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From the Editor

October 2021

Welcome to the 40th issue of the *International Leadership Journal,* an online, peer-reviewed journal. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Annette Craven of AEC Coaching, LLC, to the editorial board.

This issue contains three articles, two leadership education and development pieces, and a case study. In the first article, Solola, Buford, Shannon, and Winston examine the impact that the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values has on an employee's organizational identification. Their qualitative phenomenological inquiry of 10 Ghanian and Nigerian employees of a multinational bank explores the lived experience of followers and reveals how they responded to the alignment/misalignment of their leaders' espoused and practiced values.

Broadhurst and Harkiolakis seek to provide an understanding of the challenges of and opportunities for the consideration and application of spirituality in the workplace for U.K. business leaders. Using a qualitative multiple-case study, they interviewed 11 participants and identified several core themes, including the description of spirituality as "selfish" and the experience of great suffering and trauma as the starting point to any spiritual journey.

Ballaro, McCowan, and Polk's timely article focuses on strategies for preparing millennials for advancement into senior leader positions. Semi-structured interviews with 11 talent management leaders of a public U.S. health care organization revealed two themes and two subthemes and the lack of development and implementation of a formal succession plan, the importance of which has been intensified by the pandemic.

In the first leadership education and development piece, McClellan offers a way of thinking about leadership that is focused on understanding leadership as an emergent moment-based phenomenon. He proposes a matrix approach that can be used to better study, practice, and teach leadership in today's complex society.

Hinck discusses the results of the first phase of a four-phase study of the design of the curriculum for the new core leader development course at the U.S. Air Force Air Command and Staff College. His study focuses on determining which leadership theories best map to the course. After mapping 43 theories and domains to the course, he notes that a wider spectrum of leadership, including leadership theories related to culture and leading change, should be used to redesign the course curriculum.

In the case study, Ungson, Wang, and Wong illustrate how Paloma Lopez, an avid social entrepreneur and healthy food activist, demonstrated the five principles of exemplary leadership proposed by Kouzes and Posner (2017) in her quest to fix the broken global food system and develop her social enterprise Future Fit Foods (FFF).

Please spread the word about *ILJ* to interested academics and practitioners and remember to visit http://internationalleadershipjournal.com. Also, feel free to propose a topic and be a guest editor of a special issue by contacting me at jcsantora1@gmail.com.

Joseph C. Santora, EdD
Editor

ARTICLES

Alignment of Leaders' Espoused and Practiced Values on Employees' Organizational Identification*†

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This phenomenological inquiry sought to understand the impact that the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values has on an employee's organizational identification. The theoretical construct that undergirded this study was the social identity approach (SIA), which is composed of social identity theory (SIT) and self-categorization theory (SCT). We used a qualitative phenomenological inquiry to explore the lived experience of followers and revealed how they responded to the alignment/misalignment of their leaders' espoused and practiced values. We interviewed 10 participants from a multinational bank, with participants split equally between the staff in Ghana and Nigeria. The findings of this study helped explain the impact the alignment of leaders' values has on employees' organizational identification.

Key words: espoused values, organizational identification, phenomenological inquiry, practiced values, social identity approach

In this qualitative phenomenological study, we explored the impact of the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values on their employees' organizational identification. Gabčanová (2011) posits that "satisfied, highly-motivated and loyal employees represent the basis of a competitive company" (1), indicating that employees are crucial to the success of any organization. In this article, the researchers assessed the impact that a leader's enacted and espoused behavior (i.e., values) had on this vital resource, with a specific focus on the employees' organizational identification.

There have been numerous studies on leaders' impact on organizational values and on employees (Gutermann et al., 2017; Joubert & Feldman, 2017). Similarly, there has been ample research on the impact of organizational values on organizational

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†Authors' Note: This data in this article is from Dr. Olukayode Solola's dissertation, which exists in ProQuest. Correspondence should be sent to Bruce E. Winston.

identity and identification (Aust, 2004; Kabanoff & Daly, 2002; Pant & Ojha, 2017). Despite these investigations, we observed that scholars had not yet linked a leader's enacted versus espoused values to employees' organization identification.

We used a phenomenological approach for this study since phenomenology aids in the deep understanding of experience. Moustakas (1994) explains that "phenomenology refers to knowledge as it appears to consciousness, the science of describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one's immediate awareness and experience" (26).

Statement of the Problem

The failures in several developing countries and large organizations (e.g., Enron, Worldcom) resulted in the loss of naive trust due to "contradiction between words and deeds, between a deceiving glossy facade and a rotten structure behind" (Sims & Brinkmann, 2003, 243). Lived integrity in a leader has become very important to all stakeholders, with Schmalfuss (2017) positing that the "two characteristics that are sought after the most from all involved are honesty and ethics" (3. Coming Clean section), both bedrocks of integrity.

Employees also play a critical role in preventing corporate failures. When they observe leadership failures, they must refuse to be identified with that organization. The bottom line is that leaders cannot do much without their followers' agreement, as "the effectiveness of a leader is to a great extent dependent on the willingness and consent of the followers" (Bjugstad et al., 2006, 305). This means that a critical goal of a leader is to live the organization's espoused values, which will lead to employee buy-in and organizational identification.

Purpose of the Study

Through this study, we sought to understand the impact of the alignment of a leader's espoused and enacted values on an employee's organizational identification, with a specific focus on a private organization in Africa. Kelley (1988) explains that "organizations stand or fall partly on the basis of how well their leaders lead, but partly also on the basis of how well their followers follow" (para. 2). The alignment of an organization's values with that of its employees leads to organizational identification. Lee et al. (2015) describes *organizational identification* as "the sense of identity . . . capturing a psychological state wherein one defines oneself by the same attributes that one believes define one's organization" (1049).

According to Kabanoff and Daly (2002), organizational values "reflect what senior managers actually believe their organizations to be like, what they would like or prefer their organisations to be like, or what they would like significant stakeholders to believe the organization is like" (90). The values that leaders espouse and what they practice are of considerable importance to significant stakeholders, the most prominent of whom are an organization's employees.

The values that an organization espouses are put to the test when confronted with difficult situations, with Ivancevich et al. (2014) describing *values* as "the guidelines and beliefs that a person uses when confronted with a situation in which a choice must be made" (411). All organizations, at a point, will be confronted with situations where choices must be made, and the organization's espoused values are what stakeholders expect to guide what the organization will do, especially the leaders' lived values. This study is significant because the findings add to the body of research on the impact a leader's practiced and espoused values have on employees' organizational identification.

Research Questions

Leadership values, as reflected in a leader's behavior, influence employees' organizational identification. Lee et al. (2015) notes that "organizational identification uniquely affects behaviors in organizations, above and beyond" (1049) normal expectations. A central part of leadership involves interacting with followers, with a significant influencing factor being the leader's espoused and enacted values. Gutermann et al. (2017) notes that "leaders' engagement could provide a salient example and role model which shapes employee engagement" (300).

The impact of leaders' espoused and enacted values on their employees—and, by default, their wider community—appears massive, based on prior studies on the impact of leadership on organizations and followers (Fernandez, 2004; Gutermann et al., 2017; Joubert & Feldman, 2017; Lord & Brown, 2001). Despite these studies on leadership, followers, values, and organizational identification, the absence of studies explicitly linking the impact that leaders' enacted versus espoused values has on employees' organization identification was apparent. This gap led to the development of the following research questions.

Research Question 1: *How does an employee's perception of the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values affect their organizational identification?*

Research Question 2: *How does an employee's perception of the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values affect their behavior and attitude?*

Research Question 3: *How does the alignment of leaders' espoused and practiced values affect employees' self-categorization (social identity) with the organization?*

Research Question 4: *Would leaders align their espoused and practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification?*

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical construct underlying this study was the social identity approach, which comprises social identity theory and self-categorization theory. Social identity theory (SIT) was initially introduced by Tajfel (1978), and further developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979). In 1984, Turner proposed self-categorization theory (SCT). Islam (2014) defines *SIT* as "a classic social psychological theory that attempts to explain intergroup conflict as a function of group-based self-definitions" (1781). Huddy (2001) asserts that "self-categorization theory is a 'cognitive elaboration' of Tajfel's earlier theory that provides an explanation for how individuals come to identify and 'act as a group'" (132).

Ravasi and van Rekom (2003) state that SIT and SCT emphasize "the self-categorization of individuals as members of groups," with SCT serving "the related purposes of providing a way to systematically classify others and to locate oneself in the social environment" (120). This choice that individuals make in associating themselves with a group made the social identity approach appropriate for this study, as it aided in explaining how the espousing and enacting of a leader's values affects an employee's organizational identification. Another crucial part of why SIT was used to support this study is that SIT focuses on an individual's perception, compared with other theories that take an organizational-level or societal-level phenomena into account. Ravasi and van Rekom aptly explain that social identity theory rests "on the link between individuals and the group or organization they are part of," with the theory itself focusing "on the perceptions of individuals" (120).

Trepte and Loy (2017) explain that in SIT "individuals categorize themselves as belonging to various groups. . . . [and] alongside self-categorization, individuals evaluate the groups they feel they belong to (in-groups) and groups they do not consider themselves a member of (out-groups)" (1). An individual's mindset about their leaders' espoused and enacted values affects their perception of either being part of an in-group or out-group, which was thus expected to affect their organizational identification. The alignment of an individual's values with that of an organization—and, by extension, its leaders—is fundamental for wanting to belong to the organization (i.e., group), with SIT explaining how a person sees themselves based on the group to which they belong.

Method

In deciding on a research design to be adopted for any study, one of the starting points is usually the research questions "because they provide important clues about the substance that a researcher is aiming to assess" (Wahyuni, 2012, 72). A qualitative design was chosen for this study, as "qualitative research is more appropriate where the focus is on people behaving in natural settings and describing their world in their own words" (Cozby & Bates, 2015, 118).

Patton (2015) explains that "qualitative designs are naturalistic to the extent that the research takes place in real-world settings and the researcher does not attempt to affect, control, or manipulate what is unfolding naturally" (48). In this study, we assessed the impact of leaders' espoused and enacted values on employees' organizational identification. Since Flood (2010) states that "human actions are influenced by what they perceive to be real" (9), we chose the descriptive phenomenological approach to learn about employees' feelings and attitudes.

Interview Questions

According to Merriam (2009), semi-structured interviews often use "questions [that] are more flexibly worded. . . . allowing the researcher to respond to the situation at hand" (90). We collected data on the participants' experiences, viewpoints, and the impact on their organizational identification, based on the employees' perception of the alignment of their leaders' espoused and practiced values. We provided participants with explanations and definitions of terms such as *organizational identification* and *self-categorization* to ensure that they responded to the questions with full understanding. We asked the following interview questions, which are organized by the research question to which they are related.

Research Question 1: How does an employee's perception of the alignment of the leader's espoused and practiced values affect their organizational identification?

1. What role do "values" play in your organizational identification (Gutermann et al., 2017)?
2. How do the organization's and leader's espoused values affect your organizational identification (Bass & Bass, 2008; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991)?
3. How would the perceived misalignment of the leader's espoused values to what the leader practices affect your organizational identification (Aust, 2004; Kabanoff & Daly, 2002; Pant & Ojha, 2017)?
4. What impact does the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values have on your organizational identification (Aust, 2004; Kabanoff & Daly, 2002; Pant & Ojha, 2017)?

Research Question 2: How does an employee's perception of the alignment of the leader's espoused and practiced values affect their behavior and attitude?

1. How do values affect your behavior and attitude (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991)?
2. What impact do the organization's and leader's espoused values have on your behavior and attitude (Lee et al., 2015)?
3. How does the perception of the misalignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values affect your behavior and attitude (Silin, 1976)?

4. What impact does the perception of the alignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values have on your behavior and attitude (Gutermann et al., 2017; Silin, 1976)?

Research Question 3: How does the alignment of leaders' espoused and practiced values affect employees' self-categorization (social identity) with the organization?

1. What role do values play in your self-categorization with an organization (Huddy, 2001; Ravasi & van Rekom, 2003)?
2. What impact does the misalignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values have on your perception to self-categorize with the organization (Huddy, 2001; Ravasi & van Rekom, 2003)?
3. How does the alignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values affect how you evaluate yourself as being part of the in-group (Trepte & Loy, 2017)?
4. How does the misalignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values affect how you consider yourself as a member of the out-group (Trepte & Loy, 2017)?

Research Question 4: Would leaders align their espoused and practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification?

1. How would you, as a leader, align your espoused values with your practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification (Fernandez, 2004; Lord & Brown, 2001)?
2. How would you respond if your practiced values were misaligned from your hitherto espoused values, even if it appeared not to affect employees' organizational identity (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Kabanoff & Daly, 2002; Kelley, 1988)?

Sample and Population

We selected participants who could provide knowledge of and insight into the research questions since qualitative inquiry relies on finding the right people who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation. As Africa continues to rise in prominence, it has been described by many experts as the last economic frontier, which is why the participants for this phenomenological study were sourced from the continent. The participants were all employees of a large multinational organization headquartered in Africa, specifically Ghana and Nigeria. These two West African countries were chosen because they have a significant number of citizens who are multinationally educated. Similarly, they have citizens located around the world. This dual-country approach produced employees with extensive lived experiences and comparative perceptions of leaders at multinational organizations.

The multinational organization is listed in two stock exchanges in Africa, and its espoused (articulated) values are published on their website and in their financial results. The rationale for the company's listing on a stock exchange was that the exchange "acts as the frontline regulator, setting listings requirements and enforcing trading rules" (Johannesburg Stock Exchange, n.d., para. 1). This policing is vital, as it ensures that organizations adhere to the tenets on their website and financial statements. Several corporations met the requirements, but we ultimately selected the XYZ Group due to ease of access and because it met all of the above requirements.

The participating employees had worked in the organization for at least five years and thus had context plus lived experience of the organization's progression in terms of its espoused values. The participating employees had also worked with at least two different executives and were at the managerial level, in that they supervised a minimum of one employee themselves. These criteria ensured that the purposefully selected employees had firsthand experience with the impact of a leader living or not living the organization's espoused values. They had similarly seen the impact of living or not living their own or the organization's espoused values on their subordinates.

To ensure diversity, we ensured that each gender represented at least 40% of the total sample, as conclusions reached with one gender might not be representative of another. This was postulated by Tannenbaum et al. (2016), who states that "gender norms influence commonly accepted ways of how people behave, how they perceive themselves and each other, [and] how they act and interact" (2). We chose participants at the managerial level or above because we assumed that their experience and education would reflect a balanced view of life and of leadership. Ten people were interviewed before achieving data saturation, which is described as "when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties" (Charmaz, 2006, 113). In similar studies in which purposeful sampling was used, the sample ranged from 6 to 10 participants (Colls-Senaha, 2018; Renz, 2018; Williamson, 2016), which supports the 10 participants recruited for this study.

Data Collection

Moustakas (1994) explains that "in a phenomenological investigation the long interview is the method through which data is collected on the topic and question" (114). Therefore, we collected data through in-depth interviews via Zoom, a video conferencing platform, and we recorded the interviews with each participant's permission, which the lead researcher transcribed. We secured the participant's informed consent prior to each interview, which lasted about 60 minutes.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis guides the conversion of data into findings. It begins with reducing the collected data into small units, followed by categorization of the small units, which leads to the identification of trends, patterns, and themes. In preparing for data analysis, the qualitative data analyst identified and documented the steps that led to the eventual identification of the trends, themes, and patterns. Patton (2015) notes that "qualitative analysis often involves looking across different stories for common themes and patterns" (44). We transcribed the interview data as part of the initial steps before analysis began.

Results

Of the 10 participants, six were from Lagos, Nigeria, and four were from Accra, Ghana; six were female and four were male. The age bracket of participants ranged from 31 to 51 years and above bracket. Three participants were between 31 and 40 years old, six were between 41 and 50, and one participant was 51 or above. One participant had worked for the group for five years, four had worked for the group for 6 to 10 years, and five had worked for the group for more than 11 years. Participants obtained their first degree between 13 and 38 years prior to this study. Five participants reported to between 1 to 5 executives, four to 6 to 10 executives, and only one person to more than 11 executives. The participants' demographics are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender	Age	Location	Years of Experience	No. of Leaders	No. of Subordinates	Years Since First Degree
1	F	31–40	Lagos	6	5	3	19
2	F	41–50	Accra	11	6	9	21
3	F	41–50	Accra	5	6	1	26
4	M	41–50	Lagos	13	6	14	20
5	F	41–50	Accra	16	6	14	24
6	F	41–50	Lagos	7	3	12	23
7	M	41–50	Lagos	9	15	25	23
8	M	31–40	Accra	10	4	2	13
9	M	≥51	Lagos	13	3	6	38
10	F	31–40	Lagos	15	5	21	18

Data Analysis

The first step of this data analysis was completed by looking and relooking closely at the interview transcript, followed by looking for emerging codes from each question. The questions principally sought to unearth how the employee's perception of the alignment of leaders' espoused and practiced values affects their organizational identification. The focus of the first research question is primarily around the impact that values have on how an employee organizationally identifies, and it had four semi-structured interview questions aimed at eliciting answers to the core question, with the said codes highlighted under each question. We provide examples of the data rather than present all 10 participants for each interview question.

Research Question 1 Interview Questions. Question 1: What role do "values" play in your organizational identification?

Participant 1 responded:

> For me, values play a very key role [*Key*] in terms of my organizational alignment, or if I want to stay or remain in that organization. Because the values shown in that organization or lived in that organization [are] something that I should be proud to be associated with [*Pride*]. And because you are proud to associate with [them], then you are able to remain aligned or able to remain in the organization [*Associate*]. So, for me personally, growing up and getting older, the values of an organization like this group shows the . . . type of values that I am proud to pass on to my children [*Pride*], such as integrity, constantly raising the bar, pushing yourself to say this is not the best I can be, I want to just be more. So, these are values that you can relate to yourself and pass on to [your] children, they are values you're proud of [*Pride*], and you can relate [to them]. I mean, if we look at the eight values that we have within the group, I can align and associate with them, such that I want to live them, and I want my children to be like [*Values I live*].

Participant 2 responded:

> I think it is key [*Key*]. If I have to rate it on a scale of one to five, it'll certainly be my top three, and I don't know if it's because of me as a person or is purely because of my religious values [*Religion*] . . . and how that has shaped me over the years. What values I sign up [for] is very important to me, very, very important to me [*Important*]. I had actually considered not working for some corporations before because of what I had perceived, be it right or wrong, or have heard about the kind of values they have [*Perceived values*].

Participant 3 responded:

> It plays a very key role [*Key*] because values are an embodiment of your person and what you stand for [*Personal values*]. What I believe in is that when a person lives out their values, it gives them that sense of peace [*Peace*] in themselves and so it does play a critical role [*Critical role*]. If the values connect, then you're able to be yourself, you find fulfillment, and you're able to realize the purpose for . . . your being [*Purpose*]. So, for me, I think it plays a very fundamental role [*Key*] in how one connects to the organization that [one works] for. The organization gets the best out of you because you stand for the same values [*Similar*], and you as an individual also then get a lot of fulfillment because you know you are connected to the right principles or the right values that the organization also stands for [*Similar*]. It drives everything that you do, and really drives you wanting to be part of that organization [*Personal identification*].

Question 2: How does the organization's and leader's espoused values affect your organizational identification?

Participant 2 responded:

> I think for me, the spoken value or on-paper values [*Spoken*], which I guess we all sign up to every year, they should be in sync [*In sync*]. Once in a while,

> when I experience a leader who seems not to do what he says, whose spoken words differ from [his] actions [*Different*], I am hurt [*Hurt*].
>
> It plays a key part in my decision to work for them or not [*Personal value*]. Your spoken values must be in sync with your on-paper or supposed-to-be agreed-to values [*In sync*]. It's very important for me [*Key*].

Participant 3 responded:

> It also drives performance [*Performance driver*]. It drives your desire, and it makes you feel that you are connected in a sense [*Connectedness*]. In terms of the vision, you are in the same direction [as] the organization when you sleep and wake up and go to work [*Live by*]. It is a main driving force for everything that you do [*Driving force*]. So, it is important what the leader says before you start looking at what they exhibit; I, though, have my views about what it stands for and what they exhibit. Yes, we will get to that point, but at least what they profess is a starting point [*Profess*] for you to feel 'this is a place I [would] like to work, because we have a similar mindset or the same values in terms of how we want to live or behave' [Similar].

Participant 4 responded:

> I think in my own experience, I . . . have been pretty lucky that some of my leaders—especially the executives—their values are in line with the organization's values [*In sync*], and hence, in line with my values, and because of that, it makes us to work better [*In sync*]. There is a variance [*Variance*], [and] I am . . . not as close to that particular executive as compared to the others, but it is actually better if the spoken value is practiced [*Spoken*].

The interviewer realized during the first interview that the third and fourth interview questions for Research Question 1 were better merged as they were opposites of each other. The revised question was: What impact does the alignment or misalignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values have on your organizational identification?

Participant 3 responded:

> I will come at it from two angles. One, when the leader espouses the values and does not live by the values [*Different values*], it has two different effects on me. The question to be answered would be, what do I stand for? And secondly, What I believe in [*Belief*]? If the values of the organization are the right ones that I connect to [*Connectedness*], then I wouldn't really be that bothered if the leader chooses not to live the values but espouses those values, provided he does so only in his personal life and not in the capacity of leadership in the organization [*Leader's values*]. There are, however, bound to be some challenges, because if we are all going in one direction and the leader professes another thing but does the other [*Direction*], it would certainly

> dampen one's spirit and the drive to achieve a common purpose [*Common purpose*]. It would also introduce stumbling blocks and lead to frustration in your living out those values and achieving the desired outcome.
>
> This frustration may possibly lead to one wanting to separate himself or herself from the organization, because if the role of the leader is critical in one's ability to live out the values [*Key leader*], then one would surely not want to be associated with the organization. So, for example, let me just give a typical example, one of our values is growing our people. Now, if we are all driving toward giving people opportunities for growth, and it requires a sponsor in a leader to make it happen, and that leader is not living out this value, but is always being a stumbling block [*Stumbling block*] in the process, then you may get to that point where you get so frustrated that you decide that—you know what—if you're not going to live this out, then I'd rather not be part of it. I will go where I would be able to actually make it a reality, because that's what I stand [for] [*Personal values*]. So, if it is other things like maybe integrity . . . [and] a leader decides that he is not going to be so clean in his dealings and . . . it is personal and does not really affect me as a person, I will not let that affect me. Although you are associated with that organization, if it is more than a personal part [*Leader's values*], which can be distanced a little bit, then it wouldn't get me to pack my bag and say [goodbye]. . . . But . . . [if] it is what the entire organization stands for, [and] we preach it, but we don't live it [*Live it*], then at that point, one may want to disassociate themselves.

A follow-up question was asked of Participant 3: Suppose it is the ultimate decisionmaker in the institution whose values are different from what they say? Would this affect your views of the institution and how you would identify organizationally, and if yes, why?

> I may be a little bit more critical around what kind of values we are talking about [*Kind of value*]. I may delve further into what kind of values, because, if it is preached as the entire organization, yes, he is a decisionmaker, depending on exactly what that value is [*Kind of value*] and how that affects individuals. If it affects me, I may disassociate myself [*Personal impact*] depending on the gravity of his action in terms of the values that we profess. We know that human as we are; we are not perfect; we all have flaws [*Flaws*]. So, let me give an example: respecting one another, that's another value of ours, if we all profess it [*Profess*], we trust that we will live it, but if the leader doesn't show it in his engagement, but he is in line with all of our other values that we profess, will that, for example, make me want to walk or disassociate myself because the leader does not greet [me] [*What is done*]? That doesn't bother me; that is his call. I wish he wouldn't behave like that, but it wouldn't bother me. But if it impacts people and everything . . . I guess . . . that would inform my decision to either be part [*Personal identification*] of the business or not.

Participant 4 responded:

> There will be a disconnect, because I will know that this person is probably saying the organization's value rather than his own value, because his values may be at variance with the organization's values [*Disconnect*]. They are saying the organization's values, but their actions and deeds . . . are at variance with the organization's values [*Different*]. If I am to follow his own disposition from a value point of view, I will not identify with the organization [*Follow leader*]. So, it is not [through] the leader that I identify with the organization; it is more of the organization's value itself [*Organizational values*] as compared to what the leader is saying, which is different from what [the organization] is practicing [*Practice*].
>
> In the instance of this group, I would say yes. Because the [organization's] . . . values over the years supersede the exact practice that this leader is displaying [*Leader display*]. In this instance, it has to be a yes, but in another scenario where the leader is a major decision-maker [*Key leader*], then it will have a big impact [and] it may lead to a disconnect.

Participant 5 responded:

> For me, the organization identification goes beyond the particular individual, as I separate the individual. I have seen leaders that are aligned and others that do not practice their spoken values. I mean, they may have their own values, which may not necessarily be in sync with the company's core values [*Different*]. I will see this more as institutional and not necessarily the individual, and so it might be in terms of the individual's priorities. If I were to arrange one to ten in terms of values, the leader may have other values that are not necessarily in line with . . . the core values of the bank, and I have had a few like that [*Leader's value*].

Themes Derived from Codes in Research Question 1. Ten themes emerged from the responses to the interview questions. The first theme is value alignment (67). It synthesized the following codes: different (21), similar (14), leader's values (6), in sync (4), practice (3), connectedness (2), dissonance (2), live by (2), above the values (1), agreed values (1), align (1), breaking rules (1), change (1), direction (1), disconnect (1), habitual error (1), hindering (1), live it (1), open to correction (1), said values (1), stumbling block (1), and variance (1). This theme reflects what employees perceive as leading to their aligning or not aligning with the organization's values. The response is curated along the line of individual values and their linkage with organizational values.

The second theme is personal self-esteem (46), which grouped the following codes: personal values (9), personal identification (6), pride (4), respect (4), endears (3), belief (2), personal brand (2), hurt (1), peace (1), perceived values (1), personal impact (1), purpose (1), religion (1), and struggle (1). This theme relates to how individual participants understand the personal drivers that drove how they related to their organization, which affected their willingness to identify with the organization.

The third theme is organizational support (34). It grouped the following codes: institutional (5), leader as face of the organization (4), organizational values (4), feedback (3), condoned behavior (2), organizational brand (2), calling out (1), confidence (1), conform (1), disguise (1), disrespect (1), escalation (1), leader anomaly (1), leader display (1), leadership circle (1), living up to values (1), organizational belief (1), organizational check (1), personal drive (1), and support (1). This theme reflects how participants perceive the organization to respond when there is a conflict between its values and their leader's behavior. The response is curated along the line of reinforcing confidence in or against the organizational values.

The fourth theme, critical alignment (18), grouped the following three codes: key (15), critical role (2), and important (1). This theme synthesized how participants expect the organization and its values to be aligned, while surfacing the intense emotions underpinning this desired alignment with the organization's value.

The fifth theme is communication (15), which grouped the following codes: spoken (5), speech (3), profess (2), acknowledge (1), language (1), talk (1), voice (1), and way to communicate (1). This theme represents how participants perceive the organization expresses itself to them and that what was communicated was viewed as crucial and thus undergirded the real organizational values.

The sixth theme, face of the organization (15), synthesized the following codes: leader as mirror (7), action (3), key leader (3), follow leader (1), and people in organization (1). In this theme, the participants' perception was that crucial stakeholders' behavior represents what the organization truly means rather than just what it is saying. Their leaders' actions and behavior are thus seen as the "real" organization.

The seventh theme, weight of value (12), grouped the following codes: impact (3), being human (2), kind of value (2), leadership approach (2), flaw (1), human weakness (1), and what is done (1). This theme reflected participants ascribing different weight to values, emphasizing that not all values are the same. There appeared to be a willingness to be more understanding when some values are not lived as they should be lived, as human imperfection was expected and factored into participants' views of how they expected they would be led.

The eighth theme is organizational brand (10), which grouped the following codes: equality (3), picture (2), identification (1), culture (1), reinforced values (1), taste of brand (1), and valued employees (1). This theme reflects how participants perceived their organization's brand and how it is reflected in the employee's actions.

The ninth theme, directional alignment (9), grouped the following codes: directional alignment (4), synthesized (1), assurance (1), common purpose (1), driving force (1), and foundation (1). This represents how participants perceived their leaders' values to direct their alignment with the organizational values.

The tenth theme is generation values (5), which grouped the following codes: leading by example (2), pride (2), and values I live (1). This theme speaks to how participants perceived the relationship between the values they portray—which they expect should mirror the organization's—to be the kind of values they will like future generations to be proud of. Similarly, participants wanted these same values to be what their children and their direct generational lineage, to adopt.

Table 2: Emerged Themes From Research Question 1

Theme	Occurrences	% Weighting
Value alignment	67	29%
Personal self-esteem	46	20%
Organizational support	34	15%
Critical alignment	18	8%
Communication	15	6%
Face of the organization	15	6%
Weight of value	12	5%
Organizational brand	10	4%
Directional alignment	9	4%
Generational values	4	2%

Research Question 2 Interview Questions. Question 1: How do values impact your behavior and attitude?

Participant 4 responded:

> My values are the things that, for me, with or without pay, will make me do the job [*Driver*]. Whether there is reward, compensation or not, the fact that they are in line with my values, I will go all out to do them [*Driver*]. Because I will be passionate about it, there will be the natural disposition to want to do more [*Do more*] as it is in line with my values. In that case, I can say confidently that my own values, if [they are] in sync with that of the organization [*In sync*], I will go all out, and the percentage will be so high [*High performance*].

Participant 5 responded:

> I think generally, when I give my best [*High performance*] is when I believe I am being fairly treated, [and] not necessarily only through compensation. It involves how I am seen in terms of the level and everything [*Perception*]. If I think I am viewed fairly and treated as such, I give my best [*High performance*]. The biggest problem or issue arises when I think I am not being treated fairly, or I feel there is some injustice; then I think that will affect me in terms of not giving 100% [*Low performance*]. When I think it is fair, I am giving my best [*High performance*], and I am at peace because of that strong value I have and belief of being treated fairly [*Perception*].

Participant 6 responded:

> My values are the guiding principles [*Principles*] to how I behave, and I can explain it. One of my personal values is loyalty, and it doesn't matter how hard things get, and even when the circumstances are not right, I will try very hard with everything that I have to be loyal [*Loyal*]. I try; I am not obviously perfect, and I don't always get it right, but it is such a guiding force in the way that I align [*Force*] that it doesn't matter if everyone in the organization is doing what is not right. I just would not do it because it does not align [*Align*] with my values. For example, I work in an area where I have always consistently managed budgets with suppliers and lots of vendors involved to be given contracts. For me, it did not matter how easy it is to give out the contracts, but I will still follow the governance process. This is because part of the deterrents I have is not just the organization's maker-checker process; it is what I have inside me—my own personal values [*Inside*]. I think that it guides me, and I often do everything that I can within my power to live within the values [Lived *values*], regardless of what the circumstances are.

Question 2: What impact do the organization's and leader's espoused values have on your behavior and attitude?

Participant 1 responded:

> People that are lucky to have started their career in this bank, are lucky to have been in a situation where they will not have to think twice about the values that they had from their previous employers. If I am, though, confronted with the

> situations where my values [are] tested, I would stick to my values [*Lived values*]. It that takes me back to my previous life, wherein . . . some of what you said were the order of the day, and the organization comes to know that . . . we don't have to tell this lady to do the bribing [*Lived values*], we just tell someone else to do it. As I don't believe in it, then don't tell me to do it nor ask me to be a part of it after communicating my position. I guess maybe I was lucky to have worked with bosses that understood . . . I still stand by my values, irrespective of what is being said. . . . I know that it's easier said than done, but I imagine that there are a lot of factors that have to fall into place to ensure that you're able to stand by your values [*Lived values*].
>
> So, one perhaps needs a . . . boss that that will support your values [*Lived values*] and of course, to the extent that you're being seen as okay on the job. They accept that you will not do such and not going to be involved in this action. I guess when you have been tested in several ways, people come to know you for who you are and respect those values [*Lived values*].

Participant 2 responded that "if the leaders and their espoused values [are] in sync [*In sync*], like I said, it drives me to my very high good behavior and high performance [*High performance*]."

