a reason to expect this correlation to be any different for those in each of the two research groups (treatment and control). Therefore, these correlations were examined separately for those in both the experimental and control groups in order to examine if the findings replicate in two different samples.

In order to answer RQ3, the Pearson  $r$  was obtained, with satisfaction as the IV (or predictor variable) and performance scores as the DV (criterion variable). Correlations were determined for each of the nine job satisfaction survey subscales.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

There are limitations to any research design. In this design, the demographic factors were not controlled for as well as the tenure of the employee. Additionally, attitudinal positions and the anxiety related to being included in a research study cannot

be accounted for as well as any cognitive learning issues or behaviors.

A delimitation that was possible was the researcher did not have control over team movement during the research study period. Another possible delimitation was the call monitoring standards were under review, and the new standards were planned for implementation of the beginning the utility's fiscal year, which was October. New standards could have compromised the findings.

### **Summary**

The intent of this applied dissertation study was to improve the CSRs performance scores by using the ADKAR change management model in relationship to the call monitoring standards. Training ADKAR could enhance frontline supervisor's human potential professionally; support the transfer of knowledge to others; and reassure leaders and participants that the appropriate training materials, methods, and processes were provided. The goals were as follows:

1. To prepare new and existing frontline supervisors with job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and practices to carry out established customer-service job duties competently and successfully.
2. To address negative behaviors and encourage positive ones.
3. To have a practical method for change management that creates awareness and improves operational efficiencies in all areas with a feedback mechanism to ensure the researcher's co-workers will have success.

One way to obtain the utility's goal for excellent customer service in this dynamic and

competitive service marketplace with increasing customer demands is to become data focused, and customer driven, starting with frontline supervisors in the call centers and continuing throughout the entire organization.



## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if the ADKAR change management model as an intervention increased job performance as measured by call monitoring scores for customer service representatives (CSRs). The ADKAR change management model focuses on individual change the impacts of organizational change and therefore impacts the business result. ADKAR describes the states of change that an individual must take if the individual change is to occur. ADKAR is defined as follows:

A – Awareness,

D – Desire,

K – Knowledge,

A – Ability,

R – Reinforcement.

The participants in this study were 50 call center agents from a utility organization. The agents primarily take inbound calls from customers and are expected to deliver exceptional customer service while following provided call flow guidelines. The study included a 4-hour training session and collection of performance call monitoring scores pre and post-intervention. Additionally, a Likert-type scale survey instrument, the JSS, was used as a pre- and post-implementation tool to obtain perceptions of their job satisfaction.

### Response Rate to the Research

Fifty agents were randomly assigned to participate in the study. 100% of the consent forms were signed by agents agreeing to their participation in the study. From

the fifty agents that participated in the pre- and post-job satisfaction surveys, there was a 98% response rate for the pre-job satisfaction survey, 90% for the post job satisfaction survey.

The researcher utilized Survey Monkey to collect data from a job satisfaction survey. The survey consisted of 36 Likert-scale questions with 9 subscales. The survey included two parts. The first part contained demographic questions and the second part related to perceptions of job satisfaction.

### **Demographic Characteristics**

The participants were 50 call center agents from a utility organization. The agents consisted of agents with various tenures, ages, and gender. Table 2 depicts the demographics of the study participants. As depicted in Table 2, females represented 86% of the sample, 33% were millennials, 45% have had some college, but no degree and 50% were employed 24 months or less.

Table 2

*Sample Demographics*

Demographic	Frequency or M (SD)	%
Gender		
Male	7	14
Female	42	86
Age		
26-33	16	33
34- 41	10	20
42- 49	10	20
Over 50	13	27
Education		
Highest level of school High School	3	6
Some college, but no degree	22	45
2-year college degree	9	18
4-year college degree	14	29
Graduate-level degree	1	2
Months in current position*	27	

*Note.* N = 50, \*Average months of employment =27.

**Preliminary Findings**

A reliability analysis was carried out on the job satisfaction survey comprising 9 subscales (see Table 3). Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach acceptable reliability,  $\alpha = 0.92$  and  $.90$ , respectively for pre and post job satisfaction survey results and are in line with the Total Satisfaction alpha reported by Spector (1994). The JSS consists of 9 subscales and based on Spector's (1994) 2,870 sample has an overall internal consistency reliability score for total satisfaction of  $.91$ . Cronbach alpha scores for the 9 subscales in this study range between  $.46$  and  $.88$ ., as compared to Spector's that ranged from  $.60$  to  $.82$ . Most items appeared to be worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted. Findings indicated that there was no significant difference in overall job satisfaction between pre and posttest tests and the control group and the treatment group. Preliminary findings found that there were no outliers based on

histograms ran for initial analysis of job satisfaction constructs

Table 3

*Comparison of Reliability Coefficients of Job Satisfaction by subscales*

Subscale	Pretest Alpha			Posttest Alpha			Spector
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	Alpha
Pay	12.50	5.64	.88	12.12	4.84	.84	.75
Promotion	11.14	4.66	.72	11.36	4.24	.76	.73
Supervision	19.72	4.80	.80	19.54	4.21	.86	.82
Fringe Benefits	17.44	4.63	.76	16.72	4.11	.73	.73
Contingent rewards	13.58	5.26	.83	12.44	4.39	.84	.76
Operating conditions	13.38	3.99	.46	13.34	3.79	.58	.62
Coworkers	18.56	3.74	.65	18.12	3.73	.73	.60
Nature of work	16.68	4.64	.76	16.56	4.29	.77	.78
Communication	13.82	4.21	.60	12.64	3.88	.63	.71
Total satisfaction	137.20	27.93	.92	133.88	23.49	.90	.91

