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JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

BIBLICAL SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE

SERVICE (SES) ROLE IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

QUANTITATIVE CORRELATIONAL STUDY

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Eugene Quinn, Jr.

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2022

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ABSTRACT

Considering the traits of biblical servant leadership, this leadership style may be ideal for the

entrusted federal government positions of the Senior Executive Service (SES). The U.S. Office

of Personnel Management (OPM), SES, was created by Congress to provide a government

mobile cadre of managers for the federal government. These federal government employees are

the backbone of the executive leadership in the federal government. The SES is mandated to

respect and adhere to the fundamental principles of ethical service (behaves in an honest, fair,

and ethical manner). The SES are federal government employees and are the link between a

federal agency's career employees and the politically appointed agency head. For those in the

SES position, their leadership must ensure that their federal government agency is productive

and efficient throughout administrations. The SES position is held to a very high ethical service

standard. Since those in the SES positions lead the moral-ethical service standard for the federal

government, should their leadership traits not be of a high ethical standard? Maybe biblical

servant leadership? This study, which was a quantitative correlation, provides a research

approach to exploring the foundational elements of biblical servant leadership and secular

servant leadership and the SES role. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to

discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership

models were identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of the SES. The correlation design

was used to determine to what extent a correlation exists between biblical servant leadership and

the leadership behaviors of the SES role. The instrumentation used to measure the study

variables included the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the

Awareness Survey Questionnaire.

Keywords: Senior Executive Service, leadership, ethical, behavior, worldview

Dedication

To my wife and kids for all the laughter, fun, and joyful moments while going through this process.

Acknowledgments

To a teacher who pushed a very challenged kid to understand and accept the world's challenges. If only I knew then the little I know now. As it says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (*New International Bible*, 1978/2011), "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

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List of Abbreviations

Awareness Survey Questionnaire (ASQ)

Congressional Research Service (CRS)

Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE)

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW)

Hall Tonna Inventory of Vaules (HTIV)

Inspectors General (IG)

Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act)

Liberty University (LU)

New International Bible (NIV)

Office of Inspector General (OIG)

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Senior Executive Association (SEA)

Senior Executive Service (SES)

Servant Leadership Scale (SLQ)

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERNS

Introduction

In the world of today, people spend most of their waking hours at work (Oliver, 2019).

The U.S. federal government has nearly 4.3 million civilian and military employees (Jennings &

Nagel, 2021). The Senior Executive Service (SES) makes up close to 8,000 civilian positions

(Office of Strategy and Innovation Data Analysis Group, 2018). These positions are the

influencers and executive managers of their agencies. The SES was established by the Civil

Service Reform Act of 1978, created by Congress to provide a government-wide establishment

of managers within federal agencies (Carey, 2012, p. 2). These positions are made up

predominantly of career appointees selected through a merit recruitment process. The SES

position is the link between a federal government agency's employees and the politically

appointed agency heads. Before establishing the SES, a consolidated means of finding a cadre

for executive leadership within the federal government did not exist:

> The SES position was brought into to play to establish a means of consistency to the
> federal government bureaucracy. As described by Buchanan (1981): The ultimate
> objectives of the SES are logical responses to the moral and management failures of
> Watergate and Great Society program implementation: to increase the effectiveness of
> program performance and to increase public confidence in and satisfaction with the
> integrity and the competence of federal program administration. (Carey, 2012, p. 5)

The SES has been responsible for the oversight and operation of government agencies such as

the Department of State, Department of Defense, and Department of Veterans Affairs for more

than three decades. The SES functional criteria are to direct the work at the organizational level,

being held accountable for the programs or projects within that organization, monitoring and

improving on progression towards organizational goals, supervising the work of employees 25%

of the time, and being involved in the policymaking process for the organization (U.S. Office of

Personnel Management [OPM], 2017). Over the past three decades, the SES has managed

government agency operations with a combined budget of approximately $1.6 trillion dollars

(Office of Management and Budget [OMB], 2021). The SES is a concept that is based on

reinvention theory (Denhardt, 1993; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993). This theory relates that modern

government can improve by implementing private sector work function principles. The SES was

formed during a civil service reform that came from a period when distrust and dissatisfaction

were defining the government (Buchanan, 1981). As related by the OPM (n.d.):

> The Senior Executive Service (SES) lead America's workforce. As the keystone of the
> Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, the SES was established to "…ensure that the
> executive management of the Government of the United States is responsive to the needs,
> policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality." These leaders
> possess well-honed executive skills and share a broad perspective on government and a
> public service commitment that is grounded in the Constitution. (para. 1)

Since the model on which the SES is based can be identified, being able to identify the extent to

which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models are identifiable in

the leadership behaviors would not only be beneficial for the community but would also provide

insight into the type of leadership style. Without a doubt, success as a leader within these

organizations is essential, as stated before, to the government and the taxpayer. The SES

leadership behavior should not only impact how facts and data are presented to the public or

Congress; the SES leadership behavior should also affect their agency, part of the federal

government system. Further, the person in the SES position must go in front of Congress and the

American people to inform them of troubling matters within the federal government, without

question of character or leadership. Moral reputation is a critical dimension that affects public

opinion (Henson, 2016). Seeing that the SES position is one of such great trust, ethics, and moral

character, understanding if there are any behavior traits that align with biblical servant leadership

is a must.

Background to the Problem

Regardless of the person's leadership style in the SES position, the SES is a federal government employee. Federal government employees are public servants. Public servants work as providers for public goods and as promoters of the life essentials for the communities they find themselves within (Reid, 2011). "The role of ethics in the public sector helps to establish moral conduct and prevents individuals from engaging in unethical behaviors. Ethics are moral values that govern a person's behavior" (Jimenez, 2019, p.1). Ethical and moral behavior are the hallmark of servant leadership (Myers, 2018). The public servant is held to a standard of ethics regarding their job performance, not only by law but also within the Bible. A work environment that is healthy in ethical standards benefits all that are part of it (Dory, 2015). Government stewardship is the guardianship of God's created material. Oh (2001) provided insight and understanding to this when he related, "In recognition that God has created all things (Genesis 1; Ps. 24:1), humans are called to steward the rest of God's creation, and political leaders are to wisely direct and oversee the proper use of earthly resources" (para. 5). Public servants are called to a leadership style that improves on the mentioned primary government functions (Jog, 2021). Romans 13:3 (*New International Bible [NIV]*, 1978/2011) tells the importance of public servants performing their duties ethically: "For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will be commended." Conduct that is ethical and good is the standard for federal government employees (Whitton, 2001).

As related before, the SES is the link between federal agencies and presidentially appointed agency leaders (Carey, 2012). The SES provides management and oversight to taxpayers' funding of federal government agencies (OMB, 2021). The SES ensures through their

leadership that the agency to which they are assigned for management and oversight is adhering to ethical principles of federal service. Miller (2011) helped further this understanding when she related, "Smart, compassionate, loyal, ethical, and committed. These are the adjectives I use to describe the local government professionals I have come to know" (p. 9). For the SES to be effective, they must ensure that federal government employee mandates are being followed that lead to efficiency and management priorities (Strengthening the Senior Executive Service, 2011). This is done through their mission completion, leadership behaviors, and good performance (Carey, 2012). A leader's conduct is important for fostering good conduct and an ethical philosophy (Downe, 2016). However, with 57% of federal government employees reporting witnessing a violation of ethical standards within their workplace (Hassan et al., 2014), the question arises: Are ethical and moral behavior part of that good performance? To address concerns of corruption and unethical behavior in government agencies, public administrators must be proactive instead of reactive concerning incident detection and the associated corrective actions, such as updates to internal processes, policies, and procedures (Henson, 2016, p. 13).

As the link between the presidential appointee and the agency employees, the SES provides the core qualification and leadership skills in leading change, leading people, displaying business acumen, building coalitions, and achieving results through their leadership behaviors. This SES is the moral-ethical establisher for their federal government agency (Hassan et al., 2014). Over the past years, however, some in SES positions have been removed from their position due to trust issues. These issues ranged from lack of confidence to questions of the integrity of the work performed (Quinn, 2020). As related by McMahone (2012), "Ethical failures in business have continued to fuel a trend toward the development of strong ethical training in business and education. The call for strengthening ethics education comes from

government organizations, from educators, and from the business world" (p. 1). Annual ethics training is mandated for all within the federal government (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2020). The SES position itself is a position that is held to government standards of ethical responsibility (Civil Service Reform Act, 1978). Therefore, this researcher believes that looking at the SES position from an ethical and moral leadership standpoint is a matter that should be studied. Of the various leadership styles identified throughout the years, three styles include an ethical element as a trait: (a) authentic leadership, transformational leadership, and servant leadership (Northouse, 2016). This researcher chose biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership for that standpoint. Further, Waraga (2017) relates, "The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps clarify that will. The leader seeks to listen sympathetically to what is being said that encompasses with one's own inner voice" (p.6). Biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership contain the behavioral trait of ethical behavior within them. Since the SES position is the lead moral-ethical standard for their federal government agency, could their leadership traits not be of a high ethical standard? Maybe biblical servant leadership? As related before considering biblical servant leadership traits, discovering these traits in public trust institutions should be of importance to all.

Statement of the Problem

Considering biblical servant leadership traits, this leadership style may be ideal for the entrusted SES role. Research has been conducted regarding diversity, increasing diversity, online learning, job satisfaction, and turnover within the SES; however, there seems to be a shortcoming in looking at the leadership or leadership styles best suited for this position. Athanasaw (1997) conducted a correlational study that attempted to identify the prevailing leadership styles of the SES. Nelson (2015) chose a phenomenological study approach to explore

the lack of African Americans in the Department of Defense SES Corp. Paylor (2018) used a quantitative approach for her study into the dominant leadership style or behavior of the SES. Camacho (2021) used a qualitative, gap analysis approach when he studied the lack of Latinx SES members in a federal government agency, and Washington (2015) approached his study into the lived experiences of the federal government SES who exhibited servant leadership characteristic using a phenomenological approach. By law, this federal government position (SES) is assigned and responsible for executive management within the federal government. Further, by law the position is held to a very high ethical standard. The person in the position must go in front of Congress and the American people to inform them of troubling matters within the federal government, without question to character or leadership. This study, which was a quantitative correlation study, provides a research approach to exploring the foundational elements of biblical servant leadership, secular servant leadership, and the SES role. As the position is one of ethical and moral trust, seeing if those in that position exhibit biblical servant leadership behaviors was fundamental for understanding that position. Romans 13:3 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) communicates the importance of public servants performing their duties ethically: "For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will be commended."

It is also understood now that improper management or leadership behaviors can kill an organization. As related by Beck and Harter (2016), "Managers account for 70% of the variance in employee engagement scores across business units. When managers have real management talent, teams and individuals develop and win customers. When managers are lousy, human development freezes, and teams fail" (para. 3). In this research, the researcher looked at the behaviors associated with biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership to see if

those traits were present in the leadership styles of the SES. Further, this research sought to understand if those in the SES position were aware of having those behaviors. As mentioned before, from enforcing ethical behavior to leading at a high ethical conduct level, the SES is vital, and moral and ethical correctness is a necessity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models were identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of the SES role. This research sought to identify the leadership behaviors of SES personnel, including behaviors that can be duplicated and behaviors that show genuine interest in taking care of their people. Further, a Christian worldview was part of this research as the key indicators of the shepherding leadership style/behavior (integrity, intelligence, courage, character, peace, and being like Jesus) were looked for in all the leadership behaviors identified as being used by the SES. As related by Bhatti et al. (2011),

> Leadership is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organization goals, a process whereby one person exerts social influence over other members of the group, a process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group of individuals in an effort towards goal achievement in given situations, and a relational concept involving both the influencing agent and the person being influenced. (p. 192)

The guiding theory for this research was Peter Northouse's (2016) understanding of ethical leadership: "Ethical leadership is rooted in respect, service, justice, honesty, and community"(p. 359).

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government?

RQ2. What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

Assumptions and Delimitations

Research Assumptions

This research, based on behaviors within the study, provides the reader with an understanding of some of the common leadership behaviors among the SES within the federal government and the relationship between their leadership style and biblical servant leadership. This research sought to establish that biblical worldview (or Christian worldview) does transcend cultural diversity. Biblical servant leadership provides a means to place one's values, understanding, and actions towards only one: God. Imagine a leadership that is composed of these elements, leaders whose actions and reason would be towards serving others and the glory of God, not for self-fulfillment. Christians rooted in the Biblical worldview, however, must understand that the Greatest Commandment outlines the order of our service: that order being God first, then others (Duby, 2009, para. 2).

Delimitations of the Research

The nature of this study among the SES within the U.S. federal government may impact its transferability to other agency head leadership settings and populations. The delimitations of the study include the following:

- The study was delimited to the SES of the federal government and not state, local, or military executives.
- The study was delimited to federal employees and not civil employees or those who are self-employed.

- The study was delimited to agency SES leaders in the federal government, and not in the state or local government.
- The study was delimited to leaders of the federal government SES and did not consider other leaders of federal, state, or local organizations.
- The study was delimited to the current perceived leadership styles of the federal government SES within federal agencies, as employed as federal government SES, and did not consider the federal government SES of the past.

Definition of Terms

1. *Behavior/Behavioral:* The way in which someone conducts themselves or acts towards others (Vaari, 2015).

2. *Biblical Worldview:* Understanding and seeing the world through the biblical truth of the Bible (Schultz & Swezey, 2013).

3. *Biblical Servant Leadership:* Understanding an approach to leadership as promoted by the Bible (Duby, 2009).

4. *Bureaucratic Oversight Mechanism:* A control mechanism created by the government to uncover and investigate unethical behavior (Apaza, 2009).

5. *Civil Service Reform Act of 1978:* A law that reformed the federal government management of federal agencies (Carey, 2012).

6. *Congressional Oversight:* Congress has the authority to monitor and review executive branch policy, operations, and budgets. This refers to that action (Congressional Research Service, 2014).

7. *Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE):* The CIGIE is the council formed after the passage of the Inspector General Reauthorization Act of 2008. The CIGIE provides guidance and standardization for all 74 Inspectors General (CIGIE, 2019).

8. *Fraud, Waste and Abuse:* The oversight of taxpayer's funds, and making sure these funds are being used properly.

9. *Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act of 1978):* This act was signed into law by President Carter on October 12, 1978. The IG Act was to consolidate audit and investigative efforts within federal agencies. The goal of the IG Act was to improve economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of federal programs.

10. *Inspector General Reform Act of 2008 (IG Reform Act of 2008):* This act was signed into law by President G. W. Bush. This reform act modified the IG Act of 1978 and facilitated independence, making the IG position nonpolitical.

11. *Integrity:* A characteristic of being truthful and having solid moral values; moral honesty (McCarthy, 2014).

12. *Leadership style:* The behaviors (actions or activities) exhibited or shown by those charged with leading an organization.

13. *Mankind:* Human beings, humanity, humankind, or humans. The human race on this planet earth.

14. *Moral values:* Comparative values that safeguard life and are considerate of the twofold life value of oneself and others (Resnik, 2020).

15. *Senior Executives Association (SEA):* This association is a broad spectrum of government agencies. The association engages in lobbying with Congress and the Executive Branch of Government for the SES (SEA, n.d.).

16. *Senior Executive Service (SES):* Key senior management position in the federal government (Carey, 2012).

17. *Trait:* A distinguishing quality, as of personal character (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

18. *Worldview:* Understanding the world as it is through the culture and experience of that culture (Sire, 2004).

Significance of the Study

The information shared/gained from this study will assist those who hire the SES for their positions and those looking to be hired in that position. As SES personnel are continually being hired, this study should help in understanding what leadership behaviors or leadership styles beyond the core qualifications are best to pick when hiring an individual for the SES position. This study contributed to prior research conducted on the SES position as research on leadership behaviors of the SES from a biblical servant leadership standpoint was not in existence. This study added to prior the SES research conducted on diversity, online learning, dominant leadership style, job satisfaction and turnover. Further, this study showed if there are any similarities in the successful leadership style and shepherding. This study should also help the American tax-paying citizen understand that the individual hiring the SES has hired the best

person for that position. As related by Hassan et al. (2014), "Recent ethical scandals involving managers in government organizations have highlighted the need for more research on ethical leadership in public sector organizations" (p. 1). This study expanded the limited SES research. This study may be beneficial for future training purposes and the hiring or selection process. The study has added new research to a previously unexplored area.

Summary of the Design

The research population for this research consisted of 12 current SES members in the federal government. These 12 SES members were responsible for the executive management of the agency to which they were assigned. The 12 SES members were also part of the SEA and served as board members. This association board is a broad spectrum of government agencies. The association for the SES engages in lobbying with Congress and the Executive Branch of Government (SEA, n.d.). Further, the SEA's mission is to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of the federal government, to advance the professionalism and advocate the interests of career federal executives, and to enhance public recognition of their accomplishments (Spinella, 2015, p. 2).