Participant 3 responded:

> There are times where I get frustrated because I expect better [*Expectation*]. Because I expect that as the leader, you know what the guidelines are, what the rules are concerning certain things, maybe it is recruitment or whatever [*Expectation*]. I have been an HR professional for over 25 years . . . and so I expect that if you are leading me, even if you do not have as much experience as I have, you are closer to me, and I expect that you know what the process should be [*Expectation*].

Participant 4 responded:

> Because it takes time for you to check action, the first thing you probably hear will be the spoken values. To that extent, I would keep aligning, and I will keep displaying same level of energy [*Energy*], because what they are saying is in line with the values that I believe. So, to that extent, I will keep putting in 100% [*High performance*] until the time that I discover that what you are saying is different from what you are practicing [*Different*].
>
> So, if I am blindfolded and unable to see that what the leader is saying is not what he is doing, then it is not going to have any negative impact on me [*Impact*]. In this instance, I will keep doing and keep giving to that organization with the same energy [*Energy*], same vigor, same belief [*High performance*], but only because I am blinded to the fact that the leader is not practicing their values. But the moment I get to know that the leader is not practicing their values, that alignment will not be as strong anymore, and it is going to have a big impact on my disposition to the organization. So up to the time that I do not know, there will be no impact.

After posing the second interview question for Research Question 2 to the first four participants, it became clear that this question, which relates to the espoused values alone, could not provide illumination for the research question on its own. The participants all kept responding about the practiced values and their influence on their behavior. The question was subsequently not asked of the other participants, because the third question on the practiced values appeared more appropriate for eliciting participants' perception of behavior and attitude.

Similar to Research Question 1, the third and fourth interview questions for Research Question 2 were merged, as it was easier for the participants to respond to the question on the impact alignment and misalignment has on their behavior and attitude, rather than answering both separately. The revised third interview question was as follows: How does the perception of the misalignment or alignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values affect your behavior and attitude?

Participant 5 responded:

> When it is misaligned, I think it causes a bit of mess on my side [*Low performance*]. It brings a lot of mistrust [*Mistrust*] as I am not sure what the leader wants. I am not sure what the person stands for and thus makes it a bit more difficult for me to be clear on which way we are going [*Direction*]. In effect, it leads to mistrust [*Mistrust*]. I function better [*Better performance*] when I know clearly which way we are going, what the leader stands for, what they say, and what they do are in sync [*In sync*].
>
> I think, to be honest, when it happens and I see the disconnect, the level of integrity or trust I put in that person drops [*Mistrust*]. It affects how I see the person. I question if I can trust the person and if I should I bend over backward for this person [*Bend backward*]? It kind of affects that part of it. That said, one can work in an automatic manner, but I am not going to be bending over backward [*Bend backward*]. One would do what they have to do, but not go over and beyond. Unlike when it is otherwise, then you go beyond just doing the work [*Go beyond*]. You basically have the person's back, because you know the person has your back, he stands for what he says, and that makes a difference [*Go beyond*].

Participant 6 responded:

> When there is a misalignment . . . it is always a big cog [*Disconnect*], because . . . if you mix it with culture, there is almost very little that you can do about it. I say "culture," because how are you going to call out the leader? [*Callout*] Any callout would have had to be just both of you if at all, as . . . going above the leader for a callout is difficult [*Callout*], which meant that you suffered

the pains of the misalignment, and sometimes it affected your attitude and the output of the work that you did [*Low performance*]. When there is an alignment of values, even if the circumstances are painful, you still put out the right output [*High performance*] because you know that it is based on principles [*Principles*] that the pain or friction is occurring. Once the practiced values and the spoken values are aligned [*Align*], you live with it, and you deal with it.

Now the outcome of a dissonance value [*Dissonance*] is, you are . . . always looking for opportunities to either leave the department or leave the organization [*Leave*]. So, you almost always need an exit plan because of the constant dissonance that you see.

Participant 7 responded:

It affects your behavior in two ways. The first way that it can affect your behavior is when there is a misalignment between your leader's spoken values and practiced values; you then realize that there are things you can get away with that nobody can criticize you for, just because your boss behaves like that [*Leader action*]. If one looks around, we will see quite a lot of it on the shop floor, because the line manager does the same things [*Leader action*]; people get away with it. Number two, it also depends on how strong you are as a person to say to yourself that, despite what I am seeing, I would continue to follow what I have said are my personal values [*Personal values*], which align to the organizational values [*Align*]. One of the things I have learned is when people say they separate their personal lives from their business lives; I think that is a lie [*Dual life*]. It is very hard to have two sides in terms of how you act on values, as what we are talking about is just different environments [*Dual life*].

I try to stick to the second approach. Even though this person is my leader and I have seen this misalignment in values, these are not the things that will make me happy; I will stick to these values and thus not let it affect my behavior and attitude in the immediate [*My behavior*]. I think if you are true to yourself, you will likely tire out, and this will, in the long run, lead to high attrition and high loss of employees [*Employee loss*] that have been invested. So, you will see that quite a lot of people leave for places that are better aligned to their values. This organization may not be the best paying; people are sometimes unhappy, but they stay because of the organizational values [*Align*].

If the misalignment is persistent, you find out that the people you would actually like to retain, because they just don't have strong bones, will leave. You then end up with the people you would not like to retain but that have nowhere to go and thus will stay. It also leads to disharmony on the shop floor as some are getting away with things they should not get away with.

I will give you an example, we have a graduate trainee class, and I was asked to sit, just talk to them and get feedback; it was a closed group session. Some of the feedback they gave me was that when they went to the branches, that they do not practice all the things that we preach in the training school. Later, when I checked, out of all those five people that I met, all of them have left the organization. . . . They loved our espoused values and had no problem with executive management; what they had a problem with was the middle

> management, which did not practice the organizationally espoused values [*Leader practice*]. When the persons are away from scrutiny, they get away with all manner of things, and this pushed the staff away as a lot of them left for a combination of money and . . . their leaders not living their values [*Leader practice*].

During the interviews, the issue of participants' energy levels kept recurring. This then led to questions being asked about energy level of several participants, thus leading to an additional interview question for Research Question 2: How does the misalignment between the espoused values of your leader affect your energy level?

Participant 6 responded:

> I am a bit selfish about my energy and about my outputs as I kind of feel like at every time that I am working, I am representing myself [*Personal brand*] and not necessarily anyone. Obviously, as I got older, even when I found misalignments, clear gaps, and dissonance [*Dissonance*], I just kind of kept going and giving a good output [*Good output*], because it was not always about the leader, it was about myself [*Personal brand*]. Again, I wanted to be marketable internally and externally, so I kind of kept my best foot forward consistently [*Personal brand*], hoping that an opportunity will come through so that I can leave [*Leave*].
>
> At a younger age, it is more difficult. The time that it happened to me at a younger age, I just left as jobs [were] easier to get; you just left [*Leave*] as there was no need for us to be speaking so much.

A follow-up question was then asked of Participant 6: What I hear you inferring is that age matters, and I would like you to elaborate a bit more on this. What impact do experience and age have in instances of misaligned spoken and practiced values?

> I think that the younger you are, the less jaded you are, and . . . you feel like there is a next organization that is going to offer you a full alignment. I think that the older you are, the more realistic you are about human behaviors [*Human behavior*] not being consistent with what they see. So, you are just a little bit more not amenable or tolerant [*Tolerate*] of the situation and seeking change in other ways. When you are younger, you are not seeking change, not very amenable [*Tolerate*]. I remember when I came back from doing my master's in the UK; the first place I worked in, leaders were behaving badly [*Bad behavior*]. . . . I just made sure that I reached one year, and I gave them my resignation letter [*Resign*]. Obviously, it was the phase of life that I was in also at the time.

Participant 7 responded:

> When I take a job, I try to find part of the job that I am happy with and find joy in that part of my job [*Happy*]. I have always told you my passion is engineering,

but even when I started in this part of the bank, I found that with the quantitative part, I can live with that, and that is what makes me happy [*Happy*]. So usually, I tend to use that as my core focus. Then in terms of my leaders, in an organization, you are going to have good and bad leaders, and the thing you have to do is identify what values you recognize in them [*Value recognition*]. If you have 10 different leaders, identify the ones who live the values you deem good; those are the ones you want to build a close relationship [*Relationship*] with, and the rest of them you can tolerate [*Tolerate*]. An organization has a lot of leaders; it gets to a certain level where you realize that you just have to pick the leaders you can work with, and those are the ones you build a relationship [*Relationship*] with—the ones you stretch for.

Your energy has to come from you [*Self-motivate*]. I think if you are going to rely on one person, it has to come from your attitude. There has to be something that you are doing that you can identify with and that drives [you] [*Self-motivate*]. The second one is that you build the rest of that around you by identifying the kind of people you want [around you].

The reason why I do not read [these] motivational business books by leaders is that it almost seems like a sense of hero worship. So, when I see people talking about Jack Welch this and that, it does not resonate with me because that is not where I get my energy from [*My energy*]. I think there are different ways, and for me, as I go along, I cannot become a Jack Welch or any leader. I can take parts of him and other leaders; thus, I have made myself a composite [of] different leaders I have learned to rely upon.

Even then, at the very base, the energy must come from doing something that inspires me and that I enjoy [*Inspiration*].

Participant 8 responded:

I think I will have 50% because irrespective of that, there is a misalignment on my boss's side; there is still work that I am being paid for [*Low energy*]. Even though my energy level will be low, because of the personal values [*Personal values*] that I have, if there is something I have to do, I get it done. This is more of my own personal values, irrespective of the energy I am getting from someone else, which elevates my energy to about 50%. Bringing 100%, being passionate, chasing opportunities, trying to go the extra mile [*High energy*]—that, I think will be lost if there is a misalignment between the leader's spoken and practiced values.

Themes Derived from Codes in Research Question 2. Eighteen themes emerged from the responses to the interview questions:

- behavior drivers (25), made up of do more (1), driver (4), dual life (2), expectation (3), go beyond (3), happy (2), inspiration (1), my behavior (1), relationship (1), self-motivate (4), and thinking correctly (3);

- communication (6), made up of callout (2), conversation (2), feedback (1), and speak out (1);
- confidence (12), made up of bend backward (2), mistrust (4), respect (1), and trust (5);
- critical alignment (10), made up of buy-in (4), friction (1), key (1), and relationship (4);
- directional alignment (2), made up of direction (2);
- evaluation (17), made up of destroy energy (1), energy (3), frustrated (1), high energy (2), low energy (2), my energy (3), reduced energy (3), weak (1), and weak energy (1);
- exit (10), made up of cut off (1), dissociate (1), employee loss (1), leave (5), quit (1), and resign (1);
- face of the organization (1), made up of key leader (1);
- generational values (6), made up of pride (1), remembered for (2), and values I live (3);
- impact on others (9), made up of affect others (1), being judged (1), eye service (1), fairness (2), negative vibes (3), and treat others (1);
- leadership behavior (8), made up of bad behavior (1), drama (1), leader action (2), leader expectation (1), leader practice (2), and value recognition (1);
- organizational support (2), made up of organizational belief (2);
- performance (34), made up of average performance (1), better performance (1), good output (1), high performance (14), impact (1), look good (1), low performance (11), nonperformance (2), and perform (2);
- personal self-esteem (9), made up of associate (1), perception (2), personal brand (3), personal values (1), professionalism (1), and who you are (1);
- personal values (28), made up of align (1), behavior (2), believe (1), doing right (1), drivers (1), everything (2), force (1), inside (1), lived values (11), loyal (1), personal values (2), principles (2), role of values (1), and who I am (1);
- state of mind (4), made up of mindset (1) and tolerate (3);
- value alignment (15), made up of align (7), different (2), disconnect (1), dissonance (2), and in sync (3); and

- weight of value (7), made up of human behavior (1) and kind of value (6).

Table 3: Emerged Themes From Research Question 2

Theme	Occurrences	% Weighting
Performance	34	17%
Personal values	28	14%
Behavior drivers	25	12%
Evaluation	17	8%
Value alignment	15	7%
Confidence	12	6%
Critical alignment	10	5%
Exit	10	5%
Impact on others	9	4%
Personal self-esteem	9	4%
Leadership behavior	8	4%
Weight of value	7	3%
Communication	6	3%
Generational value	6	3%
State of mind	4	2%
Directional alignment	2	1%
Organizational support	2	1%
Face of the organization	1	0%

Research Question 3 Interview Questions. Research Question 3, which explored how the alignment of leaders' espoused and practiced values affects the employee's self-categorization with the organization, had four semi-structured interview questions. Question 1: What role do values play in your self-categorization with an organization?

Participant 7 responded:

> I think I typically categorize myself [*In-group*] as part of an organization that I voluntarily work with. There are quite a lot of things in this present organization that I identify with [*Identification*]. I identify with the prospects of wanting to help our clients more; I identify with the prospect of doing business in the right way. I identify with the prospect that even though bullying may occur, it is not something that is widespread in the organization; I identify with the value of openness. Based on discussions I have had with people outside, I realize that these values are not always possible in every organization; therefore, I will identify myself with this organization and want to be part of it [*Identification*]. I will want to classify myself as part of the inner group [*In-group*] because my values resonate with the organizational values [*Align*]. While I might not be happy with everything, I will broadly categorize myself as in-group [*In-group*].

Participant 8 responded:

I must say very low. . . . I am internally not focused on acceptance by people [*People acceptance*]. I am not someone who is driven because I want to be accepted by people and hoping to categorize myself based on whether I am the boss's favorite or otherwise [*Favorite*]. All I want is to have the room to express my views; that is what is key for me [*Self-expression*]. I will just observe the room and realize who the boss's favorites are [*Favorite]*]. That self-alignment does not bother me; whether I am seen as inwards or outwards [*Camps*], I do not worry about it—I just do what I have to do.

Participant 9 responded:

Where my values align with a wider group's values [*Align*], I will see myself as part of that group [*In-group*], but where I do not see synergy in our values, I will categorize myself as an outsider to that group [*Out-group*]. Above said, I do not work toward being in the inner circle because of my behavior, as my personal values [*Lived values*] do not allow me to actively canvass to get into any inner circle [*In-group*].

Question 2: What impact does the misalignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values have on your perception to self-categorize with the organization?

Participant 8 responded:

It will make me feel less like self-categorizing [*Out-group*] as part of the organization. For example, part of our organization's core value is respect for one another. I now have a boss [that] whenever decisions have to be made, you do not get listened to [*Deaf ears*]. It is like his ways are always the only way that is right; your experience of the organizational values, how it makes you feel, is from your immediate boss [*Leader experience*]. Once that is not aligned, I definitely will not feel like I am part of the organization [*Out-group*]. I may not feel like I have something to bring onboard because whatever I bring onboard does not get heard [*Deaf ears*]. I will not feel like self-categorizing with such an organization [*Out-group*] because it is not ready for me to contribute to its growth as my boss's spoken and practiced values are misaligned [*Leader anomaly*].

Participant 9 responded:

My values [*Lived values*] say that I will not actively canvass to be made an insider [*In-group*]. There is a saying that goes thus: "you are only lonely if you believe that someone should be at your side" [*Alone*]. Consequently, if you do not believe that, you will not be lonely. Personally, I am not lonely [*Alone*] if I am not inside, as I do not believe I have to get inside [*In-group*]. I believe a lot in work ethic and in value-add [A*pproach to work*], because once you have these two, you will eventually get into the inner circle if you want to [*In-group*]. I have worked in several organizations and seen that you get into the inner circle

> either because you are a founding member or you have actively canvassed to get into the inner circle [*In-group*]. But by virtue of whatever skills or whatever values you possess, the inner circle has to put you in the inner circle [*In-group*] because they cannot do without you [*Valuable*]. If you are that kind of person, you will be in the inner circle, but you will not be in the inner-inner circle [*Circle in circle*] because even in inner circles, there are inner-inner circles [*Circle in circle*]. For me, I personally do not canvass to be in the inner circle. Maybe it is because, over time, I have gone through a lot of upheavals . . . [and] it really does not make sense to actively canvass to be in the inner circle. But if I have to get there, it is because they pull me in as a result of the value [*Valuable*] they notice I have to add, but it will not be as a result of me actively campaigning to be in the inner circle. I also will likely not be a founding member anyway.

Participant 10 responded:

> The reality is that, despite the fact that there are things the organization stands for, not everybody will be 100% aligned [*Scale*], and that is the truth. That is why you will have people being asked to exit [*Asked to leave*] at senior levels. It is not more on performance basis or delivery of goals, it is more on the soft skills and values, which is outside competence. It is not in all cases that you would have leaders that would be aligned with the organizational values [*Align*].
>
> What happens in a lot of cases is you get leaders who ask you to do what they say but not what they practice, which then does not get far with employees or with subordinates as they do not lead by example [*Leading by example*]. What sticks more and what stays more is when you lead by example. When you do not lead by example [*Leading by example*], it is not as though people will not follow you; they will follow you, but there is a limit to which you can . . . influence them, so it is just positional and not the power of influence. If they had a choice, [would] they want to follow you? The answer [would] be no.

Similar to what happened in Research Questions 1 and 2, the third and fourth interview questions were merged, as it was easier for the participants to respond to the question on the impact alignment and misalignment has on how they evaluate themselves as part of the in-group or out-group. The revised third interview question was as follows: How does the alignment or misalignment of your leader's espoused and practiced values affect how you evaluate yourself as being part of the in-group or out-group?

Participant 1 responded:

> Not necessarily. Self-categorization depends on how I am treated [*Treatment*]. I mean, the leader lives the values, he says the values, I put in my 100%, I push myself; at the end of the day, it is how I am treated [*Treatment*].

A follow-up question was asked of Participant 1: If the leader treats you well, but there is a misalignment between their spoken values and practiced values, will it help your self-categorization? Because sometimes leaders just like you, but their values are not aligned with their espoused values?

> If a leader treats me well even if their values are not aligned with the organizational values, I will seek an audience with the person. Because if the leader treats me well, I want to imagine I owe them feedback [*Feedback*], to say, "this is what I am seeing, are you sure this is who you are?" I will feel some responsibility to let them know what I have seen.

After hearing Participant 1's response, this question was rephrased to elicit a more representative lived experience. The revised question is as follows: When the leader likes you, you know that the leader likes you, and everybody knows you are the leader's person, the word around the organization is that if anyone wants anything from the boss, they will get it if they go through you. But the leader's espoused values do not align with their practiced values. In that kind of scenario, what impact will it have on your self-categorizing and desire to be part of the in-group?

Participant 1 responded:

> I will feel like I am part of the inner group [*Belong*], but then at this point, it takes me back to the burden of proof to be put on the leader of the organization [*Internal checks*]. They need to actually check and see the full summation of the people that are regarded as the in-group, because before you know it, the negative part begins to get larger if not dealt [with]. The burden of proof should be upon the leaders to be able to unpack what makes up that in-group [*Internal checks*] and treat whatever wound/injury before it affects the organizational values as a whole.

Participant 3 responded:

> I will not want to associate myself with a leader who does that [*Dissociate*]. I guess it comes back to who I am [*Who I am*]; I will want to give the person a heightened awareness that this thing that people are experiencing with you is not right and needs to change. I will let them know that I will not want to continue being closely associated [*Dissociate*] as if all is well. You see, I come from this point where I believe people need to be given a chance once they have been made aware [*Awareness*]. People sometimes do certain things because it has become part of their DNA over time without anyone calling it out and are thus not mindful of the impact on others. But if someone is bold enough to call it out and raise their awareness [*Awareness]*, it may lead to a change.

Participant 4 responded:

> I will still see myself as an outsider [*Outsider*]. It is the boss that is seeing me as an insider; I am not seeing me as an insider [*Outsider*]. So, to him, I am in his inner caucus, but to me, I am an outsider [*Outsider*]. It is probably because of my values that is actually making the leader want me to be an insider. The leader is thinking that though they are not practicing the values, but I can see that this guy is practicing it, so as long as he's with me, I can continue to do what I am doing. To me, I am an outsider [*Outsider*]; that is how I will categorize myself. I am not going to be carried away with the temporary affection and favor; I won't be deceived by that.

Themes Derived from Codes in Research Question 3. Nineteen themes emerged from the responses to the interview questions:

- caucus (87), made up of in-group (33), out-group (15), outsider (13), camps (12), favorite (3), alienation (2), belong (2), circle in circle (2), dissociate (2), in-camp (1), loyalty (1), and out of favor (1);
- amend (1), made up of adjust (1);
- communication (14), made up of awareness (2), callout (2), deaf ears (2), engagement (2), feedback (2), speak out (2), report leader (1), and voice (1);
- confidence (4), made up of trust (2), mistrust (1), and switch (1);
- directional alignment (5), made up of connectedness (2), identification (2), and guidance (1);
- evaluation (2), made up of disconnect (1) and diligence (1);
- exit (8), made up of leave (4), resign (2), asked to leave (1), and move on (1);
- face of the organization (1), made up of key leader (1);
- impact on others (9), made up of fairness (3), impact (2), attitude (1), judge (1), let down (1), and set apart (1);
- leadership behavior (10), made up of leader anomaly (3), leading by example (2), rogue leader (2), different values (1), flaws (1), and similar values (1);
- organizational brand (5), made up of identification (2), organizational values (2), reputation (1);
- organizational support (2), made up of internal checks (2);

- performance (12), made up of do the job (2), get the job done (2), low performance (2), output (2), valuable (2), job-related (1), and key to leader (1);
- personal self-esteem (3), made up of treatment (2) and perception (1);
- personal values (13), made up of lived values (7), approach to work (1), diligence (1), do my best (1), people acceptance (1), personal energy (1), and stand for (1);
- relationship (6), made up of friendship (2), correlation (1), friendly (1), like (1), and not alone (1);
- The seventeenth category is state of mind (6), made up of alone (2), irritate (1), self-expression (1), vibes (1), and align (1);
- value alignment (18), made up of align (9), different (4), in sync (3), bribe (1), and variance (1); and
- weight of value (9), made up of scale (4), situation (2), human weakness (1), kind of value (1), and kind of weakness (1).

Table 4: Emerged Themes From Research Question 3

Theme	Occurrences	% Weighting
Caucus	87	40%
Value alignment	18	8%
Communication	14	7%
Personal values	13	6%
Performance	12	6%
Leadership behavior	10	5%
Impact on others	9	4%
Weight of value	9	4%
Exit	8	4%
Relationship	6	3%
State of mind	6	3%
Directional alignment	5	2%
Organizational brand	5	2%
Confidence	4	2%
Personal self-esteem	3	1%
Evaluation	2	1%
Organizational support	2	1%
Amend	1	0%
Face of the organization	1	0%

Research Question 4 Interview Questions. Research Question 4, which asks if leaders would align their espoused and practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification, has three interview questions. Question 1: How would you, as a leader, align your espoused values with your practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification?

Participant 4 responded:

> It puts the responsibility on me to ensure that the two are in sync [*In sync*], and at every particular time, I will be conscious of that big responsibility [*Responsibility*]. For instance, if I want my team to get a task delivered and . . . [the] deadline has been communicated and it is not done [by the deadline], the question is, that if I [was] in their shoes [*In-shoes*], [would] I also have done so? If the answer is no, then I can understand as the first big responsibility [*Responsibility*] it places on you is that you want to demand from people what you yourself [would] be able to give [*In-shoes*]. So, which means, what you are saying and what you are doing [have] to be aligned because they will be watching you [*Watching*].

Participant 5 responded:

> Typically, what I really stand for, as much as it is possible (though I know from time to time, depending on what is happening, things may happen that [are] not what you want) . . . [is to] work on the core of who I am [*Work on self*]. It comes back—for me—to about being fair [*Fairness*], just, and transparent with being fair—being just and collaborative [is] where I will thrive. I get concerned when I believe, or for any reason, I pick up that there is a reason for people to think there is some misalignment. Once I am aware or sometimes when [I] hear of it, I try to pull out . . . what the concerns are, then try to explain or try to make it very clear what the crux of the matter is [*Engagement*]. In my mind, I need to make sure that they are seeing me as just and transparent, because of those values of mine [*Lived values*]. I am very conscious of the fact that whatever I do needs to be clear, because I know I would function at 50% or less if it was the other way around [*Impact*]. I will therefore try very much to ensure that the transparency cascades downward. If there is any reason why I think otherwise, I would, as much as I can, let the team or the person be aware of the circumstance and try to convince them on the situation [*Engagement*]. Sometimes it doesn't work, as they may still not believe till the fact of the matter is found out; they will thus sit on the fence. As humanly as possible, I will work on them seeing it from the other side, where the perceived misalignment is coming from, just to get them on the same page [*Align*], but [the] truth is that it has not always worked.

Participant 6 responded:

> I think that just in the course of managing people over the years, where there has been some dissonance between what I have said and what I have done, a lot of times it has been unconscious [*Unconscious misalignment*]. I have been lucky to have team members who were bold enough to tell me and line managers who were very upfront with their feedback [*Feedback*]. So, like every person, I will think that I am in control and that my spoken values are aligned to the way I behave. But sometimes, when I receive feedback [*Feedback*], I find that there had been dissonance. I remember when they said, we do not shout. . . . I [was] at an event, and the guest of honor [was] supposed to give somebody a gift . . . and when it [was] time to hand it over, we [could not] find it, because the event manager forgot it in the office. I mean, of course, I flipped [out] like crazy. I remember the feedback [*Feedback*] that the person gave later—she said it [was] not like I did not do something bad, but she thought the reaction was too much [*Overreact*]. So . . . I had fallen short of the values that I had spoken about as one of the organizational values is about respecting one another. I . . . flipped [out] and [did] not [show] respect enough at that time.
>
> So, I have not always practiced it [*Practice*], but I think I have practiced it more than I have not practiced it. The thing I will say is that it has never been deliberate [*Unconscious misalignment*] and for every time that I have been called out, I have kind of made adjustment[s] [*Adjust*]. Sometimes, in the times I [was] called out, I [was] genuinely surprised. Also, if the leader that called me out had demonstrated favoritism in the past, I [would] ask the question if I think it is genuine or a one-off to support their favorite [*Support*]? For example, one of the ladies who reported me back then, was the only one in my team of 15, who had ever had that type of comment or made that type of report that the leader called me out about. When I asked myself about the leader, to sense check if this was them showing up for one of their favorites and if this was a one-off to me alone or others are experiencing the same? Once I realized it was not just to me, because my colleagues who were executive committee members were experiencing the same thing. So, the problem was not a dissonance in what I said and what I did; it was a dissonance with the leader, as many others who were not recipients of the favoritism could see the issues with the leader.

A follow-up question was asked: In this instance, and in terms of the subordinate, what did you do? Did you engage with her again? How did you handle things?

Participant 6 responded:

> Yes, I engaged [*Engage*]. There were actually two things she said: the first was that when she does something out of place and as she knows it is out of place, that I completely flip big time. Secondly, . . . I did not show vulnerability, and my leader said that vulnerability [*Vulnerability*] was important in leadership. On the vulnerability part, I told them that the way that I understood vulnerability to be, I needed to choose who it was I showed it to, and at the time, I was only

> vulnerable [*Vulnerability*] with my only friend in the organization at the time. This friend could count the number of times I had cried or been depressed. . . . I did not think that if my role was to encourage them, I should then show them my vulnerability [*Vulnerability*], as who will then encourage the team when they are on the ground? On the flipping [out] with the lady, I just downright apologized [*Apologize*], and then I just found a way to manage myself. In the end, I found out as well that she had so many triggers, as she had personal circumstances that were very difficult for her, so her triggers were a lot, and I did not need to scratch the surface. We somehow came to a mutual agreement, and then we worked things out very well, actually.

Question 2: How would you respond if your practiced values were misaligned from your hitherto espoused values, even if it appeared not to affect employees' organizational identity?

Participant 5 responded:

> It does, because as a leader, I am concerned about how I am seen in the eyes of my people [*Perception*]. Unless that value of mine really has nothing to do with the organizational values which I stand by and believe [*Lived values*]. It may not necessarily be in line with the organizational values, but I am fine with it [because] . . . it's my individual principle or core value that I believe in as an individual [*Lived values*]. If the misalignment borders on things that I am called to do as the leader in the organization and I am not being seen as doing what I signed up to, that is of serious concern to me [*Concern*]. But to the extent that that value does not necessarily happen to be one of the values of the organization, but I really stand for it, then I am fine [*Stand for*].

Participant 6 responded:

> You see, I will make changes [*Change*] because I feel like, in the course of my career, my audience is myself [*Personal brand*] and then the onlookers with the purpose of the audience not just being for today but it is also for tomorrow [*Future impact*]. I guess because I have very tall ambitions for myself [*Self ambition*], I constantly feel like I am being watched, and when I want to go to the UN or that job, they are going to say there is a dissonance in her values, so [I] do not go there [*Dissonance*]. I am fiercely selfish about what I am doing and how I am doing it, and sometimes it is up to the point of paranoia [*Self-ambition*]. I do not want anybody to say anything negative about my values [*Lived values*]; I guess it is also a burden of being Nigerian. I kind of get into a sense of doing what is right [*Doing right*]. It is really not always about the employees; therefore, even if it [does] not matter, I will do the right thing [*Doing right*]. I will align my spoken values [with] my practiced values [*Align*] and ensure I do the right thing for my own selfish purposes [*Doing right*]. It is not about them.

Participant 8 responded:

> First of all, I always try to make sure that my spoken values are aligned to my practiced values, to my actions [*Align*]. I am a person [who does] a lot of self-reflection [*Reflection*], so if I realize that I have acted in a way that my spoken values are contrary to what I did—maybe out of frustration or something—I immediately try to correct it [*Change*].
>
> I try to be self-aware [*Self-aware*] of any misalignment in my spoken and practiced actions; it is more personal [for] me in terms of how it affects the team [*Personal impact*]. It will even get the best out of me because once I see myself misaligning, I try to align myself to the values I have spoken [*Align*].

As the interview progressed, the last interview question was rephrased to further garner practical lived experience. The revised question is: Have you ever found yourself in a place where your espoused values did not align with your practiced values? If you did, and your junior reports were present, how did you handle it?

Participant 7 answered:

> I think I have been in that situation, and luckily this has not been client facing; they have all been internal. I recall a time someone sent me an email that I found irritating, but the way I responded to it was not respectful and rude [*Disrespect*], with the acting head of my team [telling] me that I was wrong with my response. I apologized [*Apologize*] via email but not only that, I drove to where the person was, stood in front of the person publicly, and apologized in person [*Apologize*]: "I do not agree with what you said, but I will admit that the way I sent the email was wrong" and apologized again [*Apologize*]. I have zero problem with apologizing, as I think this is important as a leader when you are wrong; it is a sign of maturity and respecting others [*Showing respect*]. You will then correct whatever you have done going forward.
>
> The more you live your set of values [*Lived values*], the easier it is to continue to live them, and the less likely you are to be in those kinds of situations. Like someone said, a lie begets a lie and so on, so when you start a lie, you tend to continue. If you live your values from the onset, you find out that the next time something comes up, you will live it easier, and the longer you live those values, the easier it becomes [*Lived values*].

Participant 8 answered:

> Yes, I have experienced that before. Honestly, in terms of values, honesty is key [*Honesty*], but sometimes while trying to get a trade done, you realize that you have compromised on that value. Especially in our space of work, it is a value you can easily misalign [*Misalign*] what you say [with] what you are practicing, despite it being a core value.
>
> In terms of how I have handled it, when I have found myself lying to get a transaction done, in their midst, I immediately say, oh God, forgive me [*God factor*], I just lied. My immediate acknowledgment of that lie [in] their hearing

> when I go wrong and my quick . . . acknowledgment [*Acknowledge*] of the misalignment of my practice to my spoken value . . . always makes them see that I am human [*Human weakness*]. How they see me—I believe it will not impact negatively . . . because they see me as quickly acknowledging that misalignment [*Acknowledge*], especially if it is not a frequent occurrence.