*n*=50

### Primary Findings

Presented below are the findings for each research question that the current study addresses. The three research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations. Missing values were handled as follows: for performance call monitoring scores, the mean across all participants for the control group and treatment group were calculated separately for pre and post-performance scores. The mean scores were then used to replace any missing values. For example, if an agent that was in the control group did not have a post-performance score, I substituted with the

mean score calculated for the control group performance scores.

Secondly, Spector's (1994) Instructions for Scoring the Job Satisfaction Survey, JSS was used to substitute for any missing item data for pre and post job satisfaction survey results. Spector offered two alternatives for substituting missing data. The one used in this study used the middle response items for each of the missing items. Since 3 and 4 are in the middle of the Likert scale, Spector suggested that either number could be used, but stated that one should alternate the two numbers as missing items occurred (p.2). For example, out of the 36 questions, if an agent skipped questions 5 and then 8, I substituted the Likert score of 3 for the skipped question 5 and a Likert score of 4 for the skipped question number 8. For research question number 2, after collecting the questionnaire data, raw data were downloaded from survey monkey into Excel. Data for all research questions were then analyzed using IBM SPSS, version 25 statistical processing for Windows software. After adjustments data were imported into SPSS.

**Research Question 1.** Does the ADKAR change model enable customer service representatives in the treatment group to show more improved call monitoring standard scores than the control group CSRs between the pretest and posttest time periods? The mean call monitoring standard scores (AKA call monitoring performance scores) were first examined. Descriptive statistics were run on the original data to determine mean values pre and post-call monitoring performance scores for both the control and treatment groups. The mean values for call monitoring performance scores for the control group for pretest and posttest were ( $M = 76.19$ ,  $SD = 10.62$ ,  $M = 76.62$ ,  $SD = 8.83$ ) respectively, indicating a minor increase. The mean values for performance call monitoring scores for the treatment group for pretest and posttest performance scores were ( $M = 78.24$ ,  $SD =$

6.61,  $M = 77.71$ ,  $SD = 10.60$ ) respectively. These findings for the posttest time period suggest a small advantage for the ADKAR treatment group with respect to mean levels of performance call monitoring scores.

A statistical test was conducted next to verify whether or not the group differences for posttest performance monitoring scores were significantly different. The performance call monitoring scores were examined with posttest as the dependent variable, group as the independent variable while controlling for the pretest. To examine research question 1, an analysis of covariance design, commonly referred to as ANCOVA was conducted to determine a statistical significance in performance scores between the ADKAR group and the control group on posttest call monitoring performance scores while controlling for pretest call monitoring performance scores.

There is not a significant effect between the treatment group and the control group on the posttest call monitoring performance scores after controlling for pretest call monitoring scores,  $F(1, 47) = 2.80$ ,  $p > .10$ . The ANCOVA indicated a strong effect of the pretest scores on posttest performance scores, thereby suggesting substantial stability in call monitoring standards scores between the pretest and posttest time period.

**Research Question 2.** Does the ADKAR change model enable agents to show more improved job satisfaction than the control group agents between the pretest and posttest time periods? In order to answer research question 2, an ANCOVA analysis was conducted on each of the 9 pre and post job satisfaction survey subscales. The post total job satisfaction score (or each of the post job satisfaction subscales) were the dependent variable while controlling for pretest levels of job satisfaction.

The analysis of variance covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted for the total job satisfaction scores on Spector's (1994) survey. Both pre and post job satisfaction means, and standard deviations were higher for the treatment group than the control group. Pretest control group ( $M = 134.04$ ,  $SD = 30.18$ ), pretest treatment group ( $M = 140.36$ ,  $SD = 25.71$ ). Posttest control group ( $M = 131.16$ ,  $SD = 27.97$ ), posttest treatment group ( $M = 136.60$ ,  $SD = 18.13$ ). Group differences in posttest performance was examined while controlled for pretested performance. The resultant F for group was  $F(1,47) = .11$ ,  $p = .75$ , which was not significant. The results of the ANCOVA for each subscale of Spector's (1994) instrument are available in Appendix D (see Table D1).

**Research Question 3.** Is there an association between increasing levels of call center agents' job satisfaction and the agents' performance call monitoring standard scores? A Pearson product moment correlation,  $r$ , was obtained between total scores on the post job satisfaction index, post job satisfaction subscales and the agents post-performance call monitoring standard scores.