The research used three instruments to measure this study's variables (servant leadership, leadership behavior, and awareness) of the SES. The variables were measured with three instruments: The Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire. The choice to use a correlation design was based on the researcher wanting to determine to what extent a correlation exists between biblical servant leadership and the leadership behaviors of the SES role.

A true objective survey of the SES population was sought from all 12 SES members within the SEA. They were all asked to complete an online leadership style questionnaire

containing specific questions with numerical values assigned within a 20 to 30-day window. They were emailed specific instructions on how to complete the survey and the website address for the online survey. The research design compared the answers provided in the online survey to understand the SES's leadership behaviors and compare that to the collected data on biblical servant leadership. Further, this design answered the following research questions: What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter explores the literature first presented in Chapter One of the dissertation. Prior research and scholarly material pertaining to the study are introduced. The information presented within this chapter provides a critical synthesis of literature relevant to the themes and variables of the study. Through this and other sections within this document, justification for the research study is established to address an existing gap in the literature and outline the framework of the study. The literature presented in this chapter examines the theological, theoretical, and related literature linked to the study. Further, the study's rationale and the identified gap in the literature are discussed at the conclusion of this chapter.

This study attempted to discover if SES members exhibit biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership behaviors. This research sought to further identify the most used and productive leadership behaviors of SES members, including behaviors that can be duplicated and behaviors that show genuine interest in taking care of their people. Further, a biblical worldview was part of this research as the researcher searched for key indicators of the shepherding leadership style/behavior (care, courage, and guiding) in the leadership behaviors identified as being used by those in the SES position.

Theological Framework for the Study

This theological framework provides a means by which a researcher can situate data collected and analyzed within a biblical narrative. More formally, "a theological framework is by placing what is being researched into a biblical account of creation, fall, and the mission of God to bring restoration and redemption through Israel, Christ, and the Church" (Swithinbank, 2016, p. 3). Within the theological framework, this research examines the foundation of biblical servant

leadership and the behaviors associated with this leadership style. Biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership is defined as, "a character-oriented leadership concerned with the kind of person the leader is. It involves cultivating a servant altitude focusing on the leader's values of integrity, humanity, and servanthood" (Waraga, 2018, p.6). This is the definition and understanding used throughout this study.

Foundation for Biblical Servant Leadership

God is interested in people's motives and actions (Warren, 2013). Leadership was always part of God's plan for man.

> God created humanity in his own image, in the image of God, he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (*NIV*, 1978/2011, Genesis 2:27–28)

This passage provides an understanding of the leadership rule assigned by God. Humanity was given the earth to rule (Keller & Keller, 1989). Further, this passage is the first presentation of leadership in the Bible related to humanity. This is the first example of humankind's command to lead; however, this is not the only example of leadership presented in the Bible. Genesis 2:20–22 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) provides the first view of humankind as a helper or team member:

> But for Adam, no suitable helper was found. So, the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

Also, within the same book of Genesis, there is an introduction to humankind's servant role towards one another. Genesis 3:16 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) states, "To the woman he said, 'I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor, you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.'" What is the biblical definition of

leadership? Deuteronomy 17:18-20 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) provides a further understanding when it

relates:

> When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

This passage implies that the act of making oneself a servant leader is essential. This

implied act would be of a different leadership style or model than what was initially introduced

by God during Genesis. Adu (2015) relates in his literature, "There are numerous leadership

models in the Bible, such as school of prophets, servant leadership, teacher-learner relationship,

disciple-making, coaching, mentoring, amongst others" (p. 80). However, for this research,

literature was reviewed dealing with servant leadership or, as called within the Bible,

shepherding.

In Genesis 4:2 (*NIV*, 1978/2011), the Bible provides us with the first reference of

shepherding: "Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked

the soil." Psalm 23 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) provides the understanding of the duties of a shepherd

when it relates:

> The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

The shepherd in the Bible had responsibility to take care of, provide courage, and guide the

sheep. Care, as related by Wright (2001), "would involve caring for them properly, by tending

their needs and providing good pasture. The New Testament variably and interchangeably

attaches the ideas 'to lead' and 'to care for'" (p. 277). Courage is the ability to face threatening

circumstances without showing fear. Resane (2014) explained, "This is one of the leadership

qualities that every shepherd-leader is expected to possess. It speaks of being of good cheer

(tharseō) in the face of threatening circumstances" (p. 5). Lastly, to guide "is to give direction or

helpful suggestions regarding a decision or future course of action, the act of guiding or showing

the way, the act of setting and holding a course" (Resane, 2014, p. 5). Alternatively, as related by

Jones (2014), to summarize it all:

> The three activities of shepherd-king: leading, feeding, and protecting, must depend on two foundations. The first is tender care. This is an application of the shepherd metaphor display in love and care for the flock. Ezekiel 34:4 and Zechariah 11:16 depict the picture of the unrighteous shepherds. They did not care for Yahweh's flock; they did not strengthen the diseased, heal the sick, or bind the broken. A righteous shepherd will be one who seeks out the straying from the flock (Ez 34:4-6, 8; Zec 11:16). Thus, a shepherd-king is like the righteous shepherd who does likewise; tend the flock with love and care. (p. 39)

In so many parts of the Bible, there is scripture relating how God chose individuals to

lead in a manner that provides care, courage, and guidance. Servant leadership is having

awareness of moral authority that results in character change which contributes to leadership

success (Jackson, 2020). Within the book of Exodus, there is a Hebrew slave by the name of

Moses. God selected Moses to lead his people out of Egypt, even though Moses felt there was no

way he (Moses) could do such a task. God prepared and enacted upon Moses the foundational set

of standards mentioned earlier. God sent Moses (as a leader) to lead the Hebrews out of slavery.

God (through Moses) provided devastating plagues to ensure governance of order for the coming

together and leaving of the Hebrew slaves to the promised land. Lastly, God provided a way

(structure/assembly) for all the Hebrew slaves to come together and leave the promised land as

one organization. Philippians 2:3 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) sums up Moses' actions and activities as a

shepherd or better yet a servant leader as it relates, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain

conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves." From this passage, servant

leadership is understood as a way to reduce the life problems of others and bear those life problems for them. Dennis (2014) explained:

> Servant leadership lightens life's burdens. We are instructed to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6.2). "And as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). Servant leadership is performed in humility: "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying-in wait of the Jews" (Acts 20:19). Servant leadership requires undivided service. "Then saith Jesus unto him, 'Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve'" (Matt. 4:10). Additionally, "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lu. 16:13). (p. 13)

The Bible provides further examples of servant leadership (reducing life problems for others) throughout (e.g., Abraham, Noah, Jesus). Abraham is described as a man of strong faith who demonstrates ultimate obedience to God and thus brings blessing to the whole world. Genesis 22:18 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) states, "And through your offspring, all nations on earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me." There is Noah, a man who provided insight into servant leadership through his model of humility and endurance. From building the ark to bringing the animals on it to repopulating the planet, Noah was a bearing the weight of the servant of humanity. Genesis 9:1 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) states, "Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.'" There is also Jesus, who provided insight into servant leadership by taking sin upon himself so that those who accepted him could be blameless in God's eyes: "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (*NIV*, 1978/2011, John 6:29). Jesus laid down his life for all of us. All three (Abraham, Noah, and Jesus), through their care, courage, and guidance, influenced and changed the world. Through service and purpose, they influenced others. Biblical servant leadership is the ability to influence others through service to people and purpose (Hunter, 2004).

Characteristics of Biblical Servant Leadership

"Tapping into the wealth of knowledge related to the characteristics pf servant leadership can help shed light on how leaders contribute" (Mitterer, 2016, p.16). Leadership is not a new idea. However, the biblical model of servant leadership is categorically different from other leadership models, focusing on ethical leadership (Fry, 2003). Matthew 20:25–28 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) explains this model in detail:

> Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus is relating the essence of servant leadership. The servant-leader is always growing in his relationship with God, exercises humility, maintains right relationships, expresses regret for mistakes, shows forgiveness when others fail, makes peace when possible, and endures unmerited criticism when attempting to serve God with integrity (Vu, 2011). This leadership style produces groups, corporations, and businesses that are open to change, creative thinkers, and results-driven (Fry, 2003; Harris, 1990). This study focused on six servant leadership traits that this author discovered as part of the research process and understood them as the essence of biblical servant leadership. These traits are defined from within the Bible and research and include the following: empathy, integrity, humility, resilience, flexibility, and stewardship.

Empathy

The trait of empathy is showing an understanding of the issues or problems that someone else is presenting. Horsman (2001) explained, "Empathy is consciously understanding an issue from someone else's perspective" (p. 59). Empathy is the ability to grasp the feelings of others (Carre et al.,2013). Empathy is also understood as sharing of another's emotions (de Waal,

2008). The Bible (*NIV*, 1978/2011) describes it as understanding: "Rejoice with those who rejoice; morn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:14). For the biblical servant leader (Christian leader), all these meanings of the word empathy mean one thing: focusing on the employee as a being to be loved and not as a problem. Jennings (2002) provided further understanding of this trait: "Valuing the worth of the individual and accepting that individual is part of the trust-building that must occur for an effective servant leader/led relationship to exist" (p. 17).

Integrity

The trait of integrity is negating deceit, presenting the required behavior, exhibiting honesty, and acknowledging mistakes (McCarthy, 2014). Hubert's (2018) explained, "Integrity is more of an umbrella concept, that combines sets of values that are relevant for the official being judge" (p. 20). Integrity is a vital concept for governance (Hubert, 2018). The Bible (*NIV*, 1978/2011) explains that doing what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice (Proverbs 21:3). As this author understands it, the Christian leader is held to the standard of not being a fraud, manipulator, or fibber.

Humility

The trait of humility recognizes the nature of one's understanding and valuing others' intellect (Porter, 2015). Nielsen and Marrone (2018), define humility as modesty or the opposite of arrogance. Humility is a trait that is grounded in a self-view that something greater than the self exists (Ou et al., 2014, p.37). The Bible (*NIV*, 1978/2011) provides further insight into this in Proverbs 27:2, "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips." These definitions all point to the Christian leader's understanding that this trait is about learning and growing for biblical servant leadership.

Resilience

The trait of resilience is understood as adjusting to and handling difficulty or stress effectively and positively (Luthar et al., 2000). Resilience is the ability to adapt, sustain and recover (Raycroft, 2021). The Bible (*NIV*, 1978/2011) presents the following as an explanation of resilience or overcoming hardships: "Love the Lord, all his faithful people! The Lord preserves those who are true to him, but the proud he pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord." The Christian leader will see this trait as understanding that life is complicated and there will be struggles, but God is in control; as related by Bass (1960), "Leadership involves a reordering or organizing, of a new way of acting, as well as the need to overcome resistance to change" (p. 83).

Flexibility

The trait of flexibility is understood as a leader's ability to adapt their behavior in different situations (Vaari, 2015, p. 85). Bernardes and Hanna (2009), define flexibility as agility and responsiveness. Flexibility is changeability (Magalhaes, 2014). The Bible (*NIV*, 1978/2011) provides the following for an understanding of flexibility: "And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). A Christian leader should know how to adapt to the unexpected.

Stewardship

The trait of stewardship is understood as the attitudes and behaviors that place the long-term best interests of a group ahead of personal goals that serve an individual's self-interests (Hernandez, 2008, p. 124). Stewardship is the human influence on the system they find themselves in (Enqvist, 2017). Biblical guidance on stewardship is found throughout the Bible; however, 1 Peter 4:10–11 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) states:

> Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

For biblical servant leadership, the understanding of stewardship is twofold. It involves not only looking after finances but also the people (talent and the relationships).

These six discussed traits align with the standards set forth by federal government employees' ethical standards. Compared to other leadership styles, it would seem that the biblical model of servant leadership aligns as the best leadership style for an SES position, such as an Inspector General. The general standards of the Office of the Inspector General provide a further understanding of the importance of these traits for this SES position:

- The Inspector General (IG) and Office of Inspector General staff shall adhere to the highest ethical principles by conducting their work with integrity.

- Integrity is the cornerstone of all ethical conduct, ensuring adherence to accepted codes of ethics and practice. Objectivity, independence, professional judgment, and confidentiality are all elements of integrity. (CIGIE, 2019, p. 7)

Theoretical Framework for the Study

This theoretical framework provides a means by which a researcher can situate data collected and analyzed within a theoretical and empirical narrative. Anfara and Mertz (2006) defined theoretical framework as "any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes" (p. xxvii). Within this theoretical framework, the researcher examined research dealing with ethics in the federal government, leadership behaviors, and the behaviors associated with those leadership styles.

Leadership Styles

Federal government employees are mandated to respect and adhere to the fundamental principles of ethical service. The SES position is an executive leadership connection between the

agency workers and the newly appointed Presidential cabinet members. For them to be

successful and effective in the SES position, they must ensure that federal government employee

mandates are being followed, or as related in the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978,

> A Senior Executive Service should be established to provide the flexibility needed by
> agencies to recruit and retain the highly competent and qualified executives needed to
> provide more effective management of agencies and their functions, and the more
> expeditious administration of the public business.

Those holding a position in the SES do this through their mission and leadership styles. There

are many different forms of leadership styles; the question is, what is the most effective

leadership style for the SES, and does that leadership style have traits of shepherding?

There were eight different leadership styles selected for review and use for this study:

Greenleaf's servant leadership, democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, strategic, transformational,

transactional, and bureaucratic. Literature was reviewed for each of the mentioned styles to

provide a more in-depth understanding of the leadership style and the traits of such. The eight

leadership styles mentioned above are described in the following sections.

Greenleaf's Servant Leadership

Greenleaf's servant leadership style is serving others selflessly and placing those wants

and needs above their own. This is a secular viewpoint of servant leadership and does not hinge

on the concept of leading for the glory of God. The inability of Greenleaf's theory to establish

this fundamental link leaves the concept hollow though paradoxically stuffed with abstract

spirituality (Kimotho, 2019, p. 76). A leader following this form of servant leadership displays

actions and behaviors based on the motivation of the person's values and beliefs. Greenleaf

(1991) explained, "It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first. Then conscious

choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 7). In the Greenleaf model, "servant leadership means

serving others and placing the good of others and the organization above the leader's self-interest" (Banks & Ledbetter, 2004, p. 108).

Democratic

A democratic leadership style is a leadership style that invites all team members to have input in the decision-making process. The democratic leader enables employees to be part of the problem-solving. Bhatti et al. (2011) explained this about the democratic leader: "Employees and team members feel in control of their own destiny, such as the promotion they deserve and so they are motivated to work hard by more than just a financial reward" (p. 193). Further, as related by Tibaldo (1994), "This democratic approach to leadership assumes that persons affected by the decision should have input in the decision-making process" (p. 18). Some characteristics of this leadership include staff who are encouraged to share their ideas and opinions, making staff feel more engaged in the process, and creativity is encouraged (Eze, 2011). As such, they feel more involved, empowered, and committed to the work and ideas being tasked. Below are listed behaviors and characteristics of the democratic leadership style:

> Democratic leaders make the final decisions, but they include team members in the decision-making process. They encourage creativity, and team members are often highly engaged in projects and decisions. There are many benefits of democratic leadership. Team members tend to have high job satisfaction and are productive because they're more involved in decisions. This style also helps develop people's skills. Team members feel in control of their destiny, so they're motivated to work hard by more than just a financial reward. Because participation takes time, this approach can slow decision-making, but the result is often good. The approach can be most suitable when working as a team is essential and when quality is more important than efficiency or productivity. The downside of democratic leadership is that it can often hinder situations where speed or efficiency is essential. For instance, during a crisis, a team can waste valuable time gathering people's input. Another downside is that some team members might not have the knowledge or expertise to provide high-quality input. (Mind Tools, 2012, p. 3)

Autocratic

An autocratic leadership style is a leadership style of someone in a leadership position who dictates and controls every aspect of the decisions, goals, and mission of the team. The

autocratic leader is the leader who is in full control of the team. As related by Wang (2017),

"autocratic leaders tend to emphasize their personal control over their followers, and, instead of

making bilateral or multilateral decisions, they make unilateral ones" (p. 20). Autocratic leader

centralize power in themselves and have complete control over the decision-making process.

Autocratic leaders makes vital decisions on their own (Cellar et al., 2001; Maloş, 2012).

Autocratic leaders also prefer to adhere to strict regulations, control processes, and maintain

informal, professional relationships with their subordinates in group work (Maloş, 2012). Below

are listed behaviors and characteristics of the autocratic leadership style:

> Autocratic leadership is an extreme form of transactional leadership, where leaders have a lot of power over their people. Staff and team members have little opportunity to make suggestions, even if these would be in the team's or the organization's best interest. The benefit of autocratic leadership is that it is incredibly efficient. Decisions are made quickly, and work gets done efficiently. The downside is that most people resent being treated this way. Therefore, autocratic leadership can often lead to high levels of absenteeism and high staff turnover. However, the style can be effective for some routine and unskilled jobs: in these situations, the advantages of control may outweigh the disadvantages.