Participant 9 answered as follows:

> I am not really sure. You know, as a salesperson, we have learned to beat around the bush; you are not really telling a lie, but you are also not telling the whole truth [*Beat around the bush*]. I think one of the strong points I have always had with customers—and I try to bring my staff to that level, too—is that I more or less will tell you the truth [*Honesty*]. In a previous organization, I had a boss who taught me that you let a client know that you turned down their deal and not them, thus there will be other deals to be done with them. Since that time, I had learned to be upfront with a client [*Honesty*], to tell them as practically as possible what we can and cannot do. Now, several clients always come back and put other deals before me: [even] though we could not do others, how about this one? I see that when we establish trust with a client, we always get trust back [*Trust*]. I thus always correct my team when they say untruths to the client, as this breeds distrust [*Distrust*]. I have sat with senior people though, where the leader is promising stuff to clients that I know they cannot deliver on, and you are wondering [*Dishonesty*]. I always think, "What is the leader talking about and putting me, the relationship person, in a difficult situation where what is being promised is almost impossible to deliver [*Impossible*]?" I would not like that because the leader is putting me in a bad spot that I [would] not like, and I thus dodge the leader going to see clients with me [*Avoid*]. That is probably what one will get from the subordinates if I put them in that situation, and so, I avoid such [*Avoid*].

Themes Derived from Codes in Research Question 4. Nineteen themes emerged from the responses to the interview questions:

- amend (12), made up of change (7) and apologize (5);
- behavior drivers (11), made up of cheating (3), dishonesty (3), honesty (3), and beat around the bush (1);
- communication (21), made up of communicate (4), pass it on (4), feedback (3), acknowledge (2), callout (2), engagement (2), engage (1), made aware (1), speak (1), and voice (1);
- confidence (3), made up of distrust (1), impossible (1), and trust (1);
- critical alignment (7), made up of behavioral influence (3), buy-in (3), and environmental influence (1);

- directional alignment (2), made up of cascade (1) and direction (1);
- evaluation (9), made up of God factor (9);
- exit (2), made up of leave (1), and way out (1);
- face of the organization (3), made up of represents the organization (3);
- impact on others (15), made up of impact (4), avoid (2), impossible not to care (2), treat others (2), consequences (1), fairness (1), overreact (1), personal impact (1), and watching (1);
- leadership behavior (1), made up of lived values (1);
- organizational support (3), made up of organizational belief (1), organizational check (1), and support (1);
- personal self-esteem (4), made up of self-ambition (2), future impact (1), and perception (1);
- personal values (23), made up of lived values (12), doing right (3) belief (1), concern (1), experience (1), fall short (1), live with (1), personal responsibility (1), practice (1), and stand for (1);
- relationship (3), made up of disrespect (1), relationship (1), and showing respect (1);
- self-evaluation (17), made up of accountability (3), in-shoes (2), lead by example (2), responsibility (2), self-correct (2), espoused values (1), reflection (1), self-audit (1), self-aware (1), self-review (1), and work on self (1);
- state of mind (6), made up of vulnerability (3), uncomfortable (2), and unbelief (1);
- value alignment (26), made up of align (11), live the values (4), in sync (2), different (2), unconscious misalignment (2), dissonance (1), misalign (1), practice (1), value conflict (1), and variance (1); and
- weight of value (1), made up of human weakness (1).

Table 5: Emerged Themes From Research Question 4

Theme	Occurrences	% Weighting
Value alignment	26	15%
Personal values	23	14%
Communication	21	12%
Self-evaluation	17	10%
Impact on others	15	9%
Amend	12	7%
Behavior drivers	11	7%
Evaluation	9	5%
Critical alignment	7	4%
State of mind	6	4%
Personal self-esteem	4	2%
Confidence	3	2%
Face of the organization	3	2%
Organizational support	3	2%
Relationship	3	2%
Directional alignment	2	1%
Exit	2	1%
Leadership behavior	1	1%
Weight of value	1	1%

Summary

This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to understand the impact that the alignment or misalignment of a leader's espoused and enacted values has on the employee's organizational identification. In line with the phenomenological approach, data were collected from the lived experiences of 10 managers, whom themselves reported to other executives. Semi-structured, recorded, and transcribed interviews were used for data collection, and this was then analyzed with the following themes emerging.

Overall, 23 themes emerged from the analysis. Seven themes recurred in all four research questions; eight themes recurred in three of the research questions; six themes recurred in two research questions; and only two recurred in a single research question. A significant 65% recurrence in more than three of the research questions provides a strong trend, which will be discussed in detail below.

Discussion

Emerged Themes Description and Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1 asked: How does an employee's perception of the alignment of the leader's espoused and practiced values affect their organizational identification? We asked the participants about the role that values play in their organizational identification, as well as how the leader's espoused values and practiced values, if aligned or misaligned, affected their organizational identification. Ten themes emerged from this question, with value alignment recurring 67 times, personal self-esteem 46 times, and organizational support 34 times. These three themes represent 64% of the surfaced themes in the first research question and form part of the overarching theme identified in this study.

Value alignment reflects how the employees perceive the alignment of their values, in its various facets, with the organization and its leaders. The theme of personal self-esteem is a significant finding in this study, as Li et al. (2019) notes, "individuals derive their sense of self-worth from their personal attributes" (1). In the current study, self-esteem related to how participants understood how their personal drivers, values, and self-worth were being met by the organization, which affected their organizational identification. The way organizations make employees feel is an integral part of what drives their desire to identify organizationally, as their alignment—or lack thereof—with the organization's values affects employees' personal self-esteem.

Finally, organizational support reflects how participants perceive that the organization responds when there is a conflict between its values and their leader's behavior. Fiorito and Ehrenhard (2019) theorize that there must be a coherence between the values reflected in an organization's talk, operational, and social structures; otherwise, subordinates might be frustrated. Each of the remaining seven themes—critical alignment, communication, the face of the organization, weight of value, organizational brand, generational values, and directional alignment—occurred less than 10% in the participants' responses to this first research question. Thus, when it comes to the impact of a leader's espoused and practiced values on an employee's organizational identification, the results confirmed the importance of value alignment, self-esteem, and organizational support.

Research Question 2 asked: How does an employee's perception of the alignment of the leader's espoused and practiced values affect their behavior and attitude? To answer this question, we asked the participants about the impact that their leaders' espoused and practiced values, if aligned or misaligned, had on their behavior, attitude, and energy levels. Eighteen themes emerged from the analysis of the participants' responses for this research question, with the top three themes representing more than 43%. These three themes are performance, which occurred 34 times; personal values, which occurred 28 times; and behavior drivers, which occurred 25 times.

The theme performance refers to what drives performance and what kind of performance and behavior results from the identified drivers. According to Trepte and Loy (2017), SIT emphasizes that "individuals categorize themselves as belonging to various groups" (1), with performance being one of the ways that employees perceive that they belong. Performance, therefore, led to self-categorization as *in-group* or *out-group*. The theme of personal values spoke to the participants' perception of the role their personal values play in the behavior and attitude they exhibit in the organization, irrespective of the misalignment of their leaders' values. Identity and values are critical driving forces in human lives; hence, an individual's "conception of personal identity influences the formation of a role identity" (Hitlin, 2003, 118). The theme of behavior drivers represents what participants view as the subtle underlining factors that affect their behavior and attitudes. Ellemers (2020) links social identity with individual behavior, stating that SIT is "an integrative theory, as it aims to connect cognitive processes and behavioral motivation" (History section). In organizations, individuals surreptitiously observe the body language, behaviors, and attitudes exhibited by others, especially the leader. The dominant traits, attitudes, and behaviors that can be seen are then adopted as characteristics of their in-groups. The remaining 15 themes are evaluation, value alignment, confidence, critical alignment, exit, impact on others, personal self-esteem, leadership behavior, weight of value, communication, generational value, state of mind, directional alignment, organizational support, and face of the organization. These 15 themes each accounted for less than 10% of the mentions from the analysis of responses. Thus, we determined that performance, personal values, and behavior drivers have the biggest impact on employees' behavior and attitude.

Research Question 3 asked: How does the alignment or misalignment of the leaders' espoused and practiced values affect the employee's self-categorization (social identity) with the organization? Through this question, we sought to understand the role that values play in self-categorization, as well as the impact of the misalignment of leaders' espoused and practiced values on employees' desire to self-categorize with the organization.

Nineteen themes emerged from the analysis of this research question, with caucus being the standout theme, representing 40% of the emerged themes with 87 occurrences. The caucus theme represents what participants perceive as the different camps and groups within the organization, which leads to some being favored over other members in the organization, as well as the resulting impact of this favoritism on their willingness to self-categorize and identify organizationally. When caucuses are formed, "individuals evaluate the groups they feel they belong to" (Trepte & Loy, 2017, 1) and thus view members of that caucus as the in-group. Being a caucus member serves as a social network that accrues benefits, such as up-to-date information and a valued support system. The other 18 themes under this question are value alignment, communication, personal values, performance, leadership behavior, impact on others, weight of value, exit, relationship, state of mind, directional alignment, organizational brand, confidence, personal self-esteem, evaluation, organizational support, amend, and face of the organization.

Research Question 4 asked: Would leaders align their espoused and practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification? Through this question, we sought to elicit the participants' lived experience as leaders themselves and understand how participants would align their espoused values to their practiced values if it affected employees' organizational identification or vice versa. Responses to this question revealed how participants espoused their own practiced values and aligned them with the organization's espoused values.

Nineteen themes emerged from the analysis of this research question, with the top four themes representing 51%. These four themes are value alignment, which occurred 26 times; personal values, which occurred 23 times; communication, which occurred 21 times; and self-evaluation, which occurred 17 times. Earlier in this section, we analyzed and explained value alignment and personal values and will thus focus on the other two categories. Communication represents how participants perceive the organization expressed itself to them regarding what was important and how what was communicated undergirded the real organizational values, thus influencing their organizational identification. Salient messages about the organization must be communicated transparently, leading to organizational identification, or "the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent" (Hall et al., 1970, 176–177). The self-evaluation theme reflects how participants as leaders held themselves accountable, as they sought to lead by example and be good examples to others. The self-evaluation process helps individuals "to harness . . . ownership and control of their own work" (Klenowski, 1995, 2), leading an individual to align and identify with an organization.

The remaining 15 themes each represented less than 10% of participants' responses. These themes are impact on others, amend, behavior drivers, evaluation, critical alignment, state of mind, personal self-esteem, confidence, face of the organization, organizational support, relationship, directional alignment, exit, leadership behavior, and weight of value. This study determined that the individual's lived experience is reflected mostly in the four factors of value alignment, personal value, communication, and self-evaluation.

Examination of Findings

The daily observation of leadership brings significant pressure for the maintenance of organizational integrity (Fiorito & Ehrenhard, 2019). Social identity theory (SIT) can help restore some coherence to organizational identification and advocate fruitful applications of organizational behavior (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The findings in this study indicate that the misalignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values affects their employees' organizational identification. While the participants reported many things that they required from their organization that would lead them to identify organizationally, the overarching themes that emerged supported the conclusion that has been reached in this study. The SIT literature suggests several factors of direct relevance to organizations, which most likely increases the tendency to identify with groups. The current findings align with the notion that "leadership is extremely important for the organizations in terms of achieving certain common goals because the leaders have a strong influence on the behaviours and performance of individuals and groups" (Ertosun & Adiguzel, 2018, 53), especially with comparable groups.

The findings show values as a critical factor that influences employees' organizational identification. While the leaders' espoused and practiced values came through as crucial to employees identifying organizationally, we identified other factors that influenced the employees' willingness to identify organizationally.

The seven recurring themes were value alignment, personal self-esteem, communication, organizational support, weight of value, face of the organization, and directional alignment. The importance of values to participants as employees is reflected in these themes, as each theme can be linked back to either the organization's, leader's, or employee's personal values.

From the analysis of the participants' responses, we found that value alignment had the highest number of mentions at 126. Value alignment, or value congruence, reflects how employees see the alignment of their personal values with those of their leaders and the organization. Pant and Ojha (2017) describe the values that an organization and its leaders adopt as "those abstract ideals that emerge as guiding principles in the act of managing an enterprise or a collective" (vii). Winston (2002) posits that leadership starts with values. The conclusion is that value congruence is important to employees for them to identify organizationally. Edwards and Cable (2009) concur, noting that "value congruence relates to job satisfaction, organizational identification, and intent to stay in the organization" (654). If this value congruence is absent, such as when a leader espouses certain values but fails to practice them, employees will feel a lack of value congruence and are less likely to organizationally identify. This finding supports the fact that employees will not organizationally identify when the leader's espoused values are misaligned with their practiced values.

Personal self-esteem, the second of the core themes, relates to individual personal drivers, values, and self-worth and how this is perceived as being met by the organization, which then influences employees' organizational identification. The way organizations make an employee feel is an essential part of what drives their desire to identify organizationally, with the alignment or misalignment of the leader's and organization's values affecting the employees' personal self-esteem. This finding supports the fact that employees will not organizationally identify when the leader's espoused values are misaligned with their practiced values.

Communication, the third core theme, is a critical component in espousing and practicing the values of an organization, with Kotter (2012) expressing that "communication comes in both words and deeds" and "the latter is generally the most powerful form" (10). This study's core is about what leaders both say and back up with practice—precisely how Kotter describes communication. It thus is no surprise that it has shown up as critical for participants before they can organizationally identify. Communication is fundamental to building trust, which then leads to a good relationship and the desire to identify, with Boies et al. (2015) noting that "trust and value congruence . . . [are] mediators of the relationship between transformational leadership and performance" (1083). As described above, situations in which the leader speaks what they do not practice will lead to employee distrust and unwillingness to identify organizationally.

Organizational support, the fourth core theme, spoke to participants' expectation that the organization's values will triumph when the leader does not practice what they espouse. Multiple responses from participants for all four research questions revealed that this theme was central for them to organizationally identify. Uchenna and Tolulope (2013) support this theme, noting that "perceived organizational support significantly influenced organizational commitment" (182). This finding was about the employees' expectation that when there is a misalignment between a leader's espoused and practiced values, the organization will stand by its values and support the employee, not the leader. Rahman and Karan (2012) note that "a manager should focus on issues that increase employees' perceived organizational support to boost up the employees' commitment of all types to the organization" (205). In the current study, the employees' perception of organizational support influenced their willingness to identify organizationally.

Weight of value, the fifth core theme, also speaks directly to the participants' focus on values. In this instance, participants ascribed weighting to different values and indicated that they were willing to accept their leader's failure to practice specific espoused values to which they do not ascribe much importance or weight. The theme indicated that participants were willing to identify organizationally, even if misalignment existed between a leader's espoused and practiced values—as long as the misaligned value was not one they deemed as weighty and important.

Face of the organization, the sixth core theme, refers to how participants see their leaders as representing the organization in how they practice their values. This theme speaks explicitly to the leader's dominance in the organization or whether or not the practiced values are a true reflection of the organization's real values. This theme is at the core of the studied phenomenon, as it puts the leader at the center of how employees perceive the organization and their willingness to identify with the organization.

Directional alignment is the seventh core theme; it represents how participants perceived that their leaders' lived values influenced their values. The leader is thus viewed as showing the direction they should follow. Employees' connectedness to a leader, willingness to yield to a leader's guidance, assurance in who a leader is, and preparedness to align directionally or not is what decides for them whether they will identify with the organization and the leader.

The findings from these core themes confirm the impact that the misalignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values have on employees' willingness to identify organizationally. We also identified other factors as being crucial to identifying organizationally. Two additional themes worth mentioning are caucus, which participants indicated 87 times, and performance, which participants indicated 46 times.

The theme caucus spoke to the impact that participants felt that favoritism and camps had on organization identification. This theme reflected the existence of diverse emotions in participants, with some feeling alienated, some like outsiders, and others perceiving themselves as members of the favored in-group. Turner (1984) likens this to the existence of a *psychological group,* which he defines as "a collection of people that share the same social identification or define themselves in terms of the same social category membership" (530). The willingness to identify was thus hinged on the emotion that the participant's status commanded, a situation that created an uneven field and was thus not merit based. This theme reveals the impact that participants' emotions and perceptions about their leader's unequal values play in their decision to identify organizationally.

The theme of performance related to how participants perceived the impact their leader's misalignment had on their performance, and thus, affected their willingness or otherwise to identify organizationally. Some participants believed that their level of performance was independent of their organizational identification or self-identification with any leader but rather driven by their personal values and drive. This finding showed that while performance is vital to an organization, it has different drivers. A leader's aligned, espoused, and practiced values play a pivotal role in driving performance and organizational identification.

We conclude that employees' perception of the misalignment of the leader's espoused and practiced values affects employees' willingness to identify organizationally. The findings showed that while the alignment of a leader's espoused and practiced values is crucial for organizational identification, other factors also promoted or discouraged organizational identification. Although the coherence of a group's organization's identity is not limited to the leader's espoused and practiced values alone, we conclude that symbolic leader behaviors/alignment affects an individual's alignment with organizational values.

Implications for Scholarly and Practitioner Literature

The findings in this study added to the body of research by explicitly explaining how an employee's organizational identification is affected by the values that a leader practices, not just what he or she espouses. This study identified various themes that supported this position, with the theme of value alignment making this most evident.

The concepts in the social identity approach (made up of social identity theory and social categorization theory) were reconfirmed, especially as it relates to what drives a person to self-associate with an organization. In this study, we confirmed previous scholars' findings that the impact of leaders on followers is significant and their approach affects followers' willingness to self-categorize. As Fernandez (2004) explains, "leadership is an emergent quality of the character that radiates and makes others want to follow, based on the respect and trust the leader generates" (22).

The findings revealed some unexpected themes and patterns that have shed more light on the theory of organizational identification and self-identity. An example of this is the theme of weight of value, which showed that employees can still willingly identify organizationally even when a leader does not live their espoused values, depending on the weight that the employee ascribes to that value. This disconnect in the approach to values provides an interesting view of self-identity theory and its connection to organizational identification.

Practical Implications

Recent corporate and country leadership failures have emphasized the importance of followers in implementing required checks and balances. Contrary to the idea that leadership is everything, this study's results proved the critical role that followers play in organizational success. Kelley (1988) notes that "organizations stand or fall, partly on the basis of how well their leaders lead, but partly also on the basis of how well their followers follow" (para. 2). A quick indicator to stakeholders that all is not well within an organization is employees' unwillingness to identify organizationally. Stakeholders should ensure that checks are in place that regularly monitor employees' (un)willingness to identify organizationally, which could serve as an early warning sign of underlining issues.

Similarly, this study provided practical guidance to practitioners on the drivers that lead employees to identify organizationally or be demotivated, thus leading to their physical or emotional exit from the organization. The top three themes in the study are value alignment, personal self-esteem, and communication. These themes fundamentally speak to how the organization makes the employee feel—either from the view that their values are aligned or once in which they are misaligned; how the organization's actions affect their personal self-esteem; or how it communicates with and to them. The themes that have emerged are worth further study to help practitioners identify fresh insights on this critical dynamic of bringing alignment between the organization and its employees.

The increased focus on Africa means the themes that have emerged from this study are significant to developments on the continent. This exploration of business in Africa is timely and much required. The findings are expected to aid practitioners in focusing their attention on the required additional layer of checks on whether a leader's lived values are different from their espoused values, which has historically not been the norm on this continent.

Finally, the findings illuminate that a leader plays a pivotal role in ensuring that employees identify with the organization. From an employee perspective, this study's findings clarify that employees should pay attention when seeking to join an organization or implementing changes that will make other employees seek to identify with their organization. While leaders have a crucial role in how followers perceive an organization, it is now apparent that followers are similarly responsible for holding leaders accountable, with this study's themes providing guidelines for practitioners to adopt.

Limitations

Participants' varied experience meant that those with fewer years of work experience might not have the required length of lived experience and thus provided more theoretical and emotional views than lived experience. This might have skewed the outcome of the findings. The participants in this study were recruited from a single organization and located in West Africa; thus, the study's conclusions might be difficult to generalize to all of Africa or other organizations. It is necessary to conduct additional studies with a broader set of participants before generalization of the result can be achieved.

Recommendation for Future Research

In future studies, participants should be selected from different locations in Africa, as this would allow for the cultural peculiarities that might exist across the continent to be reflected in the results. Future researchers should focus on other ways employees and followers can act, as a better check on leaders, thus increasing employees' desire to identify more with the organization and further fulfill the critical roles required by stakeholders. The findings show unexpected themes and patterns that are worthy of further study. An example is the theme weight of value, which indicated that employees will still identify organizationally, despite a leader not living their espoused values, when the discrepant value is not perceived as a dealbreaker. This variation in approach to values by employees is worthy of further research, as it surfaces an exciting angle on value bias in general, as well as in the context of self-identity theory.

Conclusion

This study was driven by our desire to understand the impact of the misalignment of leaders' espoused and practiced values on employees' organizational identification. The findings confirmed that leaders' practice of their espoused values is crucial to employees' organizational identification. The core emerged themes of value alignment, personal self-esteem, communication, organizational support, weight of value, face of the organization, and directional alignment all undergird employees' expectations, mainly of their leaders, whom they see as the organization.

The findings confirmed the necessity of leaders not just speaking but living their values, thus serving as a beacon for employees to follow. Employees thus looked to their leaders to gauge what the organization was about and whether it was worth identifying with it. The findings provide a valuable reference to the scholarly and practical linkages between leadership, followership, lived values, and organizational identification.

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Consideration and Application of Spirituality in the Workplace for U.K. Business Leaders*†

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Integrating spirituality into professional practices has, occasionally, been considered in efforts to foster positive change in employment relationships and improve job satisfaction and commitment, while also increasing productivity and reducing absenteeism and employee turnover. The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to provide an understanding of the challenges of and opportunities for the consideration and application of spirituality in the workplace for U.K. business leaders. An interview protocol was developed based on the extant literature and in alignment with the purpose and research question of this study. Eleven participants formed the sample of this study, as dictated by the saturation levels of the information in the interview transcripts. Core themes identified include the description of spirituality as "selfish" and the experience of great suffering and trauma as the starting point to any spiritual journey.

Key words: leadership development, workplace spirituality, spirituality, U.K. workforce

Leadership development has existed throughout the written history of humankind, through charisma and transformation, skills acquired through training and experience, or rising up in times of crisis and challenges. Through philosophical tenets like "knowing oneself," leaders become aware of their environment and limitations and seek to change their behavior and establish a work-in-progress attitude toward intellectual growth and maturity. This level of awareness is in relation to the continuous effort dedicated to improvement (Wilson, 2013). Research has shown that integrating spirituality into professional practices fosters positive change in employment relationships and improves efficiency by promoting harmony, peacefulness, job satisfaction, and commitment, while also increasing productivity and reducing absenteeism and employee turnover (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Neal, 2001; Katilienė & Bakanauskienė, 2012). Despite its consideration, spirituality—or its perceived synonyms as a concept and practice—has been

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confused and misused to the point of casting doubt on our ability to measure and even study something as “vague” as spirituality (Eccles, 2013).

Neal (1998) argues that a growing social consciousness in business culture indicates a developing sense of corporate responsibility, which recognizes and incorporates all of these factors (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Despite these statements/intentions, there still is not a dominant paradigm or practical framework within which the workplace spirituality discussion could be carried out (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008).

Although there is no one widely accepted, all-encompassing, and conclusive definition of spirituality (Koenig et al., 2012), the researcher for this study chose the definition of *spirituality* as a conscious practice toward a better living (Bernal, 2001; Bierly et al., 2000), which was then used to build a conceptual framework. This definition was chosen because while studying spirituality as a conscious practice for improving the quality of life has been debated and thrived within areas like religious practices, psychological growth, and recovery programs, it still lacks formal consideration within the U.K. workplace, which is the focus of this study.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to provide an understanding of the challenges and opportunities of the consideration and application of spirituality in the workplace, for U.K. business leaders. In alignment with the purpose of this research, the following research question was introduced:

> *What challenges and opportunities do business leaders in the United Kingdom face in the consideration and application of spirituality in the workplace?*

Literature Review

The term and subsequent translations of spirituality first began to appear within the fifth century, but only became more common in the Middle Ages (Cohn, 2011). In biblical terms, *spirituality* means being enlivened and directed by the metaphysical God (Waaijman, 2002, 2007) while being motivated and compelled by the Holy Spirit, as opposed to a life that ignores and discards both influences (Wong & Vinsky, 2008).

During the 11th century, spirituality began to represent the mental aspect of life as opposed to the materialistic and sensory aspects of life (Waaijman, 2002, 2007). In the 13th century, spirituality attained both a psychological and social meaning (Waaijman, 2002, 2007). Socially, it represented the role and domain of the clergy, or as Waaijman (2002) notes, "the ecclesiastical against the temporary possessions, the ecclesiastical against the secular authority, [and] the clerical class against the secular class" (360–361). During the 17th and 18th centuries, *higher* and *lower* forms of spirituality were terms used to distinguish between the higher mental thought processes—or cognitive behavior (Tan, 2013; Waller et al., 2010)—and the lower or biological evolution of the physical form (Colonius & Earley, 2013; Labbé & Fobes, 2010).

After World War II, spirituality and religion separated (Waaijman, 2002, 2007), with spirituality leaning more toward a subjective experience (Saucier & Skrzypińska, 2006; Wills, 2009). The gulf between spirituality and religion became even more apparent in the 20th century with the arrival of the New Age and the rise of the secular New Thought Movement (Hanegraaff, 1999; Sheldrake, 2013; Waaijman, 2007).

The declining membership of religious organizations has also led to the growth of secularism in the Western world, which has escalated the current broader understanding and view of spirituality (Hogan, 2010). Secular spirituality accentuates humanistic ideas, behaviors, and moral character, where qualities such as love, compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, responsibility, harmony, and a concern for others (Dalai Lama, 2002) are all part of life and the human experience. This goes beyond a purely materialistic attitude of the world, without necessarily accepting belief in the supernatural and/or a divine being (Epps, 2012). So much so, the word *spiritual* has now been replaced and is more frequently used when the word *religious* was formerly employed (Gorsuch & Miller, 1999). This has only added to the confusion (Ivtzan et al., 2015), as those who now speak of spirituality often describe themselves as being spiritual but not religious, without really knowing the difference (Ammerman, 2013; Gibson, 2011; Oman, 2013; Pettit, 2014; Saucier & Skrzypińska, 2006; Wong & Vinsky, 2008).

Rather than accepting any historical (authoritarian) religious doctrine, which is based on pure faith in an unknown deity (King, 2012), personal well-being (both physical and psychological) is an all-important attribute of this contemporary spirituality (Houtman & Aupers, 2007), although modern-day thinking generally neither embraces nor even understands this approach (Schober, 2014).

Spirituality and the Workplace

To be able to confront any external competitive challenge, contemporary organizations must create work environments—through the creation of a culture that provides a sense of challenge and meaningfulness for all—that will help them attract, keep, and motivate a team of high-performing employees (Fry et al., 2007). This is now a priority issue (Fry et al., 2007). Therefore, any motivational theory framework for future leadership should consist of the components and processes that support and develop both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2007; Reiss, 2012). *Intrinsic motivation* takes the form of personal satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 1980); in other words: work itself is the reward (Fry et al., 2007; Wolcott & Betts, 2007). Separating work from reward in this way eliminates the motivation for labor, so motivation must be replaced with compulsion, which equates to business slavery (Broadhurst, 2021). *Extrinsic motivation* is the rewards given for any work done (Fry et al., 2007) through any or a combination of promotions, pay (and increases of), bonuses, cars, insurance benefits, and holidays that are given when either meeting or exceeding the expectations of others (Fry, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 1999).

While exploring the role of spirituality and self, Maslow (1964) realized that the existing theories of leadership and motivation were not adequate for the tasks of today's organizations (O'Connor & Yballe, 2007). Spirituality in the workplace is about experiencing real purpose and meaning at work, which goes beyond both pay (monies) and performance reviews (Marschke et al., 2011; Watson et al., 2004). Spirituality is about people sharing and experiencing some common attachment through attraction, empathy, and closeness with each other (Marschke et al., 2011).

Spirituality and Leadership

Attempts to link and integrate spirituality into current leadership theories have been made, but much of the spiritual literature suggests what leaders should do and should be, which can be highly misleading (Reed et al., 2011). Successful spiritual solutions may hold the key to more effective strategies. Influencing the shift from successful spiritual support programs into a workable framework that offers a fresh, new business perspective and a clear vocabulary would prepare leaders for the future (Karakas & Sarigollu, 2013; Newhall, 2011; Phipps, 2012; White, 2002).

Spirituality, as a construct, has been considered in the formation and effectiveness of servant leadership (Freeman, 2011). People centeredness is at the heart of *servant leadership,* the aim of which is to both selflessly serve and lead others (Argandoña, 2011; Fry et al., 2007; Hunter, 2004; Reed et al., 2011; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Sipe & Frick, 2015; Udani & Lorenzo-Molo, 2013). Existing empirical research on servant leadership supports the hypothesis that a servant leader must adopt the above universal agreement, as it is core to the whole spiritual archetype (Greenleaf, 1997). Since Greenleaf's (1997) writings on servant leadership, there has been little academic progress regarding this concept and proposal (Fry et al., 2007). Such a theory can take a person's breath away (Regan, 1987), so what is the truth? Can an individual be obliged to be truly selfless in ensuring well-being in all aspects of the world? (Rambachan, 2015; Smith, 2014). This is at the heart of the problem and the basic error in the understanding of the word *selfless* (Rambachan, 2015).

Intrinsic motivational factors are measured in terms of personal change (Fry, 2003), whereas extrinsic motivational factors are aimed more toward professional incentives to change (Fullan, 2003, 2014). This highlights the fundamental difference between spiritual support programs: servant leadership and organizational servant leadership (Fry, 2003; Fullan, 2003, 2014). What is important is addressing these differences (Avolio et al., 1991).

If spirituality is to be offered as being central to a new organizational framework (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008), then a totally authentic and unique approach to leadership theory is required (Fry, 2003; Gill, 2011; Haslam et al., 2010; Lloyd-Walker & Walker, 2011; Northouse, 2018; Wheatley, 2011). No business can function without capable leadership (Wilson, 1988). For this, a new generation of leadership (Carucci, 2006) needs to be sought out and then trusted to serve in a way that relates to the general economic conditions and increasing competition by encouraging both individual and group capability while seeking and capturing the willingness to contribute to the success of the organizations (Wilson, 1988).

Workplace motivation is one of the most important topics regarding influence and significance for both future economic business goals and general well-being (Griffin & Moorhead, 2011). Defining motivation is difficult. Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) alone reported and categorized 140 different definitions, including humans being simply motivated to increase pleasure and avoid any pain or, for the purpose of workplace motivation, having such strong desires for the material things money can buy that they are prepared to work long and unsociable hours, which ultimately means having less leisure time and quality in terms of a real meaningful life (Griffin & Moorhead, 2011; Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981).

Within the United Kingdom, the perception of spirituality is generally one of mysticism (Cush, 2010; King, 2005; McSherry & Jamieson, 2011). Spirituality is not, as the majority assumes, simply sitting cross-legged and saying “Ohm” while meditating (Caldwell, 1999; Holm, 2014). At the other extreme end of the spirituality spectrum is the highly controversial occult perspective (Ellison & Lee, 2010), including such practices as witchcraft, Ouija boards, tarot cards, and fortune telling (Davies & Freathy, 2014; Terzani, 2010). These views, interpretations, assumptions, and understandings must be changed through (re)education (Fiorenza, 2015; Mezirow, 1978; Pargament, 2011).

It is only through the building of fresh and new knowledge that the subject of spirituality will be taken seriously and so be effectively progressed (Fry et al., 2007; Krempl, 2014; Lakoff, 2014; Wong & Dillon, 2014). Therefore, going forward, a more clear and concise spiritual language is now required—one that goes beyond the current conventional understanding and meaning (Karakas & Sarigollu, 2013). Through experimentation, this would provide the opportunity to contribute to the existing literature and, by exploring new and creative academic approaches, build bridges that will encompass both successful spiritual practices and business leadership (Ibarra, 2015; Karakas & Sarigollu, 2013; Rangan et al., 2012).