In order to answer RQ3, a partial correlation was used to obtain the Pearson  $r$  with post-performance scores, the 9 post job satisfaction subscales (pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication) and post overall total job satisfaction were the variables while controlling for group. The results (see Table 4) indicated that there were no significant correlations between post-performance scores and post test levels of either total or subscales for the job satisfaction survey. However, there were correlations found within the job satisfaction subscales.

Table 4

*Partial Correlations of Post Job Satisfaction Scale Subscales With the Post Performance Score Measure, While Controlling for Group*

JSS subscale	Partial Correlation
Pay	-.23
Promotion	-.01
Supervision	-.06
Fringe Benefits	.01
Contingent rewards	-.10
Operating conditions	-.09
Coworkers	-.01
Nature of work	-.07
Communication	-.21
Total satisfaction	-.14

*Note.* JSS = Job Satisfaction Survey

### **Summary**

The findings indicate that the ADKAR change management does not have a statistically significant difference in the performance of customer service representatives. The mean posttest performance scores for the treatment group were slightly lower than the pretest scores. The control group and the treatment group received pre and posttest. Posttest of the treatment group, when presented with the ADKAR intervention, resulted in slightly lower posttest call monitoring scores for the treatment group.

The data also suggested that there was not a statistical significance in overall job satisfaction and in the 9 job satisfaction subscales based on the intervention (ADKAR)



for pre and posttest job satisfaction surveys. According to Ogunkuade and Ojiji (2018), job satisfaction perceptions by employees is an impact on organizational productivity. However, job satisfaction results in this study did not impact performance.

Findings from this study will contribute to the lack of quantitative data that exists relative to change management factors that implicate job satisfaction to predict improved performance for customer services representatives (Osei-Bonsu, 2014; Shoss, Witt, & Vera, 2012; Springer, 2011; Wanza & Nikuraru, 2016)). This will assist industry leaders and educational leaders in decision making and aid in customer service training programs. Chapter 5 will provide an interpretation of the data and conclusions. In addition, limitations, implications, and further research will be discussed.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### Introduction

The call center has become the place for managing the customer relationship and puts the customer service representative on the frontline. Call centers or contact centers take inbound and make outbound calls to handle customer issues and answer questions. The customer service representative becomes the main liaison for the organization, and therefore they play a vital role in impacting the customer's satisfaction and maintaining organizational branding and integrity for the organization. The world today is surrounded by the global competition that requires organizations to be flexible and to have a workforce that adapts to change (Shoss et al., 2012).

Today's call centers use complex technical customer information systems and are froth with a myriad of policies and procedures and continual change. Organizations are quick to spend money on these high-end systems and keep up with the technology changes in software but seem to forget the employees that need to operate the systems and often ignore the human side of change. The need to make organizational changes that are adopted by the employees are critical in that there is an inextricable link with the customer's service representatives' impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, customer service representatives job performance and job satisfaction are important to customer satisfaction. This study sought to explore factors related to the customer service representative's performance in call centers.

Chapter 1 began with an introduction and the statement of the problem. Included was the background and justification for the research. Chapter 2 reviewed the existing literature in light of the technology impact on a call center, critical thinking and innovation required in a call center, the roles that leadership plays, organizational

climate, employee engagement, and diversity in the call center. The theoretical framework is based on the ADKAR change management model. Chapter 3 included the research design of the current study, the methodology, data collection, instrumentation, and research questions. The research methodology used is a quantitative approach. Chapter 4 contained the findings from the applied research. The overall findings indicated no significant statistical results for improved job performance for customer service representatives after the ADKAR change management intervention.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the study and the implications of the findings. The chapter is divided into the following sections: limitations of the study, implications of the study, recommendations for future research studies, and a conclusion. The results of the study contribute to the literature on change management for factors that impact job performance for customer service representatives in a call center.

### **Overview of the Applied Dissertation**

This applied dissertation study was conducted at a small, mid-size utility with a call center that included 50 participants. A call center is a system of people, processes, technologies, and strategies designed to use organizational resources to create value for the customer and organization (Yaslioglu et al., 2013, p. 633). Branding is important to an organization, and the level of service provided by customer service representatives has been shown to impact an organization's brand (Yaslioglu et al., 2013). The intervention consisted of a 4-hour training class that demonstrated the application of the ADKAR change management model to a customer call and the call monitoring performance standards. The learning objectives for the training included an introduction to the ADKAR model, a deep dive into ADKAR – awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and

reinforcement, review of performance standards, tying ADKAR to the performance standards (see Appendix B), and a wrap-up. Agents are measured for adherence on the standards that provide guidelines to resolve the customers' issues, answer customer questions and thereby achieve customer satisfaction. The study included a control group and an experimental group (randomly selected). A 6-point Likert-type survey was used to measure job satisfaction pre and post the intervention. Employees job satisfaction can translate to customer satisfaction.