> Autocratic leadership is often best used in crises when decisions must be made quickly and without dissent. For instance, the military often uses an autocratic leadership style; top commanders are responsible for quickly making complex decisions, which allows troops to focus their attention and energy on performing their allotted tasks and missions. (Mind Tools, 2012, p. 1)

Laissez-Faire

A laissez-faire leadership style is a leadership style where leaders are hands-off, patient,

and allow the team members to make any and all the decisions. Bhatti et al. (2011) noted, "The

laissez-faire leadership style involves non-interference policy, allows complete freedom to all

workers and has no particular way of attaining goals" (p. 193). This leadership style gives the

employees freedom to accomplish their given responsibilities (Mehmood & Arif, 2011). The

laissez-faire leadership style is not the type of leadership that gets involved with the day-to-day

tasks and is sometimes viewed as the absence of leadership. Christensen (2010) related,

"Laissez-faire leadership is actually the absence of leadership, when an individual avoids making

decisions and demonstrates a passive indifference to both tasks and followers" (p. 10). Below are

listed behaviors and characteristics of the laissez-faire leadership style:

> This French phrase means "leave it be," and it describes leaders who allow their people to work on their own. This type of leadership can also occur naturally, when managers don't have sufficient control over their work and their people. Laissez-faire leaders may give their teams complete freedom to do their work and set their own deadlines. They provide team support with resources and advice, if needed, but otherwise don't get involved. This leadership style can be effective if the leader monitors performance and gives feedback to team members regularly. It is most likely to be effective when individual team members are experienced, skilled, self-starters. The main benefit of laissez-faire leadership is that giving team members so much autonomy can lead to high job satisfaction and increased productivity. The downside is that it can be damaging if team members don't manage their time well or if they don't have the knowledge, skills, or motivation to do their work effectively. (Mind Tools, 2012, p. 4)

Strategic

A strategic leadership style is a leadership style wherein the leader uses a strategy-based

management style. As related by Eliogu-Anenih (2017), "It appreciates that different situations

demand different types of intelligence to execute hence the flexibility to adapt to a required

course of action. It understands the importance of organizational culture to the success and long-

term viability of the organization. Strategic leadership is a valuable addition to a high

performance where the operative element is a strategy. Strategic leadership employs critical

thinking for problem-solving" (p. 51). Further, "strategic leadership entails the ability to

integrate short- and long-term visions of the firm" (Hitt et al., 1994, p. 30). Must importunately

the strategic leadership style influences others, or as related by Rowe (2001): "Strategic

leadership is the ability to influence others to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance

the long-term viability of the organization, while at the same time maintaining its short-term

financial stability" (pp. 81–82).

Transformational

A transformational leadership style is a leadership style wherein a leader works with others to identify any needed changes, vision, and commitment. Through this, this leader leads his/her team. Beggs (2008) explained, "In the current era, there has been a leaning towards seeing followers as more than manipulated pawns, accomplishing goals in exchange for money" (p. 14). The transformational style of leadership includes the ability to motivate supporters to accomplish beyond what was initially thought conceivable (Sivanathan & Fekken, 2001). Further, transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by clearly articulating a promising, caring, and compelling vision for the future. They provide support to employees, encourage employees to learn and develop, and build good relationships with employees, which then nurture employees' favorable perception of the company (Aloys & Lewa, 2016, p. 101). Below are listed behaviors and characteristics of the transformational leadership style:

> Transformational leaders are inspiring because they expect the best from everyone on their team as well as themselves. This leads to high productivity and engagement from everyone in their team. The downside of transformational leadership is that while the leader's enthusiasm is passed onto the team, he or she can need to be supported by "detail people." That's why, in many organizations, both transactional and transformational leadership styles are useful. Transactional leaders (or managers) ensure that routine work is done reliably, while transformational leaders look after initiatives that add new value. (Mind Tools, 2012, p. 7)

Transactional

A transactional leadership style is a leadership style wherein a leader applies a reward and punishment system for those who are being led. As cited by Beggs (2008), "Transactional leaders are thought to have an exchange-based relationship with their followers" (p. 15). In this transactional style of leadership, leaders give followers guidance and rewards; in return, followers give leaders a job well done (Jordan, 1998). Further, according to Xiaoxia and Jing (2006), "the transactional leadership style contracts exchange or rewards for effort, promises

rewards for good performance, recognizes accomplishment, watches, and searches for deviations

from rules and standards, takes corrective actions and intervenes only if standards are not met"

(p. 16). Below are listed behaviors and characteristics of the transactional leadership style:

> This leadership style starts with the idea that team members agree to obey their leader when they accept a job. The "transaction" usually involves the organization paying team members in return for their effort and compliance. The leader has a right to "punish" team members if their work doesn't meet an appropriate standard. Although this might sound controlling and paternalistic, transactional leadership offers some benefits. For one, this leadership style clarifies everyone's roles and responsibilities. Another benefit is that, because transactional leadership judges team members on performance, people who are ambitious or who are motivated by external rewards – including compensation – often thrive. The downside of this leadership style is that team members can do little to improve their job satisfaction. It can feel stifling, and it can lead to high staff turnover. Transactional leadership is really a type of management, not a true leadership style, because the focus is on short-term tasks. It has serious limitations for knowledge-based or creative work. However, it can be effective in other situations. (Mind Tools, 2012, pp. 6–7)

Bureaucratic

A bureaucratic leadership style is a leadership style that imposes rules, policies, and lines

of authority. Rouzbahani et al. (2013) described bureaucratic leadership as follows:

> Bureaucratic leader, like an authoritarian leader, tells people what to do and how to do. However, the basis of all his orders is solely organizational policies, procedures, and guidelines. Rules are absolute for bureaucratic leaders. He really works by job description, and his job as a manager is more like a judge, and he would not accept any exception in rules even in special technical issues. (p. 1293)

This leadership style ensures absolute compliance with procedures and rules. Below are listed

behaviors and characteristics of the bureaucratic leadership style:

> Bureaucratic leaders work "by the book." They follow the rules rigorously and ensure that their people follow procedures precisely. This is an appropriate leadership style for work involving serious safety risks (such as working with machinery, with toxic substances, or at dangerous heights) or where large sums of money are involved. Bureaucratic leadership is also useful in organizations where employees do routine tasks (as in manufacturing). The downside of this leadership style is that it is ineffective in teams and organizations that rely on flexibility, creativity, or innovation. Often, bureaucratic leaders achieve their position because of their ability to conform to and uphold rules, not because of their qualifications or expertise. This can cause resentment when team members do not value their expertise or advice. (Mind Tools, 2012, p. 2)

The eight leadership styles described in this section provide to the reader with an understanding of some of the most common leadership styles among leaders (Becker, 2021), and the relationship between the behaviors of those leadership styles and the traits of shepherding and servant leadership.

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Related Literature

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The following related literature offers a comprehensive synthesis of related literature to the research. Unfortunately, research on leadership styles in the SES is scarce; however, related literature referencing the history and diversity of the position is available. The literature within this section includes literature on the foundation for servant leadership, worldview, biblical worldview, research conducted on the SES, ethics of the federal government, ethical principles for federal government employees, core qualifications for the SES, and leadership. Reviewing the literature on aspects that could influence SES's leadership can be educational and can perhaps offer an understanding of the importance of the SES position. From the review of literature on the SES' role to how the world is viewed from Christian leadership, all of the literature provides a clear rationale for the research study.

Foundation for Greenleaf's Servant Leadership

In 1970 Robert Greenleaf authored an essay that gave him credit for the concept of servant leadership (Lewis, 2019). However, the concept of servant leadership can be found in the theological and biblical foundation of the shepherd motif. Alternatively, as related by Lewis (2019), "although Greenleaf has been credited with the origin of servant leadership, the characteristics of the theory have biblical implications" (p. 304). As this author has previously discussed,

> The shepherd motif is a felicitous metaphor for human leadership because both occupations have a comparable variety of diverse tasks that are negotiated continuously.

> Shepherds had to combine broad competencies in animal husbandry with capacities for scouting, defense, and negotiation. The shepherd metaphor for leaders affirms the coherence and inner logic of these diverse tasks and competencies. (Laniak, 2006, p. 40)

Greenleaf's servant leader characteristics align with the theological foundation of the shepherd motif (lead, govern, and organization) and the biblical foundation of the shepherd motif (ruler, protector, and provider). Greenleaf's servant leadership is not only comprised of being a servant, but also includes other characteristics that align with the theological and biblical foundation of servant leadership. Those relating characteristics are as follows:

- The Leader Guides.

- The Leader is Goal-Oriented and Qualified.

- The Leader Listens and Reflects.

- The Leader is Fair and Flexible.

- The Leader is Intuitive and Aware.

- The Leader Uses Persuasion.

- The Leader Takes One Step at a Time. (Flanike, 2006, p. 34)

Greenleaf's servant leadership is a secular philosophy with a concept featured prominently throughout the Bible and clearly presented by Christ (Ross, 2006). However, Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership is missing the connection to Christ (Kimotho, 2019).

Servant Leadership

Robert Greenleaf is recognized as the father of servant leadership. Greenleaf first coined the term *servant leadership* in a 1970 essay entitled "The Servant as Leader." Within the essay, Greenleaf related,

> The servant-leader is servant first . . . it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. The conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is a leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage in unusual power drive or to acquire material possession. . . . The leader-first and the

servant first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 6)

In providing an explanation for servant leadership Greenleaf (1977) explained:

Natural servants are trying to see clearly the world as it is and are listening carefully to prophetic voices that are speaking now. They are challenging the pervasive injustice with greater force and they are taking sharper issue with the wide disparity between the quality of society they know is reasonable and possible with available resources, and, on the other hand, the actual performance of the whole range of institutions that exist to serve society. (p. 3)

Covey et al. (1994) provided an understanding of a servant leader as a means "to help build that intelligence, judgment, and character. It may require significant breaks with traditional ways of seeing and doing" (p. 251). These explanations of servant leadership both point to two things: a leadership style that is comprised of observing the world and making a decision not based on that world. However, servant leadership throughout Scripture is best defined as God's foundation for leadership. Thus, Jesus presented himself as a model of service and the perfect servant leader. Mark 10:42-45 (*NIV,* 1978/2011) provides insight into God's view of servant leadership:

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Biblical servant leadership requires the characteristic of following God, for that leader to be a servant leader. However, the characteristics of servant leadership such as care, courage, and guiding (shepherding) are also present in Greenleaf's servant leadership.

Characteristics of Servant Leadership

Understanding the scriptural foundation of shepherding and how it relates to servant leadership is important. The Trinity (God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) provides a perfect picture of leadership. However, many cannot see nor understand how the fundamental

understanding of the leadership provided by the Trinity is *shepherding*. God explains in his own words how to lead his creation of man, as shepherds, wanting to serve first. Not only does God provide the first example of shepherding (care, courage, and guiding) but also the foundation for servant leadership:

> And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So, God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God, he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food." (*NIV,* 1978/2011, Genesis 1:24–29)

From a servant leadership role, this concept can be understood with insight from Greenleaf (1980): "How can an institution become more serving? I see no other way than that the people who inhabit it serve better and work together toward synergy—the whole becoming greater than the sum of its parts" (p. 30). Greenleaf's servant leadership model encompasses leadership from a creation standpoint. However, instead of the examples of Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership provided 10 prominent characteristics that heighten an understanding of the concept of servant leadership. These 10 characteristics were outlined by Larry Spears' books *Reflections of Leadership* (1995) and *Insights on Leadership* (1998), and include listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. The servant leadership characteristics mentioned above are defined as follows:

Listening

This servant leadership characteristic is demonstrated by listening and understanding those around them, as well as listening and understanding one's body, spirit, and mind. Spears (2005) explained:

> Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. While these are also important skills for the servant-leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps clarify that will. He or she seeks to listen receptively to what is being said (and not said!). Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one's own inner voice and seeking to understand what one's body, spirit, and mind are communicating. Listening, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant-leader. (p. 3)

Empathy

Empathy as a servant leadership characteristic is demonstrated by understanding and sharing the feelings of others and self. Spears (2005) explained:

> The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and does not reject them as people, even while refusing to accept their behavior or performance. The most successful servant-leaders are those who have become skilled, empathetic listeners. (p. 3)

Healing

Healing as a servant-leadership characteristic is demonstrated by seeking the need to make others whole. Spears (2005) explained:

> Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one's self and others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to "help make whole" those with whom they come in contact. In the Servant as Leader, Greenleaf writes: "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share." (p. 3)

Awareness

Awareness, as a servant leadership characteristic, is demonstrated by being impartial

when approaching and solving problems. Spears (2005) explained:

> General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Making a commitment to foster awareness can be scary—you never know what you may discover. Awareness also aids one in understanding issues involving ethics and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As Greenleaf observed: "Awareness is not a giver of solace—it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity." (p. 3)

Persuasion

Persuasion, as a servant leadership characteristic, is demonstrated by uniting people to

create and accomplish a goal. Spears (2005) explained:

> Another characteristic of servant-leaders is a primary reliance on persuasion, rather than using one's positional authority, in making decisions within an organization. The servant-leader seeks to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. This particular element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant-leadership. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups. This emphasis on persuasion over coercion probably has its roots within the beliefs of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the denomination with which Robert Greenleaf himself was most closely allied. (p. 3)

Conceptualization

Conceptualization, as a servant leadership characteristic, is demonstrated by taking great

ideas and making them into an executable plan. Spears (2005) explained:

> Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to "dream great dreams." The ability to look at a problem (or an organization) from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many managers, this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The traditional manager is focused on the need to achieve short-term operational goals. The manager who wishes to also be a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. Within organizations, conceptualization is also the proper role of boards of trustees or directors. Unfortunately, boards can sometimes become involved in the day-to-day operations something that should always be discouraged!) and fail to provide the visionary concept for an institution. Trustees need to be mostly conceptual in their orientation, staffs need to be mostly operational in their perspective, and the most effective CEOs and leaders

probably need to develop both perspectives. Servant-leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day focused approach. (p. 3)

Foresight

Foresight, as a servant leadership characteristic, is demonstrated by being able to look at

the future or look into the future. Spears (2005) explained:

> Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easy to identify. One knows it when one sees it. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. As such, one can conjecture that foresight is the one servant-leader characteristic with which one may be born. All other characteristics can be consciously developed. There hasn't been a great deal written on foresight. It remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies, but one most deserving of careful attention. (p. 4)

Stewardship

Stewardship, as a servant leadership characteristic, is demonstrated when a leader serves

others. Spears (2005) explained:

> Peter Block (author of Stewardship and The Empowered Manager) has defined stewardship as "holding something in trust for another." Robert Greenleaf's view of all institutions was one in which CEOs, staffs, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society. Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control. (p. 4)

Commitment to Growth of People

Commitment to the growth of people, as a servant leadership characteristic, is

demonstrated when a leader focuses on growing those they lead. This growth is personal,

professional, and spiritual. Spears (2005) explained:

> Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her institution. The servant-leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything within his or her power to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees. In practice, this can include (but is not limited to) concrete actions such as making available funds for personal and

professional development, taking a personal interest in the ideas and suggestions from everyone, encouraging worker involvement in decision making, and actively assisting laid-off workers to find other employment. (p. 4)

Building Community

Building community, as a servant leadership characteristic, is demonstrated when a leader can produce a sense of unity as a group. Spears (2005) explained:

The servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of the shift from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution. Servant-leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions. Greenleaf said: "All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group." (p. 4)

These 10 characteristics of servant leadership are intended to show the concept of shepherding and what this leadership style brings to the growth and accomplishments of those being led. They speak to the power and promise that this model presents (Spears, 2018).

Theological Foundation

As discussed previously within the theological framework of this research, the theological foundation of the shepherd motif throughout scripture is best defined as God's foundation for leadership (lead, govern, and organization). As related by Ross (2006), "It becomes evident as one studies the servant leadership paradigm that it has roots in the divine principles that Jesus Christ established, taught and practiced as recorded in scriptures" (p. 59). In so many parts of the Bible, one can read where God chose individuals to lead, govern, and organize, even if they felt they were not fit to do so. One example is within the book of Exodus where a Hebrew slave by the name of Moses is described:

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and the led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of

God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire, it did not burn up. So, Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up." When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." (*NIV*, 1978/2011, Exodus 3)

Moses was focused on being a leader and was committed to God's plan and purposes (Fair, 1996). Moses was selected by God to lead, govern, and organize God's people out of Egypt, even though Moses felt there was no way he (Moses) could do such a task. As a leader, Moses' actions demonstrated Greenleaf's servant leadership (Lewis, 2019). God prepared and enacted upon Moses the foundational set of standards mentioned earlier. God sent Moses (as a leader) to lead the Hebrews out of slavery. God (through Moses) provided devastating plagues to provide governance of order for the coming together and leaving of the Hebrew slaves to the promised land. Exodus 12 relates:

During the night, Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Lord as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me." (*NIV*, 1978/2011, Exodus 12:31–32)

Lastly, God provided a way (structure/assembly) for all the Hebrew slaves to come together and leave for the promised land as one organization. Exodus 12 relates:

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the regulations for the Passover meal: No foreigner may eat it. Any slave you have bought may eat it after you have circumcised him, but a temporary resident or a hired worker may not eat it. It must be eaten inside the house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones. The whole community of Israel must celebrate it. A foreigner residing among you who wants to celebrate the Lord's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat it. The same law applies both to the native-born and to the foreigner residing among you." All the Israelites did just what the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that very day the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions. (*NIV*, 1978/2011, Exodus 12:43–50)

In short, the theological foundation of the shepherd motif throughout scripture is to lead, govern, and organize. Kittel and Friedrich (1968) related,

God defines the term, identifies the position, and clarifies the role when it comes to leadership. Leadership is "to put oneself at the head," "to preside" in sense of "to lead, conduct, direct, govern," and contextually it always shows a sense of "to care." (pp. 700-701)

Greenleaf's servant leadership philosophy emphasizes service to others and the role of building a better tomorrow (Greenleaf, 1991). The biblical foundation of the shepherd motif is also shared within scripture and seen in Greenleaf's servant leadership.