The theoretical framework of this research was based on three theories: social exchange theory (Miles, 2012), Clark’s (1997b) theory of leadership, and Maslow’s

(1962) theory of self-actualization. *Social exchange theory* describes relationships as a series of exchanges aimed at balancing rewards and costs (Emerson, 1976) and social structures as being created by repeated exchanges and the ways in which these structures both constrain and enable individuals to influence and exercise power (Blau, 2017; Cook et al., 2013). Workplace spirituality is often associated with social exchange theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1961; Zhang, 2020), by providing an explanation of the relationship between job satisfaction and deviant workplace behavior among employees (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). According to Robinson and Bennett (1995), deviant behaviors vary along two dimensions: minor versus serious deviance, and interpersonal versus organizational deviance (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). Minor deviant behaviors include deliberately working slowly, leaving early, and showing favoritism (Ahmad & Omar, 2014; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Serious deviant behaviors include stealing from the company, abuse of privileges, and absenteeism (Ahmad & Omar, 2014). Servant leadership is also an approach that has long been academically tied to social exchange theory (Liden et al., 2008), but it has been largely void of clarification on how servant leader behaviors influence followers' well-being and associated organizational outcomes (Panaccio et al., 2015).

According to Clark's (1997b) theory of leadership, many leadership theories fall under the domain of philosophy, as they deal with knowledge, beliefs, concepts, attitudes, and values, primarily in the ways that leaders should treat others. Leadership styles describe the manner and approach of providing direction by implementing plans and motivating people (Clark, 2010). Leadership traits describe a person of honorable character (Clark, 2010). Ethos and leadership designate moving beyond the talk of ethics to actually displaying core beliefs (Clark, 2010). Motivational leadership allows the needs of your team to synchronize with the needs of your organization (Clark, 1997a). Leadership through diversity and inclusion creates an atmosphere in which all people feel valued and respected and have the same opportunities as others (Clark, 1997a). Change and leadership reshape an organization to meet a rapidly changing world (Clark, 1997a). A learning organization describes the level of performance and improvement that is needed in today's ever-changing environment, and it is one that requires both full-time and continuous learning (Clark, 1997a). Leadership through mentoring involves identifying the different types of mentoring, finding the appropriate mentors, and creating a mentorship program (Clark, 1997a).

The first two categories of Maslow's (1964) theory—hierarchy of needs (Maslow & Lewis, 1987), or physiological needs and safety needs (especially failure), and self-actualization (the fifth level)—describe the pattern through which human motivations generally move and, as such, can be successfully influenced by the promotion of spirituality in the workplace (Marschke et al., 2011; Maslow, 1964).

Utilizing these three theories, two constructs were determined: *self-actualization,* defined as a drive or need that is present in everyone (Giddens, 1991; Maslow, 1954, 1962), and *self-realization,* defined as the fulfilment of one's own potential and possibilities (Ryff, 2014; Yeoman, 2014). Considering these constructs, the previous theories were developed for the purpose of this research and, in doing so, the theoretical framework of this study was established (see Figure 1).

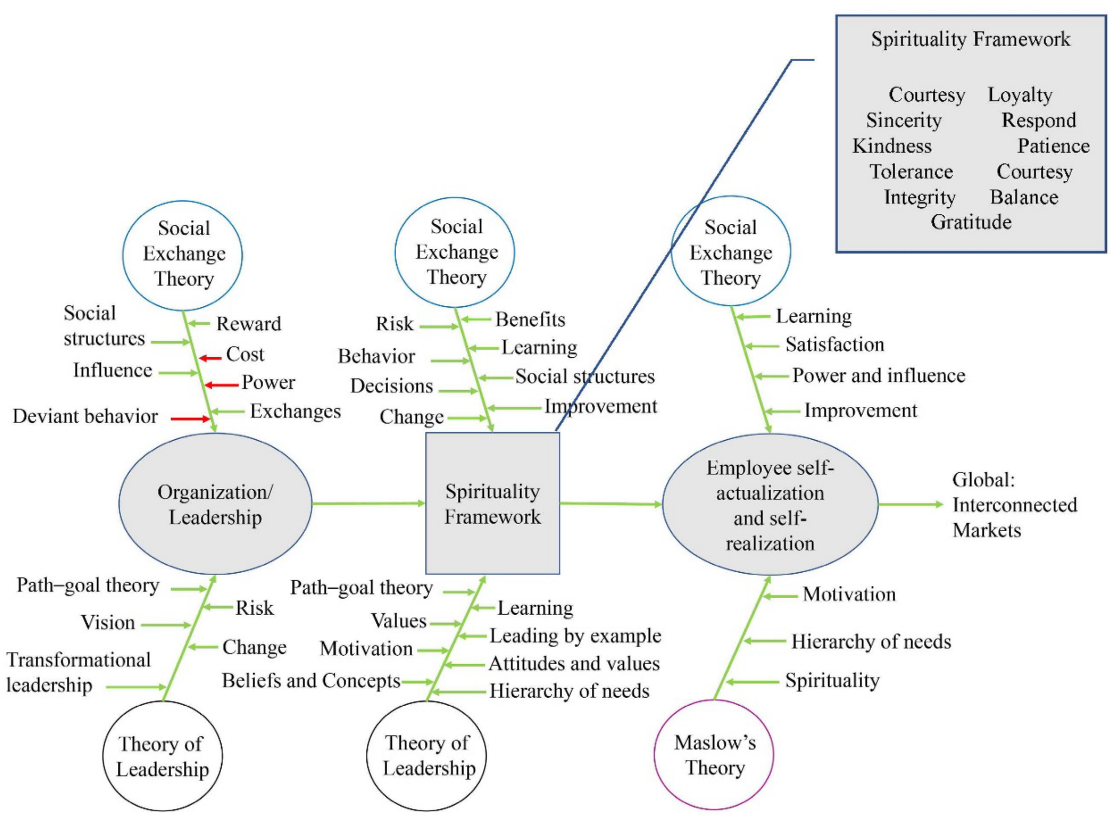

Figure 1. Spirituality framework

Method

To address the purpose of this research, a qualitative methodology was followed. The language of the qualitative methodology is marked by such words as *exploration, meaning, naturalistic, thematic,* and *understanding.* The choice of research methodology (and in trying to locate a clear epistemological grounding for further research) was further supported by the need for additional philosophical and psychological connotations in relation to the subject of spirituality. The qualitative approach emphasizes the need to gather data that reflected the interactions and experiences of individuals and communities in relation to the research question, so it lends itself to similar theoretical frameworks such as social exchange theory (Miles, 2012). In conjunction with social exchange theory, a qualitative mode of spiritual enquiry was also deemed appropriate for answering the given research question, as it yielded data that provided depth and detail to create a clearer understanding of both the phenomena and experiences that are associated with the actual practice of spirituality (Miles, 2012).

To answer the proposed research question, a multiple-case study research design was adopted. The multiple-case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence ranging from documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations (Maxwell, 2012; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2002; Shank, 2006). The researched multiple-case studies were used to identify and explore multiple sources of real-life, contemporary, bounded systems in which case description and themes were produced to gain and present an in-depth understanding of the subject of spirituality and its application and practicality across all organizational aspects. The multiple-case study included multiple units (individuals), which allowed for comparison of themes (where issues were organized chronologically). Similarities and differences were also used to refine theoretical constraints to build a model. In terms of intent, collective and/or multiple convenience sampling showed the different perspectives (Yin, 2011).

The researcher's intention was to "obtain the broadest range of information and perspectives on the subject of study" (Kuzel, 1992, 94) against "those that [would] yield the most relevant and plentiful data" (Yin, 2011, 88). Purposive sampling was identified as the preferred sampling method for the purpose of this research. To test "rival explanations," contrary evidence was also sought and offered to avoid biasing the study (Yin, 2011). For the purposes of this research, a sample size of eight participants was initially considered and/or until saturation was achieved (Yin, 2011). Together with being in an active professional career in the United Kingdom, participants were identified and recruited from spiritual support groups, business articles, and via referral—a snowball approach.

Within this study, the researcher was the main research instrument (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2002), and an interview protocol was the chosen instrument of inquiry (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2011). An interview protocol was designed based on the literature and in alignment with the purpose and research question of this study to cover all phases of this investigative interview (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Turner, 2010). Each interview had two parts. The first part captured the participant's demographics, while the second part captured the participant's answers to the subject matter questions. A script was developed, together with prompts, that acted as a guide to what the researcher said before, during, and at the conclusion of each of the interviews (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). All interviews were carried out at a quiet place of the participants' choosing where there were no interruptions (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

The development of the interview questions was initially guided by the literature review and refined based on feedback from the team's members and an external evaluator. To further validate the interview protocol, three test interviews were conducted as a pilot study (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). This allowed for the determination of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the interview questions (Nyström, 2009). Upon completion and transcription of the first two test interviews, following those adaptions, the protocol was tested with the third interview. At that point, it was determined that the revised protocol was suitable for this study, and the changes to the interview protocol were duly integrated into the full study. The final interview protocol contained six main questions and six probing follow-up questions.

The field notes and interview transcripts were coded and organized into nodes with NVivo 11 Plus, a text analysis software. For the data analysis method, the researcher identified word frequencies and produced node matrices (Yin, 2011). This evidence then supported the thematic analysis that followed. Those items that seemed to be essentially similar were assigned the same code. This "higher conceptual level" enabled the sorting of items obtained from different records in different ways, such as into similar and dissimilar groups. Once sorted, the related features of these groups were then examined with the intention of gaining suitable and further insight into them (Yin, 2011).

Within this qualitative research study, reliability and validity were not treated separately; instead, terminology such as *credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness* were utilized (Golafshani, 2003). To ensure reliability within this qualitative research study, the examination of trustworthiness was considered crucial, as it "lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability" (Seale, 1999, 467). Also embodied within this citation is the idea of replicability of the results or observations (Golafshani, 2003), and together, precision, credibility, and transferability provided the lenses that were used to evaluate the findings of this study (Glesne & Peshkin, 2006; Golafshani, 2003; Hoepfl, 1997; Winter, 2000).

Two approaches to validity that were utilized within this study were respondent validation and triangulation (Torrance, 2012). Respondent validation involved returning the transcripts to the respondents to validate their content (Bryman, 2008; Polhill et al., 2010). Feedback was also sought on the study's preliminary and/or emerging findings from the participants who were interviewed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

To control bias and establish valid propositions, triangulation was used for both evaluation (Golafshani, 2003; Mathison, 1988) and addressing trustworthiness (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2011). In addition to the interview transcripts' reflective and reflexive observations, organizational reports and past research (Nyström, 2009; Wahyuni, 2012) were considered as sources of information.

Assumptions considered for this study concern the choice of qualitative methodology selected for the purpose of this study, the multiple-case study research design, purposive sampling, interviews as the main data collection method, and the thematic analysis of the data. In addition, the population being represented was the "right size" and the participants were suitably qualified to provide enough (honest and accurate) information about spirituality and the positions that they held that were representative of management and leadership roles within the U.K. workplace. The assumption was also made that the instrument the researcher used effectively captured the required information.

Potential limitations include the sample size and the data collection environment. As the current study took place in a natural setting and only had access to certain people, documents, and data, this study may not be easy to replicate (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Simon & Goes, 2011). It also contained elements that the researcher could not control, like limited geographical reach for the study's sample, finding qualified participants, and using an instrument that might not be as accurate and reliable as what is required. This also infers that this study's findings cannot be generalized or extended to a larger population with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses could offer (Holloway & Wheeler, 2013; Yin, 2013).

Results

Saturation was achieved with semi-structured interviews of 11 participants, who were either leaders or managers within their chosen profession. Demographic information was collected for each participant, including age range, gender, educational qualifications, role and organization type, and number of direct/indirect employees responsible for, together with confirmation of their spirituality belief and religious positioning. Each participant was also provided a unique identifier/alias from P1 to P11 (see Table 1 on the next page).

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Participant Identifier	Age	Gender	Highest Academic Qualification	Organization/ Department	No. of Direct/ Indirect Reports	Spiritual	Religious	12-Step	Years in Position (to 2018)
P1	31–40	Female	GCSEs	Managing Director/Owner: Drainage Company	22	Yes	No	Yes	11
P2	31–40	Female	Degree in Health & Social Care	Managing Director: Sub Post Office	4	Yes	No	No	6
P3	41–50	Female	Master's in Leisure Management	Two Directorships: Sports and Neuro Rehab	9+	Yes	Yes	Yes	19
P4	51–60	Male	A Level	Managing Director/Owner: Haulage & Distribution	45	Yes	No	Yes	27
P5	41–50	Female	BA Honors in Communication Media	Managing Director/Owner: Digital Marketing Company	4+	Yes	No	Ex	18
P6	41–50	Male	Site Manager Training	Contracts Manager: Construction & Utilities	30+	Yes	Yes	No	18
P7	51–60	Male	Business HNC in Financial Planning	Life Coach: Director	4	Yes	No	No	16
P8	41–50	Male	PhD in Organic Chemistry	Senior Scientist Researcher: Global Pharmaceutical Company, Analytical Department	3	No	No	Yes	20
P9	51–60	Female	Level 5 Management	Director: Childcare	17	Yes	No	Yes	26
P10	51–60	Male	Master's in Engineering and Computer Science from Cambridge	Business Angel. Entrepreneur & Technology Investor	1+	Yes	No	Ex	27
P11	41–50	Female	Certified in Art Intelligence Coaching	Director: Spiritual Change Agent/ Catalyst for Change	1+	Yes	No	No	25

The almost equal number of male and female participants suggests no bias toward gender while the age range is suggestive of mature participants with presumably adequate life-experiences. Three of the participants used to be religious but no longer were, two were both religious and spiritual, and six had never been religious. The distribution of participants' educational levels included: doctoral, master's, and bachelor's degrees and diplomas. Roles and responsibilities ranged from managers, entrepreneurs, business owners, and directors to managing directors, as either employers or employees.

Word frequency estimations, word trees, thematic analysis, and node matrices were performed on the subject matter part of the transcripts and the collected supporting documentation. The three most repeated and relevant words (see Table 2 on the next page) were *people, think,* and *working,* with 180, 159, and 137 occurrences respectively. This finding is both relevant and significant, as this is a clear indication that the answers were well aligned with the interview protocol questions regarding spirituality and the U.K. workplace. Of interest here is the fact that the words *God, religious,* and *religion* did not prominently feature in the top 20 (or even within the top 100) most-frequent words.

Table 2: Top 20 Most-Frequent Words

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
people	6	180	1.87	peoples’
think	5	159	1.65	thinking, thinks
working	7	137	1.42	work, work’, worked, works
spirituality	12	95	0.99	spiritual, spiritualism
something	9	70	0.73	something’
feel	4	58	0.60	feeling, feelings, feels
different	9	56	0.58	differently
happen	6	56	0.58	happened happening, happens
life	4	56	0.58	life’
thought	7	56	0.58	thoughtful, thoughts
time	4	55	0.57	times, timings
company	7	54	0.56	companies
help	4	54	0.56	helped, helpful, helping, helps
want	4	53	0.55	wanted, wanting
good	4	52	0.54	’good, goodness
always	6	49	0.51	
laugh	5	47	0.49	laughed, laughs
need	4	47	0.49	needed, needing, needs
years	5	45	0.47	year, years’
calling	7	44	0.46	call, called, ‘calling’

Text search queries were run on the top three words of the frequency matrix and displayed as word trees to reveal the contexts in which the word appeared. For example, with respect to *people,* the most frequent word (see Figure 2), the spiritual support program participants all asserted that they had been, as summarized by P5, “impacted by other people hurting them and treating them badly,” which consequently led them to “suffer.” The consensus throughout the transcripts was that they were, as P5 expressed, “working in the big companies, with people who are very driven—but mainly driven through fear.” She added that it was “horrible and demotivating,” and that this way of working “is not progressive or productive for anyone.” For P11, in a work situation, it is “very, very helpful that you are not triggered all the time by other people and what other people are doing.” P8 noted that “by setting the standard for other people to work by, [it] ultimately means the work environment can be less stressful and a bit happier, so more productive.” P7 responded that “I help other people, because if we help others—

we will help ourselves." P8 replied: "I help other people through my shares, and I also take on board other people's shares, however ranged that they are, so I can learn and continue to help and, in turn, this keeps the drive for my self-reflection."

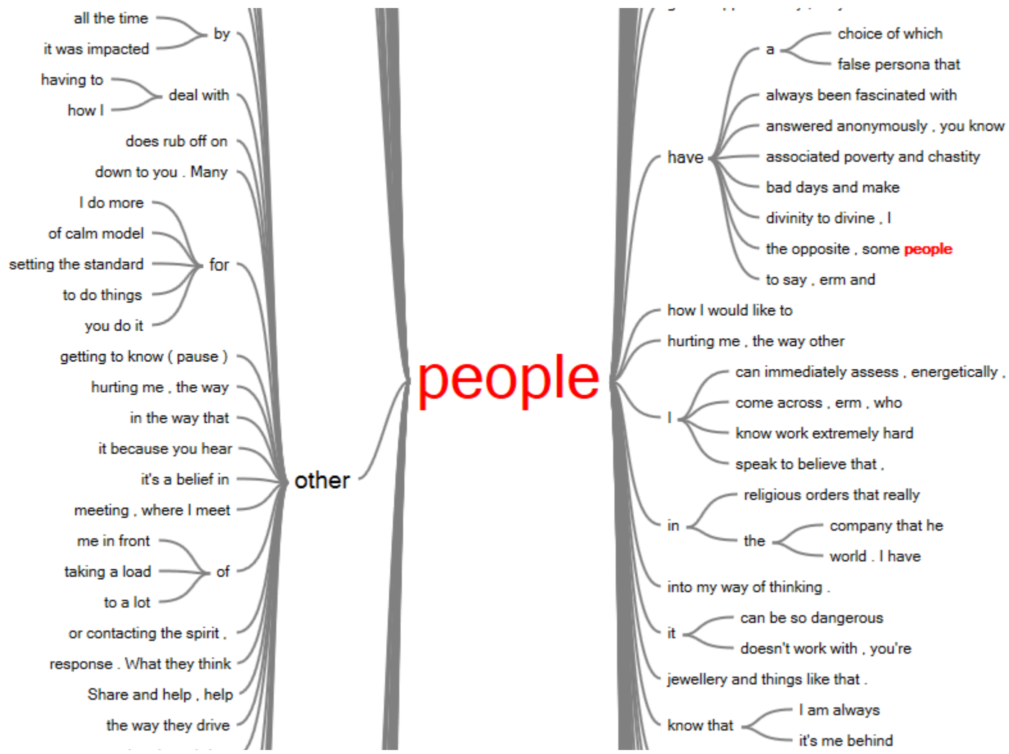

Figure 2. Word tree section of the term "people"

Hierarchical charts were also used to display data as a set of nested rectangles that represent the amount of coding at each node. The size of the rectangles indicates the number of nodes coded or amount of coding references. The rectangles are scaled so the sizes of the rectangles should be considered in relation to each other, rather than as an absolute number. Larger areas are displayed at the top left of the chart; smaller rectangles are displayed toward the bottom right. Figure 3 shows that *Question 5: How do you apply/express your spiritual practices and beliefs at work?* provided the most responses/data (which is in line with the purpose of this research). This was followed by *Probe Question 5c: How has your spirituality evolved over your career?* All of the participants noted that they were driven to (positive) change after suffering and consequently finding spirituality, from which their careers then evolved/moved forward, i.e., self-realization.

The next column contains four additional interview protocol questions—that are all equal in relation to each other. *Question 6: Before we conclude this interview, is there anything that you feel you would like to add/share?* For the 36% of participants who answered this question, the consensus was that spirituality is a huge subject and the more aware of it you become, the more you realize what you don't know. *Probe Question 5b: How does your spirituality help you with your leaders, managers, peers and/or customers?* All 11 participants responded to this question by referring to the importance of authenticity. *Question 4: How would you define or what does your spirituality mean to you?* Here, the amount of responses/data provided is a direct relation to the fact that spirituality has no one recognized definition. *Question 2: Do you belong to formal spiritual belief systems?* P2 and P6 did not belong to a belief system. Of the remaining nine participants, P5, P7, P8, P10, and P11 (56%) believed that their meetings/groups were informal. P1, P3, P4, and P9 (44%) believed that they did belong to a formal system.

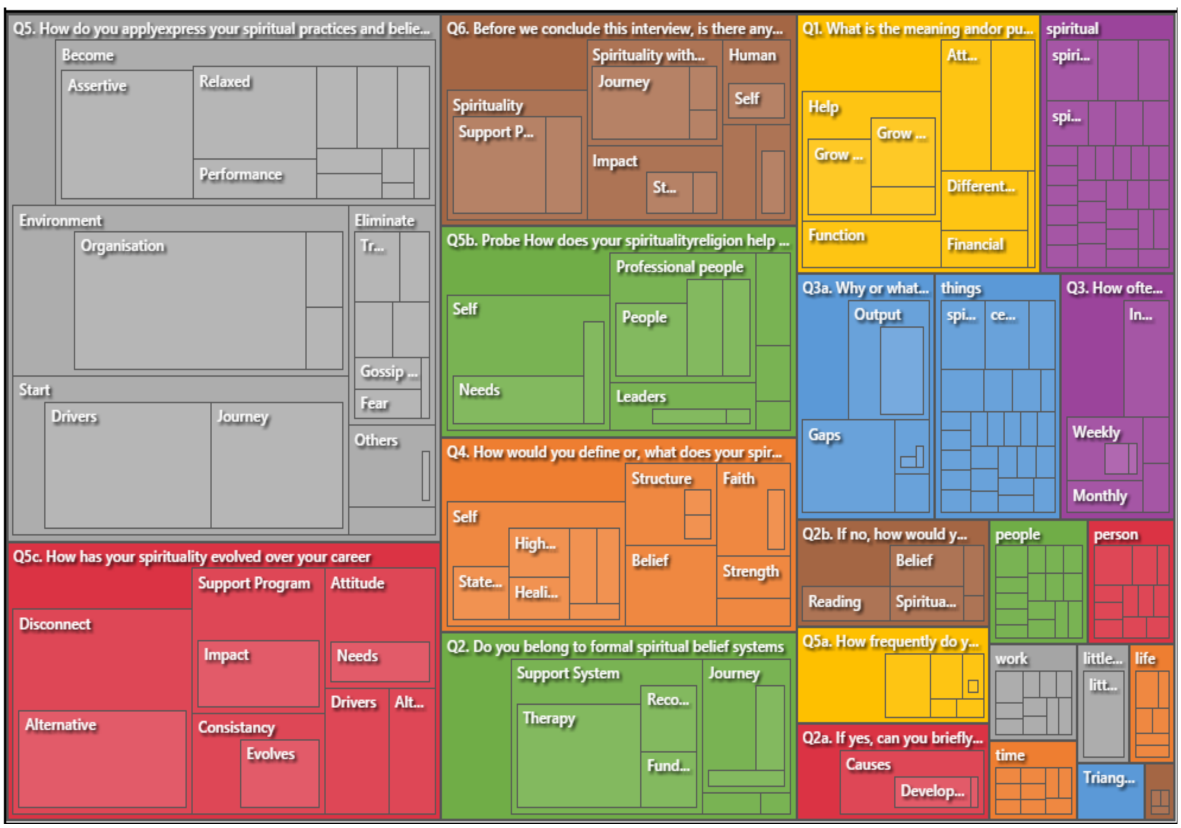

Figure 3. Hierarchical chart

Cluster analysis offered a visual way to view similarities and differences in the data by grouping sources that shared similar words and attribute values or were coded similarly. The horizontal dendrogram of Figure 4 reveals a hierarchical tree consisting of the study's 11 participants, who are situated at different points along two branches. Those who provided similar content in their transcripts are clustered close together and share the same (leaf) color within the diagram. For example, P1 and P8 are clustered closely together (filtered in NVivo 11 Plus at a fine level of similarity at 0.3) and share the same branch with P7 and P11, who are also clustered closely together. Analyzing their respective transcript data as a cluster node shows similarities in their attitudes toward both work and spirituality, as well as the application of spirituality in their everyday lives. The dendogram shows that although there are varying degrees of separation, there are no polar opposites or dissimilarities. The various responses are considered parallel, in that the participants share similar attributes and values between them and so suitably progress—for the purpose of this study—the subject matter concerning spirituality.

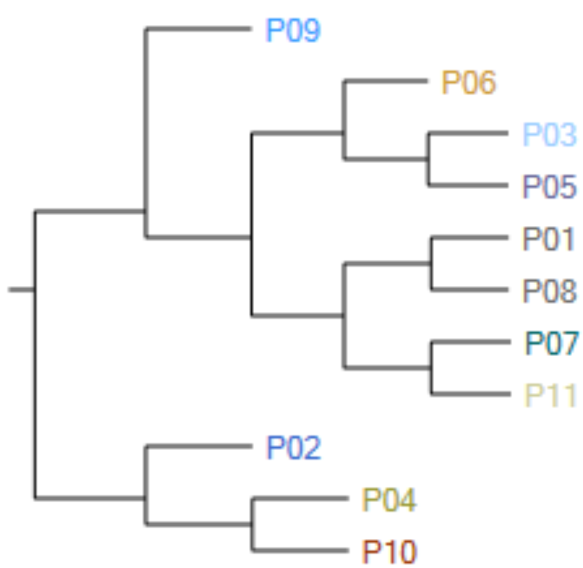

Figure 4. Hierarchical tree of the study's participants

A sentiment analysis of the transcripts and the consequential scoring of such were used to divide sentences into their separate parts of speech, and the software highlighted the groups of words that convey sentiment and identified the various entities associated with them. These groups were then assigned positive, negative, or neutral sentiment scores and weighted by the degree of sentiment expressed by the participants. The sentiment scores were then aggregated on an entity level. Further analysis was conducted, while also taking into consideration the context in which these words were given during each of the individual interviews. In this way, the raw text was turned into structured data, which allowed for more generic statistical analysis, shedding light both on the specific and the more general sentiment of the opinions provided by the participants.

A thematic analysis was conducted to identify persistent themes in relation to the research question of the study. A core theme was that all 11 participants associated spirituality with a major crisis and trauma that they had experienced in their lives. P1 stated that "I was desperately in need of help," while P8 expressed that "it seems odd that a major trauma is the door opener to spirituality and that, in turn, gives you the guidance that you need in all areas of your life." However, P1 testified that "just because I have this program, it doesn't mean that bad things aren't still going to happen to me." The results also revealed that the construct of the self and selfishness is both persistent and of principle importance throughout all 11 participants' experiences. P8 stipulated that "spirituality is, first and foremost, learning about yourself and coming to terms with who and what you are, through actually realizing and taking responsibility for your own self-reflection and self-development." P3 agreed, noting "you have to do your own soul searching," or self-actualization. All 11 participants also identified that believing in something higher than themselves is of principle importance in spirituality. As P1 stated, "I don't know why everybody gets into such a flap over numbers, business, and money, as I have a belief that my higher power will take care of everything and we will all be all right."

An additional theme emerged from seven of the spiritual support program attendees, who identified that the only thing that they had control over was themselves. As P1 testified, "that's hard to do when you're a control freak like me, just constantly trying to control everyone and to stop bad things from happening." P8 stated that "I now feel a lot happier only being in control of me and my emotions," and P9 noted that "I am no longer a (chronic) people pleaser—no longer putting others before myself; now I listen to only what I want to do." For the same participants, fellowship, sharing, and listening helped them achieve balance in their own lives. As P1 explains:

> There is no advice given, so it's basically a self-help group and the person that I am is all together, put together by me and my choices and through trial and error; by throwing unhealthy behaviors out and putting other healthy behaviors in their place.

Interestingly, learning that doing nothing is the right thing to do was also identified. As P9 testified:

> By doing nothing, I am definitely a lot calmer now. Whereas at one time, I would jump into the situation with both feet without thinking, now I sit back before I say or do anything and . . . think about what the consequences would be to me—as a person!"

Foremost, all of these previous assertations and testimonials are, as P11 asserted, "the core drivers of spiritual growth."

All 11 participants passively measured their own spiritual progress/growth against different criteria. Through direct experience, seven participants specifically cited managers and leaders as being responsible for the dysfunction and unhappiness (i.e., suffering) in their respective U.K. organizations. P5 stated:

> Working in the big companies and with people who are very driven . . . the way they drive other people is through fear. I know how horrible it felt for me, how demotivating it is; it's not progressive or productive for anyone.

P11 testified:

> You're thrown into a situation where you've got no choice who you're working with and for—somebody who is a complete and utter idiot. A manager has a power, in a way, that they can say that your survival depends on me. This hierarchy of power goes on in every structure, and I couldn't live with that imbalance. . . . I would be living a lie in that falsified situation; because most businesses are there to make a profit, and that is their only reason for being.

With respect to the meaning and purpose of work (see Figure 5), six participants had recently shifted from their previous career positions to jobs within smaller, more flexible, balanced, and communicative family-friendly organizations and work functions. As P5 expressed, "I'm just not in the rat race anymore." Six participants identified as "always" practicing their spirituality at work, but five of these participants had to leave their previous jobs to do so. As P11 explained, "Spirituality is my life, so I can never separate it out from work." Ten participants said that their spirituality contained traits that are opposite to those experienced in a U.K. business environment. As P11 noted, "when you are seen and told that you are going to be the next great leader, when they finally get there, they haven't then got anybody actually saying to them, well you're now being an arse." All of the participants confirmed that spirituality provided them with the opportunity to evaluate their lives. P5 noted that it is about asking "'What do I want?' as opposed to 'What do I have to do?' It was the strength to think 'What do I really want to do?' rather than how much money can I earn and how successful can I be seen to be." As P7 stated, "I want to get up in the morning knowing that I'm going to be helping somebody; rather than going to a job, watching the clock, and wondering when my next break or when my next holiday will be."

With respect to the benefits of spirituality in the workplace, a core theme revealed by all of the participants were that spirituality provides a balance between self-examination and associated positive activity. As P5 stated:

> I am not a new or a different person, I'm the person who I have now chosen to be—I am not a person that has been formed or shaped by any other adults or people—just me and my choices.

In an additional example of this self-realization, P1 said that "people noticed it and liked it, so the change in me must have been huge!"

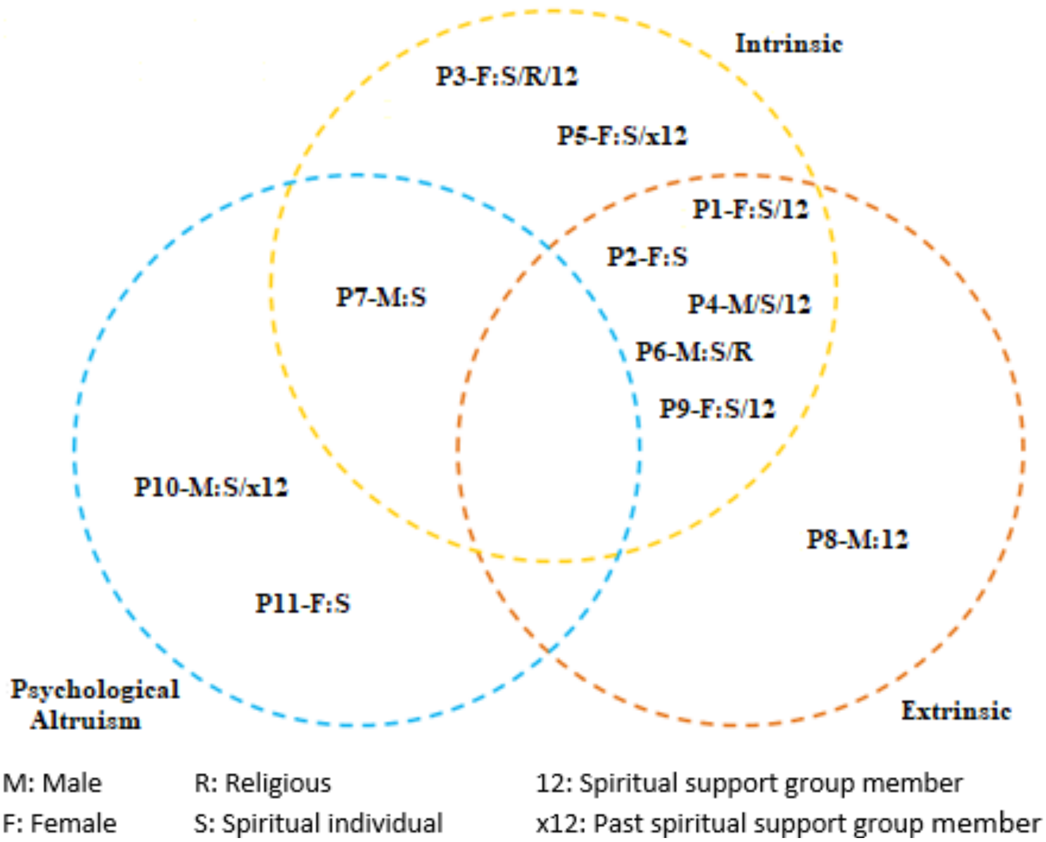

Figure 5. Venn diagram of participants' meaning and purpose of work

Discussion

A significant finding relating to the research question of the study is that all 11 participants associated spirituality with a major crisis and trauma that they had experienced in their lives. This agrees with past research in which the starting point to any spiritual journey is a heart-wrenching dissatisfaction with life situations that, in turn, cause suffering (Waaijman, 2002, 2007). All of the participants provided new, but vague, definitions to their perception of spirituality (Koenig et al., 2012). This aligns with past research in which defining the term *spirituality* is difficult (Koening et al., 2012). Existing research suggests that it is pointless, even impossible, to try to measure spirituality and that it should not even be attempted (Eccles, 2013; Koenig, 2008; Koenig et al., 2012; Moberg, 2002; Neal & Biberman, 2003; Ratnakar & Nair, 2012).