The purpose of this applied dissertation was to explore factors that can improve customer service representatives job performance in a call center. Specifically, the study explored the use of the ADKAR change management model.

### **Relationship of the Current Study to Prior Literature**

The literature reviews indicated that there are many factors that drive organizational results, excellent customer service and improved employee job performance and employee job satisfaction. It is clear from the literature that organizations must pay attention to their human resources.

Wanza and Nkuraru (2016) found that change management impacts employees' performance in numerous ways and that organizational culture is a strong influencer as well. Further, leaders that demonstrate and model strong leadership skills influence others to follow and influence the performance of their subordinates, as well as job satisfaction (p.197).

Job satisfaction is generally defined as the attitudes or perceptions that employees' have about their job (Spector, 1985) and is linked to productivity (Aziri, 2011). Some researchers, examining the relationship between job satisfaction and job

performance showed that positive job satisfaction increased job performance (Springer, 2011), but some researchers (Mikkelsen & Olsen, 2019; Wanza & Nkuraru 2016) found that various dimensions of change management impacted job performance.

### **Summary of Findings**

This section includes the results of the study. Results are summarized and delineated for each research question below.

**Research Question 1.** Does the ADKAR change model enable customer service representatives to show more improved call monitoring standard scores than the control group CSRs between the pretest and posttest time periods? This question was addressed by comparing performance scores of call center agents pretest scores and posttest scores after the ADKAR intervention. The findings indicated no statistically significant differences between pretest scores and posttest scores.

The performance scores for the month of November 2019 were compared with scores from the month of December 2019. The broad categories for the standards include greeting, emotions, security, communication and professionalism, knowledge and execution, and closing. Each standard was applied to an ADKAR component (see Appendix B) to demonstrate to the customer service representatives the use of ADKAR during customer contact can lead to exceptional customer service.

Individual changes adapted by employees facilitate organizational outcomes (Shoss et al., 2012). Further, Shoss et al. (2012) suggested that organizations need to assess the conditions to understand when change is needed (p. 911). Employees ability to adapt to changes at the individual level impact positive performance for the employee at the task level (2012). This construct shared by Shoss et al. is the embodiment of

ADKAR, which emphasizes change at the individual level.

As defined by Shoss et al. (2012), job performance as behaviors that have tremendous implications for organizational effectiveness (p. 911), hence the importance of this study. Shoss et al. conducted a study with call center employees that were confronted with changes in performance standards and other organizational changes that impacted the call center. Participants were measured for quality on call monitoring ratings recorded from a previous year to the year of the study. The ratings looked at if the employee was compliant with the company's performance standards, including providing empathy to the customers, and meeting the customers need while maintaining standards of efficiency (p.916). These dimensions are similar to the performance standard criteria used in this study.

The results indicated that adaptive performance, i.e., change was significantly associated with task performance, i.e., job performance. Also, worth noting from Shoss's et al. (2012) study is the relationship between adaptive performance and task performance among employees high in conscientiousness and organizational politics was positive. This is in line with the A in ADKAR that stands for awareness. When employees are made aware of the changes that impact their job, they are more engaged and feel empowered in their role. One of the principles that I stressed during training is that ADKAR frees you from feeling like you are a victim of change and instead makes you the master of the change. The employee has a choice on how they respond to changes.

**Research Question 2.** Does the ADKAR change model enable agents to show more improved job satisfaction than the control group agents between the pretest and

posttest time periods? The findings indicated that there were statistically significant differences with each of the 9 JSS subscales and with total job satisfaction.

Agents in both the control group and experimental group were given the JSS pre and post the ADKAR intervention. The survey contained 36 questions subdivided into 9 subscales. The merits of employee job satisfaction and its impact on organizational goals have been widely researched (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011; Aziri, 2011; Birkenmeier & Sanseau, 2016; Spector, 1997, Springer, 2011).

Job satisfaction is defined based on how people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Spector, 1994, p. 2.) According to Aziri (2011), Spector's (1994) definition of job satisfaction is one of the most cited definitions. Further, Aziri (2011) stated that job satisfaction can mean different things to the employee, but indicated it is linked to employee productivity and a multitude of attitudes about the job.

It is important to note that there are many factors that impact employees' job perceptions of job satisfaction. Factors that may impact perceptions are the loyalty of the employee to the company, experience, age and gender and education (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011).

**Research Question 3.** Is there an association between increasing levels of call center agents' job satisfaction and the agents' job performance related to the call monitoring standard scores? The findings revealed that there were no statistically significant correlations between post job satisfaction and the agent's post-performance call monitoring standard scores. However, all subscales were significantly correlated to overall post job satisfaction score and ranged from .42 to .78. However, there were small (.30-.66) intercorrelation results between some of the JSS subscales. Almost 43% of the

possible correlations exceeded the .40 level, while 26% exceeded .50.