Biblical Foundation

As this author has previously discussed, the biblical foundation for servant leadership is best defined by being a shepherd (ruler, protector, and provider). Greenleaf's servant leadership behaviors encompass those traits. Alternatively, Liden et al. (2008) explained these behaviors as "putting subordinates first, helping subordinates grow and succeed, empowering, emotional healing, creating value for the community, behaving ethically, and conceptual skills" (p. 2). The concept of the shepherd leader has a long history; rulers and kings from all different backgrounds were referred to as shepherds (Hedrick, 2007). Further, one can read within the beginning book of the Bible that from the start of creation, God laid the biblical foundation for the shepherd motif:

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and overall the creatures that move along the ground." So, God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God, he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food." (*NIV*, 1978/2011, Genesis 1:24–29)

God established the basis for the shepherd motif when he created humankind in the image of himself. In creating man (Adam), God showed that he (God) was the Shepherd King (ruler, protector, and provider). God planted a garden for Adam, and within that garden, God provided food and rules for man to live by. God even went searching for humankind when his creation hid from him within the garden. As previously mentioned, God proclaims these same shepherding rights to humankind. Gunter (2016) provided an understanding for this when he related, "Christian leaders' organizational leadership abilities or charismatic personalities will never be a sufficient substitute for hearts that beat passionately for the care and well-being of the people" (p. 16). The link between the biblical foundation of the shepherd motif and Greenleaf's servant leadership behaviors can be understood further by examining shepherding examples within the Bible. Laniak (2006) presented three books (Ezekiel, Mark, and John) of the Bible that focus on this. Ezekiel presents a faithful shepherd (Laniak, 2006). Ezekiel's message is clear and presents the foundation for biblical servant leadership. As within Ezekiel's message, there is an understanding that biblical servant leadership is not a privilege but a responsibility (Laniak, 2006). In Mark, there is a clear presentation of Jesus as the serving and suffering shepherd of Messianic traditions (Laniak, 2006, p. 173). John's book further explains ruler, protector, and provider for John makes it clear that Jesus is training those following him to be like him in his life and death (Laniak, 2006). The book of John provides the understanding that Jesus should be emulated: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (*NIV*, 1978/2011, John 10:11). In short, the biblical foundation of the shepherd motif throughout scripture is the dominant idea for being a shepherd (ruler, protector, and provider).

In summary, the shepherd motif's biblical and theological foundation can be observed in the characteristics associated with Greenleaf's servant leadership. There are teachings within the

Bible as well as instructions, examples, and commands to support each of Greenleaf's servant leadership principles (Flanike, 2006). Greenleaf's servant leadership idea was that leaders would service with skill, understanding, and spirit (Kimotho, 2019, p. 72).

U.S. Civil Service Commission

The U.S. Civil Service Commission is the predecessor to the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. The U.S. Civil Service Commission came into existence when the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act of 1883 was signed into law. This commission laid the groundwork for federal government employment. The commission provides a merit-based principle for those desiring employment within the federal government (OPM, 2017). The commission owes its establishment to President James A. Garfield, who was assassinated by a disgruntled job seeker (Uhler, 2011). The commission was comprised of three members, all of whom were appointed by the President. The makeup and duties of the commission were outline in the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act of 1883:

> That it shall be the duty of said commissioners:
>
> (1) To aid the President, as he may request, in preparing suitable rules for carrying this act into effect, and when said rules shall have been promulgated it shall be the duty of all officers of the United States in the departments and offices to which any such rules may relate to aid, in all proper ways, in carrying said rules, and any modifications thereof, into effect.
>
> (2) And, among other things, said rules shall provide and declare, as nearly as the conditions of good administration will warrant, as follows:
>
> - First, for open, competitive examinations for testing the fitness of applicants for the public service now classified or to be classified here- under. Such examinations shall be practical in their character, and so far, as may shall relate to those matters which will fairly test the relative capacity and fitness of the persons examined to discharge the duties of the service into which they seek to be appointed.
>
> - Second, that all the offices, places, and employments so arranged or to be arranged in classes shall be filled by selections according to grade from among those graded highest as the results of such competitive examinations.

- Third, appointments to the public service aforesaid in the departments at Washington shall be apportioned among the several States and Territories and the District of Columbia upon the basis of population as ascertained at the last preceding census. Every application for an examination shall contain, among other things, a statement, under oath, setting forth his or her actual bona fide residence at the time of making the application, as well as how long he or she has been a resident of such place.

- Fourth, that there shall be a period of probation before any absolute appointment or employment aforesaid.

- Fifth, that no person in the public service is for that reason under any obligations to contribute to any political fund, or to render any political service, and that he will not be removed or otherwise prejudiced for refusing to do so.

- Sixth, that no person in said service has any right to use his official authority or influence to coerce the political action of any person or body.

- Seventh, there shall be non-competitive examinations in all proper cases before the commission, when competent persons do not compete, after notice has been given of the existence of the vacancy, under such rules as may be prescribed by the commissioners as to the manner of giving notice.

- Eighth, that notice shall be given in writing by the appointing power to said commission of the persons selected for appointment or employment from among those who have been examined, of the place of residence of such persons, of the rejection of any such persons after probation, of transfers, resignations, and removals and of the date thereof, and a record of the same shall be kept. by said commission. And any necessary exceptions from said eight fundamental provisions of the rules shall be set forth in connection with such rules, and the reasons there-for shall be stated in the annual reports of the commission.

(3) Said commission shall, subject to the rules that may be made by the President, make regulations for, and have control of, such examinations, and, through its members or the examiners, it shall supervise and preserve the records of the same; and said commission shall keep minutes of its own proceedings.

(4) Said commission may make investigations concerning the facts, and may report upon all matters touching the enforcement and effects of said rules and regulations, and concerning the action of any examiner or board of examiners hereinafter provided for, and its own subordinates, and those in the public service, in respect to the execution of this act.

(5) Said commission shall make an annual report to the President for transmission to Congress, showing its own action, the rules and regulations and the exceptions thereto in force, the practical effects thereof, and any suggestions it may approve for the more effectual accomplishment of the purposes of this act. (Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act, 1883)

This U.S. Civil Service Commission provided the oversight and management of the federal government employment process until it was replaced with a new law in 1978. As related by Hurley (1983), "The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA), signed into law October 13, 1978, launched the most comprehensive changes in the Federal civil service since the Pendleton Act of 1833 which created the U.S. Civil Service Commission (CSC)."

Civil Service Reform Act of 1978

The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA) established the SES. The CSRA implemented management, employment, and structure changes of the federal employment system. The SES was instituted within the federal government to provide a government-wide mobile corps of managers (Carey, 2012). The CSRA brought a form of government management that was not present until its signing in 1978 (Hurley, 1983). The act established that critical link between the presidential appointee and the workforce of the agency (OPM, n.d.). A few years after the signing, the following was noted:

> The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA), signed into law October 13, 1978, launched the most comprehensive changes in the Federal civil service since the Pendleton Act of 1833 which created the U.S. Civil Service Commission (CSC) . These changes mandated a complete alteration of Federal personnel management, including overall organization, delegation of authority, performance appraisal, executive development, and management, and pay systems for managers and supervisors. (Hurley, 1983, para. 2)

At the time the CSRA was passed in 1978, employees working within the federal government were expressing concerns and dissatisfaction with the workplace. Acts of fraud in U.S. programs and policies were on the rise (Moore & Gates, 1986). The National Commission on Public Service (2005) related it best: "A strong workforce comes from having the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. Only then, will government operate in an effective, efficient, and economic manner" (p. 12). The CSRA (1978) brought this statement into practices for the federal government:

It is the policy of the United States that --,

(1) in order to provide the people of the United States with a competent, honest, and productive Federal work force reflective of the Nation's diversity, and to improve the quality of public service, Federal personnel management should be implemented consistent with merit system principles and free from prohibited personnel practices;

(2) the merit system principles which shall govern in the competitive service and in the executive branch of the Federal Government should be expressly stated to furnish guidance to Federal agencies in carrying out their responsibilities in administering the public business, and prohibited personnel practices should be statutorily defined to enable Federal employees to avoid conduct which undermines the merit system principles and the integrity of the merit system;

(3) Federal employees should receive appropriate protection through increasing the authority and powers of the Merit Systems Protection Board in processing hearings and appeals affecting Federal employees;

(4) the authority and power of the Special Counsel should be increased so that the Special Counsel may investigate allegations involving prohibited personnel practices and reprisals against Federal employees for the lawful disclosure of certain information and may file complaints against agency officials and employees who engage in such conduct;

(5) the function of filling positions and other personnel functions in the competitive service and in the executive branch should be delegated in appropriate cases to the agencies to expedite processing appointments and other personnel actions, with the control and oversight of this delegation being maintained by the Office of Personnel Management to protect against prohibited personnel practices and the use of unsound management practices by the agencies;

(6) a Senior Executive Service should be established to provide the flexibility needed by agencies to recruit and retain the highly competent and qualified executives needed to provide more effective management of agencies and their functions, and the more expeditious administration of the public business;

(7) in appropriate instances, pay increases should be based on quality of performance rather than length of service;

(8) research programs and demonstration projects should be authorized to permit Federal agencies to experiment, subject to congressional oversight, with new and different personnel management concepts in controlled situations to achieve more efficient management of the Government's human resources and greater productivity in the delivery of service to the public;

(9) the training program of the Government should include retraining of employees for positions in other agencies to avoid separations during reductions in force and the loss to the Government of the knowledge and experience that these employees possess; and

(10) the right of Federal employees to organize, bargain collectively, and participate through labor organizations in decisions which affect them, with full regard for the public interest and the effective conduct of public business, should be specifically recognized in statute. (3 section)

The CSRA ushered in a new organization plan for the federal government workforce. "It eliminated the Civil Service Commission and divided its functions between the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and an independent new Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB)" (Hurley, 1983, para. 3).

The CSRA provided the foundation to establish and lead an SES program. The CSRA conceived the SES as a collection of highly skilled executives chosen for their leadership qualifications (Jones, 2019).

Ethics of the Federal Government

The U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) provides overall leadership and oversight of the ethics program for those federal employees assigned to the executive branch (controlled by the President). OGE (n.d.) related:

> The U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) oversees the executive branch ethics program and works with a community of ethics practitioners made up of nearly 5,000 ethics officials in more than 130 agencies to implement that program. When government decisions are made free from conflicts of interest, the public can have greater confidence in the integrity of executive branch programs and operations. OGE's mission is part of a system of institutional integrity in the executive branch. (para. 1)

This ethics program was established in the federal government in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Daley (2016) explained:

> Following the Watergate Scandal, the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities or the Senate Watergate Committee was put together to investigate campaign activities related to the presidential election of 1972. In the committee's final report issued in 1974, it included legislative recommendations in three areas: regulation of

campaign activities and contributions, the establishment of a permanent special prosecutor, and the creation of a permanent congressional legal service. Among other things, this resulted in the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, which first established the Office of Government Ethics. (para. 5)

The OGE oversees 14 basic principles of ethical conduct by which federal employees must abide. The principles help in presenting a transparent means of accountability. As Menzel (2015) related:

Public trust and confidence in government in the United States and in some countries abroad are at an all-time low. The reasons are many, with perhaps the foremost being the perception, if not the reality, that those who hold public office have lost their way ethically and morally, and second-most, the commodification of citizenship. (p. 358)

OGE provides a means of accountability through ethical standards. Further, OGE provides an understanding and pinpoint of these ethical standards within:

In 1989, the President's Commission on Federal Ethics Law Reform recommended that individual agency standards of conduct be replaced with a single regulation applicable to all executive branch employees. Acting upon that recommendation, President Bush signed Executive Order 12674 on April 12, 1989. That Executive Order (as modified by Executive Order 12731) set out fourteen basic principles of ethical conduct for executive branch personnel and directed OGE to establish a single, comprehensive, and clear set of executive branch standards of ethical conduct. (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2020, pp. 570–571)

Fundamental Obligation of Public Service

Once employed by the federal government, the employee is considered a public servant. They are placed in a position of public trust, and conduct is critical. There are 14 principles that are the determining factor for proper conduct as a federal employee. These 14 principles are given and outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The CFR is an arranged sorting of the general and permanent rules for federal departments and agencies. The CFR (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2020) explained:

Each employee has a responsibility to the United States Government and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, lASQ, and ethical principles above private gain. To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government, each employee shall respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct

set forth in this section, as well as the implementing standards contained in this part and in supplemental agency regulations. (p. 570)

These ethical conducts are then outlined as follows:

- Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the lASQ, and ethical principles above private gain.

- Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

- Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

- An employee shall not, except as permitted by subpart B of this part, solicit, or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

- Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

- Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

- Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

- Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

- Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

- Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with the official Government duties and responsibilities.

- Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to the appropriate authorities.

- Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as Federal, State, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

- Employees shall adhere to all lASQ and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

- Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards set forth in this part. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or these standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts. (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2020, pp. 570–571)

From their first day, federal employees are on notice of the requirement to know federal statutes (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2020). These 14 principles of ethical conduct are the fundamental ethical measurement of performance for federal employees. A leader using a biblical servant leadership approach would have no problem adhering to and exceeding those standards. These ethical principles serve as the baseline to which the federal government employee must adhere when managing and using the $4.5 trillion in taxes collected yearly.

The Inspector General (Understanding of an SES Position)

On December 13, 1777, Congress created by law the military Inspector General. The Inspector General system within the United States took on the same roles as the system set up by King Louis XIV. The military Inspector General system remained and remains today; however, in the 1970s, acts of political corruption brought about the Inspector General (IG) Act of 1978, which created the Federal Government Departmental Inspector General. As related by Johnson et al. (2015):

> In 1976, independence became Congress's key focus of deliberations as it considered legislation to create an Office of Inspector General (OIG) to address perceptions of substantial fraud and respond to widespread mismanagement in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). (p. 9)

With the signing of the IG Act of 1978, Congress established an office that was independent and objective; it provided the standard (model) for the OIG. The Inspectors General were by law mandated to conduct and supervise audits and investigations, promote economy, efficacy, and effectiveness in administration, and prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse. The law stated:

> In order to create independent and objective units—

(1) to conduct and supervise audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations of the establishments listed in section 12(2);

(2) to provide leadership and coordination and recommend policies for activities designed to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of, and to prevent and detect fraud and abuse in, such programs and operations; and

(3) to provide a means for keeping the head of the establishment and the Congress fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies relating to the administration of such programs and operations and the necessity for and progress of corrective action. (IG Act, 1978/2018, para. 1)

The Inspectors General are the oversight watchdogs for the federal government department to which they are appointed. The Inspectors General lead an office ranging from a staff of three to a staff of over 1,000. The concept of the Inspector General Act was proven to be so successful that the IG community of 12 Inspectors General has increased to 74 since the inception of the program in the federal government (Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency [CIGIE], 2014, p. 1). As related before, these 74 Inspectors General through leadership (stewardship) provide the oversight needed to report to heads of agencies, Congress, the public, and the President. The federal government's Inspectors General are tasked (by law) with the oversight of federal agencies and programs.

The Inspectors General's oversight mission detects and prevents fraud, waste, and abuse within federal agencies and programs. Being successful in this position is determined by the impact (or return on investment) the Inspector General brings to its agency. Those challenges were outlined by the CIGIE (2019) as follows:

- Information Technology Security and Management- This refers to (1) the protection of Federal IT systems from intrusion or compromise by external or internal entities and (2) the planning and acquisition for replacing or upgrading IT infrastructure.

- Performance Management and Accountability- Pertains to challenges related to managing agency programs and operations efficiently and effectively to accomplish mission-related goals. Although Federal agencies vary greatly in size and mission, they face some common challenges in improving agency programs and operations performance.