All 11 participants measured their own growth/progress of their spirituality against different criteria. P11 was seeking transcendence, whereas the other

10 participants were seeking a more meaningful, purposeful, and recognized quality of life in both their personal and professional lives. This finding/requirement aligns with previous research in which the levels of motivation and ability of the workforce are two factors that can be influenced by free thinking and progressive spiritual practices, which will affect both the overall level of productivity in Western economies and the quality of work (Griffin & Moorhead, 2011; Nicolae et al., 2013).

Spiritual maturity is defined as meaning "what ails them" (Wilson, 2013) by "knowing oneself"; all 11 participants referred to their own ailments. As P1 testified, "I wasn't as great as I thought I was, and actually, I was desperately in need of help." Similarly, P5 gave this example: "Working in the big companies—working with people who are very driven . . . the way they drive other people is through fear." P11 expressed that when we have a "fear of not being enough, not . . . [having] a status in society . . . we can either move further and deeper into fear, which means self-destruction, or we can move into the vibration of positive energy." This aligns with past research in that it is not the external circumstances that destroy the individual, but the way people think (Chesnut, 2010).

Spirituality as a construct is considered within servant leadership (Freeman, 2011) as selflessly serving others (Argandoña, 2011; Fry et al., 2007; Hunter, 2004; Reed et al., 2011; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Sipe & Frick, 2015; Udani & Lorenzo-Molo, 2013). All seven of the spiritual support program members were both taught to be and so considered themselves to be selfish, with the emphasis on purely looking after themselves. This principle agrees with Dyer's (2006) sentiment that "we cannot give away, what we do not have ourselves" (37). All 11 participants strongly and ultimately believed in a higher power (Ruse, 2010). This clarifies past research that reveals that despite the specific use of the word *God,* spiritual support programs are not based on any specific deity or divine being but the belief of a higher power (Cornish & Wade, 2010), which is interpreted as anything or anyone with which or whom there is a strongly felt connection to (Colonius & Earley, 2013; Fry, 2003; Giddens, 2013; Phipps, 2012). The seven participants who attended a spiritual support program stated that there was no advice given and it was only through both sharing and listening with and to others that they then found balance in their own activities; through learning and self-help, they changed their own lives. This overall attitude and approach within any of the previous contexts would not provide any degree of confidence in driving any organizational change (Eccles, 2013; Ferrazzi, 2014).

Ten participants stipulated that it had been and was difficult to recognize both themselves and others as authentic humans. As P3 articulated, “ego can go away! By keeping it real, [it] helps your staff to know that you’re a human too. If you are able to admit to your mistakes and take responsibility for things, that’s a good thing.” P11 exclaimed: “How boring it would be if we were all the same! Nothing in nature—nothing is reproduced, everything is different, and it’s the same with human beings.” To be effective, future leaders need practical tools for engaging and managing the affective, visceral dimensions of human needs, values, and morals to meet present-day strategic business goals (Thompson, 2010). P11 shared an experience:

> The CEO said, ‘Are you questioning my authority?’ and I said ‘No, I’m just questioning your morals actually!’ So, I got dismissed for wearing a black bra under a white shirt. I didn’t even possess a black bra! So, speaking the truth and being authentic is absolutely vital if we are going to achieve harmony in the workplace.

Through the exploration and identification of challenges, strengths, and truths (Clements & Koenig, 2014) regarding the concept of spirituality, the opportunities that presented themselves regarding the application of spirituality within the U.K. workplace are practical and potentially meaningful (Adedoyin et al., 2014; Galanter, 2014; Karakas & Sarigollu, 2013; Richard & Psyd, 2012; Thompson; 2010). P11 presented a new definition of *spirituality* as “an awareness that you are on a pathway that it is expanding and that you are moving into different areas of yourself, so it is really becoming aware of who you are and all of what your potential is.” This aligns with past research that argues that, going forward, spirituality needs new definitions that provide a more inclusive terminology and bridge/encompass spirituality and business leadership (Karakas & Sarigollu, 2013). Ten participants had taken practical action and transfigured themselves (Chomsky, 1986; Foucault, 2005; Jenzen & Munt, 2016) from previous (pre-spiritual) unsatisfying motivational sectors to sectors that reflected their (current) spiritual transformational states, mindsets, and situations. As an opportunity, this shift is regarded as being both pragmatic and relativistic (Knorr-Cetina, 2013).

The findings from this study suggest that providing the opportunity to practice workplace spirituality increases a higher sense of both service and personal growth and maximizes conceptions of self-worth and inherent uniqueness, which are motivators themselves (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Hawley & Hawley, 1993), so this could potentially increase productivity and reduce absenteeism and employee turnover (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003; Neal, 2001).

All 11 participants expressed that their newfound confidence and assertiveness had been gained from their spirituality. In all examples, this directly contradicts Eccles' (2013) past research in which spiritual support program members avoided confrontations and particular stressful and/or any risky situations (Eccles, 2013). P2 and P6 did not belong to a belief system, but of the remaining nine participants, P5, P7, P8, P10, and P11 believed that their meetings/groups were informal. All nine of these participants also confirmed that their respective spiritual fellowships, meetings, and groups were not religious. This aligns with past research and so concurs that, despite most modern-day beliefs, spiritual support fellowships are not religious, semi-religious, a thinly veiled religion, or even a covert religion; they are not even a cult (Dossett, 2013; Hamilton, 2000; Sheldrake, 2013).

Much of what has been written points to an age-old perception and belief of achieving perfection (Davies & Freathy, 2014; Horsburgh, 1997; Terzani, 2010; Waaijman, 2010). P5 testified that "looking at everything through rose-tinted glasses, where everything is going to be amazing . . . I wasn't comfortable with that, so for me, it's just a natural progression—learning from the way I was dealing with situations, whatever they were." P1 determined that "every time I go [to a spiritual support group], I get a little bit better, a little bit stronger, and a bit happier." This agrees with the notion that of acceptance— the individual will never be "finished'; it's all about progress, not perfection (Wilson, 2013).

An objective of the study was the identification of elements that could be incorporated into a practical framework for the application of spirituality in the U.K. workplace. In that respect, it is not possible to "give" people spirituality (Jonson, 1610/1967), but it is true that what the mind can conceive, it can achieve, always providing you the tools for the job (Hill, 2011). The 11 participants cited seven different supporting networks for their spirituality including Al-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), ad hoc/independent group gatherings, spiritual therapists, and meditation. This supports past research of the urge to bridge the void between professionals, researchers, business leaders, and the largest self-help movement in the world (Bristow-Braitman, 1995), bringing with it a willingness to integrate spiritual elements in U.K. businesses (Karakas, 2010). This harmonizes with the spiritual principle: "Let's not louse it up with Freudian complexes and things that are only interesting to the scientific mind" (Bob, 1980, 338). Tables 3, 4, and 5 provide a summary of these results.

Table 3: Issues and Challenges to the Application of Spirituality Within U.K. Organizations

Issues/Challenges		No. of Responses
Issue 1	• It is all about being selfish.	10
Issue 2	• Great suffering and trauma brought them to spirituality	10
Issue 3	• Managers and leaders • Action not words	11
Challenge 1	• Definition of spirituality • Measuring spirituality • Evolution • 12 steps • Spiritual maturity • Spiritual awakening • Life is in the now. • Progress • Happiness • Free from addiction	11
Challenge 2	• Motivation	11
Challenge 3	• Something higher is out there.	11
Challenge 4	• Powerless over everything • Hard to let go	9
Challenge 5	• Confused with spiritualism • There is such a long way to go for spirituality to be accepted in business.	8

Table 4: Benefits of Applying Spirituality Within U.K. Organizations

Benefits		No. of Responses
Benefit 1	• Develops both self and others (via multiplier effect).	11
Benefit 2	• Freeing the suffering: It absolutely works.	11
Benefit 3	• Establishes functional and healthy relationships both at work and at home.	11
Benefit 4	• No fear/stress/conflict	11
Benefit 5	• Self-help program	10
Benefit 6	• Spirituality is not religious: It is a (multicultural) philosophy.	11
Benefit 7	• Commercially astute • Influential and promoter positions • Acceptance	11

Table 5: Recommendations for Integrating Spirituality Into U.K. Organizations

Suggestions		No. of Responses
Suggestion 1	• Action, not just words • Be human. Lead by example. Ask self-effacing questions. • Be authentic: Display the difference between right and wrong.	11
Suggestion 2	• Help toward setting up/having access to fellowships and groups. • Keep an open mind. • Provide a safe, confidential space. • You share, you listen, and that's it! • Measure: Serenity	10
Suggestion 3	• Remove direct bosses and empower/trust the team with business initiatives.	11
Suggestion 4	• Seek out those who have suffered and are suffering and send appropriate spiritual support program literature.	11
Suggestion 5	• Creating awareness: Display and distribute spiritual support program literature. • Read!	11
Suggestion 6	• Provide access to a spiritual (lay)person to act as coach and therapist. • Develop human capital through the multiplier/ricochet effect.	11
Suggestion 7	• Offer and promote meditation practices. • Provide: Time for 2x 10 mins daily meditation (as opposed to mindfulness) sessions. • Start an internal spiritual support program/fellowship.	9

Considering the preceding analysis and abstracting the findings of this study (Tables 3, 4, and 5), a conceptual framework for the application of spirituality in the workplace has been developed (see Figure 6). Although the participants' spirituality began and so was principally motivated by suffering, their spiritual journey actually started with self-awareness, or the conscious knowledge of one's own character, feelings, motives, and desires to do "something" to improve their particular situation (Cooley, 2017; Stevenson & Waite, 2011). The individual considers spirituality as the way to end their suffering, and by keeping an open mind and self-actualization, they then seek the appropriate spiritual attitudes/ practice(s) that would be the most apt in supporting their life recovery.

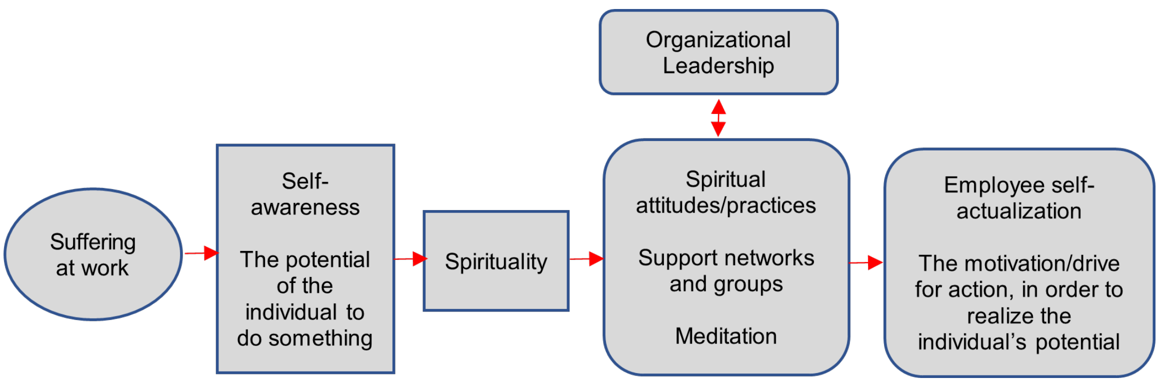

Figure 6. Conceptual framework for the application of spirituality in the workplace

Through this help and support, the individual comes to understand both their own feelings and their own particular wants and needs, and while balancing these against their own intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, an equilibrium between all of these emotional and physical factors is sought. The next stage of the process is the actual crux of the "required action" itself, wherein through self-actualization and (self-)realization—the motivation to fulfill one's own potential (Dweck, 2017; Ryff, 2014; Yeoman, 2014)—the individual has both faith and trust that their (newly found) spiritual attitudes and activities will produce a step toward a more meaningful purpose and quality of life (Galanter, 2014). Courage is required at this part of the individual's spiritual transfiguration, as this stage of the framework entails a fundamental reconstruction and (re)testing of the individual's own core beliefs and values, but consequently leads to the individual's own brand of authenticity. Through this authentic leadership (but not in a hierarchical sense—in this context meaning learned), an individual continues to attend their respective spiritual network systems with the intention of sharing their experiences, giving support via comfort and hope to those individuals who have arrived in their principal suffering phase and to those who are further behind in their recovery than they are. Interestingly, "giving" and "sharing" in this manner also helps an individual balance and progress within their own spiritual journey (Davis, 1971).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Among the issues and challenges of spirituality in the workplace identified by the study is its description as being of a selfish nature—with all seven of the spiritual support program members specifically taught to be selfish through their spiritual support fellowships. This was significant, as it is a new contribution to what is primarily the domain of and contradictory to servant leadership (Freeman, 2011; Udani & Lorenzo-Molo, 2013). A second issue that was identified and is consistent with existing research was the experience of great suffering and trauma as the starting point to any spiritual journey (Waaijman, 2007). In relation to managers and leaders, a recurring issue was the growing numbers of dissatisfied workers, who are increasingly complaining of bullying, harassment, and poor relations with managers (Marques, 2010; Robbins et al., 2013).

One of the primary challenges that was identified by this research is that all 11 participants had difficulty in and different ways of defining spirituality, as well as different ways of measuring it. This finding is consistent with attempts continuing to clearly define spirituality (Ratnakar & Nair, 2012), which also includes the difficulty of and limitations in measuring spirituality (Eccles, 2013).

A prime benefit for applying spirituality within U.K. organizations is its contribution to the development of the self and others. What seems to be a spiritual holistic phenomenon is, in reality, an individual spiritual phenomenon (Davis, 1971), as the participants did not speak directly about their spirituality in public, but by displaying their spiritual values and behaviors, they subjectively and unintentionally affected the people around them.

Another benefit that was evident to all 11 participants is the positive contribution of spirituality to all their issues (Dossett, 2013; Durrer, 2011). This was supplemented by the establishment of healthy boundaries and having no fear, stress, and/or conflict. Although the participants brought as much compassion into their work as possible, all of them "would (no longer) tolerate being treated like a doormat."

All 11 participants stressed the importance of learning not only that they were human, but accepting that other people were human as well. This finding supports that awareness of and access to fellowships and/or dedicated groups are positive additions to individuals' spiritual support system. Another suggestion would be to empower teams through delegation of authority and control and allowing team member participation in the decision-making process. This, of course, should be complemented with proper accountability and performance metrics, which would ensure fairness while supporting the efficiency and effectiveness of the team. Following a spiritual model like spiritual support program fellowships might also enhance the levels of motivation and capabilities of the workforce. This can also be influenced through free thinking and progressive spiritual practices, which will affect both the overall level of productivity and the quality of work in Western economies, and thus, the employee/individuals' positive contribution to their work life (Griffin & Moorhead, 2011; Nicolae et al., 2013). Also, in relation to and balanced with spirituality in the workplace, it is about experiencing real purpose and meaning at work that goes beyond both pay and performance reviews (Marschke et al., 2011; Watson et al., 2004), to which all the participants aspired. Creating awareness through the distribution of organization-approved books, flyers, and pamphlets on spirituality might be a way to spread the benefits of the application of spirituality in the workplace. In relation to past research, in which there has been a debate over the ethics of "selling" spirituality (Ebenstein, 2014; Gaurangkumar, 2015), maybe it is time to balance both material and spiritual aspirations and integrate them into the business world (Waddock, 1999).

An additional recommendation is to hold meetings at the workplace (with Wednesday being determined by these findings as the optimal day to hold them) in accordance with a formal spiritual support system (i.e., utilizing a nonhierarchical support system structure with contained guidelines facilitated by an appropriate spiritual coach). This is based on one participant, P8, who wanted to start an organizational/business spiritual formal meeting at their place of work. In addition to this, access could be provided to a room for an existing/established spiritual support system meeting. As P1 noted, “a place where not everything is doom and gloom . . . a safe place.” This part of the recommendation is also justified based on eight of the participants being unable to attend/access spiritual group meetings and/or practices due to work restrictions and/or other commitments such as childcare.

Recommendations for further research include the investigation of why some individuals go to support programs feeling “absolutely desperate,” then do not return. This recommendation is based on the notion of variability, in which, through the instruments of transformation (e.g., formal and/or informal support systems and group access), words, ideas, and metaphors that can incite change in one person, leave another unmoved (White, 2002). It would be interesting to discover if they found any alternative support vehicles to alleviate their suffering, which could also be considered for/incorporated into future workplace paradigms.

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Succession Planning Strategies for Preparing Millennials for Senior Leader Positions*

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The research for this study focused on strategies for preparing millennials for advancement into senior leader positions. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic intensified the importance of having a succession plan in place to meet the organization's needs due to an unexpected crisis. With the aging of traditionalists and baby boomers, and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on people over the age of 60, many organizations were not prepared to fill their senior leader positions. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 11 talent management (TM) leaders employed by a public health care organization in the United States. Through data analyses, two main themes and two sub-themes emerged. Although several departments had informal training plans, the chief human resource officer (CHRO) failed to develop and implement a formal succession plan for the organization.

Key words: COVID-19, millennials, senior executive leaders, succession plan, talent management

In March 2020, the United States experienced a rise in the unemployment rate as many organizations closed or scaled back operating hours due to mandated shutdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2021). For some organizations, there were a lack of feasible succession plans, especially for health care organizations needing to fill critical leader vacancies due to the pandemic (CDC, 2021). According to Farrell (2020), succession planning may be the single-most neglected aspect of business ownership. An unexpected death of an owner, executive leader, or an employee can cripple a business without a succession plan in place to identify who will be prepared and qualified to transition to these unexpected vacancies (Farrell, 2020).

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Santora (2020) posits that COVID-19 has forced boards of directors (BODs) and their leaders across industries and sectors to take decisive action and mandate chief executive officer (CEO) succession be a major corporate governance issue to ensure their companies can function effectively and efficiently in both ordinary and unstable times. The COVID-19 pandemic made executive succession planning even more critical for the BODs, considering that only 45% of BODs have a plan for CEO and other senior executive succession (Jennings, 2020). In the Governance Institute's 2019 Biennial Survey of Hospitals and Healthcare Systems, 80% of survey respondents agreed that succession planning for the CEO and other senior executives is the BOD's responsibility (Jennings, 2020).

The 2020 pandemic moved three peripheral issues to center stage for most organizations, with baby boomer leaders finding their registered investment advisors (RIAs) forced to acknowledge that their age is a factor when considering their firm's long-term sustainability and success (Freeman, 2020). We learned from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC, 2021) that people over the age of 50 are at greater risk of severe illness with COVID-19, and the risk increases with age. These concerns have prompted CEOs to start seriously considering a CEO or second-in-command to help run the firm (Freeman, 2020). According to a Franklin Templeton (2019) study, more than half of the RIAs admitted not having a succession plan in place, and 11% stated they had no intentions to create one. Forty-five percent of RIAs stated that they planned to sell or merge their firm, and 39% said they plan to sell to their employees (Franklin Templeton, 2019).

The findings from our research revealed there were many organizations, particularly in the health care sector, that were unprepared to handle the pandemic; however, thriving hospitals already knew who among their millennial managers were in the leadership pipeline since they had established and implemented an effective succession plan (Jennings, 2020). The results from our interviews with talent management (TM) leaders employed by a public health care organization in the United States indicated that the organization's chief human resource officer (CHRO) did not develop a robust succession plan to prepare its millennials for the unexpected leader vacancies due to COVID-19. Day (2007) emphasizes that the

CHRO reports directly to the CEO, and together they are charged with grooming the next generation of leaders. Concurrently, the CHRO has a fiduciary responsibility to the BOD to develop and implement an effective succession plan (Day, 2007). Lessons learned from this study requires the organization's CHRO, in support of the BOD, to develop and implement a robust succession plan to prepare millennials to fill future senior leader positions.

Literature Review

Millennials

People born between 1982 and 2000 are considered millennials by the U.S. Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Millennials brought more racial and ethnic diversity to American society, and millennial women, like Generation X women, are more likely to participate in the nation's workforce than prior generations (Bialik & Fry, 2019). Millennials are highly committed, motivated, educated, and seek meaningful roles in a global environment (Martin, 2005). Employee engagement is crucial for an organization that seeks to gain and retain millennial employees of value (Schullery, 2013). By the end of 2029, number of millennials in the U.S. labor force is projected to increase by 4.5 million, which is the largest gain for a single age group (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020).

Theories

Human Capital Theory. Human capital theory suggests there are gains to investing in people (Becker, 1962; Schultz, 1961; Sweetland, 1996). A succession plan is an investment in an organization's workforce to enhance human skills and talents. Based on human capital theory, millennials must be given the knowledge from the previous generation and updated knowledge of any current information to develop innovative processes, production methods, and services (Babalola, 2003; Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008).

Generation Theory. The concept of generations dates to sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893–1947). In his essay "The Problem of Generations," Mannheim (1928/1952) discussed the importance of generation succession and understanding common generational influences deriving from intellectual, social, and political circumstances. A *generation* is the expression of unity in how individuals view the world and life during a certain time period (Mannheim, 1952). Generation theory is an important element of succession planning for understanding generations and the approach CHROs and senior leaders must utilize in preparing and promoting millennials to senior leader roles.

Theory of Planned Behavior. In the theory of planned behavior, variables impact individuals' operational beliefs relating to their behavior, normative, and control beliefs (Ajzen, 1991). As Ajzen (2019) depicts, a *behavioral belief* is a belief held by an individual regarding the outcome of a certain behavior. In succession planning, behavioral beliefs support the need for a CHRO to develop and implement a concrete succession plan. The theory of planned behavior in succession planning includes selecting the right employee as a successor for leader opportunities wherein the successor is expected to provide the organization with continued growth (Spurk & Abele, 2011).

Normative beliefs build on the perceptions of social norms, such as what types of behaviors are acceptable (Bertaux, 1981; Poelmans, 2012). Normative behaviors in succession planning help leaders discover what types of behaviors are socially acceptable in businesses. A normative belief about succession planning is that a CHRO will focus on career planning and training, leading to promotional opportunities. Leaders will expect successors to behave a certain way when promoted to a specific leader role (Sánchez-Medina et al., 2014). BODs expect CEOs and CHROs to behave in a manner that contributes to organization growth and success (Hall et al., 2012). As noted in Ballaro and Polk's (2017) succession plan research, HR leaders must work diligently to include specific criteria in an organization's formal succession plan and communicate the criteria to employees to motivate change behavior to fill future vacancies from within.

Perceived behavioral control is an individual's awareness of the level of difficulty in completing a task. In succession planning specifically, the perception of creating a plan for selection of a successor can seem daunting, which is why some CEOs and CHROs do not have a succession plan (Walker et al., 2013). Similar to perceived behavioral control, *control beliefs* are based on an individual's belief about facets that may affect behaviors when performed (Sánchez-Medina et al., 2014). Items that may affect succession planning include successors and company resources. Figure 1 represents Ajzen's (2019) model for planned behavior theory.

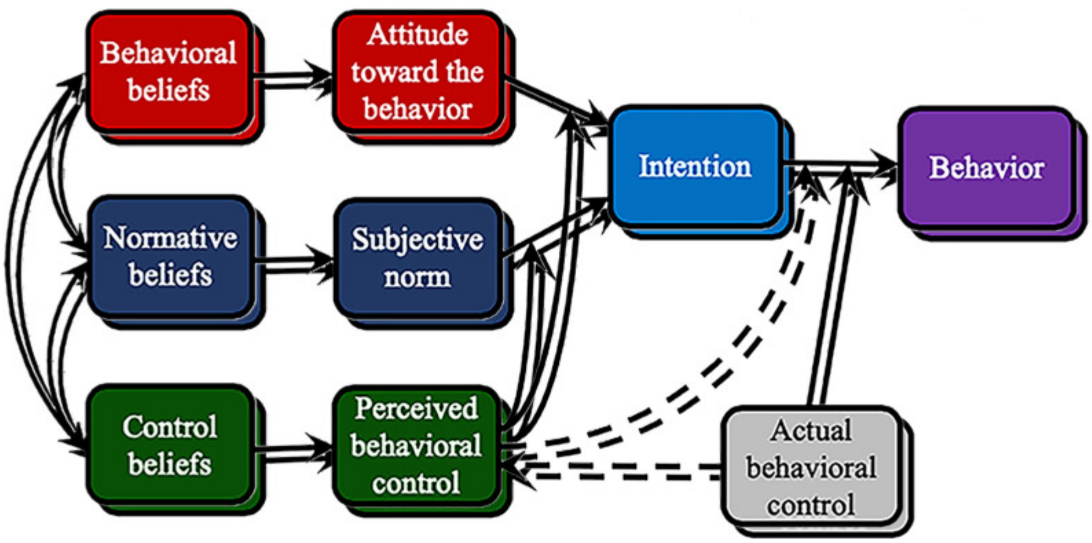

Figure 1. Graphical depiction of the theory of planned behavior.
Note: From *Theory of Planned Behavior Diagram,* by I. Ajzen, 2006, (http://people.umass.edu/aizen/tpb.diag.html). Copyright 2019 by Icek Ajzen.

A Need for Succession Planning

Purpose of a Succession Plan

COVID-19 forced BODs, CEOs, and CHROs to work together more intensely to ensure the long-term health of their firms is maintained and reassess leadership needs within the evolving industry environment by developing an effective succession plan (Cheng et al., 2020). Common elements listed among organizations with succession planning include a mission and vision statement and a strategic plan (Rothwell, 2010). The mission and vision statements can include corporate values or key objectives (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d.). Even with leadership changes and other variables that influence an open business, the mission and vision statements remain intact. A corporate strategic plan outlines the organization's goals for the long and short terms, as well as the necessary steps for the company to achieve its goals. A succession plan provides an organization with a set of steps to choose future successors. As noted by the Society for Human

Resource Management (2020), key reasons for an organization to engage in succession planning are: (a) adapting to demographic changes and talent scarcity, (b) identifying skill gaps and training needs, (c) retaining institutional knowledge and a knowledge economy, (d) boosting morale and retention by investing in employees, and (e) replacing unique or highly specialized competencies.

Public and Private Sector Trends

In public and private business sectors, succession planning is a key area of focus. Organization leaders increasingly work with the CHRO to ensure future employees can assume responsibility once other employees retire. Companies expend funds and resources to determine the perfect strategy for succession planning, even when no plan exists. Finding the right individuals to fill jobs is critical for supporting organizational growth, which necessitates that a CHRO develop and implement an effective succession plan that prepares millennials to fill many vacancies in both the public and private sectors. According to Day (2007), the following major reasons are why succession planning and leader development are important: (a) rapid, radical, and discontinuous change; (b) increasingly complex challenges; (c) greater leader responsibility at lower levels; and (d) recruitment and retention of the best talent.

Because succession plans were not developed, COVID-19 left many organizations facing disastrous predicaments when the virus attacked employees in positions below senior ranks, such as payroll and benefits, and compensation managers or IT personnel who analyzed data (Patton, 2020). Many private organizations do not have a backup plan for employees in critical positions below the C-suite because CHROs and CEOs do not consider this level of employee replacement a priority (Patton, 2020). In government sectors, many workers over the age of 45 will be retiring over the next 20 years, leaving the organization unprepared for filling these vacancies with skilled and knowledgeable employees (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). About 3.2 million more baby boomers retired in the third quarter of 2020 than did in the same quarter of 2019, greatly affecting the workforce (Fry, 2020; Gurchiek, 2021). Turnover due to retirement is inevitable; however, public and private sectors face a large deficit of qualified individuals if these organizations continue to operate without a succession plan. Although workforce leaders have been preparing for the gap in employees, many have yet to devise a succession plan that is sustainable (O'Kelley et al., 2020).

Public-sector limitations for succession planning seem to be greater than the private sector; these limitations include funding, job scope, and opportunities (Boyne & Dahya, 2002). Government leaders have placed high priority on filling jobs, but low priority on developing employees (Ballaro et al., 2020; Kochanowski, 2011). If government HR leaders seek to hire new employees, leaders should take inventory of human capital by requesting an inventory of employee skill sets, education levels, and tenure to prepare organizations for future vacancies by training current employees to fill any noted gaps. Internal candidates are not often found because they have not been prepared, which leads to a vicious cycle that harms the organization and tends to postpone the succession process (Comini & Fischer, 2009). To break this cycle, current government leaders can participate in a mentoring program to train millennial employees for developing the skills and knowledge necessary to transition into senior leader positions (Leland et al., 2012). By preparing millennials for future vacancies, it creates the likelihood that numerous projects will not be impaired by retirements in all government and private sectors.

Method

A qualitative method and exploratory case study design were selected for this study due to the nature of inquiry, which allows researchers to gain information from interviews and document analysis (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Yin, 2017). The study commenced in two phases: semi-structured interviews with TM leaders of a health care organization and the collection of archival data from the CHRO for analysis. The data collected from the organization provided supporting information about the organization's formal succession plan. The results of the interviews and analysis of departments' training programs provided firsthand information regarding succession planning in this organization. The interview questions were developed to support two research questions that framed our study.

Research Questions

The purpose of creating research questions is to gain a better understanding of the study topic and to narrow the scope of research (Yin, 2017). The types of succession planning in all businesses vary. We sought to explore the strategies TM leaders in healthcare implement to advance millennials to senior leader positions and to identify any barriers they may encounter while developing and implementing their succession plan for the organization that targets millennials for senior leader positions. Two research questions were developed to explore the strategies that the health care TM leaders use for millennial advancement to senior leader positions and to identify the barriers they may encounter while developing a succession plan.

Research Question 1: What succession planning strategies do health care TM leaders develop to advance millennials to senior leader positions in health care systems?

Research Question 2: What barriers do health care TM leaders experience that affect the development of succession plans to advance millennials to senior leader positions in health care systems?

The research questions were developed to better understand how the organization measures the effectiveness of its current succession plan regarding millennials.

Field Test

Field tests are used as a strategy to check the soundness and validity of a data collection instrument (Dover & Amar, 2015). A field test was conducted with four public health care subject matter experts (SMEs) with previous research, HR, and TM knowledge and experience to evaluate the cogency of the instrument to ensure a strong alignment with the research questions. The recommendations included the following:

- Develop follow-up questions to pull additional data as needed. (Examples: Please explain. Can you elaborate?)
- Rearrange questions to gather basic information and then transition into targeted questions emphasizing millennials.

Other than the above minor recommendations, the SMEs believed overall that the interview questions would elicit quality data to answer the research questions.

Population and Sample

The population for our study included TM leaders from a health care organization located in the United States. They were a senior executive, management consultant, senior manager, division director, executive director, senior director, assistant vice president (AVP), vice president (VP), senior vice president (SVP), chief officer, and a BOD member who were all in the TM sector, had TM responsibilities, and understood leader advancement and development strategies.