In reviewing the relationships between the subscales and total post job satisfaction score, it was evident that Supervision was least related to the post-JSS total score ( $r = .48$ ), whereas post Contingent Rewards was the most ( $r = .73$ ). Moderate intercorrelations between the sub-scales indicate that they are measuring distinct but related aspects of job satisfaction. All correlations fell above the 0.001 level of probability, indicating that even the weakest of the relationships was nonetheless not significant. All subscales and scale scores, therefore, were not significantly related to all other JSS subscale and scale scores. However, studies such as the one conducted by Mikkelsen and Olsen (2019) concluded that change management does have an influence on an employees' job performance and job satisfaction.

In parallel, research conducted by Springer (2011) during which he surveyed 750 participants that were randomly selected showed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and job performance in bank employees. The correlation between job satisfaction and job performance was significant at the point  $p < .05$  level ( $r = .29$ ). Further, Springer noted other studies that suggested a positive association between job satisfaction and job performance.

### **Implications of the Study**

The findings from all three research questions indicate the need for more in-depth research considering comments made from participants on their training evaluation and feedback on their ADKAR barrier worksheet. All participants commented that the training was helpful and that they understood the ADKAR change management model. Several commented that they would apply it in their personal life and in their business



role. Particularly, to the question, “Do you have a better understanding of the performance standards? 100% of participants that completed the form answered yes. A few even stated that they now understood how to apply ADKAR to the call monitoring performance standards. Many mentioned that they thought this was a training that their supervisors needed, as well as others in the organization.

The training included a review of the call monitoring standards as it related to ADKAR (see Appendix B). The researcher conducted an exercise in which I revealed the call monitoring standard categories one at a time and then had the participants assign an ADKAR pillar. Ninety percent of the time the participants and I agreed. In order to review the training, the researcher asked some review 6 questions. The questions asked include: “Describe ADKAR”, “Describe the difference between individual change, and organizational change”, “Explain the five phases of ADKAR”, “Summarize the six categories of the call monitoring standards”, “Create a personal change situation and apply ADKAR” and lastly “Describe how you will apply ADKAR to a call”. The last question is notable. Some participant answers were, be aware of my tone, desire to help, knowledge of the account, ability to execute customer concern and reinforce what we discussed. I was impressed with the detail in which they were able to make the correlation between the pillars of ADKAR and a customer call and the application of the call monitoring performance standards.

Included in the 4-hour ADKAR training was a segment on barriers to change. It was interesting to note how quickly CSRS were able to identify their barriers. Participant comments on their barrier worksheet were enlightening and have implications for change management. Almost all participants listed at least one barrier to change from awareness

to reinforcement, some CSRs listed all. One CSR listed reinforcement as a barrier with the added comment, “lack of trust.” Another cited awareness, “If I know what you are looking for this would help me extend my knowledge.” Resistance to change is widely addressed in the literature, and an engaged supervisor is one of the mitigation strategies.

According to Georgalis, Smaratunge, Kimberley, and Lu (2015), the relationship between supervisors and employees is critical to implementing change initiatives. Further, they suggested that organizations should consider how employees perceive supervisor relationships. Similarly, Shoss et al. (2012) stated that supervisors need to motivate employees to increase performance that keeps up with the constant changes in the workplace. Further, supervisors need to clarify performance requirements and increase awareness (ADKAR) in competencies to improve job performance.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The first major limitation in this study was the dynamics of agent movement. Several agents that were initially in the study either were terminated, promoted, and or transferred to other areas. The second limitation was a project that significantly impacted the call volume in the call centers. The project was new to the agents, and even though the agents did receive training, the conversations with customers were more intense. The environmental factors related to a new initiative lead to more intense and different conversations. However, the researcher believes that ADKAR could have still been applied.

Another limitation was the length of the training intervention. Due to the nature of the call center, as it pertains to call volumes and service levels, the training was limited by call center management. Expanding the length of time for training and providing

reinforcement by myself or supervisors as prescribed by ADKAR could have positively impacted results.

According to Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011), employees are critical to an organization's success. Employees, particularly customer service representatives are the face of the company, and their job satisfaction can determine how long they stay with the organization (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011). The delivery of the customer service representative's quality of service to a customer can impact customer satisfaction (Abdullateef, Mokhtar, & Yusoff, 2011) and organizational branding. The call monitoring performance standards in this study are the qualitative measure of the quality of service for the customer service representative that was provided to the customer.

Typical dimensions of service quality as related to call handling in this study are greeting and commitment, emotions, tempo, communication, knowledge and execution, and a summary. Other service quality dimensions such as telephone etiquette, knowledge, errors/rework, and adherence to the protocol are used to measure service quality for call centers by other researchers (Baraka<sup>a</sup>, Baraka<sup>b</sup>, & El-Gamily, 2013) and are similar to the dimensions used in this study. To this end it is important that employees are trained on the service quality dimensions, employees who are not trained perform poorly and negatively impact customer satisfaction.

Technological advances in call centers will continue to require extensive training demands on customer service representatives. However, the learning and training demand and the change impact should not impact job performance and job satisfaction. Therefore, it is critical that supervisors are involved to create sustainable learning.