- Human Capital Management- Relates to recruiting, managing, developing, and optimizing agency human resources. Human capital management is a significant challenge that impacts the ability of Federal agencies to meet their performance goals and to execute their missions efficiently.

- Financial Management- Spans a broad range of functions, from program planning, budgeting, and execution to accounting, audit, and evaluation. Weaknesses in any of these functional areas limit an agency's ability to ensure that taxpayer funds are being used efficiently and effectively.

- Procurement Management- The procurement management challenge encompasses the entire procurement process, including pre-award planning, contract award, and post-award contract administration.

- Facilities Maintenance- Federal agencies face challenges ensuring that their facilities Stay in proper condition and remain capable of fulfilling the government's needs.

- Grant Management- Involves the process used by Federal agencies to award, monitor, and assess the success of grants. Deficiencies in any of these areas can lead to misspent funds and ineffective programs. (pp. 13–14)

Francis (2019) explained the CRS as follows,

Statutory Inspectors General play a key role in government oversight, and Congress plays a key role in establishing the structures and authorities to enable that oversight. The structure and placement of Inspectors General in government agencies allow the Office of Inspector General personnel to develop the expertise necessary to conduct in-depth assessments of agency programs. (p. 20)

Without a doubt, success as a leader (Inspector General) within these organizations is essential, as stated before, to the government as well as the taxpayer. The leadership style of the Inspector General should not only impact how things are presented to the public or Congress, but the leadership style of the Inspector General should also affect the OIG. Although many different leadership styles exist biblical servant leadership traits/behaviors are the right fit for this SES position. Biblical servant leadership is a leadership style with a disposition, dialogue, and decision-making embedded with God, allowing a leader to exceed in the fundamental obligation for public service, something that all federal employees must adhere to once employed.

Inspector General Act of 1978

The Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act) brought a form of government oversight that was not present until its signing in 1978. Congress enacted the IG Act creating the OIG in 12 different agencies (Salkin & Kansler, 2011). The motivation for creating the Inspector General was the Watergate events of the early 1970s (Light, 2006; Moore & Gates, 1986; Salkin & Kansler, 2011). At the October 12, 1978, signing, President Carter remarked:

> I think it's accurate to say that the American people are fed up with the treatment of American tax money in a way that involves fraud and mismanagement and embarrassment to the Government. I consider and these Members of the House and Senate behind me consider the tax money to be a matter of public trust. We've not yet completely succeeded in rooting out the embarrassing aspects of government management—or mismanagement. This bill will go a long way toward resolving that problem.
> At the time of the passing of the IG Act in 1978, acts of fraud in U.S. programs and

policies were on the rise (Moore & Gates, 1986). The IG Act brought into law an independent civilian Inspector General who was appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability. Also, the IG Act prohibited an agency head from interfering with the duties (audits and investigations) of the Inspector General. The IG Act (1978/2018), stated:

> There shall be at the head of each Office an Inspector General who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations. Each Inspector General shall report to and be under the general supervision of the head of the establishment involved or, to the extent such authority is delegated, the officer next in rank below such head, but shall not report to, or be subject to supervision by, any other officer of such establishment. Neither the head of the establishment nor the officer next in rank below such head shall prevent or prohibit the Inspector General from initiating, carrying out, or completing any audit or investigation, or from issuing any subpoena during the course of any audit or investigation. (para. 3)

The appointment process of the Inspector General was a means of protecting that position. A major provision of the IG Act included protection to help ensure the independence of

the Inspector General (Davis, 2018). The IG Act also contained a passage to protect the removal

of an Inspector General as well. An Inspector General may be removed from office by the

President.

> If an Inspector General is removed from office or is transferred to another position or location within an establishment, the President shall communicate in writing the reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress, not later than 30 days before the removal or transfer. Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit a personnel action otherwise authorized by law, other than transfer or removal. (IG Act, 1978/2018, para. 3)

> The IG Act provided the foundation to establish and lead an Office of Inspector General.

"The IG Act also sets out, among other things, (1) the duties and responsibilities of each IG with

respect to the entity within which its office is established; (2) how IG are appointed; and (3) the

processes for removing an IG" (Davis, 2018, p. 4).

Worldview

Within this study, there are different examples of leadership styles and their applications.

However, it is important to narrow the leadership focus to a specific position and organization

for this study. Before examining the leadership styles of those in the SES, it is important to

define worldview and biblical worldview as these points of view help form the leadership styles

within this study. For this study, worldview is defined as a guide that shapes and supports a

person's views and understandings in the world. Sire (2004) explained:

> A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being. (p. 122)

This understanding of worldview could also be called a cultural worldview. Matsumoto (2006)

explained:

> Cultural worldviews, on the other hand, are belief systems about one's culture. They are produced because verbal language is a unique characteristic of humans, and because

people talk about their own and other cultures. These verbal descriptions can be oral or written, and are social constructions of reality expressed in consensual ideologies about one's culture. These descriptions bring about the direction of the experiencing of worldly surroundings. (p. 35)

Culture can best be explained as the beliefs and values that affect the way people think and act in the world in which they live. In other words, worldviews are based on culture, and matters of the world's ethics, understanding, faith, reason, and morals are all based on the society in which they live. Ott (1989) helps this understanding when he related, "Culture is to the organization what personality is to the individual—a hidden, yet unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization" (p. 1). Further, Tylor (1920) related the first definition of culture as the following: "That complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p. 1). So, now that worldview (culture worldview) is understood, the next step is understanding what a biblical worldview is.

Biblical Worldview

Biblical worldview within this study is understood as interpreting or viewing of life through God's word (gospel), or as related by Schultz and Swezey (2013), "framework of assumptions about reality, all of which are in submission to Christ" (p. 232). So, can a biblical worldview be useful as a leader in a specific leadership position in the federal government? The Bible helps in understanding this question in Romans 12:2 (*NIV*, 1978/2011): "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what the will of God is, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Scripture is telling them that by applying the knowledge and understanding of God's word, we can become unified as one with God and not one with the world. God's word is about the transformation of an individual to a community of God followers. This is also related by Hiebert (2008):

The gospel is about transformed lives. As Christians, we live in the world, but we are not to be of the world. We are those transformed by the power of the gospel to show to the world a new worldview, one that brings about eternal salvation and manifests itself in love, joy, peace, gentleness, and witness. We are not called to fight the world or to flee from it. We are to be like salt and yeast, bringing about transformation in the world. One danger is to withdraw and form Christian communities that have no impact on the world. Another is to become so captive to our culture that we lose the gospel. We are to live as a countercultural community and as individuals in the world. ("Concluding Comments" section)

Biblical worldview is about transforming lives to the glory of God and coming together to worship God. Biblical worldview cuts through the differences in values, understanding, and actions of culture as the Biblical worldview provides a means to place one's values, understanding, and actions towards only one: God. In the biblical worldview, a team (group) is coming together with a central focus on God. Imagine a leadership style that is composed of these elements. Leaders whose actions are for the glory of God and not for self-fulfillment would fall in line with a shepherding style of leadership. Laniak (2006) explained:

Shepherd is a felicitous metaphor for human leadership because both occupations have a comparable variety of diverse tasks that are constantly negotiated. . . . Shepherds had to combine broad competencies in animal husbandry with capacities for scouting, defense, and negotiation. The use of the shepherd metaphor for leaders affirms the coherence and inner logic of these diverse tasks and competencies. (p. 40)

A biblical worldview that transforms lives to the glory of God brings a standard to leadership that would not be of this world; traits such as ethics or integrity would be a byproduct. Resnik (2020) explained,

Most people learn ethical norms at home, at school, in church, or in other social settings. Although most people acquire their sense of right and wrong during childhood, moral development occurs throughout life, and human beings pass through different stages of growth as they mature. Ethical norms are so ubiquitous that one might be tempted to regard them as simple commonsense. (para. 2)

The Bible (*NIV*, 1978/2011) helps us further understand this in Proverbs 11:3: "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity" and Colossians 3:23:

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."

Leadership Understanding

Bevans (2017) offers an explanation of the changing leadership style of the present day. He explained Christian leadership and argued that leadership needs to move away from transitional leadership (a leadership style that has a defined purpose and direction) and transformational leadership (a style of leadership where leaders work with subordinates to identify changes). Bevans explained that the new leadership style must have a heart, so the heart of leadership; this is the creation-based leadership style.

Gladwell (n.d.) provided an understanding of three questions of the shepherd and the shepherd motif. Question 1: Why might God have chosen to use this image? Question 2: What are the characteristics of a Good Shepherd? Question 3: Who is the Shepherd that is to come referred to in the Old Testament? Gladwell provided a connection between the leadership traits of the Shepherd, God, and Jesus.

Bowie (2000) provided insight into the criticism of the servant leadership style. Bowie argued that the servant leader has low respect for themselves in relation to others. Further, Bowie believed the term "servant leadership" has a negative meaning as it may lead to followers manipulating the servant leader in some settings. Bowie contended that this leadership style misses its mark by suggesting a leadership style in which followers would use the leader for their own ends.

Berry and Cartwright (2000) regarded servant leadership as idealistic and suggested that it is unfitting for Western corporations, as the servant leader is focused on service to God or others before self. Thus, the servant leader is not serving the particular purpose of the

organization. Heim (1993) examined leadership, decision making, and the Judeo-Christian ethic using the professional army ethics (army values, army creed, army oaths, etc.) and then sampled and analyzed Judeo-Christian literature on leadership, ethics, morals, and the decision-making process. Heim also considered the lives of five biblical leaders to determine the qualities of their decision-making process, to see if any of the qualities of these marked the army ethics.

Stott (2013) provided insight into the challenges that the Christian leader faces. Stott's book emphasized that God works with us and through us to complete his purposes and actions in this world. Stott addressed issues of self-discipline, discouragement, relationships, and youth. The author provided insight into his past leadership in the ministry from two of his former study assistants. This book was a vital resource for my biblical/theological analysis of the Trinity in leadership, as Stott discussed issues understanding and dealing with Christian leadership, leadership that is inspired by God.

Research Conducted on the SES

Athanasaw (1997) conducted a study examining the perceived leadership style of SES personnel and identified their dominant leadership styles. At the time of the study, the population of the SES service was 6,395 (Athanasaw, 1997). The survey instruments used in the study revealed that the self-perceived leadership style for the male SES personnel was the strategic leadership style, while collaborative leadership was found to be the leadership style for the female SES personnel.

Camacho (2021) conducted qualitative research on the Latinx in the SES, looking into the barriers that hinders Latinxs from the SES position, as they were underrepresented. The study investigated the knowledge, motivation, and organizational influences that serve as those barriers (Camacho, 2021). The findings from the study indicated that those barriers were in fact hindering

the Latinxs when it came to seeking employment in the SES position. They study provided a plan to mitigate those barriers.

Using a phenomenological approach for her study into the lack of African Americans in the Department of Defense SES Corp, Nelson (2015) examined the factors that contribute to African Americans becoming part of the SES. Nelson identified qualities like performing core executive activities, education, and training helped with SES progression.

Paylor (2018) researched the dominant leadership and behaviors of SES personnel, in a quantitative approach. By using a multifactor leadership questionnaire and a demographic questionnaire, she was able to identify transformational leadership as the dominant leadership style within the SES personnel included in her study. Additional findings in the study related that the female SES personnel preferred transformational leadership and intellectual stimulation (Paylor, 2018).

Washington (2015) also used a phenomenological approach when he researched servant leadership characteristics in the SES. His research was based on one question: How do SES leaders perceive and describe their decision-making experiences with employees when practicing the 10 servant leadership characteristics (Washington, 2015, p. 4)? The study findings indicated that those in the survey concluded that integrity and ethics were the weakest traits among leaders in the SES.

Executive Core Qualifications

The competencies needed for a position in the SES are understood as the executive core qualifications. As related by OPM (2017), "The executive core qualifications (ECQs) define the competencies needed to build a Federal corporate culture that drives results, serves customers, and builds successful teams and coalitions within and outside the organization" (p. 7). The OPM

developed these core qualifications to represent what the federal government considers to be

critical leadership skills (OPM, 2017). There are five ECQs, and described by the OPM (2017):

> 1. Leading Change--This core qualification involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. This ECQ requires the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.
>
> 2. Leading People--This core qualification involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. This ECQ requires the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.
>
> 3. Results Driven--This core qualification involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. This ECQ requires the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.
>
> 4. Business Acumen--This core qualification requires the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.
>
> 5. Building Coalitions--This core qualification requires the ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and Local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals. (p. 7)

The literature within this section provided insight and understanding to those emerging

matters that could impact the leadership of those in the SES.

Rationale for the Study

This literature review confirms the need to identify leadership behaviors that provide a

foundation for ethical understanding. As there is limited research on the SES leadership

behaviors, this study is beneficial for the community and every taxpayer in the United States.

Those in SES positions provide oversight for the use of $4.5 trillion in taxes collected yearly

(Amadeo, 2020).

Further, it should be remembered that a biblical worldview was part of this research as the key indicators of the biblical servant leadership style/behavior were sought among the leadership styles identified as being used by those in the SES. As related by Bhatti et al. (2011),

> Leadership is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organization goals, a process whereby one person exerts social influence over other members of the group, a process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group of individuals in an effort towards goal achievement in given situations, and a relational concept involving both the influencing agent and the person being influenced. (p. 192)

Identified Gap in the Literature

Research was conducted regarding diversity, increasing diversity, leadership, online learning, job satisfaction, and turnover within the SES; however, there is a shortcoming in examining the leadership or leadership styles best suited for this service. Considering biblical servant leadership traits, this leadership style may be ideal for the entrusted SES role. As related previously, Athanasaw (1997) conducted a study dealing with the prevailing leadership styles of the SES. Nelson (2015) explored the lack of African Americans in the Department of Defense SES Corp. Paylor (2018) researched the SES's dominant leadership style or behavior. Camacho (2021) studied the lack of Latinx SES members in a federal government agency, and Washington (2015) looked into the lived experiences of those serving in the federal government SES. However, the SES position (by law) is held to a very high ethical standard. This federal government position is responsible for executive management within the federal government. The person in this position must go before Congress and the American people to inform them of troubling matters within the federal government, without question to their character or leadership. This study, which was a quantitative correlation study, provides a research approach to exploring the foundational elements of biblical servant leadership, secular servant leadership, and the SES role. As the SES position is one of ethical and moral trust, seeing if those in the SES

exhibit biblical servant leadership behaviors is fundamental for understanding that position. Lett (2014) explains, "In light of the current demand for more ethical, people-centered management, leadership inspired by the ideas from servant leadership may very well be what organizations need" (p. 52). Romans 13:3 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) explains the importance of public servants performing their duties ethically: "For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will be commended."

Leadership is essential for those responsible for the federal government budget of over $3.8 trillion. As related by the OPM (2020), "The CSRA's stated purpose was to ensure that the executive management of the Government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the nation and otherwise is of the highest quality" (p. 4).

Profile of the Current Study

The SES of the federal government is tasked (by law) with being the executive personnel management of the federal government. Those in the SES share values, have a broad understanding of government, executive-level skills, and respect and embrace the dynamics of American democracy (OPM, 2020). Those in the SES position have a challenging obligation to transform the nation's laws and administration policies into effective public service (OPM, 2020, p. 8). Being successful in this position is determined by the impact they have on the commitment and accomplishment of their agency's mission. In the past 5 years, the SES positions have managed the federal government's budget totaling an estimated $17.8 trillion (USAFACTS, n.d.). This research sought to identify biblical servant leadership traits in the SES. Considering the traits of biblical servant leadership, this leadership style may be ideal for the entrusted federal government position (role) of the SES.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a research approach to exploring the foundational elements of biblical servant and secular servant leadership and the Senior Executive Service (SES) role. This research sought to determine if biblical and secular servant leadership models are identifiable in the SES leadership behaviors. In this chapter, the applicability of the quantitative correlational approach to this study is discussed. The chapter provides the data collection methods, the data analysis process, and the matters that factor into the research for credibility and dependability. In the concluding sections of this chapter, the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are presented, followed by the chapter summary. This chapter also discussed the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models are identifiable in the SES's essential leadership behaviors – and if those elements are associated with an awareness of use.