Sample

In our study, a purposive sampling method was administered to create sound judgment and acquire a better understanding of the case. The *purposive sampling technique* is a deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualifications and experience (Etikan & Bala, 2017). We used a non-random approach for the purpose of gathering rich data from experts in the TM sector in this health care organization. Before the study was administered, a recruitment letter was sent to potential TM leaders informing them about the study. A sample of 11 TM leaders volunteered to participate in this study.

Interviews

The first phase of data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews with 11 participants from the health care organization. The content of the interview questions supported the research questions to assess potential outcomes. With permission from the participants, interviews were recorded. Interviews continued until saturation occurred. Saturation occurred at the ninth interview; however, two additional interviews were conducted to ensure no new information emerged.

The interviews provided a holistic view of the health care organization. Once the interview concluded for each participant, the recorded answers were played back to the participant for accuracy and clarification. Once the interviews were completed, recorded, and checked for accuracy, Microsoft Excel and NVivo 12 data analysis software was used to analyze the collected data and determine any themes that emerged.

Document Review

The second phase of data collection included an analysis of the organization's leader development program at the organizational and departmental levels, and the succession plan where there appeared to be a succession plan in progress, but not a formal documented one in place.

Triangulation

Triangulation supports the credibility and validity of the study (Vogt, 2011; Yin 2017). Due to the size and design of the study, triangulation provided a consistent measure of employee interviews and increased the accuracy and findings of the qualitative information. Cross-checking data and conclusions using multiple sources was conducted to strengthen the validity of the research for the study. These sources included participant interviews and analysis of the organization's documents on the organization's leader development program at the organizational and departmental levels and an incomplete succession plan from the CHRO.

Coding

NVivo 12 data analysis software and Microsoft Excel were used to analyze data collected from the semi-structured interviews. Participants answered all interview questions comfortably and were genuinely interested in succession planning within the organization. The thematic analysis process was the guide mechanism that assisted in outlining a systematic process on how an analysis was conducted and offered insight on patterns and themes. Data were manually analyzed using Excel before importing into NVivo 12. Focus coding was implemented to concentrate on frequency of responses. To further narrow coding for final themes, we combined themes based on relationships by theme coding. Braun and Clark's (2006) two-step thematic analysis process were used as a guide to the analysis process.

Step 1: *Be familiar with the data acquired from the interviews*. Before starting the initial coding process, bracketing occurred by listening to each interview with a clear mind free of bias, allowing the data to speak for itself. After member checking, all interview responses were transferred to an Excel document aligned with the targeted research question. Responses were read several times to gain an understanding of the data.

Step 2: Assign preliminary codes to your data to describe the content. To start the coding process, NVivo 12's Auto Coding Method was utilized to develop pre-codes as a guide. The NVivo auto codes aided in developing initial themes from the interview data. The interview questions and responses were separated based on the support for each research question. Two documents from Excel were exported into NVivo 12: one document in support of Research Question 1 and other in support of Research Question 2. To further aid in initial theme development, all data were combined to create a word cloud to show word frequency from the participants (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Word cloud from interview data

Findings

Demographics

Participants for the study were identified by job classification, area, years in current role, and years in a leader role (see Table 1). Eleven leaders with TM responsibilities who support all TM initiatives were interviewed.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Job Classification	Number of Years in Current Role	Number of Years in Leader Role
Director	5	10
Senior Consultant	4	6
Director	5	22
AVP	10	15
VP	2	15
Senior Consultant	9	10
Director	2	7
Senior Manager	7	15
Director	6	15
Director	4	6
Senior Manager	10	20

Figure 3 displays a participant breakdown via organization area by percentage. For this study, there was representation from each area in the health care system with the majority of the participants from the business and finance departments.

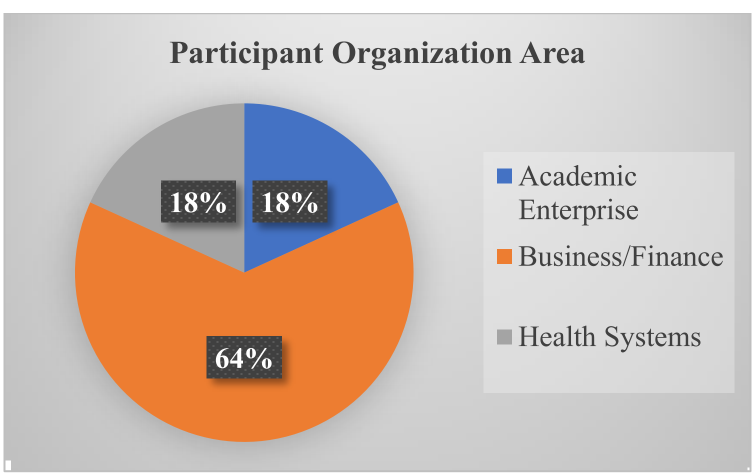

Figure 3. Participant organization area breakdown

Transcription of Data

The TM leaders answered nine interview questions supporting two research questions based on their professional experience. The interview questions were constructed using open-ended phrases to obtain information relative to the participant and support the research questions. The first set of semi-structured interview questions solicited TM leaders' succession-planning strategies, and the second set of interview questions explored the types of barriers TM leaders encountered while developing a succession plan. Two main themes emerged along with two sub-themes, one in support of Theme 1, and one in support of Theme 2 (see Table 2).

Table 2: Final Themes and Sub-Themes

Theme	Sub-Theme
Theme 1: Due to the lack of a formal succession plan at the organizational level, there are no leader development strategies specifically for millennials. (Supports Research Question 1)	**Theme 1 Sub-Theme:** Leader development strategies are conducted on the departmental level for all employees.
Theme 2: Lack of a formal succession plan, limited resources, finances, scarcity of positions, and lack of knowledge for preparing millennials are barriers to advancing millennials to senior leader positions. (Supports Research Question 2)	**Theme 2 Sub-Theme:** While there is no formal succession plan in place, there is an interest in developing one at the organizational level.

Theme 1: Due to the lack of a formal succession plan at the organizational level, there are no leader development strategies specifically for millennials. Fifty-five percent of the participants stated there was not a formal succession plan at the organizational level and no leader development strategies in place that specifically target millennials. TM leaders mentioned that training programs were not offered throughout the year targeting just millennials.

Throughout the interviews, 100% of participants mentioned that the current leader development program is managed by the CHRO and open to all generations; however, these programs are limited to class size, job title, and executive nomination and do not exclusively target millennials. There are basically three buckets of development—one for employees, one for managers, and one for executives.

Theme 1 Sub-Theme: Leader development strategies are conducted on the departmental level. According to 55% of the participants, there are no formal organizational leader development strategies that target millennials; six of the leaders interviewed shared that leader development is done at the departmental level. One TM leader emphasized there is a stereotype that millennials have a high turnover rate; however, some of the departments retained several millennials through their fellowship program, which encourages leader development. There were various training initiatives currently in place at the departmental level that target the development of the next generation of leaders. For example, Illumin-8 is one formal program developed and hosted at the departmental level; invitations are sent to other departments to encourage participation. The TM leaders all found the Illumin-8 a great innovative strategy because it was initially a grassroots strategy developed by a few managers to fill the leader gap in their department. Through the Illumin-8 program, employees identified themselves as leaders without the leader title. Although the TM leaders emphasized there are no leader development strategies targeting millennials exclusively, millennials are invited to participate in programs that offer a leader development strategy option.

Theme 2: Lack of a formal succession plan, limited resources, finances, scarcity of positions, and lack of knowledge for preparing millennials are barriers to advancing millennials to senior leader positions. Fifty-five percent of participants noted that barriers for senior advancement overall are caused by limited resources, finances, scarcity of positions, and lack of knowledge for preparing millennials for senior leader positions. Ninety percent of the participants emphasized that there were no formal organizational strategies to mitigate barriers for millennial advancement to senior leader roles, due to a lack of a formal succession plan.

Theme 2 Sub-Theme: While there is no formal succession plan in place, there is an interest in developing one at the organizational level. Ninety percent of the participants mentioned that there currently is not a formal succession plan in place at the organizational level. However, 65% of the participants expressed that there is an interest among leaders in developing a plan. Succession planning does not happen organically. In this organization, leaders at the health care organization feel a need to open the talent pool through national searches. As noted by the majority of the participants, with a robust succession plan in place, limited resources could be used to provide millennial training in preparation for filling senior leader positions internally rather than through external recruitment.

Implications

The findings for succession planning at the CHRO level revealed that a formal succession plan does not exist in this organization. There is a need for the CEO to collaborate with the CHRO to develop a formal succession plan for the entire organization. BODs expect CEOs and the CHRO to behave in a manner that contributes to organization growth and success (Hall et al., 2012). Although some department leaders have taken the lead in providing training programs for their employees with the goal of providing the needed skills to fill leader positions, the training programs do not specifically target millennials. An organization that fails to plan for succession within their business departments is an organization planning to fail in support of long-term planning (Ballaro & Polk, 2017). COVID-19 left many organizations in a disastrous predicament when the virus attacked employees in positions below senior ranks, necessitating the need for a formal succession plan. The results from this study support generation theory as an important element of succession planning for understanding generations and the approach a CHRO must implement to develop and promote millennials to senior leader roles. Human capital theory reminds us that a succession plan is an investment in the organization's workforce to enhance human skills and talents. The theory of planned behavior in succession planning includes selecting the right employee as a successor for leader opportunities wherein the successor is expected to provide the organization with continual growth (Spurk & Abele, 2011).

Limitations

One limitation was the lack of participation from executive leaders. Some executives were interviewed, but scheduling made it difficult to interview all executives. Another limitation was the lack of participation from HR leaders; we had to seek other senior leaders with TM responsibilities outside of HR, which is a direct result of minimal responses for participation in this study. Lastly, the data collected were limited to one large health care organization in the United States.

Conclusion

Health care leaders within the private and public sectors must continue to develop robust strategies to train and promote employees to fill future leader positions. Forward-thinking organizations plan strategically by having a robust formal succession plan in place for investing in their millennials (Jennings, 2020). As noted by Day (2007), a formal succession plan is one in which the key pieces are standardized throughout the entire organization. One key finding from this study, consistent with prior studies (Leland et al., 2012), is the lack of support at the organizational level for developing millennials through succession planning. Low priority in leadership development is the reason 71% of millennials leave their companies within two years (Deloitte, 2016). The CEO and CHRO of the organization in this study must exercise active roles in both the development and implementation of a formal succession plan at the organizational level that targets millennials and future generations. Effective succession planning involves not only a replacement planning process, but a comprehensive employee development system (Day, 2007). Proactive behaviors by the CHRO and CEO in support of an effective succession plan will guarantee that the organization is better prepared when faced with an unplanned crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendations for Future Research

Additional research is needed within the health care industry. A multiple-case study should be considered to compare various CHROs and their succession plan strategies for advancing millennials and future leaders. Another recommendation is to conduct a qualitative study and interview millennial employees to uncover their strategies for advancing themselves to senior leader roles within their organization. A quantitative methodology may be considered to further aid in future research and understanding of how succession planning affects a business's return on investment in both the long and short term. Researchers may consider a longitudinal study by reviewing data over a five-year period to determine which types of behaviors within succession planning affect the filling of senior leader positions.

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Leadership Education and Development

Leadership as a Momentary Phenomenon: Proposing a Taxonomy of Leadership Moments*

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Leadership theory has been dominated for decades by an emphasis on the leader. This emphasis has provided both significant insights and understandings, as well as limitations, regarding the nature and practice of leadership. As a result, leadership theory has begun to focus more on leadership as a system, process, or relationship in recent years. These perspectives have contributed to our understanding of leadership, but also have their limitations. This article offers a way of thinking about leadership that is focused on understanding leadership as an emergent moment-based phenomenon and proposes a matrix approach to understanding leadership that can be used to better study, practice, and teach leadership in today's complex society.

Key words: leadership, leadership system, leadership theory, momentary leadership, relational leadership

The way we think about, teach, and research leadership is burdened by its history and philosophical underpinnings (Kellerman, 2012). For centuries, leadership philosophy and theory has taken a very position-focused, leader-centric approach to understanding and researching leadership that is, in the words of Bennis (1999), "wrong, unrealistic and maladaptive" and, "given the report of history, dangerous" (71). Nonetheless, this positional and personalistic approach led scholars and practitioners to strive to understand leadership by examining the traits, behaviors, styles, and models that leaders apply to influence followers to achieve goals (Covey, 1991; Lussier & Achua, 2007; Northouse, 2019; Roberts, 2007). This emphasis has failed to accurately conceptualize both the realities and complexities of leadership (McChrystal et al., 2018). Furthermore, it has not resulted in significantly better leadership across the globe (Kellerman, 2012, 2016). To address these issues, some researchers have argued for placing a greater emphasis on the leadership system, collective leadership, or the relationship

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between leaders and followers (Denis et al., 2012; Kellerman, 2016; Laurent, 1978; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). However, these approaches are also limited in that they do not fully recognize or validate the truly variable nature of leadership. As a result, an emphasis on leadership as a moment-based phenomenon is advocated for in this article. Based on an understanding of the nature of leadership moments and the goals and processes that characterize these, a potential taxonomy of leadership moments is provided and described. Finally, implications of a shift in focus from a person-centric to a moment-centric approach to leadership are explored and discussed.

Defining Leadership

Few words in the English language are more ambiguous and evasive than the word *leadership.* As Thompson (2000) declares, “for decades now, writers have tried to define leadership. Libraries are full of our attempts to decode this complex human phenomenon” (9). Unfortunately, all of these attempts to define leadership have left us with, as Dhar and Mishra (2001) explain, “almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define it” (255). Fiedler (1971) echoes this declaration in his pronouncement that “there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are leadership theories" (as cited in Antonakis et al., 2004, 5). Obviously, the challenge of defining leadership is significant. However, some consensus does seem to be emerging. Two dominant concepts repeatedly emerge as central to understanding this evasive term’s meaning. The first is influence.

As Hughes et al. (1995) wrote, “leadership is a social influence process shared among all members of a group” (43). Social influence lies at the core of who we are as humans. We are dependent upon interaction with others for survival, identity formation, goal achievement, and psychological health (Lieberman, 2013). Consequently, we engage in constant, ongoing processes of interaction. As Stone (2002) further explains:

> Influence is inherent in communities, even communities of two. People are not free wheeling, freethinking atoms whose desires arise from spontaneous

> generation. Our ideas about what we want and the choices we make are shaped by education, persuasion, and the general process of socialization. (25)

Thus, influence shapes our behavior and is shaped by that behavior within social contexts. It is worth noting, however, that person-centered leadership theories and the human penchant for perceiving status and hierarchy have placed the concept of leadership and the nature of social influence on a cultural foundation of personified hierarchical authority. Consequently, there is a tendency to think of influence in terms of hierarchy: leaders are often viewed as those in positions of authority, and leadership is often perceived as whatever these authority figures do. Likewise, followers are viewed in relation to leaders, and followership is what they do. This traditional view, however, does not align with a basic reality that social influence occurs irrespective of hierarchy. Furthermore, in any interaction between two people influence is rarely—if ever—unidirectional, and mutual influence is inherent in all social interactions as individuals engage with one another to address their individual, group or organizational, and shared needs.

The purpose of influence represents the second element of leadership that is inherent in nearly all definitions of the concept. As House et al. (2004) explains, "the core" of almost all definitions is influence and "how leaders influence others to help them accomplish group or organizational objectives" (14). This statement is consistent with one of the central tenets of motivation theory, which suggests that human behavior is motivated by an urge to fulfill basic needs or desires (Robbins & Judge, 2013; Siegel, 2014). Thus, behavior is goal-directed by nature. Leadership, as a form of behavior, is distinguished from other forms of behavior by its emphasis on processes of influence, but consistent with these in its goal-directed nature. So, leadership can be conceptualized as a social influence process that is goal-directed. This is consistent with the thinking of several scholars who have completed extensive reviews of the literature (Hughes et al., 1995; Hunt, 2004). For example, Northouse (2019) wrote that "leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (5). So, while innumerable definitions of leadership exist, there is sufficient consensus that, at its core, it involves social influence processes that are goal-oriented.

Leadership Theory

While such consensus is valuable, it is, unfortunately, burdened by a history of leader-centric application. As alluded to previously, leadership has traditionally been viewed hierarchically. This tendency emerges from the evolutionary nature of human beings and our shared philosophical condition. According to Rock (2008), the human brain is wired to determine social status within any social context. As he explains, “status is about relative importance, ‘pecking order’ and seniority. Humans hold a representation of status in relation to others when in conversations” (3), and pleasure centers are activated in the brain when people perceive themselves as superior to others. Based on this ongoing calculus of social status, individuals determine who they need to defer to and who defers to them. In social settings, people naturally look to leaders and idealize and defer to them. They both respect and want to achieve their status; seek to be close to them, desire to increase their own status; and despise them, because the leader reminds them that they are below them in the hierarchy.

This evolutionary foundation is strengthened by our cultural and philosophical heritage (Kellerman, 2012; Peterson & Hunt, 1997). Since the earliest civilizations, people have been concerned with how power is acquired and wielded. Moses was given status by his relationship with a deity to direct his people using divine directives, hierarchical organizational structure, and strict rewards and punishments (Bowker, 2007; *Holy Bible, New International Version [NIV],* 1984; Shafritz & Ott, 2001). Later, messianic kings were divinely empowered to engage in heroic and wise leadership that elevated the Jewish nation (*Holy Bible, NIV,* 1984; McGrath, 1997). Hinduism formalized its hierarchy in its caste system and suggested that fulfilling one’s duties within this system represented a means of spiritual progression (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957; Wolpert, 1991). Confucius envisioned a social order characterized by hierarchical filial piety (Chen & Lee, 2008; Waley, 1982). Plato mused on the value of philosopher-kings, whose rational wisdom and pursuit of the good made them worthy of status (Plato, c. 375 BC/2000). Christianity created a bureaucratic, hierarchical structure of bishops, cardinals, popes, and kings who ruled with divine authority (Fisher, 1994).

Inherent in these structures and beliefs is the idea that gave voice to and is often seen as the foundational model for the great man theory of leadership.

In his essay, 19th-century British historian and philosopher Thomas Carlyle (1841/1973) argues that "the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom, the History of the Great Men who have worked here" (101). He further argues that "all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwell in the Great Men sent into the world" (101). This idea that leadership is rooted in great men resonated deeply with humanity's status conscious brains. While many see Carlyle's ideas as unfounded and irrelevant, the clear connection between his conception of the leader as hero, Freudian psychology, and modern leadership theories is well articulated by Spector (2016). Indeed, the power of the notion of great men as leaders likely served as a driving force behind researchers' attempts to identify the traits, behaviors, styles, and approaches of these great men (Northouse, 2019).

These efforts were largely unsuccessful due to the recognition that situational variables in the studies contributed to variation in outcomes, which gave birth to the contingency approach to leadership (Ayman, 2004). This approach attempted to understand how great men could approach leadership based on an understanding of follower and contextual factors using decision trees to identify ideal, context-based approaches to influencing others (Ayman, 2004; Lussier & Achua, 2007). Nonetheless, while these contingency models expanded the study of leadership to include the follower and context, they did not truly shift the focus of study away from its leader-centric emphasis. Consequently, when they failed to deliver models that could provide clear universal directions for how great men could respond in all leadership situations, researchers shifted their focus to an exploration of a variety of philosophical and research-based models of leadership that could be empirically studied to identify their effectiveness in different contexts. Thus, the modern contemporary models of leadership emerged as embodied by theories such as transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002), adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994), authentic leadership (George, 2008), the leadership challenge model (Kouzes & Posner, 2012), and others. These approaches have largely been conceptualized, operationalized, and tested empirically to determine their effectiveness, and most have been validated across a variety of studies, but have still largely remained great-man-centered (Northouse, 2019).

While these contemporary models have been beneficial to the study of leadership, they have been burdened by their continued leader-centric focus (Denis et al., 2012; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009). And, in spite of their research validity, they have not appeared to contribute to an overall improvement of leadership within society (Kellerman, 2012) and may actually be perpetuating the power dynamics in society by overemphasizing the importance of leader agency (Tourish, 2014). As Kellerman (2016) argues, these models have birthed a leadership industry that has not effectively contributed to improvements in leadership. She believes that this is because of the leader-centric nature of this industry. To address this problem, she suggests that "we need to reimagine leadership learning by shedding our obsession with single individuals and adopting instead a more inclusive, systemic perspective" (93). This systemic perspective would refocus leadership studies on the important contributions of and interplay between the leader, follower, and context. This system-focused approach has been joined by other efforts to refocus the concept of leadership away from its emphasis on what the leader does and more on the collective nature of leadership (Denis et al., 2012), the process(es) enacted (Komives et al., 2009), the relationship developed between leaders and followers (Uhl-Bien, 2006), or the emergent result of the interplay among these (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009; Wheatley, 1999, 2007; Wood, 2005). Summarizing this perspective of leadership as an emergent phenomenon, Tourish (2014) explains that leadership, "emerges through the interaction of organisational actors and has a contested, fluid meaning for all of them, in a given social situation for determinate amount of time" (84). As a result, he argues, "it is fundamentally an on-going process rather than a finished accomplishment. Meaning is constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed between those in leadership positions and those that they lead" (84). Leadership is not, therefore, "a discrete phenomenon with easily observable causal relationships, inherently powerful and charismatic leaders, measurable outcomes and clear demarcations between categories of meaning and behaviour" (84). This perspective of leadership as an emergent phenomenon is, perhaps, most embodied in the idea of leadership as practice (Raelin, 2016), which advocates for leadership as focused on the "'bundles of related actions' or 'the work of leadership' as it takes form in patterns of action and interaction" (Crevani & Endrissat, 2016, 31). Consequently, "leadership-as-practice is based on a process perspective," (Crevani & Endrissat, 2016, 31), which views reality as constantly emerging and forming through interactions, of which leadership refers to one aspect of that reality as it relates to social influence.

As valuable as these models and theories are to our understanding of leadership, they have, unfortunately, largely failed to achieve the kind of paradigm shift that is needed. The systems model has reinforced a trend toward an awareness of the importance of followers and followership and context (Cunha et al., 2013). However, the study of followership has largely followed the same trajectory as the person-centric approach of leadership studies (Collinson, 2011) with an emphasis on follower traits and styles (Chaleff, 1995; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Howell & Mendez, 2008; Kelley, 1992). As a result, this functional approach of followership theorizing has offered "little conceptual clarity on how followership might offset the problem of excessive leader agency in organizations" (Tourish, 2014, 82–83). Indeed, rather than challenging the importance of leaders, by emphasizing the hierarchical nature of leadership and the relatively positional nature of leaders and followers, the concept of followership likely perpetuates the traditional conception of leaders as agentic actors and followers as reactive entities who assist "in the 'improvement' and 'attainment' of . . . objectives, rather than what might fundamentally interrogate them" (Tourish, 2014, 83).

The process-oriented approach moves away from an emphasis on individual leaders and focuses leadership on goal-directed influence processes that are shared among groups of individuals (Denis et al., 2012; Komives et al., 2009).

Nonetheless, it cannot escape the reality that these processes must often be facilitated by leaders. Furthermore, these shared models often overlook the realities of power and struggle with conceptual ambiguity (Denis et al., 2012). Finally, the relational models focus primarily on the relationship between leader and follower (Uhl-Bien, 2006) and how this relationship creates leader–follower identities (DeRue & Ashford, 2010) and fosters the emergent phenomenon of leadership (Denis et al., 2012; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009; Wood, 2005). Nonetheless, these models, while they provide a more accurate picture of the complex emergent reality of leadership, remain largely philosophical and ideological, difficult to apply in practice, occasionally overlook or minimize the influence of power on leader–follower interaction, and risk diluting the concept of leadership (Collinson, 2018; Denis et al., 2012; Tourish, 2014). Thus, while these approaches to conceptualizing leadership broaden our understanding of the concept, they do not provide a solid practical alternative to the leader-centric approach or, in some cases, reinforce it because they do not address the reality of how influence occurs and even changes from moment to moment (Collinson, 2011; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; McChrystal et al., 2018). However, some of the relational models come close to this idea (Denis et al., 2012), especially Woods' (2005) conception of leadership as an event. What is needed is a model that recognizes the emergent reality of leadership while honoring the reality of individuals as influencers, without centering on them. Such a model must address several issues.

Problems That Need Resolution

For an alternative approach to examining leadership to be accepted as valid and useful, it must address the issues that these other models fail to resolve. These include the reality of mutual influence independent of hierarchy; the issue of variability in leadership approaches over time and across contexts; the differences in outcomes across contexts; the complexity of the leadership system; the importance of processes and relationships; and the need for concrete, practical conceptual leadership models (Denis et al., 2012). Practicing leaders need a balance between complex theorizing that matches reality and practical, simplified models that guide practice.

The great man theory's reinforcement of our natural tendency toward hierarchy fails to recognize that leadership, or goal-directed influence, is hierarchy-independent, shared, and multidirectional (Collinson, 2011; Denis et al., 2012; Peiró & Meliá, 2003; Pescosolido, 2001; Pielstick, 2000; Smart, 2005). Consider the following scenario: a supervisor sits down to conduct a performance evaluation with an employee. As the supervisor opens the conversation, he greets the employee (a relationship-building effort focused on creating a positive emotional climate for the more challenging aspects of the conversation that follow). The follower, reading the subtle cues of nervousness displayed by the leader, subconsciously flashes an emotional display of concern; tries to determine what negative issues will be brought up and how they will be addressed; and begins to construct an argument that will influence the supervisor's perception of the employee and soften the corrective response. This mental distraction dilutes the effectiveness of the leader's relationship-building efforts and discussion of the employee's positive performance. Further, the leader, picking up on the concern on the employee's face and distractedness, alters approaches by increasing the emphasis on the positive to offset the negative. The employee picks up on this and sees it as an indicator that the negative conversation that is coming is more significant than expected because of the strength of the perceived "softening-the-blow" approach of the leader. While a continued examination of this dyadic interaction would no doubt strengthen the clearly iterative, mutual nature of the influence processes taking place in this interaction, this should suffice to illustrate a point. Social influence, while occurring within a context of perceived and real hierarchical differences, is not unidirectional from hierarchical leader to hierarchical follower. Instead, it is a shared, relational, iterative, ongoing process (Denis et al., 2012; Tourish, 2014). Therefore, any approach to studying leadership needs to be able to address this reality.

In addition to the mutual, iterative nature of social influence, leadership approaches are highly variable from moment to moment and emerge and evolve over time (Collinson, 2011; Wood, 2005). While research often categorizes leaders as servant, transformational, charismatic, or authentic, these represent idealistic conceptualizations of approaches to leadership that do not clearly match the ongoing reality of an individual's leadership moment-to-moment practice (Tourish, 2014). Thus, while these models provide cognitive schema as fodder for behavior within given contexts that can inform practice, the actual approach to leadership in any given situation or "event" is generally far more shared, intuitive, and creative than personalized, intentional, and predictable (Wood, 2005). Thus, research studies that link leadership styles to outcomes based on generalized statements regarding the leader's approach do not take into consideration the fact that each leadership moment is characterized by differences in approach that are not necessarily theory-dependent. For example, leaders who espouse an empowerment oriented, participative approach to leadership often make autocratic decisions and use more traditional directive approaches to leadership. Furthermore, research suggests that such variation is essential to effective leadership (Goleman, 2000). Thus, the actual nature of influence activities varies from moment to moment as part of an "endless process" of emergent social construction (Tourish, 2014, 88). As Tourish (2014) wrote, there is "no essence of leadership waiting to be discovered," summarized, conceptualized, and codified as if it is a stable reality. Leadership is emergent within the moment and transitory, even if it is informed by intentionally selected cognitive schema and well-practiced behavior patterns, though I suspect this level of intentionality and theory–practice congruence is far less common than the leadership literature would lead one to believe.

The momentary nature of leadership implies that a leader's style overall may not matter as much as the leader's ability to adapt his or her style to the context. Obviously, there is plenty of research to support the idea that a leader's ability to fluidly adapt their style to the needs of followers and context is indicative of effective leadership (Ayman, 2004; Goleman, 2000). This is particularly true across cultural contexts (House et al., 2004; Livermore, 2010; Meyer, 2014). Consequently, while a leader's overall style may be correlated with and predictive of success on a broad scale, the strength of the relationship between overall success is more likely a result of the compound effect of successfully applying different styles and approaches to the individual moments in which influence takes place. Furthermore, leadership style models generally focus on leadership behaviors at the macro level of social interaction and rarely have much to say about the more micro processes of daily social interaction.

The ability to adapt one's approach from moment to moment is based on the intuitive capacity of a leader to make decisions in real time. This capacity, while informed by preferences regarding style, is more likely informed by social learning and subconsciously developed patterns of behavior over time (Allen, 2007; Bandura, 1971; Hamilton, 2016; Tang, 2015). Without a level of conscious and intentional effort that is not characteristic of busy working professionals, leadership theories are unlikely to inform practice on a day-to-day basis for most leaders, largely because the context of leadership situations is highly complex and not well suited to contingency-model-oriented, decision-tree thinking (Lussier & Achua, 2007). Instead, it is grounded more in the nonlinear, interactive, intuitive, and creative approaches that are appropriate to the paradigm of engagement in complex adaptive systems (McClellan, 2010; Rosenhead, 1998; Stacey et al., 2000; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009).

Finally, while style is important, process and relationship are clearly significant as well (Kellerman, 2012; Komives et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien, 2006). Leaders must enact processes that are designed to achieve outcomes, but that also respond to human needs, align with the cultural context, and take into consideration the political environment (Bolman & Deal, 1991; McClellan, 2011b). Thus, a leader's processes are equally as important as the leader's style and represent the way that style manifests in action. Furthermore, the relationship between a leader and follower is a critical shaping force when it comes to influence. Influencers who engage one another on the foundation of a strong positive relationship are far more likely to promote follower compliance and satisfaction and achieve success—even if their process or approach is sloppy—because of the willingness of the other to support the influencer based on loyalty and concern for the influencer (Gabarro, 2007; Rahim, 1989; Wang et al., 2005). Thus, an approach to effectively understanding leadership must take into consideration that leadership is constantly bi- or multi-directional, informed by hierarchy but not hierarchy-dependent, momentary in nature, symbolic and creative, dependent on adaptation for success, more intuitive than rational, and process- and relationship-dependent (Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014). A shift in paradigm from leadership as person-, system-, process-, or relationship-focused to moment-oriented achieves these objectives.

Leadership Is Momentary

Given that leadership is a momentary phenomenon, one approach to understanding it is to focus on the moment in which goal-directed influence takes place as the unit of analysis. If leadership is a social influence process (House et al., 2004; Uhl-Bien, 2006), then it takes place when people influence one another to achieve some desired end. Such moments would normally be brief (Mintzberg, 1975), especially if one focuses on the individual influence activities of any given moment. Consequently, a *leadership moment* would be defined as occurring when individuals influence one another to achieve a goal or goals within a specific context for a limited time, the context of which is, at least partially, dependent upon the context that proceeded it and influenced by the expectation of those who will follow (Wellman, 2017; Wood, 2005). Based on this definition, and consistent with what is understood about leadership, a leadership moment would contain six key elements: context, leader, follower, goal, process, and relationship. See Figure 1.

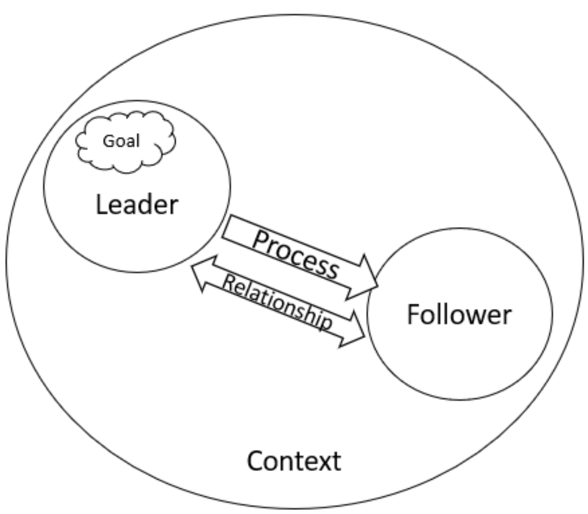

Figure 1. Elements of a leadership moment

Understanding the interplay between these six elements and the emergent nature of influence resulting from that interplay within any given moment would characterize this approach to understanding leadership.