Due to the limited population, agents less than two years were part of the study. Agents at this level have still not fully mastered all the call monitoring skills and are learning the organizational culture. A customer service representative who is tenured, more experience and more ingrained in the organizational culture may have impacted the resulting scores.

### **Recommendations for Future Research Studies**

This study did not consider the reasons agents responded to job satisfaction questions. A future mixed methods study could include a qualitative analysis of job satisfaction responses. Mixed methods research captures the strength of both qualitative and quantitative methodology and increases the depth of understanding (Wisdom, Cavaleri, Onwuegbuzie, & Green, 2012). However, quantitative research tends to be more rigorous, but there are gaps in mixed methods research as well (Wisdom et al., 2012). Qualitative and quantitative methods each serve a purpose and provide a more comprehensive picture.

It is also noted that a future study should examine the differences in the call centers, commercial agents versus residential agents. The commercial agent has a different type of customer, and their calls normally take longer. Additional future research should examine the differences in roles. The residential call center is comprised of customer service representative I's and customer service representative II's, with customer service representative I's being the more experienced agent.

Future studies could incorporate additional demographic elements such as ethnicity and employees' role in the organization. As the world becomes more global, diversity in the call center should be explored and its' differences related to change

management and improved performance. Further investigation should be done on the tenure of customer service representatives (who have 10 years or more) to discover the difference of adaption to change. Additionally, a study could be conducted on generational differences. Millennials, generation Xer's and baby boomers have different responses to change. The different generations think differently.

Other studies could use different mediators for improvement in job performance and job satisfaction, such as motivation and positive reinforcement. Even though there are studies in this area, it is limited for the call center industry. This study did not consider other change management models. It may be of interest to use different change management models as an intervention and compare their impact in improving customer service representatives job performance and job satisfaction.

The study can be duplicated using different demographics. This study was conducted in a mid-size utility company. This study could be conducted in other mid-size or larger utility companies to look for trends and or comparisons. Studies that could include a larger sample size might yield different results. Utility companies have many ways to produce power, coal, wind, water, nuclear, and solar are some examples. The inbound calls will vary depending on the services offered at each utility, but the call flow, in general, will be the same making the findings from this study transferable to other utilities.

Additionally, other job satisfaction surveys could be used in future research. In Aziri's (2011) literature review on job satisfaction, he mentioned two other commonly used job satisfaction surveys, the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire, and the Job Description Index, both of which I considered for this study. The Minnesota Satisfaction

Questionnaire has multiple forms and takes between 15-20 minutes. The questionnaire considers 19 aspects of the job (Aziri, 2011). The Job Description Index measures five dimensions of job satisfaction which are similar to the dimensions found in Spector's (1994) job satisfaction survey. The dimensions are the nature of work, compensation, and benefits, attitudes toward supervisors, relations with co-workers and opportunities for promotion.

The study can be used for customer service representatives in various industries. In most call centers handling the customer's call and answering their questions in an effective and efficient manner are the goal and one that most call centers strive for. Future studies should consider multiple treatment periods. One of the tenants of ADKAR is reinforcement. It would be interesting to conduct procedures after multiple training sessions of ADKAR in a longitudinal study. In addition, providing ADKAR training to supervisors as well as the customer service representatives would be interesting.

## **Conclusion**

This research study was performed to help bridge the gap in information regarding the use of change management in improving customer service representatives' call monitoring performance, specifically utilizing the ADKAR model. Research is limited regarding techniques to improve the performance of customer service representatives and absent concerning the use of change management models as a catalyst.

The study found no significant relationship between job performance and job satisfaction using the ADKAR change management model. However, the results from the correlational analysis (see Table 4) showed in general moderate association among

the JSS subscales and post-performance. However, it is critical that management improves change management capabilities. Research that examines factors that impact job performance and job satisfaction in change processes have the potential to increase our knowledge of change management in customer service call centers.

Understanding that technological advancements (Aydogdu & Asikgil, 2011; Osei-Bonsu, 2014) of our global world and the constant nature of change (Wanza & Nkuraru, 2016) that will continually impact call centers, it is important to understand factors that may mediate change management and the impact on job performance and job satisfaction in customer service call centers. And finally, not ever forgetting the human side of change that is needed to provide excellent customer service and organizational results.

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Appendix A  
Consenting Documents

October 30, 2018

**General Informed Consent Form (ADKAR Group)**  
**NSU Consent to be in a Research Study Entitled**  
*Exploring Factors Related to Customer Service Representatives' (CSRs) Performance in Call Centers*

**Who is doing this research study?**

College: Abraham S. Fischler College of Education, Organizational Leadership

Principal Investigator: Ruth R. Jayson-Polk, BSBA in Business Administration, MBA in Business Administration

Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair: Steven Alan Hecht, Ph.D.