Research Design Synopsis

The Problem

Considering biblical servant leadership traits, this leadership style may be ideal for the federal government positions entrusted to those in the SES. As related before, the SES was created by Congress to provide a mobile cadre of managers for the federal government. These federal government employees are the backbone of the executive leadership in the federal government. SES members are mandated to respect and adhere to the fundamental principles of ethical service (behaving in an honest, fair, and ethical manner). Past studies have examined diversity, increasing diversity, online learning, job satisfaction, and turnover within the SES; however, there seems to be a shortcoming in looking at the leadership or leadership styles best suited for this position. Nelson (2015) chose a phenomenological approach when she explored

the lack of African Americans in the Department of Defense SES Corp, and Camacho (2021) used a qualitative, gap analysis approach when he studied the lack of Latinx SES members in a federal government agency. The SES personnel are federal government employees and are the link between a federal agency's career employees and the politically appointed agency head. For those is the SES position, their leadership must ensure that their federal government agency t is productive and efficient throughout administrations. The person in this position must go before Congress and the American people to inform them of troubling matters within the federal government, without raising questions regarding their character or leadership. The SES position is held to a very high ethical standard.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership models were identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of the SES. The guiding theory for this research was to determine if there were any overriding biblical servant leadership or secular servant leadership traits in the leadership styles of those in the SES. The SES was established by the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA; P.L. 95-454, 92 Stat. 1111). Congress created the SES to provide a government-wide, mobile corps of managers within federal agencies. The SES, comprised mostly of career appointees chosen through a merit staffing process, is the link between the politically appointed heads of agencies and the career civil servants within those agencies (Carey, 2012, para. 1). As related by Bhatti et al. (2011):

> Leadership is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organization goals, a process whereby one person exerts social influence over other members of the group, a process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group of individuals in an effort towards goal achievement in given situations, and a relational concept involving both the influencing agent and the person being influenced. (p. 192).

The guiding purpose for this research was to determine if there are any overriding biblical servant leadership or secular servant leadership traits in the leadership styles of the SES.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government?

RQ2. What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

Research Hypotheses

H01: There is no most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service.

H02: There is not a statistically significant relationship between biblical servant leader or secular servant leadership traits and the Senior Executive Service behavioral traits.

H03: There is not an awareness of use for biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership.

H04: There is not a statistically significant relationship between leadership style and integrity.

Research Design and Methodology

The research design used a quantitative correlational approach. Quantitative research tries to explain, describe, and predict relationships, testing objective theories by studying their relationship (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Further, studies conducted using a quantitative approach are specific in focus and compare the results' correlations and statistical significance (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). The goal of a quantitative study is control, confirmation, predication,

and to test hypotheses. Quantitative research examines the variable amounts and tries to measure the variables numerically (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The quantitative research process uses numbers or numerical measurements in its process. Quantitative research can best be described as a factual research process that uses statistical mathematical or computational methods. "Quantitative researchers typically identify only a few variables to study and then collect data specifically related to those variables" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016, p. 80). The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models are identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of the SES role. As previously discussed, this author chose and used the quantitative correlation approach to distinguish the variables (leadership behaviors) and establish a statistically corresponding relationship. The method used was a non-experimental survey method to collect the behavior traits of leaders in the SES. Chapter Two of this study presented an overview of published literature, scholarly research, and other reliable and appropriate sources that relate the importance of the SES's role and the leadership required of those positions. This research sought to identify the most commonly used biblical and secular servant leadership traits and effective leadership style of SES members, including behaviors that can be duplicated and behaviors that show genuine interest in taking care of their people. Using this research approach provided insight into this author's concept that a biblical servant leadership approach would be the right fit for the SES role. The theory guiding this study was Peter Northouse's (2016) understanding of ethical leadership: "Ethical leadership is rooted in respect, service, justice, honesty, and community" (p. 359). Others have used this quantitative correlation research approach to show leadership relationships, as summarized in the following paragraphs.

Ramseur conducted an excellent quantitative correlation study in 2018. The study, *The Relationship between Servant Leadership, Effective Leadership, and Ethical Leadership: A Nonprofit Organization Correlational Study,* covered how relationships may or may not exist amongst servant leadership and effective leadership and servant leadership and ethical leadership. The study was confined to nonprofit organizations and taken from an employee perspective. A total of 181 employees participated in survey data collection that addressed the questions of the study. The data were collected through three specific survey instruments: Servant Leadership Scale, Leadership Practices Inventory and the Perceived Leader Integrity. From the data collected, Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to measure the strength of the associations in this study, with a finding of no significant correlation between servant leadership and effective leadership, nor servant leadership and ethical leadership (Ramseur, 2018).

Abdulghani (2016) also conducted an excellent quantitative correlation study. The study, *A Correlational Study of Principals' Leadership Styles on Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Girls' Private Elementary Schools in Saudi Arabia*, covered the relationship concerning principals' leadership styles and teachers' occupation satisfaction in private elementary schools. The researcher framed two research questions to examine the most adopted leadership style among the principals in the sample population and the existence and nature of the relationship between the principals' leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction. A total of 55 principals and 110 teachers participated in the study. The data were collected through three specific survey instruments. One survey focused on demographics (age, education, employment years). Another survey focused on job satisfaction, and a third survey focused on the extent to which the principals' leadership styles of the study were used by those surveyed. From the data collected

using a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and Job Satisfaction Survey, the researcher

concluded that transactional leadership was the principle leadership style of the principals, and

there was no significant correlation between this leadership style and job satisfaction.

Eady-Mays (2016) conducted another excellent quantitative correlation study. The study

covers the relationship between leadership styles and senior leaders' ethics positions in

nonprofits within the United States. A total of 111 leaders took part in the study. Data were

collected using a 40-question web survey from the Leadership Styles and Questionnaire and the

Ethics Position Questionnaire. The results from the study indicated that there is a relationship

between the laissez-faire leadership style and a robust ethics position.

In conclusion, the literature on biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership,

other leadership styles, and the SES was reviewed. A survey of SES personnel within the Senior

Executives Association (SEA) was then sought from 12 of the SES board members, with a

minimum of sample size of 3 responses required. This quantitative correlational research

approach intended to determine the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular

servant leadership models were identifiable in the SES role's essential leadership behaviors – and

if those elements were associated with an awareness of use. The correlational approach to this

study was applicable as it allowed the researcher to convey the level of significance in the

connection between the variables. Using a correlational approach, the researcher can provide an

accurate description of the relationship between the variables (Simon, 2010). The choice of using

a correlation design was based on the researcher wanting to determine the extent to which a

correlation exists between servant leadership and the leadership behaviors in the SES role.

Similar to the study conducted by Bivins (2005), this research design compared answers

provided through online surveys to understand leadership behaviors of those in the SES and then

compared that information to biblical and secular servant leadership. This quantitative correlational study used three instruments to measure the study variables. Lastly, this methodological design answered the following research questions: What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

Population

The target population for this research consisted of 12 SES leaders from the federal government. Their backgrounds ranged from tenured lawyers to accountants with 5 years of experience or more. These 12 leaders in the SES are responsible for the executive management of their respective agencies. These 12 leaders are also part of the Senior Executive Association (SEA) and serve as board members. This association board covers a broad spectrum of government agencies. The association engages in lobbying with Congress and the executive branch of government (SEA, n.d.). Further, the SEA's mission is to "improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of the federal government, to advance the professionalism and advocate the interests of career federal executives; and to enhance public recognition of their accomplishments" (Spinella, 2015, p. 2).

Sampling Procedures

A true objective survey of the SES population from within this association was sought. All 12 SES leaders are members of the SEA and of the federal government. A quantitative non-

experimental approach was used for the sampling approach. As related by Leedy and Ormrod (2016) in describing data collected using a correlation approach, "Finding a coefficient of correlation is equivalent to discovering a signpost. That signpost points unerringly to the fact that two things are related, and it reveals the nature of the relationship" (p. 272). The current listing and contact information for all SES personnel of the federal government is located on the SEA website. The SES members were contacted by email or phone, and all were asked to complete an online leadership style survey questionnaire containing specific questions with numerical values assigned, with a 15–30-day window to complete. They were emailed with specific instructions on how to complete the survey and the website address for the online survey. A minimum of three respondents to the survey was required, but all 12 members were contacted. The next step in the summary of the design is the methodology behind it.

The research design used a quantitative correlational approach to understand the types of leadership behaviors employed by those in the SES and then compare the findings to the research questions. A quantitative non-experimental approach was used for the sampling approach. This approach showed a direct relationship between the type of leadership behaviors that SES leaders exhibit and the relationship between biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership. Further, this methodological design answered the following research questions: What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

To summarize this section, a true objective survey of the SES population was sought. As previously discussed, all 12 SES leaders who were contacted are members of the board of SEA. They were all asked to complete an online survey questionnaire containing specific questions on leadership styles within a 20–30-day window. A respondent rate of at least three was needed for data analysis. Those who were participating were emailed specific instructions and a website address for the online surveys. Seeking a response rate of 60%, all 12 SES were sent an invitation email to take the surveys. Since Leedy and Ormrod (2016) noted that there is a low rate of return on surveys through email, a follow-up reminder was sent for the small population of emails. As the information being collected was collected without any identifying personal information, access and participation by the SES leaders should not have been an issue.

Limits of Generalization

This study was limited to those in the federal government SES who are mandated to perform their duties in accordance with the federal government laws, rules, and policies. The data obtained from the surveys depicted a moment in time, and the findings apply to that moment. The data obtained from this research may not generalize to non-federal senior executives or others in senior executive leadership roles. Further, the research conducted may not be directly applicable to those serving in a military type of senior executive position.

Ethical Considerations

Approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Liberty University before proceeding with the study's data collection. The IRB approval letter is in Appendix A. The study did not have any physical risks or hazards for the participants. The study did not incur any psychological harm to any of the participants. The study did not incur any significant costs to any of the participants. Inform consent forms were used before any

interviews, and a statement of the same was displayed on the survey site. The form and website's information were identical and the related data collected will not be shared outside of Liberty University. Further, by having used an online survey method, personal identifiable information was not collected. The confidentiality and anonymity of the SES participants was protected without the collection of personal identifiable information, protecting participants from any professional repercussions. The participants were free to terminate their involvement in the data collection at any time. Coordination was affected with by the SEA, which operates independently, outside the management lines of the federal government and has the authority to permit parties to participate in this study (Senior Executive Association [SEA], n.d.).

Instrumentation

This quantitative correlational study was completed to determine the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models were identifiable in the SES's essential leadership behaviors – and if those elements were associated with an awareness of use. The correlational approach to this study was applicable as it allowed the researcher to convey the level of significance in the connection between the variables. Using this correlational approach, the researcher can provide an accurate description of the relationship between the variables (Simon, 2010). The choice to use a correlation design was based on the researcher wanting to determine to what extent a correlation exists between the biblical servant leadership and the leadership behaviors of SES leaders.

This quantitative correlational study used three instruments to measure the study variables (servant leaderships, leadership behavior, and awareness). Communication with participants included an invitation email, a consent form, and a survey comprised of three instruments: the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the

Awareness Survey Questionnaire. These three survey instruments have been extensively used in many research studies and are reliable. Further, the consent form was included with the instrumentation for those participants to understand their rights to participate in this study. The following instrumentation section provides an overview and understanding of the instrumentation that were used in the study to measure the variables.

The Servant Leadership Scale

Liden et al. (2008) developed a tool to measure servant leadership. This tool was made so that it could be used in any type of organizational setting. The authors of this scale sought to establish three types of validity: face, convergent, and predictive (Green et al., 2015). The Servant Leadership Scale is a 28-item instrument with seven sub-dimensions constructed to provide data on the extent to which leaders manifest servant leadership behavior (Liden et al., 2008). Liden et al. (2008) explained the seven sub-dimensions as follows:

- Emotional healing: The act of showing sensitivity to others' personal concerns.

- Creating value for the community: A conscious, genuine concern for helping the community.

- Conceptual skills: Possessing knowledge of the organization and tasks to be accomplished. Effectively supporting and assisting others, especially immediate followers.

- Empowering: Encouraging and facilitating others, especially immediate followers, in identifying and solving problems. Determining when and how to complete work tasks.

- Helping subordinates grow and succeed: Demonstrating genuine concern for others' career growth and development by providing support and mentoring.

- Putting subordinates first: Using actions and words to make it clear to others, especially immediate followers, that satisfying their work needs is a priority.

- Behaving ethically: Interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with others. (p. 76)

The Servant Leadership Scale was used with permission (see Appendix C). This online survey was comprised of 28 questions which asked participants to rate their responses on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7: (Strongly Agree = 7, Agree = 6, Agree Somewhat = 5, Undecided = 4, Disagree = 3, Disagree Somewhat = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1). Below is a listing of a few examples of the questions asked about the leader within the survey:

- Others would seek help from him/her if they had a personal problem.

- He/She emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.

- He/She can tell if something work-related is going wrong.

- He/She gives others the responsibility to make important decisions about their own jobs.

- He/She makes others' career development a priority. (Liden et al., 2008)

Likert responses were calculated for each of the seven sub-dimensions of servant leadership with a score ranging from 4 to 28 for each dimension. A score of 4 for a sub-dimension is the lowest possible score, whereas a score of 28 is the highest for that sub-dimension. A score between 23 and 28 means the individual strongly exhibits this servant leadership behavior. A score between 14 and 22 means the individual tends to exhibit this behavior in an average way. A score between 8 and 13 means the individual exhibits this leadership below the average or expected degree. A score between 0 and 7 means the individual is not inclined to exhibit this leadership behavior at all.

As previously related by this researcher, the Servant Leadership Scale is a 28-item scale that measures seven primary servant leadership dimensions (Liden et al., 2008). This instrument has been used in numerous research studies to evaluate supervisors' perceived servant leadership behaviors (Hu & Liden, 2011; Liden et al., 2014; Peterson et al., 2012). The reliability of the

Servant Leadership Scale ranges from .76 to .86 (Liden et al., 2008). The Servant Leadership

Scale was first validated on a sample of 283 undergraduate students and then later validated on

182 employees (Green et al., 2015). In another study that measured the validity of the Servant

Leader Scale, Grobler and Flotman (2020) used the 28-item scale with 1764 participants

employed in 31 different organizations. Grobler and Flotman (2020) concluded:

> An exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis yielded a one-factor solution of servant leadership with acceptable psychometric and fit properties. The instrument was further found to have adequate convergent validity (compared with cognate leadership and organizational behavior construct). (para. 5)

The underlying dimension of the Servant Leadership Scale was that it does provide confidence in

the replication for future researcher use (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2010). This survey

answered the research questions (RQ1–RQ4) investigating the most common traits of those

leaders in SES positions and if they were using elements of biblical servant leadership.

The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values

Hall et al. (1986) developed a tool for grouping individuals as non-servant or servant

leaders. This tool was called the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values (HTIV). This tool was used

with permission (see Appendix C). The HTIV was made to be used in an individual, group, or

document analysis typesetting. The HTIV serves as a tool for assessing a leader's value and

servant leadership traits (Russell, 2000, p. 6). The HTIV measures 125 values and identifies four

phases of values development (surviving, belonging, self-initiating, and interdepending) and

eight sub-stages (safety security, family, institution, vocation, new order, wisdom, and world

order; Russell, 2000, pp. 68–69). The HTIV was built on the following four premises:

1. values are an important component of human existence and can be identified and measured;

2. values are described through words;

3. values are learned and developed through assimilation; and

4. values are modified and shaped by our worldview. (Minessence Group, 2020, para. 3)

The HTIV is a 125-question survey, with the participant being asked to choose one phrase within the question that best describes their behavior. The participants are further provided with the following instructions:

- You will notice that some of the choices are reported later in the inventory. This allows you to compare the phrases with more than one set of choices, which in turn, enables us to identify your value priorities.

- This inventory touches on a wide range of values. Less than half will likely have a strong personal meaning for you. Simply choose what is most important to you as is reflected in your present behavior.

- Please try to answer with your first impression and do not choose any phrase you do not clearly understand. We realize that choosing between phrases may sometimes be difficult. If two choices are equally applicable, choose the one that is most reflective of your current behavior. Choose "not applicable at this time" only if none of the options apply to you at this time. Remember there are no right or wrong answers.

- Section One addresses your long-term goals and issues that are currently important to you. Section Two covers more on what you consider to be your skills and abilities.

- Persons experiencing a major change in their lives should answer the questions as they apply to the present situation. By repeating the inventory in several months, information can be gained to support the change process.

- No particular choice is superior to any other. (Russell, 2000, p. 154)

Russell (2000) explained, "All of the 125 values have biblical origins and support" (p. 69). The definitions of the values and scripture support were defined within the appropriate section of this study. The HTIV scores individuals on the survey's 125 values by classifying the participant values on a scale of 1 to 21. The HTIV is a self-administered inventory survey, and responses are tracked, scored, reported by computer, and then tabulated by the provider, Values Technology. "Dr. Hall (1999) relates scores from 12 to 17 represent servant leadership; all other score represents non-servant leadership" (Russell, 2000).

As previously related by this researcher, the HTIV serves as a tool for assessing leaders' values and their servant leadership traits (Russell, 2000, p. 6). The participants in the research study were asked those 125 questions on a computer-based platform. It should be noted that it took over 20 years of research and development before the current version of the HTIV was completed (Bivins, 2005). During the 20-year time frame, several studies were conducted on the HTIV, including format and test and re-test reliability. Minessence Group (2020) provided insight into the reliability of HTIV:

- Format, language, and style of all instructions and items in the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values were empirically pre-tested. This was done by presenting the Hall-Tonna to committees of native users who analyzed and (in conjunction with the researchers) revised the instrument sentence-by-sentence and word by word until complete consensus in understanding was attained.