It is worth noting that the emphasis of this approach is on understanding and describing the process of influence that is used to achieve the goal of the influencer that emerges as a result of the interplay between a leader and follower within the context of the moment. Focusing on leadership in this way addresses the issue of the variable nature of leadership from moment to moment. Additionally, hierarchy would inform, but not define, the leadership influence because, from moment to moment, the influencer could be the positional leader, follower, or both individuals, and the existence of positional power within the moment would affect the nature of the influence process.

Because it takes the moment as the unit of analysis instead of the person, the focus is on defining and describing the influence efforts that characterize the actual moment rather than the broad-ranging style of the leader. Furthermore, examining the approaches taken from moment to moment and over time would reveal a more realistic picture of a leader's application of actual styles as opposed to his or her idealized style. This approach would also allow for an emphasis on monitoring momentary outcomes of the influence process in relation to the goals and results of the moment as well as a more effective examination of how success at this level influences broader measures of organizational or group success. Finally, at this micro-level of analysis, because of the bounded nature of moments, it is easier to examine and consider the complexities of the leadership context. Thus, a focus on leadership as a momentary phenomenon resolves many of the dilemmas surrounding the practice of leadership that other approaches cannot.

It is also worth noting that leadership moments take place at different levels of application and analysis (McClellan, 2011a). Thus, a leadership moment can occur at the intrapersonal level, as one seeks to influence oneself; the interpersonal level, when influence is one-on-one; the group level, when influence occurs within a group context; the organizational level, when leadership takes place across groups within a larger organization; and the community or global level when it takes place in a broader societal context. Different levels of analysis would alter both the content and context of a moment and the nature of the influence that occurs within it.

Taxonomy

To better understand how leadership might be examined from this moment-based leadership approach, the following taxonomy is offered. This taxonomy represents one way of defining leadership at the group level of analysis but does not represent a proposed "ideal" way to organize the process of describing leadership moments. Different variables could and probably should be used to examine and understand leadership at this and other levels of analysis based on the nature of the moment. Thus, this approach recognizes and honors the complexity of leadership moments, even as it seeks to understand them through conceptual simplification. The matrix presented herein explores the nature of the emergent influence process and the goal of that process. Alternative approaches could focus on things like the engagement of a follower and a leader's means of persuasion (power, authority, or influence; McClellan, 2011a). In sum, there are countless ways to conceptualize leadership moments. What follows is one way.

Because *leadership* is defined as a social influence process that is goal-directed, a taxonomy of leadership within any given moment could be based on the nature of the influence process and the nature of the goals of a leader. One approach to categorizing influence processes that has been used over time are the autocratic, participative, and democratic approaches (Lussier & Achua, 2007; Northouse, 2019). *Autocratic leadership* is characterized by a leader's control of the input, throughput, and output processes of leadership. A leader gathers information, makes decisions, and directs action. In contrast, a *democratic approach* turns leadership over to the followers. To the extent that a leader is involved, it is either as one who convenes and oversees, without controlling, or as a participant in the process of gathering information, making decisions, and directing action. Finally, a *participative approach* generally positions a leader in a more facilitative role as the leader involves people in, but still largely controls or at least manages, the processes of gathering information, making decisions, and directing action.

These social influence processes could be aligned with the nature of the goals of the influencer, based on the reasons for which the influence is taking place, to define the type of leadership taking place within the moment. One way of categorizing motives would be to use McClelland's (1985) achievement motivation theory combined with Greenleaf's (2002) philosophy of servant leadership.

McClelland (1985) proposes that people are driven to influence others based on personality-based motives for power, affiliation, or achievement (McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982). Individuals motivated by power are driven by a desire to increase the amount of influence they have over others, often through the acquisition of positions of influence. Individuals motivated by achievement are driven by the desire to accomplish goals. These goals could be either of a personal or a shared nature, which could significantly alter the nature of the leadership performed based on the goal. Individuals motivated by affiliation are motivated by a desire to develop and maintain positive relationships with others.

In addition to the core motives postulated by McClelland (1985), Greenleaf (2003) suggests that leaders might also, and perhaps ideally should be, motivated by a desire to serve others (which may represent a mature version of McClelland's power motive; McClelland & Burnham, 1976). He defines this desire to serve as focused on helping others to "grow as persons" and, in doing so, to become "healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous" and more able to also serve others (Greenleaf, 2002, 27). The emphasis here is on contributing to the legitimate growth needs of those one leads. Based on the research supporting the difference between servant leadership and other models as being rooted in a difference in motive (Smith et al., 2004; Stone et al., 2003), it seems valid to add this motive to those outlined by McClelland.

While McClelland's (1985) and Greenleaf's (2002) models suggest that people have personality-based motives; motives, like leadership, vary from moment to moment. They are also part of the emergent nature of leadership, as they are influenced by the context and relationship between a leader and follower.

Motives also shape and define the nature of the goals that a leader pursues. Thus, a matrix for analyzing the influence-oriented processes of any given moment could be based on the motives of a leader on one axis and the nature of the influence process of that leader on the other. The resulting matrix would reveal 15 different types of influence processes (see Figure 2).

	Democratic	**Participative**	**Autocratic**
Power Goal	Political Leadership	Populist Leadership	Authoritarian Leadership
Achievement Goal—Personal	Manipulative Leadership	Buy-In Leadership	Sales Director Leadership
Achievement Goal—Shared	Adaptive Leadership	Transformational Leadership	Technical Leadership
Affiliation Goal	Accommodating Leadership	Compromising Leadership	Charismatic Leadership
Service Goal	Facilitated Leadership	Servant Leadership	Paternalistic Leadership

Figure 2. A leadership moment matrix

Based on this matrix structure, three influence-based approaches would result from each of the five motives. If a leader's motive and resulting goals were oriented toward power in a specific moment, and the influence process that emerged within the moment was democratic, the approach would be characterized by an effort on the part of the leader to increase his or her power by facilitating a democratic process. This would likely be achieved by the management of information provided and the processes used to facilitate the democratic process. This approach to leadership might be called political leadership.

If, in contrast, the emergent form of leadership was one in which a leader included followers in the processes of gathering information, decision-making, and directing action, but retained control of some elements of the process, such as final decision-making authority, this approach to leadership might be characterized as populist leadership. If the leader controlled the process completely, this would be a more truly authoritarian leadership process.

If a leader's motive-based goals were achievement-oriented but based on the leader's own personal goals, emergent influence efforts that were democratic in nature might be considered manipulative, as the leader likely would manage information sharing, and seek to manipulate decision-making and action via a democratic process to achieve his or her own ends. A more participative emergent approach might involve traditional "buy-in" processes, wherein a leader involves people in a managed process to attain participation-based acceptance for a decision that was largely predetermined by the leader. An autocratic leadership moment would involve more of a sales-director-style of leadership, as a leader convinces others that his or her goal is the best option and directs them to pursue it.

The leadership process could also manifest a focus on achievement, but with an orientation toward a common or shared goal. In this case, the emergent democratic approach would likely align with Heifetz's (1994) model of adaptive leadership, wherein leaders give the work back to followers who seek to understand and respond to challenges with the support of the leader (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). The participative approach would likely conform more to an emergent form of the transformational model of leadership, as transformational leaders seek to align individual and organizational goals and then inspire, engage, and support followers in their efforts to achieve these goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The autocratic approach could be termed technical leadership, also based on Heifetz's model, which occurs when leaders implement known solutions to well-understood problems in a more traditional directive style (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz & Laurie, 1997; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

Another potential motive would involve a focus on affiliation-based goals. This emphasis on building and maintaining relationships could result in the emergence of an accommodating form of leadership in which a leader gives in to the democratic desires of followers to maintain a positive relationship. If, on the other hand, the emergent approach is participative, the style would be more compromise-oriented. A more autocratic approach would likely emphasize the use of a charming inspirational approach like that associated with charismatic leadership (Cabane, 2012; Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

The final motive, service, could contribute to the manifestation of facilitated, servant, or paternalistic leadership moments. Facilitated leadership would represent the democratic approach, as a leader would help the group to identify its own needs and establish processes for addressing these. In contrast, servant leadership, based on Greenleaf's (2002) work, would involve a leader with foresight going out ahead to lead the way and then involving people in the process of articulating and achieving the service-oriented objectives of the group (Keith, 2008; Patterson, 2003; van Dierendonck, 2011). The final approach, while still focused on serving others, would do so in a more directive, paternalistic manner.

It is worth noting again that this matrix is oriented toward describing the nature of the emergent influence process enacted by a leader within a given context based on the give-and-take relationship between a leader and follower. Thus, it is a characterization of the influence process that emerges and is used in the moment rather than reflecting a leader's style or approach. Furthermore, it is not position-based. While a positional leader may engage in one leadership approach within a specific moment, the positional follower could engage in a similar or different approach at either the same time or directly following the influence effort of the leader. Thus, the emphasis here is not on the person or role, but on the influence processes used within the moment.

Implications

As discussed previously, this approach to leadership addresses many of the challenges associated with traditional leadership theory. It aligns with and honors the reality that leadership styles and approaches vary from moment to moment and centers these in the moment as opposed to the leader, thus avoiding the labeling of leaders according to idealistic, prescriptive, or even negative styles of leadership. In so doing, it honors the freedom of a leader to create—within the moment—an approach to leadership that is more intentional and adaptive to the needs of that moment. Consequently, it realigns leadership development and education efforts on helping leaders identify, understand, and develop appropriate responses to leadership moments as opposed to asking them to espouse loyalty to a specific theoretical approach that might not be appropriate to a situation or cultural context.

Despite this potential independence from theoretical allegiance, this approach does not invalidate the leadership theories and models that have been developed and studied over the history of leadership studies. As indicated in the discussion of the matrix, it situates them within the pantheon of approaches that may be applied in any given leadership moment. Consequently, the research associated with these models and approaches is invaluable for its contributions to the understanding and application of these models and approaches.

This approach also honors the reality that leadership moments are far more complex and dynamic than many theoretical approaches recognize. Because these traditional approaches emphasize the role of the leader, they tend to overlook the complex interplay between leaders, followers, and the context of leadership moments that often shape the response of a leader and determine his or her success, thereby revealing the mythological nature of the great-man approach (Bennis, 1999; Kellerman, 2012; McChrystal et al., 2018).

In relation to leadership development, moment-based leadership recognizes that patterns of leadership emerge as activation of systemic responses across neural pathways are reinforced through repetition over time (Smilkstein, 2003; Zull, 2002). Thus, leaders develop patterns of leadership that characterize their approach even if these do not necessarily, or even likely, fully align with one specific theoretical model. Furthermore, these individual-level patterns—to the extent that they become characteristic for a specific context—can then shape group and organizational leadership culture. This suggests that through mindfulness and intentionality within moments, leaders can use their rational cognitive processes to train their intuitive brains to engage in more complex and adaptive approaches to leadership within the array of moments that present themselves. Over time, they can also shape and define leadership cultures. Obviously, these leaders will tend to utilize approaches that are more “natural” for them and that are consistent with previous cultural approaches. Nonetheless, an emphasis on recognizing and responding to individual moments of leadership with mindful awareness and effective decision-making will likely allow for more intentionality and flexibility in the application of these approaches.

This model offers interesting avenues for research. Instead of focusing on generalized styles of leadership and examining their efficacy over time, this approach would focus on specific approaches to leadership as carried out by specific leaders and followers within specific contexts. Emphasis could be placed on examining the extent to which these influence processes achieve the actual influence goals of the individual who is influencing the other, while honoring the fact that that influence is bidirectional.

Limitations

One of the obvious limitations of this approach is its complexity. As researchers striving to develop contingency models of leadership discovered, there are a limitless number of variables that can be applied to any given leadership moment. Trying to identify and categorize these would be impossible because no one person can fully grasp the plenitude of complexity inherent in any given moment, much less analyze and use all of that information to make decisions (Axelrod & Cohen, 1999; Rosenhead, 1998; Stacey et al., 2000). Therefore, some level of simplification is required to facilitate the research and study of these moments and engage in decision-making and action (Hall, 2010; Hamilton, 2016). The matrix depicted above organizes leadership moments by only two variables. However, these variables are leader-influence-centered. Additional variables could be added based on follower responses to leadership, approaches, or context variables, which would better describe the full breadth of engagement between leader and follower within a given moment. For example, there is a significant difference between a resistant follower’s response and a willing follower’s response to a paternalistic leadership process. Nonetheless, this adds greater complexity and creates more difficulty in determining how to respond.

Furthermore, complexity and simplification necessarily limit generalization. The more context-dependent moments are, the harder it is to extrapolate generalizable principles from them. Nonetheless, leadership is not a laboratory science. It happens in the real world, and the study of leadership needs to be based on the complex reality of in-context leadership. The moments leaders face are complex.

Furthermore, the brain naturally oversimplifies these moments and organizes them to make decision-making and action possible amidst complexity (Hall, 2010; Hamilton, 2016). Thus, this blending of complexity and simplification is consistent with the reality of leadership, even though it does create challenges for researching and understanding the phenomenon.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is time to rethink the way we think about, study, and practice leadership. The myth of the "great man" as leader is just that, a myth. It does not reflect the complex reality of how leadership really occurs. Consequently, it does little to help us understand how leadership actually works or to help us educate and develop leaders. Leadership happens in complex moments in which leaders and followers navigate a context through mutual influence-based interaction to achieve goals. An approach to understanding leadership needs to take this complexity into consideration and recognize the moment-to-moment variability of leadership and the compound effects such moments have on shaping the nature of leadership over time for individuals and cultures. This article outlined a way of thinking about leadership that is focused on understanding leadership as moment-based and proposed a matrix approach to understanding leadership that might be used to better study, practice, and teach leadership in today's complex society.

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Mapping Leadership Theories to Leader Development Course Content: A First Step in Measuring Curriculum Design*

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This article is a first step in measuring the design of the leadership curriculum for the new core leader development (LD) course at the U.S. Air Force (USAF) Air Command and Staff College (ACSC). More than 500 students from 39 countries represent the student population. This article reports on and discusses the results of the first phase of a four-phase study. Using document analysis and NVivo software to analyze source documents, the study focuses on determining which leadership theories best map to the LD course. The mapping of 43 theories and domains to the six lessons in the LD course indicated that a wider spectrum of leadership should be used in redesigning course curriculum and that leadership theories related to culture and leading change should be included. Continued research is supported. Ultimately, this study will provide a framework for measuring leadership curriculum redesign using a dual approach for institutional effectiveness.

Key words: Air Force, curriculum design, institutional effectiveness, leadership development

The purpose of the this paper is threefold: (a) to discover and offer a contemporary view of a full spectrum of leadership theories that have endured over time and those that have emerged over the past three decades; (b) to provide an overview of the most prominent leadership, ethical, and leading change frameworks that relate to the intersection of ethical and strategic leadership; and (c) to integrate scholarship with curriculum design by mapping the prominent leadership theories to the six lessons in the newly developed U.S. Air Force (USAF) Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) leader development (LD) course curriculum.

The three purposes support and align with the Air Education and Training Command's (AETC) Draft Learning Philosophy (Stafford, 2019), the Air University (AU) commander's guidance for CY19, the AU Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP; AU, 2019), the AU Instruction 36-2602 (AU, 2018), and RAND Corporation's report, *Improving the Effectiveness of Air Force Squadron Commanders* (Ausink et al., 2018).

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In particular, the mapping provides evidence that the new curriculum design is supported by a wide range of leadership theories when applied to the AU QEP's ethical leadership framework for the ethical capacity of the self, team, and organization and the ethical leadership framework in an Air Force organization context of ethical capacity for an airman, leaders of airmen, and the U.S. Air Force (21–22).

Background

In 2015, Air University conducted an analysis of academic operations through a strategic planning process. As a result of the institutional review, in 2018, AU published AU Instruction 36-2602, which combined 28 separate manuals into one coherent publication on academic affairs and guidance on university operations. In 2019, AU published its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *Leadership and Ethics Across the Continuum of Learning,* which has six key outcomes:

Institutional Outcomes

- Develop a leadership model and leader development framework for the continuum of learning.
- Develop faculty expertise in leadership development.
- Develop a forum for theorists, researchers, and practitioners.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand the domains of ethical leadership, with specific focus on strategic leadership capacities, in the context of a development continuum across an individual's career.
- Apply leadership development theories and models as appropriate to their career level and roles.
- Demonstrate leadership skills appropriate to their career level and roles.

A detailed assessment plan to measure all six outcomes will occur over a five-year cycle using four assessments with faculty and students: the Organizational Ethical Culture Measure (Huhtala, et al., 2018), the Empowering Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ; Yukl et al., 2013), the Moral Metacognition Scale (McMahon & Good, 2016), and the Judgment Index (Pomeroy, 2005). Together, the four instruments will help assess individual ethical competence and self-knowledge, students' judgment and decision-making capacities, faculty expertise in leadership development and competence, competence of students and faculty as strategic-ethical leaders, and perceptions of the competence of others regarding strategic-ethical leadership. What is not planned for is measuring how students apply the knowledge of the new core LD curriculum, which is more of an emergent process of understanding how students used or did not use the course concepts related to strategic and ethical leadership.

The LD course has three phases and six lessons that are delivered over 15.5 days of instruction (see Figure 1). Phase 1 explores the ethical foundations of military leadership and consists of three lessons (purpose, wisdom and justice, and courage and temperance). Phase 2 deepens and applies the ethical foundation via assessing self and organizations through one extensive lesson (self-knowledge and organizational culture). Phase 3 confronts uncertainty and future application of the integrated concepts in two lessons (creativity and resourcefulness).

Figure 1. Overview of ACSC leadership development course

The following excerpt from the LD course syllabus for AY2020 (ACSC, 2020) provides the rationale for the course development:

> The Leadership Course thus recognizes that good leadership is inextricably linked to education and ethical living. The Course's task is to best equip students to lead well in their own future, contingent, changing circumstances. Since the course aims at advancing one's capacity to lead successfully and on behalf of the common good, the course employs an educational approach grounded in a sound ethical foundation to build out the convictions and considerations that it is our hope will equip graduates to lead at their very best in the future.
>
> The course strives to blend humanities-based (history and philosophy) and social science-based (psychology and sociology) approaches to leadership. Leadership in war, or in preparation for war, demands close and thorough attention to the ends and means of military organizations, cultures, and missions. The study of the humanities clarifies ends, purposes and goods in a way that slogans and mantras never can. The study of the social sciences, by definition, identifies not ends but only varieties of means, and which means may be effective and efficient under certain circumstances. The best leaders are ethical and effective, doing the right thing well, even when it is hard. (5–6)

Institutional Effectiveness

As part of AU's institutional effectiveness program, the QEP focuses on building and strengthening three capacities: absorptive, adaptive, and decision-making (AU, 2019). The following three paragraphs explain the three capacities in detail:

> **Absorptive Capacity:** Ability to learn. Ability to learn through "know-why," "know-how," and "know-what" processes (Garud, 1997). Ability to engage in directed and self-directed learning, to recognize new information, assimilate it and apply it to a context or a targeted end. The ability to create and recreate gestalts and logical structures based on new information and understanding. Individual absorptive capacity depends on an organization's systems capabilities (procedures and policies), coordination capabilities (intra-relationship building), and socialization capabilities (Daghfous, 2004). Absorptive capacity also refers to an individual or organization's ability to understand and value new external knowledge, engage in a transformative learning process, and to apply the transformed knowledge (Lane, Koka, & Pathak, 2006). Tenets of absorptive capacity are found in vertical leadership including the leader's ability to develop one's knowledge over time (Lord & Hall, 2005; Lord & Shondrick, 2011; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017).
>
> **Adaptive Capacity:** Ability to change. Ability to be creative and innovative in the face of incongruence, complexity, disequilibrium, dissonance, and hypercompetition. Adaptive potential relies on all members of an organization, particularly in leaders' cognitive, behavioral, and flexibility abilities (Boal & Whitehead, 1992; Hooijberg, Hunt, & Dodge, 1997; Zacarro, 1996). Tenets of adaptive capacity are found in meta-leadership theory which incorporates the need for leaders to be adaptive in complex situations when multiple stakeholders

> and actors are involved (Marcus, Dorn, & Henderson, 2006; McNulty et al., 2018a; McNulty et al., 2018b; Marcus, Dorn, Henderson, & McNulty, 2015) and vertical leadership theory which refers to adaptive leadership as the ability to respond under tension (Uhl-Bien, Marion, McKelvey, 2007).
>
> **Decision-making Capacity:** Ability to discern variations in the environment, understand the social actors and their relationships, and to discern the timing of the "right action at the right time" (Gardner, 1985, 1993; Sternberg, 1985; Zaccaro, Gilbert, Thor, & Mumford, 1991). Tenets of the decision-making or managerial wisdom capacity are found in Leader-Member Exchange Theory (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006; Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Chang & Johnson, 2010; Ko, Ma, Bartnik, Haney, & Kang, 2018; Lord, Gatti, & Chui, 2016), the Full-Range Leadership Model (Bass, 1990, 1999; Burns, 1978; Pearce & Sims Jr., 2002), and Meta-Leadership (Marcus, Dorn, Henderson, & McNulty, 2015). Decision-making capacity brings attention to the importance of a strategic leader having the social intelligence to create and maintain quality relationships among actors of the organization. (AU, 2019, 18)

The three capacities are used to categorize abilities desired of leaders—*to learn, to change, and to discern*—and they should be viewed as competencies within a developmental continuum for self- and organizational growth (AU, 2019). The capacities undergird how an individual develops internally (vertically) over the course of a lifetime (horizontally). The QEP considers the capacities to be strategic in nature (AU, 2019).

The literature on institutional effectiveness discusses cultivating faculty and administrative support in great detail (Hom, 2011; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003a, 2003b) and how to identify key stakeholders in the process (Hom, 2011; Manning, 2011), but there is limited literature on including students as key stakeholders (Alfred, 2011; Hom, 2011). The role of assessment practitioners should be to advocate for all stakeholders, including students (Jankowski & Slotnick, 2015), as a holistic strategy for improvement that is dependent on quality leadership involving all participant voices in the process (Cameron, 1984; Middlehurst, 1995). The QEP did include using student assessments as part of the process, but it excluded any measurement of how students apply specific course concepts using an approach that allows the findings of learning to emerge from the data, and primarily included strategic and ethical leadership concepts (AU, 2019). The reviewed literature in the QEP related to strategic and ethical leadership thru the lens of what military leaders would need to lead current and future forces (AU, 2019). Consequently, key leadership literature outside the context of the military may have been overlooked, and, therefore, limited the understanding of how students applied the new leadership curriculum in their essays. The next section provides an overview of the prominent leadership frameworks, theories, and models that have endured over time and the ones that have emerged over the last 30 years of scholarly work in the field of leadership studies and that relate to the three strategic capacities of absorptive, adaptive, and decision making.

Leadership Frameworks

In 1991, there were more than 65 different classification systems of leadership (Fleishman et al., 1991) and more than 200 definitions of leadership (Rost, 1993). In 2003, Burns attempted to unite the leadership studies field by generating a general or grand theory of leadership. This macro approach sought to generalize key concepts about the process and pursuits of leadership. At best, the definition exemplified the complexity of leadership even within the field of leadership scholars and in a world of unique organizations with different cultures. Additionally, the failure to reach a unanimous agreement on a single definition of a general theory showed “that the process of leadership was too complex to capture in any sort of linear model or theory” (Wren, 2006, 7). The challenge of a general theory is that, to be useful on a macro level, it must be broad and general enough to appeal on a grand scale. Yet, what is missed in generalized or umbrella-type approaches is the grittiness of an organization; the unique definition of culture, characteristics, and interactions that combine into processes specific to an organization. While the practice of leadership of an organization or group is at the micro level of human interaction, the results of leadership—constructive or destructive—are felt beyond individuals within an organization, often at a macro or strategic level. The processes and levels of interaction affect those internal and external to an organization. Within the military, the exercise of leadership at the individual, group or organizational, and macro or global levels are framed by ethical standards and a code of conduct found in the U.S. Constitution, DOD regulations, and leaders’ oath of office.

As of 2012, there were an estimated 1,400 definitions of leadership and 44 leadership theories (Kellerman, 2012). Just two years later, based on examining leadership research articles published in the 10 top-tier journals between 2000 and 2012, the number of theories grew to 74 (Dinh et al., 2014) and comprised 66 leadership theory domains. At the rate of increase, there could be more than 300 leadership theories by 2022. Literature published over the last three decades re-emphasized the complexity of leadership and sought to categorize theories and more deeply explain the leadership process or describe what is occurring between people and how the processes affect outcomes at individual, organizational, societal, environmental, and global levels (Dinh et al., 2014). The recent additions did four key things:

- added new leadership theories and domains (Boin et al., 2013; Burns, 2017; Chaleff, 2009; Dinh et al., 2014; Furman, 2003; Goldman, 2006; Guo et al., 2016; Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009; Hickman & Sorenson, 2014; Hinck, 2016; Klann, 2003; Lipman-Blumen, 2010; Reed, 2015; Rhode, 2006; Scharmer, 2009);
- invited novel ideas about the roles of leaders and followers in a changing world (Cardona et al., 2019; Cashman, 2017; Chaleff, 2015; Chin et al., 2018; Kellerman, 2008; Klein et al., 2009; Riggio et al., 2008; Schockman et al., 2019);
- offered a more integrated approach to leadership (Day et al., 2009; Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013; Van Velsor et al., 2010; Wilber, 2000); and
- explored the intersections of leadership, change, and leadership development (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Day et al., 2009; Heath & Heath, 2010; Hinck, 2017; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Kotter, 1996; Hickman, 2010; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Scharmer, 2009).

Method

A four-phase mixed methods approach will be used in the entire study: (1) mapping leadership theories to course curriculum using document analysis and NVivo software; (2) qualitatively analyzing initial and final leadership philosophy papers of students (*n* = 541) in the LD course using the mapping of theories; (3) gathering data from the Judgment Index (Pomeroy, 2005), the ELQ (Yukl et al., 2013), and the Organizational Ethical Culture Measure (Huhtala et al., 2018); and (4) comparing the data from Phases 2 and 3 for institutional effectiveness. Sampling, data collection, and data analysis are different in each of the phases.

For this article, only Phase 1 was conducted. Document analysis and NVivo software were used to analyze the AU QEP (AU, 2019), the LD curriculum, and the body of leadership theories relying on the literature review and two prominent papers by Burns (2017) and Dinh et al. (2014). The analysis is the first step or key component of the larger mixed methods study and sets the foundation upon which to continue the research. Additionally, one aim of mapping leadership theories to the LD course curriculum is to provide new insights into the development of curriculum, which may challenge the pre-existing notions of which theories are more important or vital to the LD course.

Based on the literature review and three source documents, leadership theories were selected that related to the three leadership capacities described in the QEP (AU, 2019). The theories and their definitions were analyzed in comparison to the LD course curriculum using NVivo Software. The capacities were then arrayed in conceptual ways to understand the range of leadership theories, followed by a mapping of the selected theories to the course curriculum. For reliability and theoretical rigor, the results were examined by three outside experts in the fields of leadership studies, educational leadership, and curriculum development.

Findings and Discussion

Analysis of the sources yielded more than 218 distinct leadership theories that were reduced to 57 commonly used frameworks to develop a full spectrum of leadership theories for the study. The final step involved selecting 43 theories that were associated or mapped with the LD course content. The results of Phase 1 are provided in two parts: (a) a depiction of the leadership theories that relate to the three capacities of absorptive, adaptive, and decision-making, and (b) a mapping of the 43 related leadership theories to the six lessons in the ACSC's LD course curriculum using absorptive, adaptive, and decision-making frameworks.

Part 1: Development of the Full Spectrum of Leadership Theories

The 57 commonly used frameworks of leadership that relate to the capacities of absorptive, adaptive, and decision-making range from constructive to destructive, or what is commonly called the negative or the dark side of leadership. These frameworks were used to build a full spectrum of theories that are useful in a military context. Figure 2 attempts to capture the most commonly used frameworks related to the three capacities and arrange them in a way to show levels of complexity (from negative/destructive to positive/constructive in terms of processes (destructive to constructive), effectiveness (ineffective to effective), ethics (non-ethical to ethical), and intent (self-serving to altruistic), as well as how the theories are applied (at the individual, group or organizational, and macro or multiple levels). The breadth of the full spectrum of leadership theories provides conceptual frameworks and practical applications to inform and guide contemporary leadership that have immense applicability and flexibility and aid one in applying the most relevant framework to self and organizations.

Figure 2 on the next page provides a holistic, integrated view to better understand, compare, and contrast the most prominent leadership theories. The theories are arranged on a spectrum from negative on the left to positive on the right, using an approximate numerical value range of -10 to +10. The farther from the center—or mid-point value of 0—the greater the complexity of the theory, particularly in terms of levels, outcomes, and processes. At the top are associated levels of how the leadership theory is understood to be applied at the individual, group/organizational, macro/multi-levels. At the bottom, key words are used to help explain the range of negative or positive complexity based on how the theory is understood regarding process, effectiveness, ethics, and intent. For example, toxic leadership theory (Lipman-Blumen, 2010; Reed, 2015) would have a mid-range of negative complexity, as the theory affects both the individual leader and followers at multiple levels and is somewhat ineffective, unethical, and self-serving. Transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Burns, 2003) could be viewed is somewhat of an opposite of toxic leadership, as transformational leaders are often seen in an extremely positive light and generally highly effective; they use ethical practices but may not be fully altruistic in their endeavor. The traits and skills of leaders (Bass, 1990; Stogdill, 1948, 1974; Zaccaro et al., 2004) can be underdeveloped or have a negative effect on an individual's performance but may not be of a nature that affects others at the group or organizational levels; the underdeveloped or minimal negative behavior can be corrected via education, training, and practice. Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970, 1972, 1977) encompasses a highly complex situation that has positive outcomes and extremely ethical practices involving an altruistic leader with devoted followers. The placement of theories on the spectrum are approximate, and there is room for interpretation on moving right or left based on how the theory is understood and applied in various contexts.

Figure 2. The full spectrum of leadership theories

The depiction of the full spectrum of leadership theories is not meant to be all inclusive or firm in the placement of each theory. There is room for adjustments to fit individual beliefs and experiences with the various leadership theories. Excluded from the full spectrum of leadership theories are ideas that may not have moved from a concept to a theory, not found in some type of scholarly work or conference presentation, or so general in nature as to not be useful for this primer or that did not relate to any of the three previously identified strategic capacities for military leaders (e.g., org theory, e-leadership, aesthetic leadership, and entrepreneurial leadership).

Part 2: Mapping the Full Spectrum of Leadership Theories to ACSC LD Curriculum

Table 1 shows the results of mapping the leadership theories to the six lessons in the LD course (see Figure 1) using absorptive, adaptive, and decision-making frameworks. Appendix A provides a brief description of each theory, along with the accompanying scholars known as the original source of the theory and those who have either contributed to the expansion of the theory or have published the latest or most influential scholarly work related to the theory.

Table 1: Mapping the Full Spectrum of Leadership Theories to the ACSC LD Curriculum

	Absorptive Capacity: *Ability to learn*	**Adaptive Capacity:** *Ability to change*	**Decision-Making Capacity:** *Ability to discern*
Lesson 1	Traits Skills Style Path–Goal Authentic	Psychodynamic Charismatic	Purpose-Driven
Lesson 2	Moral Values-Based Servant	Adaptive Invisible/Collective	Ethical
Lesson 3	Transactional	LMX Relational Pietic/Pious-like	Action Logics Transformational
Lesson 4	EQ/EI Organizational Culture and Leadership	Theory U Framing and Reframing Change	Team/Shared Followership Toxic Destructive Sinful/Darkside
Lesson 5	Vertical/Complexity Developmental	Creative/Innovative/Innovation Situational Contingency	8-Step Process for Leading Change
Lesson 6	Integral AQAL	Crisis/In Extremis VUCA/VUCA-Prime/ VUCA-Change Three-Part Framework	Strategic Global Meta

Relationship to Theories Based on Strategic Capacities

In Phase I of the LD course, 20 theories provided a framework for the ethical foundations of leadership. Eight theories mapped to Lesson 1: traits, skills, style, path–goal, authentic, psychodynamic, charismatic, and purpose-driven. Six theories mapped to Lesson 2: moral, values-based, servant, adaptive, invisible/collective, and ethical. Six theories mapped to Lesson 3: transactional, LMX, relational, pietic/pious-like, action logics, and transformational.