Site Information: [REDACTED]

Unfunded

**What is this study about?**

The purpose of this research study is to better understand agents' performance and job satisfaction for customer service representatives' (CSRs) in call centers. This study benefits the CSRs by understanding the changes that need to be made and why, to better serve the customer.

**Why are you asking me to be in this research study?**

You are being asked to participate in this research study because you are a customer service representative in the organization.

This study will include customer service representatives that take calls in the call centers.

**What will I be doing if I agree to be in this research study?**

While you are taking part in this research study, you will participate in two sessions, 1 15-minute session and 1 4-hour training session for the group that will receive the ADKAR training. You will be sent a pre-job satisfaction survey after the consent forms are signed via Survey Monkey. The survey includes 3 demographic questions, age, gender, and tenure. One week after the intervention you will be sent the post job satisfaction survey via Survey Monkey.

Research Study Procedures - as a participant, this is what you will be doing:

The first 15-minute session provides information to the participants on their part in the study and signing of the consent form. Secondly, the Job Satisfaction Survey will be sent via survey monk. The survey will take 15 minutes.

As the researcher I will collect the performance call monitoring scores.

**Are there possible risks and discomforts to me?**

This research study involves minimal risk to you. To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would have in everyday life.

**What happens if I do not want to be in this research study?**

You have the right to leave this research study at any time, or not be in it. If you do decide to leave or you decide not to be in the study anymore, you will not get any penalty or lose any services you have a right to get. If you choose to stop being in the study, any information collected about you **before** the date you leave the study will be kept in the research records for 36 months from the end of the study, but you may request that it not be used.

**What if there is new information learned during the study that may affect my decision to remain in the study?**

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available, which may relate to whether you want to remain in this study, this information will be given to you by the investigators. You may be asked to sign a new Informed Consent Form, if the information is given to you after you have joined the study.

**Are there any benefits for taking part in this research study?**

There are not direct benefits to you for being part of this study. The possible benefit of your being in this research study is to further our understanding of variables that impact call center performance and job satisfaction. We hope information learned from this research study will be helpful to other people with similar conditions in the future.

**Will I be paid or be given compensation for being in the study?**

You will not be given any payments or compensation for being in this research study.

**Will it cost me anything?**

There are no costs to you for being in this research study.

**How will you keep my information private?**

Information we learn about you in this research study will be handled in a confidential manner, within the limits of the law and will be limited to people who have a need to review this information. Information will be maintained in a locked file in the researcher's home office. This data will be available to the researcher, the Institutional Review Board, and other representatives of this institution, and any regulatory and granting agencies (if applicable). If we publish the results of this study in a scientific journal or book, we will not identify you. All confidential data will be kept



**Research Consent & Authorization Signature Section**

**Voluntary Participation** - You are not required to participate in this study. In the event you do participate, you may leave this research study at any time. If you leave this research study before it is completed, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

If you agree to participate in this research study, sign this section. You will be given a signed copy of this form to keep. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this form.

**SIGN THIS FORM ONLY IF THE STATEMENTS LISTED BELOW ARE TRUE:**

- You have read the above information.
- Your questions have been answered to your satisfaction about the research.

**Adult Signature Section**

I have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study.

Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent and Authorization	Signature of Person Obtaining Consent & Authorization	Date

October 30, 2018

**General Informed Consent Form**  
**NSU Consent to be in a Research Study Entitled**  
*Exploring Factors Related to Customer Service Representatives' (CSRs) Performance in Call Centers*

**Who is doing this research study?**

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Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair: Steven Alan Hecht, Ph.D.

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Unfunded

**What is this study about?**

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**Why are you asking me to be in this research study?**

You are being asked to participate in this research study because you are a customer service representative in the organization.

This study will include customer service representatives that take calls in the call centers.

**What will I be doing if I agree to be in this research study?**

Research Study Procedures - as a participant, this is what you will be doing:

You will attend one 15-minute session to sign the consent forms. You will be performing your normal job functions. You will be sent a pre-job satisfaction survey after the consent forms are signed via Survey Monkey. The survey includes 3 demographic questions, age, gender, and tenure. The survey will take 15 minutes. After one week you will be sent the post job satisfaction survey via Survey Monkey.

As the researcher I will collect the performance call monitoring scores.

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**Are there possible risks and discomforts to me?**

This research study involves minimal risk to you. To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would have in everyday life.

**What happens if I do not want to be in this research study?**

You have the right to leave this research study at any time, or not be in it. If you do decide to leave or you decide not to be in the study anymore, you will not get any penalty or lose any services you have a right to get. If you choose to stop being in the study, any information collected about you **before** the date you leave the study will be kept in the research records for 36 months from the end of the study, but you may request that it not be used.

**What if there is new information learned during the study that may affect my decision to remain in the study?**

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available, which may relate to whether you want to remain in this study, this information will be given to you by the investigators. You may be asked to sign a new Informed Consent Form, if the information is given to you after you have joined the study.