- Test-retest reliability was obtained from a sample of 89 individuals ranging from high school students to adults, all from diverse backgrounds. The time interval between test and re-test was four weeks. Using specific value choices as raw scores, the test-retest correlation was .66, an acceptable figure considering the number and heterogeneity of the values in the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values. Using developmental levels as raw scores, the test-retest correlation improved to .75. Using specific responses to specific items as raw scores, the test-retest correlation was a respectable .72. (para. 14)

Further research has been conducted using the HTIV, such as the 2000 study by Russell wherein he used the HTIV for the values portion of his studies. Russell concluded from his study that the HTIV has intrinsic validity: "Furthermore, its claim that it measures servant leadership is both reasonable and sustainable" (Russell, 2000, p. 113). This survey answered the research questions (RQ2, RQ4) regarding the existence of a relationship between the most common behavioral traits and biblical and secular servant leadership.

Awareness Survey Questionnaire

This study included a researcher-developed questionnaire, presented on the SurveyMonkey platform, that gathered data on the SES participants' awareness of their use (if any) of the fundamental elements of biblical servant leadership or secular servant leadership (see

Appendix E). A questionnaire is a means to collect information from large numbers in a quick

manner and in a cost-efficient way (De Vaus, 1991; Fink, 2002). The questions by this researcher

dealt with the participant's awareness of the fundamental elements of biblical servant leadership

and secular servant leadership in the SES. The survey asked *yes*, *no*, or *somewhat* questions, and

one leadership self-study type question. The yes, no, or somewhat questions focused on whether

the participants exhibited any fundamental biblical servant leadership or secular servant

leadership elements. This instrument asked participants to conduct a self-rating through an online

survey comprised of one self-study question and two rated questions, with 14 leader attributes

listed within those two rated questions. The one self-study question asked the participant to label

their leadership style. Then there was one rated question that required an answer of either yes,

no, or somewhat, followed by a second rated question that required a selection of the trait or

behavior used. The 14 leadership attributes were drawn from the many different leadership styles

explained within the research. The ratings were based on a 3-point Likert scale ranging from 0 to

2 (Yes = 2, Somewhat = 1, No = 0). Below is a listing of examples of a few leadership attributes

listed in the questions and asked within the survey in regard to the participants' beliefs on how

they would be seen by others and how they see themselves:

- Empathetic

- Humble

- Honest

Likert responses were calculated for each of the rated responses, with a score ranging from 0 to 2

for each attribute. A score of 0 for an attribute was the lowest possible score, whereas as a total

score of 6 was the highest for that attribute. The 3-point Likert scale is sufficient for this

questionnaire (Jacoby & Matell, 1971).

The leadership self-study question dealt with the participants being able to identify if their leadership style was biblical or secular servant leadership. The questions answered the following for validity: Does the questionnaire measure what is intended to be measured, does the questionnaire represent the study's content, is the questionnaire appropriate for the participants, and does the questionnaire or platform look like a questionnaire? As related by Scherpenzeel and Saris (1997), "In the design of survey research, choices must be made with regard to the wording of questions, the response scale, the question context, and the technique of data collection" (para. 2). The questions within the survey were kept as simple as possible. As related by Scherpenzeel and Saris (1997), "In the design of survey research, choices must be made with regard to the wording of questions, the response scale, the question context, and the technique of data collection" (para. 2). The questions within the survey were kept as simple as possible.

The platform SurveyMonkey was used to administer the questionnaire. Waclawski (2012) explained the platform in this way: "SurveyMonkey is an internet program and hosting site that enables a person to develop a survey for use over the internet" (para. 1). The SurveyMonkey platform provided a customer service, tutorials, and information sheets for designing and administrating a survey. Further, SurveyMonkey was a self-serve platform. There were also three levels of services when using SurveyMonkey, from free to Platinum plan. The free basic plan provided the resources needed to complete this research. Further, research has been conducted in the past using the SurveyMonkey tool. From December 2015 – February 2016, in-depth research was conducted on SurveyMonkey's validity and reliability (Wronski, 2016). During this study, over 1000 participants from over five different countries took part. The following was concluded from the study: an 85% response reliability rate and 97% validity rate.

The study conducted demonstrates that the SurveyMonkey tool is reliable and valid (Waclawski, 2012, para. 16).

As this researcher previously discussed, the instrumentation used for this quantitative correlational study was the three instruments discussed: the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire. This survey answered the question of awareness to the use of biblical servant leadership. Lastly, and as previously related by the researcher, the instruments used in the research procedures including a consent form and the instruments were used with granted permission.

Validity

The legitimacy of an instrument used in a research study is crucial. This researcher ensured the validity of the instruments by following the requirements that make a study valid. Simon (2010) explained, "Validity refers to the extent to which measurements achieve the purpose for which they are designed" (p. 151). A design that helps gather the appropriate data for the researcher's questions is validity (Vogt, 2005).

Research outcomes and validity are enhanced when the researcher uses existing instruments (Philip, 2013). This study used three validated instruments: the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire. This study relied on these instruments as they are validated by the data provided by the instruments' developers. These instruments addressed foundational elements of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership, relationships between the behavior's traits identified, and awareness of these foundational elements. The instruments used a computer data-driven system to provide the data of the participants. As previously discussed, this process used instruments that were

validated; however, this researcher attempted to compare the results of the data collected to data of similar qualities to see the correlation between the two.

The Servant Leadership Scale was validated and designed by various scholars such as Page and Wong (2000), Wong and Page (2003), Liden et al. (2008), Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), and Ehrhart and Klein (2001). The Servant Leadership Scale developed by these scholars measures servant leadership dimensions of behaving ethically, emotional healing, conceptual skills, putting subordinates first, empowering, creating value for the community, and helping subordinates grow and succeed (Green et al., 2015). The Servant Leadership Scale measures one fundamental leadership aspect: servant leadership and delivering confidence in duplicating its use in future research (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2010).

The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values was validated through an extensive sampling process that was made up of over 2,000 participants. Further, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values has been tested for validity by academic institutions such as Santa Clara University in California and Universidad de Deusto in Bilbao, Spain. The system has also been tested and refined through tens of thousands of assessments and consultations with global organizations, including Hewlett Packard, Wilhemsen Logistics, Siemens, Alcoa, and the American Red Cross (Values Technology, 2012, para. 9).

The Awareness Survey Questionnaire was validated through extensive sampling, as this author previously discussed. The validity of this questionnaire was established by using a panel of experts and field tests. Radhakrishna (2007) explained

> In a review of 748 research studies conducted in agricultural and extension education, Radhakrishna et al. (2003) found that 64% used questionnaires. They also found that a third of the studies reviewed did not report procedures for establishing validity (31%) or reliability (33%). The development of a valid and reliable questionnaire is a must to reduce measurement error. Groves (1987) defined measurement error as the discrepancy between respondents' attributes and their survey responses. (para. 1)

As previously discussed, the validity data was discussed in detail by this researcher in the specific instrumentation area.

The Servant Leadership Scale, The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire using SurveyMonkey are research tools that have been in use for many years by various researchers. These three instruments are valid instruments for research use. As this researcher has previously discussed, in this study, the necessary measures were taken to ensure the research's validity, as the tools being used are validated and reliable instruments.

Reliability

The reliability of research involves the correctness of a measure representing the accurate score of the individual being evaluated (Simon, 2010). Further, when the approach to how the data were analyzed can be confirmed and reproduced, the instrument's reliability is present (Philip, 2013). In this research study, the researcher used three known reliable instruments: the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire (SurveyMonkey).

The Servant Leadership Scale was created and used to evaluate the servitude and integrity of the leader based on the community and workplace environment. As previously related by this researcher, Liden et al. (2008) tested this instrument's reliability by using a sample comparison on 283 undergraduate students, with a conclusion indicating high levels of reliability for the Servant Leadership Scale. Further, Chan and Mak (2014) and Peterson et al. (2012) conducted separate studies involving over 300 participants, and they all came to a finding of high levels of reliability for the Servant Leadership Scale.

The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values was created and used to evaluate the individual's value pattern. As previously related by this researcher, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values'

reliability was tested and re-tested over 20 years, involving more the 2,000 participants

(Minessence Group, 2020). The concluding results were that the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values

measures what it purports to measure (Dais & Kohler, 1995).

The Awareness Survey Questionnaire was created as a self-service questionnaire research

system. Survey Monkey (n.d.), the platform used by the researcher for this questionnaire,

explained,

> Our users can, by themselves, create, deploy and analyze surveys through an online
> interface. We have users in many different industries who use surveys for many different
> purposes. One of our most common use cases is students and other types of researchers
> using our online tools to conduct academic research. (para. 2)

As previously related by this researcher, the survey questionnaire format's reliability was tested

by a study that involved over 1,000 participants from over five different countries. The study's

concluding results demonstrated that the SurveyMonkey tool is reliable and valid (Waclawski,

2012, para. 16).

Research Procedures

A survey of the SES population was sought from all 12 SEA board members. They were

invited to complete the online survey within 20–30 days so that it could be done after work

hours. They were emailed specific instructions on how to complete the survey and provided with

the website address for the online survey. A second email was sent with a delivery and read

confirmation attached as a reminder. Approval from the IRB was obtained before any data were

collected. The online survey consisted of three instruments as well as a consent form (Appendix

B). The three instruments were the Servant Leadership Scale (Appendix D), the Awareness

Survey Questionnaire (Appendix E), and the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values (Appendix F).

Permission was obtained from the instrument developers to use the instruments involved in this

study. Once this was done, the participants of the study received emails inviting them to

participate in the study. This was a self-selecting participation process for this study by providing a website link on the invitation email. After reading and then agreeing to the online consent form explaining the nature of the study and the participant's rights, the participants were directed to the first survey, the Servant Leader Scale questionnaire, which includes 28 questions and takes approximately 40 minutes to complete. Once this survey was completed, the participant then moved on to the second instrument in this study. The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values consists of 125 questions and also takes approximately 40 minutes to complete. Once the participant completed the second survey, they moved to the final survey. The final survey was conducted online as well and contained three questions: (a) one question that contained 14 attributes where in the participant selected, yes, no, or somewhat, (b) one question that contained 14 attributes for the participant to select as a trait they use, and (c) one self-awareness question that dealt with the participant being able to identify biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership elements. The questions were designed with the help of the SurveyMonkey help team and contained attributes from the many different leadership styles discussed within the study. Once the participant completed this survey, data collection was complete. The participants then received a message thanking them for participating and reemphasizing their rights. The collected data were then put into a report format by the administrators of the online survey platforms, and the final reports of the researcher's data were provided to the researcher. The researcher then used those reports for data analysis and statistical procedures.

Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

This section discusses how this researcher analyzed the collected data. There are two subheadings within this section: one subheading provides an overview of the data analysis process and the other subheading explains the statistical procedures used.

Data Analysis

This researcher analyzed the data using IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS; Version 28) predictive analytic software. SPSS is a statistics software used for interactive or batched statistical analysis. Valeri and Vanderweele (2013) provide insight and understanding to the use of SPSS within their study to analysis the data they collect during the psychology, social and biomedical study. The conclusion of their study with the use of SPSS and collected data allowed them to show the relationship of the variables in their fields of science they researched. For this study, the collected data from each survey will be first checked for completion. The researcher kept in mind the guidelines and understanding that if more than 15% of the surveyed items were not answered, the participants' answers would be eliminated (Hair et al., 2014). Further, it was understood by the researcher that if 5% or more of those who participated in the survey did not answer the questions, those participants' responses should not be used (Hair et al., 2014). This researcher analyzed the data (descriptive statistics, assumption tests, and homoscedasticity) by evaluating the reports provided and answering the research questions of the study: What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, are leaders in the SES aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity? Further, Pearson's correlation procedure was used to determine the relationship between the research study variables. The Pearson correlation was used in other servant leadership studies for measurement of data to determine relationships (Dean, 2016; Fung, 2017; Drury, 2004).

Statistical Procedures

This researcher used descriptive statistics for this study. The results were framed around the following research questions: What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, are leaders in the SES aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity? For each of the research questions, the relevant results were presented along with the statistical analysis of the relationship between servant leadership behavioral traits, servant leadership value traits, and awareness of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership traits. Pearson's correlation analysis and frequency analysis were used to analyze the data on behavioral traits, value traits, and awareness. This researcher used a descriptive statistical approach to provide an understanding of the data in regard to the relationship of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership in the SES leadership role. The statistical method that was utilized by the researcher was the summary statistics of the known behavior leadership traits exhibited by those participating in the study.

<div align="center">

Summary

</div>

This chapter explained the research methodology for this quantitative correlation study to investigate how foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models are identifiable in the leadership behaviors of those in the SES. This researcher attempted to identify the most successful and effective leadership style of SES personnel, including behaviors that can be duplicated and behaviors that show genuine interest in taking care of their people.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative correlation study was to determine the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models were identifiable in the SES leadership behaviors and if those elements are associated with an awareness of use. The study used three instruments, all administered through SurveyMonkey's computer-based platform, to measure the study's variables. The instruments included a consent form, the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the researcher-created Awareness Survey Questionnaire. This chapter provides the details pertaining to the data collected, analysis of the data, findings, and evaluation of the research design. The conclusion and recommendations follow in the next chapter of this study.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government?

RQ2. What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

Null Hypotheses

H01: There is no most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service.

H02: There is not a statistically significant relationship between biblical servant leader or secular servant leadership traits and the Senior Executive Service behavioral traits.

H03: There is not an awareness of use for biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership.

H04: There is not a statistically significant relationship between leadership style and integrity.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

The sample population used in this study were the Senior Executive Service (SES) members on the board of the Senior Executive Association (SEA). The study used three instruments to measure the study's variables (servant leadership, leadership behavior, and awareness) among the sample population. The instruments included a consent form and a survey, which was comprised of three instruments: the Servant Leadership Scale, the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values, and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire. The Servant Leadership Scale (SLQ) was used to determine the manifestation of servant leadership behavior. The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values (HTIV) was used to determine the main leadership behaviors, either servant or non-servant. The Awareness Survey Questionnaire (ASQ) was used to determine the awareness of the leadership behavior of those involved in the research.

Both the SLQ and ASQ subpart 1 were scored by this researcher using the 7-point and 3-point Likert range scales, respectively. The SLQ was managed on the 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "strongly disagree" to 7, "strongly agree." The scores on the SLQ were a maximum of 28 and a minimum of 4. Scoring between 23–28 within the SLQ was a sign of servant leadership behavior use. The ASQ was organized on the 3-point Likert scale, ranging from "Yes", "No" to, "Somewhat", being represented by scores of 0 to 2. The scores for the ASQ were a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 6. Scoring a 6 on the ASQ was a sign of awareness and use of that behavior. The ASQ did contain two non-scoring numerical questions. One question asked the participants to select from the listed attributes or behavior they feel they use in their leadership role and the other question asked participants to label their leadership style

with two words. The HTIV classified the participants scores into leadership segments,

representing the unique development stage of the participant. Those scores were calculated

within the HTIV software. Scoring between 12–17 classified the participant as a servant leader.

All three surveys data were collected in an online format. The HTIV data were processed

through its system software for servant leadership analysis. The data from all surveys were then

merged into a series of comparative models for analysis. The models were then analyzed using

IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) predictive analytic software. A

summary of these methods and the resultant data are presented here.

Demographic and Sample Data

The researcher collected data for the study from October 5, 2021 through November 5,

2021. Twelve SES board members of the SEA received recruitment letters, consent forms, and

links to the surveys located at SurveyMonkey.com. No personal, identifiable demographic data

were collected from those who participated in the study. Emails and newsletters through the SEA

were used as the communication method for those SES members invited to the study. Four SES

members agreed to the informed consent forms; however, only three completed the surveys.

(One participant entered the survey data collection point but did not complete any of the surveys;

because no survey data information was provided, that participant's entry was neither interpreted

nor evaluated for the study). The remaining three participants completed the surveys, and their

data were used for data analysis and findings, thus giving a return response rate of 33% and a

completion rate of 25%. Table 1 summarizes the response rate and the completion rate

percentage for the number of SES members who completed the surveys for the study.