In Phase II of the LD course, nine theories related to assessing self and organization. The nine theories that mapped to Lesson 4 were EQ/EI, organizational culture and leadership, theory U, framing and re-framing, team/shared, followership, toxic, destructive, and sinful/darkside.

In Phase III of the LD course, 14 theories inform confronting uncertainty. Six theories mapped to Lesson 5: vertical/complexity, developmental, creative/innovative/innovation, situational, contingency, and the 8-step process for leading change. Eight theories mapped to Lesson 6: integral, AQAL, crisis/in extremis, VUCA/VUCA-prime/VUCA-change, three-part framework, strategic, global, and meta.

Table 2: Relationship of Theories to Lessons/Phases Based on Three Strategic Capacities

	Absorptive	Adaptive	Decision-Making	Theories by Lesson	Theories by Phase
Lesson 1	5	2	1	8	20
Lesson 2	3	2	1	6	
Lesson 3	1	3	2	6	
Lesson 4	2	2	5	9	9
Lesson 5	2	3	1	6	14
Lesson 6	2	3	3	8	
Totals	**15**	**15**	**13**	**43**	**43**

Table 2 shows that the LD course curriculum encompasses nearly an even spread of 43 prominent theories across each of the three strategic capacities, which provides evidence that the curriculum supports the QEP's assertion that the strategic capacities should be used as competencies within a developmental continuum for self- and organizational growth (AU, 2019). The capacities, therefore, are reinforced throughout the curriculum design, and support student development both vertically and horizontally, thus mirroring the aim of a leadership development course for future leaders within the Department of Defense.

Conclusions and Completing the Study

The first part of the study provided three key areas of results: (a) a contemporary view of the full spectrum of leadership theories that have endured over time and those that have emerged over the past three decades; (b) an overview of the 43 most prominent leadership, ethical, and leading change theories that relate to the intersection of ethical and strategic leadership; and (c) an integration of scholarship with curriculum design by using the three strategic capacities to map the prominent leadership theories to the six lessons in the ACSC's newly developed LD course curriculum.

Overall, there are three key takeaways or conclusions that will need to be further examined based on the results of Phases 2, 3, and 4 of the study:

- Leadership, ethical, and change theories support the entirety of the ACSC's LD course.
- The curriculum supports the QEP's intent that the strategic capacities should be used as competencies within a developmental continuum for self- and organizational growth (AU, 2019).
- The strategic capacities are reinforced throughout the curriculum design and support student development both vertically and horizontally.

The second article of the study will complete Phases 2, 3, and 4, accompanied by discussion of the results, limitations, and implications. The entire study is expected to be completed in late 2021.

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Appendix A: Overview of Key Theories, Definitions, and Scholars

Theory Name	Definition	Scholars
1. Traits	Traits and characteristics that one is born with define "great man" theories of people (generally males) in social, political, and military positions.	Bass, 1990; Stogdill, 1948, 1974; Zaccaro et al., 2004
2. Skills	The skills and abilities of leaders can be learned (leaders are made vs. born).	Katz, 1955 Mumford et al., 2000
3. Style	Leader's behaviors are emphasized (vs. characteristics or skills/ capabilities); divided into task and relationship behaviors.	Blake & Mouton, 1964, 1978, 1985; Hemphill & Coons, 1957; Likert, 1961, 1967
4. Psychodynamic	The theory seeks to understand leaders by understanding the dynamics of their behaviors and how a leader functions and why; the history of the theory tends to focus on the inner theater of people, leader–follower relationships, and the shadow side of leadership.	Baron et al., 1992; Freud, 1900/1953; Erikson, 1950; Trehan, 2007; Western, 1998
5. Charismatic	Although a trait-based theory, the leader's personal characteristics are examined for the ability to convince or influence others to accomplish a specific vision (mostly using charisma and charm).	Antonakis, 2012; Conger, 2011; House, 1976; Weber, 1920/1947
6. Situational	Different situations demand different kinds of leadership. The focus is on the leader's response (delegating, supporting, coaching, or directing) in adapting to different situations based on needs of others/employees.	Graeff, 1997; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Reddin, 1967; Vecchio, 1987
7. Contingency	Contingency theory tries to match leader's style (task- or relationship-motivated leaders) to appropriate situations. A leader's effectiveness is contingent on how well the leader's style fits the context.	Fiedler, 1964; Graen et al., 1970
8. Path–Goal	The theory attempts to specify a leader's style, actions, and behaviors that best fit the employee and work environment in the aim of increasing followers' performance, satisfaction, and empowerment and by focusing on follower motivation.	Evans, 1970; House, 1971, 1996; House & Mitchell, 1974; Schriesheim & Neider, 1996

9. Transactional	Transactional leadership involves the exchange of valued things and appeals to self-interest of followers.	Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bass et al., 2003; Burns, 1978, 2003; den Hartog et al., 1997
10. LMX	LMX is a relationship-based approach to leadership that focuses on the dyadic (two-way) relationship between leaders and followers; characterized by in-groups and out-groups based on trust, emotion, respect, and benevolence toward each other.	Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Cashman, 1975; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hooper & Martin, 2008
11. Relational	Relationships are key for effectiveness; leaders use five components that include a process that values purpose, being inclusive and ethical, and empowering others to benefit the common good.	Brower et al., 2000; Hunt & Dodge, 2000; Uhl-Bien, 2011
12. Followership	As one of the newest leadership theories, followership is about the actions of those in subordinate roles to leaders and how their actions complement leadership through intentional and meaningful interchanges.	Chaleff, 2009, 2015; Riggio et al., 2008; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014
13. Creative, Innovative, or Innovation	This is a way to both describe and prescribe a leadership theory that develops novel ideas through shared authority and how leaders create an environment that promotes generating thinking and acting in new ways. With roots in path–goal theory and LMX theory, innovation leadership is an approach that combines various leadership styles to influence others to generate new ideas that relate to products/services for the organization.	Gibbons, 1992; Guo et al., 2016; Horth & Buchner, 2014; Mainemelis et al., 2015
14. Crisis or In Extremis	This body of thematic theories looks at how leaders act or react in a crisis or unexpected situation facing self, others, and organizations.	Boin et al., 2013; Klann, 2003; Kolditz, 2007
15. Action Logics	Action logics provides a comprehensive method of self-inquiry toward positive transformation. Initially formed from ego development as part of the constructivist-development framework, the theory was expanded into how individuals make sense of	Cook-Greuter, 2004; Loevinger, 1966, 1998; Rooke & Torbert, 2005; Torbert, 2004

	themselves and take appropriate action from the right source of power.	
16. Authentic	Initially, authentic leadership was about how leaders display transparency through actions regardless of the situation. The theory has evolved to examine how leaders bring their authentic self to the various roles they perform in life (transparency in action vs. transparency of self). Authentic leaders are considered self-aware and process-positive; there are tensions between competing viewpoints: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and developmental authenticity.	Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Chan, 2005; Eagly, 2005; Gardner et al., 2011; Shamir & Eilam, 2005
17. Invisible or Collective	These theories advance leadership as a shared concept in which leadership is shared in pursuit of a common objective or collective pursuit of organizational aims, or that leadership responsibilities are distributed. The common purpose to rally people and their strengths is used to emphasize how the role of leadership is crucial for organizational success; when rallying around the common objective, the role of leadership can be taken up by anyone, regardless of position or title.	Contractor et al., 2012; Hickman & Sorenson, 2014; Hiller et al., 2006; Pearce et al., 2008
18. Purpose-Driven	Shared purpose is at the center of this theory, and influence is at the hands of all in the organization who share the common purpose that drives organizational purpose and momentum. People share trust and respect and develop bonds around the shared leadership involved in purpose-driven organizations.	Cardona et al., 2019; Cashman, 2017
19. Team or Shared	Generally, this thematic leadership model examines the shared leadership among members of a team or how different theories are applied among team members.	Carson et al., 2007; Mehra et al., 2006; Zaccaro et al., 2001
20. Transformational	Transformational leaders influence others to perform beyond own perceived abilities. Part of the full-range leadership model, leaders influence the morale, values, motivation, and performance of	Bass & Avolio, 1993; Burns, 2003; Yukl, 1999

	followers to a higher level of moral ground. It has four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.	
21. Vertical (sometimes referred to as complexity leadership)	This leadership theory advances the idea that a leader's enrichment and growth occur when showing, training, and developing leaders to think and behave like leaders. There is a focus on advancement of cognitive and behavioral capacities through training and development.	Hoch, 2013; Lord & Hall, 2005; Lord & Shondrick, 2011; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007
22. Developmental	This type of leadership theory develops the individual's interior first to serve the exterior or others external to the leader. It is about the process of fully developing individuals to support organizational development and improvement.	Gilley et al., 2011; Hudson, 1999; Rafferty & Griffin, 2010
23. Adaptive	Adaptive leadership is about mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges in organizations, life, and the larger systems in which we operate, and, ultimately, thrive. A metaphor of getting on the balcony and being on the dance floor is used to illustrate the duality of challenges; real leadership is about doing both at the same time to focus on diagnosing the situation to face the adaptive challenge (maintaining enough heat for people to do the work in a productive zone of disequilibrium) vs. providing technical solutions.	DeRue, 2011; Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009
24. EQ/EI	EQ/EI is about the leader's ability to identify, assess, and control one's emotions *and* others' emotions. Sometimes five elements (self-awareness, self-regulation, internal motivation, empathy, and social skill) are used in a four-part framework: self-awareness; self-regulation; social awareness; and relationship management.	Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1993
25. Ethical	There are generally five accepted principles with ethical leadership. An ethical leader respects others, serves others, shows justice, manifests honesty, and builds community—the	Asencio et al., 2017; Bandura, 1977, 1986; Brown & Trevino, 2006; Denny, 2014

	leadership within the organization is directed by respect for ethical beliefs and shared values.	
26. Moral	Moral leadership Involves ethical conduct on the part of leaders, as well as the capacity to inspire such conduct in follower; leading an organization or people to accomplish an explicitly moral purpose.	Furman, 2003; Gini, 1997; Rhode, 2006
27. Values-Based	Leaders draw on their own and follower's values for purpose, direction, and motivation. Values-based leadership is often associated with three constructs of authentic, ethical, and transformational *or* four principles of self-reflection, balance and perspective, self-confidence, and genuine humility *or* four value clusters for leaders: strategist, analyst, mentor, and innovator.	Copeland, 2014; Dean, 2008; Kraemer, 2011
28. Strategic	Strategic has been generally applied to the leader's ability to plan and execute change or influence conditions and outcomes at a level external to the organization, or the series of processes that allow a corporation to generate wealth. How a leader concurrently develops both horizontally and vertically or strategically throughout a career is gaining consideration as a branch of this theory.	Baarle et al., 2015; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Ko et al., 2018; Rowe, 2001; Vera & Crossan, 2004
29. Global	Global leadership is a complex process combining task and relational elements and actions through which individuals and organizations influence outcomes that affect multiple cultures, systems, and environments.	Mendenhall et al., 2018 Mobley & Weldon, 2006
30. Meta	Meta leaders use a holistic view to approach situations using a comprehensive organizing framework and collaboration method to catalyze action, with a focus on improving collective performance. There are three dimensions: the person, the situation, and connectivity (down, up, across and beyond).	Marcus et al., 2009; Marcus et al., 2006; Marcus et al., 2015
31. Integral	Integral leadership is a methodology that approaches leadership from both a higher level of consciousness or	Reams, 2005; Volckmann, 2012; Wilber, 2000, 2007

	spiritually *and* a meta-theory that integrates levels of development across an organization and values all contributions.	
32. AQAL	All Quadrants, All Lines forms the foundational elements of AQAL; leadership is a deep integration of four quadrants (I, we, it, and its) and multiple lines of development.	Haigh, 2013; Wilber, 2000
33. Pietic or Pious-like	Pietic leaders have an obligation to act with courage, will, and intent to communicate in a loving manner, which manifests in situations with close relational bonds. There is an emphasis on the inclusivity of shared authority with which to communicate, co-create, and enact in ways that respect "brotherly" or "familial" bonds between members (military units; family eldercare).	Belayche, 2007; Hinck, 2016; May, 1969
34. Servant	Leaders put the needs of followers first, serve their needs in ethical ways, and empower them to reach full potential.	Greenleaf, 1970, 1972, 1977
35. Destructive	Destructive leaders have systematic and repeated behaviors that undermine and destroy the motivation, interest, and well-being of others and that sabotage organizational goals, resources, and effectiveness.	Burns, 2017; Einarsen et al., 2007; Reed & Bullis, 2009
36. Toxic	A leader who abuses others with their authority for their own self-interest, who is both individually and organizationally harmful. There are three commonly agreed-upon elements: lack of concern for the well-being of subordinates, a personality (behavior) that negatively affects others/the organization, and a belief by subordinates that the leader is motivated by self-interest.	Goldman, 2006; Lipman-Blumen, 2010; Reed, 2015

37. Sinful or Darkside	Both deal with abuse of power but with different combination of outcomes. Darkside refers to an ongoing pattern of behavior that thwarts morale and satisfaction that results in overall negative organizational outcomes for the leaders, followers, and the environment. Sinful leadership is the process through which self, subordinates, and the organization are affected for life by the immorally seeking of pleasure or self-gratification through a combination of domination, abuse, and violation of trust from a position of ethical power (e.g., a member of the clergy with youth or a sports coach with an athlete, i.e., someone in a power position who knowingly abuses others in unethical ways).	Conger, 1990; Hinck, 2016
Change Models/Theories Associated With Leadership		
38. Theory U	Theory U is an individual and organizational change and transformation model that emphasizes a movement of letting go (left side of the U) to let come (right side of the U) in order to practice “presencing” and lead from the future as it emerges. The work is intended to aid people in answering two key questions: Who is my self? and What is my work?	Scharmer, 2009; Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013
39. Three-Part Framework	The three parts are rider, elephant, and path. Leaders are encouraged to “direct the rider” and provide crystal-clear direction. For “motivate the elephant,” everyone is both a rider and an elephant that represent the emotional context of organizations. “Shape the path” means to change the situation by identifying and removing barriers such as workflows, systems, and habits to rally the herd, where change is defined as real work—dedicating time and resources, applying social pressure, and spotlighting early success to continue on the desired path.	Heath & Heath, 2010
40. Framing and Reframing	This is a change model that employs four concepts (structural, HR, political, and symbolic) to frame situations in	Bolman & Deal, 2013

	organizations and use different frames to reframe for change.	
41. Organzational Culture & Leadership	Leadership and culture are intertwined. Leaders are the main architects of culture; after culture is formed, leaders influence the possibilities of leadership, and leaders have the obligation to make change if culture becomes dysfunctional. There are three levels to culture: artifacts (visible evidence); espoused values (compared to enacted values); and underlying assumptions and beliefs (often hidden and unspoken).	Schein, 2010
42. 8-Step Process for Leading Change	The eight steps for leading change are to create a sense of urgency, form a guiding coalition, create a vision for change, communicate the vision, empower action, create quick wins, build on the change, and make it stick.	Kotter, 1996
43. VUCA, VUCA-Prime, and VUCA-Change	Developed at the Army War College in 1990s to analyze the world post-Cold-War: volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. VUCA-Prime is a strategy to address the impact of the VUCA world: vision, understanding, clarity, and agility. VUCA-Change is a co-created model developed by IMAGO Global Grassroots and Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) while working with the poor in India: values, unity, commitment, and adaptation.	George, 2017; Johansen, 2017; U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, 2018

CASE STUDY

Paloma Lopez—Reimagining Our Broken Food Systems and Developing Future Fit Foods (FFF)[*†]

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This case study illustrates how Paloma Lopez, an avid social entrepreneur and healthy food activist, demonstrated the five principles of exemplary leadership proposed by Kouzes and Posner (2017) in her quest to fix the broken global food system and develop her social enterprise Future Fit Foods (FFF). The case study describes, from the perspective of Lopez, the current challenges facing the global food systems and the need to shift toward a circular economy. In the context of the recent efforts of multiple stakeholders to shift toward circular business models, the case also explains how Lopez created a circular business model in her new social enterprise Future Fit Foods. This case study demonstrates that exemplary leadership is important for solving the numerous global challenges the world faces.

Key words: circular business model, circular economy, exemplary leadership, global food systems

> *We must transform all the elements of the take-make-waste system: how we manage resources, how we make and use products, and what we do with the materials afterwards. Only then can we create a thriving economy that can benefit everyone within the limits of our planet.*
> *—Ellen MacArthur Foundation (Charleton, 2020, last para.)*

This case study is centered on three overarching themes: the subject: Paloma Lopez, an avid social entrepreneur and healthy food activist; the context: the deficiencies of the world's food supply system, which has been described as broken, unhealthy, and inefficient; and the solution advocated by Lopez: fixing the food system with an ongoing program that is based on a circular model. This case study interweaves the three themes with an academic model of five principles of exemplary leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) and posits a curated

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transformational model of leadership in the context of entrepreneurship and environmental sustainability.

The Paloma Lopez case offers a perspective for revisiting leadership theories over decades of scholarship (Gardner et al., 2010; Yukl, 2006). The initial studies focused on leadership traits that were valid in any generic situation (Northouse, 2012). Leadership scholars eventually moved away from the trait approach to an influence approach (Carter, 2013). Over time, theories and models have been developed to understand leadership behaviors such as transformational and charismatic leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008; Houghton & Yoho, 2005), ethical leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006), primal leadership (Goleman et al., 2013), authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), and servant leadership (van Dierendonck, 2011).

An extension of universalistic research focused on styles that depend on situational and environmental elements (see Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). In situational contexts, leaders needed to adapt to the skills, levels, and resources of their subordinates (Fiedler, 1964; Goleman, 2000; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Vroom & Yetton, 1973). For environment, Tichy et al. (1992) took a more holistic approach, combining a global mindset; global leadership skills and behaviors; global networks of energy, skills, and talents; effective teams; and change agents. Since then, studies have expanded on an inventory of global skills (Dunn at al., 2012).

Kouzes and Posner (2017) define *leadership* as a creative process that encompasses an extraordinary goal and achievement. After analyzing cases and interviews on the question: “What did you do when you were at your personal best as a leader?”, the authors proposed five principles of exemplary leadership: (a) “Model the Way” (develop core values); (b) “Inspire a Shared Vision” (imagine future possibilities); (c) “Challenge the Process” (explore innovative solutions and opportunities); (d) “Enable Others to Act” (foster collaboration and trust); and (e) “Encourage the Heart” (acknowledge positive contributions) (12–13).

Paloma Lopez—Tracking the Elements of Advocacy

Paloma Lopez was born in Alicante, Spain. Her father was a visionary entrepreneur, passionate in his endeavors, and imbued with an intrepid attitude toward life and business. Her mother—a former Montessori teacher—provided a strong moral and spiritual compass. This combination of entrepreneurship and spirituality forged core values that would influence Lopez in life. After earning her MSBA from San Francisco State University, she spent seven months in Ghana as a program coordinator for the European Voluntary Service. Then she moved to Mexico and joined the Kellogg Company, where she spent a considerable portion of her career working in various capacities in the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and served as global director in both sustainability and global brand strategy at Kellogg before moving on in 2019.

After working for 18 years as a marketer, innovator, and sustainability director in different countries for consumer brands, Lopez was preoccupied with a question: How can we reimagine our broken food systems? Over time, Lopez had begun to build on her interest, linking business to social impact and purpose-driven branding. Lopez knew that a big part of our individual environmental footprint is directly linked to our food choices. Working with one of Kellogg's brands, MorningStar Farms, she helped commission an external and third-party validated study in the United States, "A Comparative Life Cycle Assessment of Plant-Based Foods and Meat Foods" (Quantis, 2016). The report concluded that "when an American adult chooses to consume a meatless breakfast, lunch or dinner rather than one that contains meat, the decreased environmental impact of the meatless meal is a reduction on average of at least 40%" (iv).

The first practice espoused by Kouzes and Posner (2017)—"Model the Way"—means that the leader has to be certain about his or her underlying values and core principles. They cite Alan Spiegelman, a wealth management advisor with Northwestern Mutual, who opined

> before you can be a leader of others, you have to know clearly who you are and what your core values are. Once you know that, then you can give voice to those values and feel comfortable sharing them with others. (14)

Different times in Lopez's life underscore her advocacy for food reform. Her childhood nurtured a moral compass, though a specific advocacy was still undefined. Her education engendered a fledgling interest in social entrepreneurship and sustainability, enhanced with overseas assignments. Working in a well-established firm, she was able to understand the grassroots elements of the global food supply that she believed to be inefficient, inequitable, and unsustainable. After finding her voice, the second principle prescribed by Kouzes and Posner (2017), "Inspire a Shared Vision," had taken root: Lopez envisioned a pathway for reform, but also realized that the process would be challenging because most of the world relied on the current food system.

The Challenge Facing the Global Food System

Industrial food production, distribution, and consumption were designed to be extractive in nature (De Angelis, 2018; Manning, 2021). For years, the food industry had focused on profitability that led to overharvesting of scarce resources, large-scale production by highly concentrated producers, concentrated animal feeding operations, environmental degradation from massive animal waste, and degraded agriculture (O'Boyle, 2019; McKibben, 2007). Additionally, natural resources to make food packaging were discarded after usage. This take-make-waste extractive system resulted in a linear and extractive economy (MacArthur, 2017).

The influential EAT-Lancet Commission reported in 2019 that: (a) food production was responsible for up to 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions; (b) 70% of freshwater use was through agriculture; (c) conversion of natural ecosystems to croplands and pastures was the largest factor causing species to be threatened with extinction; (d) 60% of world fish stocks were fully fished, and more than 30% overfished; and (e) one third of all food produced was wasted (Willet et al., 2018). In addition, current global food systems pose significant risks on human health. In the United States, about 10.5% of U.S. population had diabetes in 2018, and the total estimated cost of diagnosed diabetes in the United States was $327 billion in 2017 (*Diabetes Statistics,* 2020). In 2014, 1.9 billion people were overweight or obese, while 462 million adults were underweight worldwide (World Health Organization, 2017).

Accordingly, Lopez saw the global food systems as “broken,” prompting an imperative to bring together all the relevant stakeholders to effect the synchronized change in a holistic manner. Realistically, Lopez was aware of the difficulties in reversing deeply held beliefs and practices: mainstream economic dogmas were paradigmatic and had held sway for decades. She wondered how to challenge the system in a way that offered demonstrable outcomes. For Lopez, a bold and transformative approach was needed to reverse well-weathered and outdated beliefs and practices about the current food systems.

Challenging the Process: Fixing Our Food Systems by Shifting to a Circular Economy

Reforming the current food systems highlights two opposing views about the future direction of global food systems. On one hand, supporters of the status quo argue that technological advances in agriculture and scaled-up production from consolidated suppliers have led to the ability to feed most of the world’s population with lower costs and affordable prices. On the other hand, critics respond that contemporary beliefs and practices have also led to unhealthy food consumption, safety concerns about mass-produced food, and environmental denigration arising from the higher ecological costs of producing and transporting food. An even deeper issue relates to basic assumptions about what we eat, as this might relate to proper nutrition, public health, and climate change. These issues accentuate a historical divide in the food systems: supporters promote efficiency and productivity; critics advocate health benefits and environmental sustainability.

While working for Kellogg, Lopez assisted in writing a report on food consumption behavior and trends for the Food Reform for Sustainability and Health (FReSH) project, which was initiated by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). The report examined global consumption patterns and industry-wide practices that addressed the challenges created by the current food systems (WBCSD, 2018). Lopez realized that a better approach might be to shift to a circular economy based on three principles: designing out waste and pollution, regenerating natural systems, and keeping products and materials in use. As shown in Figure 1, a circular economy is regenerative and aims to gradually decrease the consumption of natural systems (De Angelis, 2018; Lyon, 2020; MacArthur, 2017).

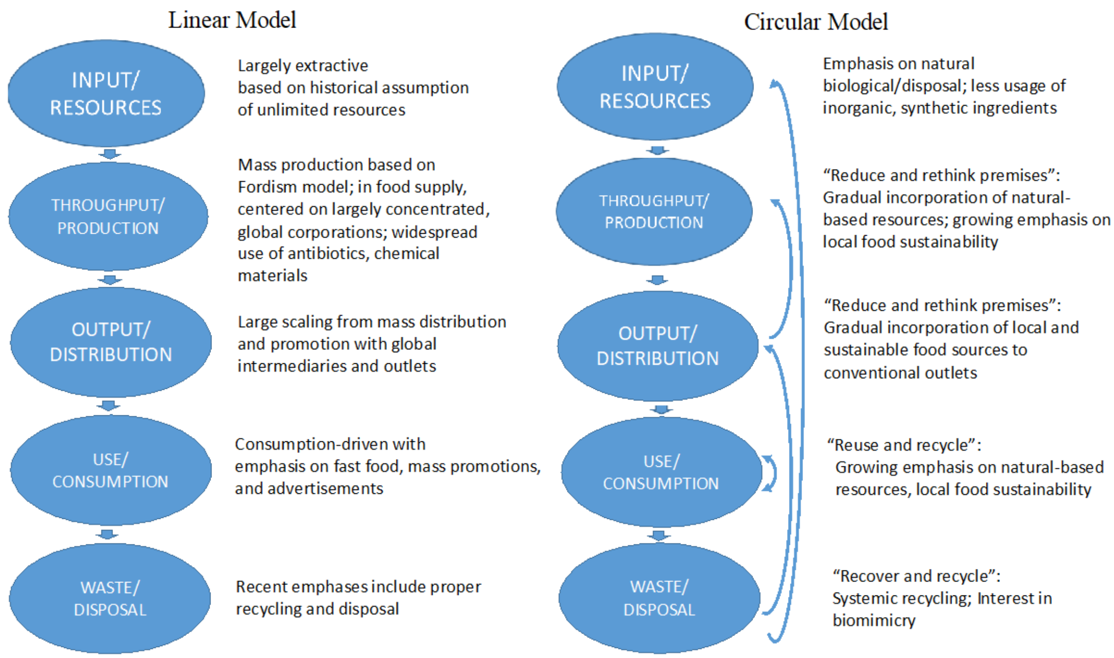

Figure 1. Linear versus circular generic models. Adapted from *Business Models in a Circular Economy: Concepts, Examples and Theory* by R. De Angelis, 2018, Springer International Publishing AG; *Circular Economy Toolkit for Small Businesses,* by E. Lyon, 2020, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation; & *What Is a Circular Economy?* by E. MacArthur, 2017, Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

Lacy et al. (2014) define five business models that facilitate the development of a circular economy: circular supplies, resource recovery, product life extension, sharing platforms, and product as a service. They apply to different stages of the product life cycle. Businesses can use second-hand, renewable, or recyclable materials for product design and materials sourcing at the beginning of product life (procurement) and the end phase of product life (recovering materials or energy from used, disposed, or byproducts). Product life extension can be done by (a) repairing, upgrading, and reselling products; (b) providing a product as a service—leasing rather than selling the product; and (c) providing a platform that enables users to share the products.

An encouraging trend is the growing shift advocated by food and agriculture industry leaders, policymakers, investors, and the public to healthier and more sustainably produced food. Food entrepreneurs have begun to use technological innovation to address the problems in current food systems, such as food productivity, safety, accessibility of healthy food, and food waste (Lynde, 2020). For Lopez, the circular model that had been implemented by leading-edge firms provided the necessary template for reform.

Enabling Action Through Industry Collaboration and Private Sector Initiatives

According to Kouzes and Posner (2017), the final two principles of exceptional leadership ("Enable Others to Act" and "Encourage the Heart") are actionable behavioral strategies that facilitate implementation. For Lopez, operationalizing her program entailed specific partnerships, including her husband, Sean Ansett, another social entrepreneur who had joined her advocacy. Lopez and Ansett traveled to more than 20 countries across Africa, Eurasia, and the Caucasus regions to explore food ways. After returning to the United States in 2019, they met with food justice organizations, food developers, and chefs in many cities for additional guidance. In February 2020, they moved to Boulder, Colorado, a city with an incredible community of food entrepreneurs, chefs, investors, and health enthusiasts. Lopez then initiated her startup venture—Future Fit Foods (FFF). Its mission would be to bring nutrient-dense, convenient, and affordable plant-based foods to people using a circular model.

The anchors of FFF included the following beliefs:

- provide intangible human value by building on the shopper–seller relationship beyond transactions;
- share with family and others;
- use natural food sources that are less likely to be processed;
- explore foods that have been around for a long time, many of which are linked to stories; and
- sell in bulk or unpackaged, resulting in less packaging waste.

Lopez also collaborated with Dan Heiges, founder of Natural Development, to provide product development consultation to food and beverage businesses. Both shared the same vision of fixing the current broken food systems by developing tasty, nutrient-dense, and fun food. Together, they decided that FFF would develop foods that were plant-based with few, pronounceable, and organic ingredients, consistent with a circular model. Moreover, FFF would not use single-use plastic packaging, among others.

Guided by these principles, Lopez and Heiges had lengthy discussions about what they mean by nutrient dense and how they were going to make sure the food is affordable and convenient while also minimizing the environmental footprint. Specifically, they decided that the salt content of their food would be 60 to 80% lower than similar food offerings on the market. They also decided that all their foods will be a good source of fiber, protein, and other key nutrients.

Moreover, Lopez decided to use edible, backyard compostable, and highly recyclable packing solutions. By 2020, FFF was in discussions to test some ideas with Notpla, a startup from the United Kingdom that makes natural, edible, and biodegradable seaweed packaging, and Loop, a new convenient way to receive favorite foods at home using safe, durable, and reusable food containers. Additionally, Lopez leveraged existing corporate ventures that had already implemented the model, including:

- Patagonia, a pioneer in producing sustainable outdoor gear and apparel, whose Patagonia Provisions division provides flavorful, nutritious, and shelf-stable food produced in ways that build soil health, ensure animal welfare, and protect agricultural workers (Chouinard, 2020);
- Impossible Foods and Beyond Meat, which make it easier for more people to eat more plant-based proteins without having to compromise taste; and
- Notpla, which creates advanced packaging solutions that disappear naturally.

Lopez's accomplishments have not been unnoticed. *Forbes* honored her as one of 46 sustainability leaders (Townsend, 2018). She is regarded as

> an incredible leader using innovation, brands, and people power to drive sustainable growth. With an expertise in the food industry, she works to create

> value for people along the supply chain and for the natural places that are touched along the way. (Townsend, 2018, Paloma Lopez section)

While she is encouraged that large food companies had been working to address the current challenges of the food systems, she pondered future issues affecting FFF: What products and services should FFF offer? What kind of ingredients should FFF use? How should they advocate their mission and create community and stakeholder collaborations (customers, suppliers, employees, investors)? How should they source the ingredients? What kind of circular packaging should they use? What kind of waste streams in the food systems could they intercept and turn into new value?

Conclusion

Kouzes and Posner's (2017) synthesis of various streams of leadership theories posits that, regardless of skills, situations, and environments, leaders take on extraordinary aspirations and tasks. The Paloma Lopez case contextualizes extraordinary or exemplary leadership. Beyond her leadership skills, Lopez tackled a highly difficult challenge (fixing the global food supply), visualized a solution (a circular model), and enacted a demonstrable action project (FFF).

An oft-cited belief is that studying leadership is a highly complex endeavor. Extant studies build largely on competencies arising from strategic, behavioral, and organizational components (Bird, 2012; Steers et al., 2012). Although leaders are a veritable subject matter in organizational studies, the context gives rise to differing substance and interpretations. This case study takes the modest step of arguing that leadership is driven by extraordinary challenges and formidable solutions to global problems. The study of exemplary leadership by Kouzes and Posner (2017) punctuates key prescriptions for context applications. The Lopez case provides a reminder that leadership matters in the current world in which challenges are global and multifaceted, impelling holistic solutions.

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