**Are there any benefits for taking part in this research study?**

There are not direct benefits to you for being part of this study. The possible benefit of your being in this research study is to further our understanding of variables that impact call center performance and job satisfaction. We hope information learned from this research study will benefit other people with similar conditions in the future.

**Will I be paid or be given compensation for being in the study?**

You will not be given any payments or compensation for being in this research study.

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There are no costs to you for being in this research study.

**How will you keep my information private?**

Information we learn about you in this research study will be handled in a confidential manner, within the limits of the law and will be limited to people who have a need to review this information. Information will be maintained in a locked file in the researcher's home office. This data will be available to the researcher, the Institutional Review Board, and other representatives of this institution, and any regulatory and granting agencies (if applicable). If we publish the results of the study in a scientific journal or book, we will not identify you. All confidential data will be kept securely in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home office. All data will be kept for 36 months from the end of the study and destroyed after that time by shredding.

**Whom can I contact if I have questions, concerns, comments, or complaints?**

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If you have questions now, feel free to ask us. If you have more questions about the research, your research rights, or have a research-related injury, please contact:

Primary contact:

Ruth R. Jayson-Polk, BSBA, MBA can be reached at 321-356-3994.

**Research Participants Rights**

For questions/concerns regarding your research rights, please contact:

Institutional Review Board

Nova Southeastern University

(954) 262-5369 / Toll Free: 1-866-499-0790

[IRB@nova.edu](mailto:IRB@nova.edu)

You may also visit the NSU IRB website at [www.nova.edu/irb/information-for-research-participants](http://www.nova.edu/irb/information-for-research-participants) for further information regarding your rights as a research participant.

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**Research Consent & Authorization Signature Section**

Voluntary Participation - You are not required to participate in this study. In the event you do participate, you may leave this research study at any time. If you leave this research study before it is completed, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

If you agree to participate in this research study, sign this section. You will be given a signed copy of this form to keep. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this form.

**SIGN THIS FORM ONLY IF THE STATEMENTS LISTED BELOW ARE TRUE:**

- You have read the above information.
- Your questions have been answered to your satisfaction about the research.

**Adult Signature Section**

I have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study.

Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent and Authorization	Signature of Person Obtaining Consent & Authorization	Date

Appendix B  
Job Satisfaction Survey

<b>JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY</b> Paul E. Spector Department of Psychology University of South Florida <small>Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.</small>							
PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.		Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2*	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4*	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6*	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8*	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10*	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12*	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14*	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16*	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18*	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.							
Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.		Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
19 *	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21*	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23*	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24*	I have too much to do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26*	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29*	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	I like my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31*	I have too much paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32*	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34*	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36*	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Note. \*Denotes reversed scored items



Appendix C  
ADKAR Training

*Call Monitoring/ADKAR Matrix*

Call Monitoring Category	ADKAR
Greeting, identify company and self, commitment	Awareness, Desire
Emotions, tone	Awareness, Desire
Security	Knowledge
Communication, professionalism	Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability
Knowledge, execution	Knowledge, Ability
Closing, branding company, summary	Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement

## ADKAR Worksheet

Which of the steps within the ADKAR model best describes your barrier points in relation to your performance?

- Awareness
- Desire
- Knowledge
- Ability
- Reinforcement

Why?

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## Appendix D

Pretest Means, Posttest Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas and Analysis of  
Covariance for 9 Job Satisfaction Survey Subscales With Pretest as the  
Covariate and the Tested Independent Variable

Table D1

*Pretest Means, Posttest Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas and Analysis of Covariance for 9 Job Satisfaction Survey Subscales With Pretest as the Covariate and Groups as the Tested Independent Variable*

	<u>Control Group</u>				<u>Treatment Group</u>				<u>Test for Group</u>		
	<u>Pretest Survey</u>		<u>Posttest Survey</u>		<u>Pretest Survey</u>		<u>Posttest Survey</u>		<u>Alpha</u>	<u>F(1,47)</u>	<u>P</u>
JSS subscales	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	Alpha	F(1,47)	P
Pay	12.40	5.98	11.68	5.38	12.60	5.41	12.56	4.30	.84	.77	.39
Promotion	10.52	4.57	10.32	4.31	11.76	4.76	12.40	3.98	.77	2.39	.13
Supervision	19.12	4.29	19.44	3.96	20.32	4.71	19.92	4.39	.89	.24	.63
Fringe Benefits	17.64	4.65	17.28	4.70	17.76	4.16	16.52	3.64	.72	.90	.35
Contingent rewards	12.96	5.64	11.72	5.52	14.36	4.93	13.36	2.96	.83	.83	.37
Operating conditions	13.72	4.36	13.52	4.71	13.04	3.65	13.56	3.32	.53	.17	.69
Coworkers	18.32	3.44	18.48	3.98	18.84	4.19	18.24	3.50	.71	.19	.67
Nature of work	16.20	3.96	16.12	4.52	17.28	4.61	17.20	4.86	.80	.22	.64
Communication	12.52	4.03	13.24	4.55	12.76	3.81	14.48	3.81	.64	.41	.53