Table 1

Participants' Sample Data

SES Invites to Survey	Survey Log Ins	Surveys Completed	Completion Rate
12	4	3	25%

Data Analysis and Findings

IBM SPSS (Version 28) predictive analytic software was used for analyzing the data collected during this study. SPSS was also utilized to generate graphs for the collected data and for the statistical calculations. Descriptive statistics were collected by this researcher of the participants to analyze the independent variable (elements of biblical and secular servant leadership behavior) and the dependent variable (SES leadership behavioral traits and awareness). The statistical analyses compared the selected leadership behavioral traits and identified leadership style against the identified biblical and secular servant leadership elements named in this study. Table 2 and Table 3 signify the descriptive statistics scores for the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for the ASQ Question 1 and the SLQ. Further, both Table 2 and Figure 1 show the descriptive statistics for the ASQ as the survey contained three questions (subparts) and only one was assigned or analyzed with the numerical value 3-point Likert scale. The data analysis provides an understanding of the extant of the awareness of the participants within the study when it came to biblical and secular servant leadership behavior traits. Those involved in the study were asked to self-identify any of Spears' (2005) servant leadership behavioral traits and by the way employees see them and how they see themselves. Table 2 displays the data collected for how the SES members saw others as identifying them with the listed leadership behaviors, and Figure 1 provides data on how the SES members identify themselves. With many of the participants selecting the same behavior traits in

both parts of the ASQ, the standard deviation scores of the completed ASQ Question 1 and the

SLQ were low: .45 and 3.99, suggesting that the mean of each test was close to a normal

distribution.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics ASQ Question 1

	N	Min.	Max.	Sum	*M*	*SD*
Empathetic	3	2.00	2.00	*6.00	2.0000	.00000
Selfless	3	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.3333	.57735
Humble	3	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.3333	.57735
Authentic	3	2.00	2.00	*6.00	2.0000	.00000
Resilient	3	.00	1.00	2.00	.6667	.57735
Caring	3	2.00	2.00	*6.00	2.000	.00000
Collaborative	3	1.00	2.00	5.00	1.6667	.57735
Compassionate	3	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.3333	.57735
Honest	3	2.00	2.00	*6.00	2.0000	.00000
Open-minded	3	1.00	2.00	5.00	1.6667	.57735
Patient	3	.00	2.00	2.00	.6667	1.15470
Flexible	3	1.00	2.00	5.00	1.6667	.57735
Stewardship	3	.00	2.00	2.00	.6667	1.15470
Self-aware	3	2.00	2.00	*6.00	2.0000	.00000
Valid N (listwise)	3					

*A sum score of 6 means a strong indication of this leadership.

     The HTIV provided a direct understanding of whether each participant's leadership style

was servant leadership or non-servant, with 66% of them scoring as having a servant leadership

style (Table 4). Further, one participant identified their leadership style as servant leadership

when asked this question within the ASQ. The lowest score for the rated behavior traits within

the ASQ was 1.14, the lowest score for the SLQ was 19, and the lowest score on the HTIV was

16. These results reveals a normal distribution for the tests of servant leadership scoring since

scoring 12–17 on the HTIV represents servant leadership, a score between 14–22 on the SLQ

represents a moderate range of use of servant leadership behavior traits, and scoring a minimum

of 2 on the ASQ individual behavior by a participants signifies servant leadership behavior. As

the ASQ identified individual participant's servant leadership traits, the results listed in Table 2

display the combine totals of the participants' responses on the ASQ.

Figure 1
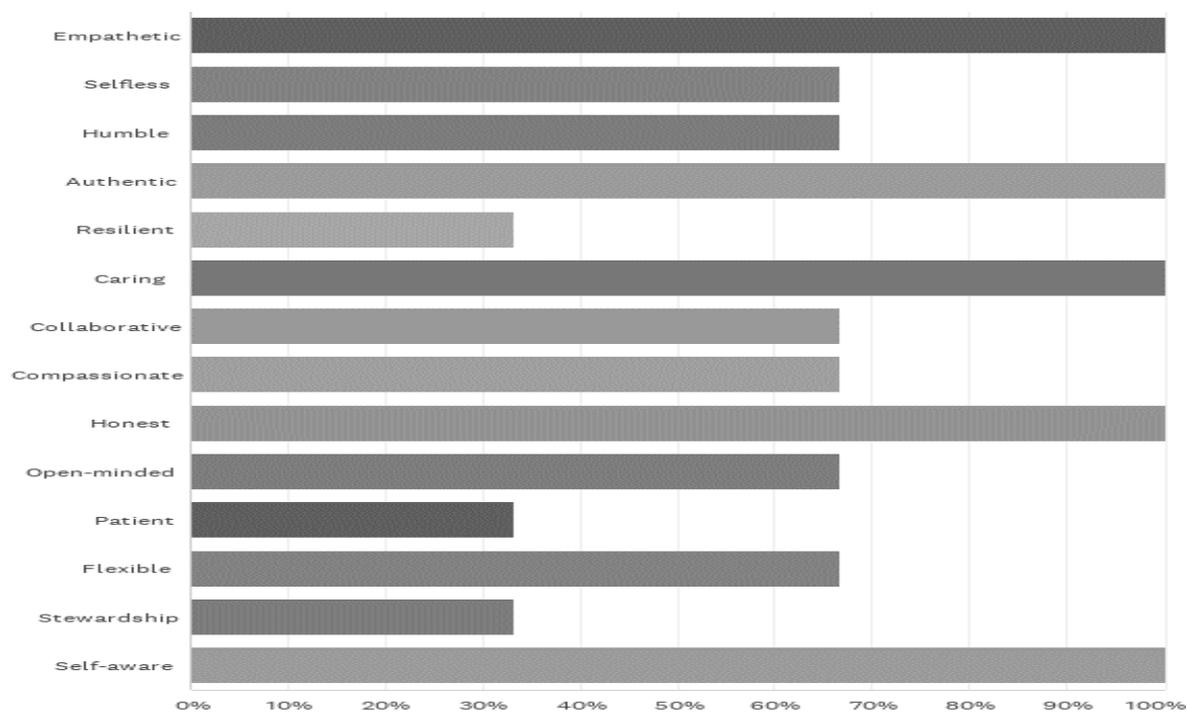
Self-Identified Traits/Behaviors

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics SLQ

	Emotional Healing	Creating value for the community	Conceptual skills	Empowering	Helping subordinates grow and succeed	Putting subordinates first	Behaving ethically
N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
M	22.6667	21.3333	23.6667	24.6667	23.6667	23.3333	26.0000
SD	4.93288	7.02377	4.04145	1.52753	4.93288	2.88675	2.64575
Min.	17.00	14.00	19.00	23.00	18.00	20.00	23.00
Max.	26.00	28.00	26.00	26.00	27.00	25.00	28.00
Sum	68.00	64.00	71.00	74.00	71.00	70.00	78.00

Note. A mean score between 23 and 28 indicates a strong exhibit of this servant leadership behavior.

Table 4

Servant Leaders HTIV

	HTIV Score	Servant Leadership score of 12–17
SES 1	20	No
SES 2	16	Yes
SES 3	16	Yes

Research Question One

What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? This question was quantified by using the ASQ and the SLQ surveys. As the HTIV survey provides an overall value total for scoring and identifying servant leadership as a leadership style, the HTIV was not used for identifying common behaviors for this question. The most common behavioral traits identified within the individual

ASQ with a mean score of 2, and a sum of 6, and selected 100% by participants are *empathetic,*

authentic, caring, honest, and *self-aware* (see Table 2 and Figure 1). The remaining behavioral

traits within the ASQ scored below the mean, sum, and selection criteria, and did not identify as

a most common behavioral trait for this study. The most common behavioral traits identified

within the SLQ by the participates of the study with a mean range score between 23–26, and a

sum range between 68–78 are *conceptual skill, empowering, putting subordinates first, helping*

subordinates grow and succeed, and *behaving ethically* (Table 3). The remaining behavioral

traits within the SLQ scored below the mean and sum and did not identify as a most common

behavioral trait for this study. Further, given a null value of anything below the value of 2 for the

ASQ and anything below the value of 23 for the SLQ for a variable evaluation, there seems to be

an inference that can be drawn regarding the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the

Senior Executive Service. This is either indicative of the sample size of those that participated in

the study, or there was a subconscious reluctance to select behavioral traits that would not be in

line with transformational leadership behavior. However, due to the sampling size this author

was unable to reject the null for if there is no most common behavior traits of the leaders in the

Senior Executive Service.

Research Question Two

What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical

servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? This

question was measured using the results from both the ASQ (Table 2 and Figure 1), SLQ (Table

3) and the HTIV survey results (Table 4). As discussed before, the most common behavioral

traits identified within the ASQ with the discussed qualifying statistics and criteria were

empathetic, authentic, caring, honest, and *self-aware* (Table 2 and Figure 1) and for the SLQ

were *conceptual skill, empowering, putting subordinates first, helping subordinates grow and succeed,* and *behaving ethically* (Table 3). These behavioral traits were compared for a relationship to the known, biblical servant leadership behavioral traits (Table 5) and secular servant leadership behavioral traits discussed within the study (Table 6). The results from the ASQ analysis identified integrity, humility, resilience, and flexible as the most common behavioral traits exhibited out of the six biblical servant leadership traits. The SLQ survey identified those identical four behavior traits as the most common traits for secular servant leadership. However, neither the ASQ nor the SLQ identified any of the following biblical or secular servant leadership traits as most common: stewardship, empathy, listening, awareness, or persuasion. Both the ASQ and SLQ did quantify this question of relationship by showing a relationship between the common behavior traits of this study and biblical and secular servant leadership behavior traits. The researcher used the Pearson correlation to determine if any relationship existed between the variables of the study. Once again, those variables were the most common leadership traits of this study, biblical servant leadership traits, and secular servant leadership traits. The analysis implied a statistically positive correlation between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership at .066 (Table 7). The research conducted also implied a statistically positive correlation between the most common behavior traits and servant leadership at .065 (Table 7). The correlational significance was set at the $p < .01$ (2-tailed), meaning the variables tested are setting at a greater than chance of a relationship at less than 1% for the SES population. Further, when looking at the statical data for the HTIV results, two out of the three participants were within the servant leadership scale. The statistical evidence indicates that a relationship exists between the common leadership behavioral traits of the SES members and biblical and secular servant leadership.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Most Common Behavioral Traits and Biblical Servant Leadership

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Honest [a/b]	3	2.00	2.00	2.0000	.00000
Humble [a/b]	3	1.00	2.00	1.3333	.57735
Resilient [a/b]	3	.00	1.00	.6667	.57735
Flexible [a/b]	3	1.00	2.00	1.6667	.57735
Stewardship [a]	3	2.00	2.00	2.0000	.00000
Empathetic [a]	3	2.00	2.00	2.0000	.00000
Caring	3	1.00	2.00	1.6667	.57735
Self-aware	3	1.00	2.00	1.6667	.57735
Authentic	3	1.00	2.00	1.6667	.57735
Valid N (listwise)	3				

[a]biblical servant leadership; [b]secular servant leadership

Table 6

Biblical Servant Leadership vs. Secular Servant Leadership

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Emotional healing	3	17.00	26.00	22.6667	4.93288
Creating value for the community	3	14.00	28.00	21.3333	7.02377
Conceptual skills [a/b]	3	19.00	26.00	23.6667	4.04145
Empowering [a/b]	3	23.00	26.00	24.6667	1.52753
Helping subordinates grow and succeed [a/b]	3	18.00	27.00	23.6667	4.93288
Putting subordinates first [b]	3	20.00	25.00	23.3333	2.88675
Behaving ethically [a/b]	3	23.00	28.00	26.0000	2.64575
Valid N (listwise)	3				

[a]biblical servant leadership; [b]secular servant leadership

Table 7

Correlations Between Most Common Behavioral Traits

Variable	Most Common Behavioral Traits
Biblical Leadership Traits	.066**
Servant Leadership Traits	.065**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question Three

      To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? The ASQ and SLQ surveys were used to test RQ3. All of participants of this study were directly asked to provide a one-to-two-word answer to describe their leadership styles. The data collected revealed a rate of 33%. The statistical data within Tables 2 and 3 and Figure 1 indicated that leadership behavior traits of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership account for 55% of the behavior traits identified for this study. Further, the HTIV survey data (Table 4) suggests the SES leaders' make-up of behavioral servant leadership traits was at 66%, with a mean score of 17.33.

Research Question Four

      To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity? This question was quantified by using the ASQ and SLQ surveys. The SES members' most frequent behavioral traits identified were Empathetic, Authentic, Caring, Honest and Self-Aware and Conceptual Skill, Empowering, Putting Subordinates First, and Behaving Ethically. Both Honest and Behaving Ethically were evaluated as the only behavior traits that scored highest on both the ASQ and SLQ surveys (Tables 2 and 3). With a sum of 6 and means of 6 on the ASQ, and a sum of 78 and mean of 26 on the SLQ, ethical behavior was rated the highest. Data suggest that although only 33.3% SES members labeled their leadership style as servant leadership,

100% of the participants in this study indicated that integrity was part of their leadership behavior.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The design of this study used a quantitative correlational research approach. As the quantitative correlational research approach tries to explain, describe, and predict the relationships between variables, testing objective theories by studying their relationship (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Previous studies have examined diversity, increasing diversity, online learning, job satisfaction, leadership styles, and turnover within the SES; however, there is a to lack of studies on the leadership or leadership styles best suited for the SES position. The quantitative approach to this research study on SES members was unique. Washington (2015) chose a phenomenological approach for his lived experiences study on SES personnel, Nelson (2015) chose a phenomenological study approach when she explored the lack of African Americans in the Department of Defense SES Corp, Paylor (2018) used a quantitative approach for the study of the dominant leadership style in the SES, and Camacho (2021) used a qualitative, gap analysis approach when he studied the lack of Latinx SES members in a federal government agency. The following concluding section of Chapter 4 briefly discusses the strengths and weakness of the chosen research design.

Strengths

The non-experimental correlation design for this study was appropriate as it examined relationships between the variables of the study and if they were interrelated (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). The researcher collected data using a survey for the study without interfering with the participants of the study. This enabled the research to answer questions about the relationships of the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As the survey was designed to be administered over a

computer-based system, the convenience to those participating was a benefit to the research

design. The downside to a computer-based system design was just that participants were required

to have internet access to take the survey.

Four SES members of the 12 members of the SEA entered into the survey system to

complete the surveys; however, only three members completed the surveys dealing with their

roles as SES leaders, if foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models

were identifiable in leadership behaviors, and if those elements were associated with an

awareness of use. The uniqueness of the surveys allowed those members to complete the survey

anonymously without any fear or impact to their SES roles.

Weakness

For this study more data from all of the SES population's take on their leadership

behaviors would have substantially enhanced the statistical confidence of the research. Even

though the response rate was 25%, the research only looked at SEA board members. Having a

broader net to capture more SES research participants would move the findings of this research

from rudimentary to what this researcher believes would be robust. A broader net was attempted

when this researcher reached out to the executive services of both CIGIE and Court Services and

Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA). Both declined to participate in the research, which

excluded approximately 80 more SES participants. Having additional SES members participating

in the research would have resulted in a higher and possibly more accurate survey of the SES

population. Lastly, the addition of demographic data such as years as an SES member, education

level, church attendance, and age would be a great addition for correlation analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

In this chapter, an interpretation of the results is presented and a discussion of the importance of those results and a summary of the data from Chapter Four. In short, this chapter provides the summary, findings, conclusion, limitations, and recommendations for future studies. Further, this chapter will provide insight into the real-world application of this study.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models were identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of the SES role. This research sought to identify the leadership behaviors of SES members, including behaviors that can be duplicated and behaviors that show genuine interest in taking care of their people. The guiding theory for this research used Peter Northouse's understanding of ethical leadership, as related "Ethical leadership is rooted in respect, service, justice, honesty, and community" (Northouse, 2016, p. 359). The research included the six biblical servant leadership behavioral traits (empathy, integrity, humility, resilience, flexibility, and stewardship) and the ten secular servant leadership behavioral traits (listening, empathy, healing, awareness, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community). Further, a Christian worldview was part of this research as the key indicators of the shepherding leadership style/behavior (integrity, intelligence, courage, character, peace, and being like Jesus) were sought in all the leadership styles identified as being used by the SES members.

This study examined if biblical servant leadership may be ideal for the entrusted federal government positions in the SES. As related before, these federal government employees are the

strength of the executive leadership in the federal government. SES members are mandated to behave in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Previous research has been conducted regarding diversity, increasing diversity, online learning, job satisfaction, and turnover within the SES. As SES leaders are the link between career employees and the politically appointed agency head, their leadership style is important. Levine (2000) related this best when she explained, "The quality of leadership is important for both hiring of new leadership and setting priorities" (p. 9). The SES position is held to a very high ethical service standard, and this study expanded on the limited research regarding the leadership behaviors for that position.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government?

RQ2. What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership?

RQ3. To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership?

RQ4. To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity?

Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

This research sought to identify the leadership behaviors of SES members, including behaviors that can be duplicated and behaviors that show genuine interest in taking care of their people. The researcher used three instruments to help in the discovery of the identifiable biblical and secular servant leadership models. The instrumentation measuring this study's variables (servant leadership behaviors and SES leadership behaviors) included the Servant Leadership Scale (SLQ), the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values (HTIV), and the Awareness Survey Questionnaire (ASQ). The three surveys did not collect any demographic information and were

separately administered on the online platform Survey Monkey. Twelve SES members were invited to take part in the study and four SES members logged into the online platform; however, only three members completed the surveys.

The research findings indicated that biblical and secular servant leadership behavioral traits were statistically identifiable as being used. Further, the behavioral trait of ethical conduct was observed with a 100% response rate by all participants' leadership behavior traits. The SES participants indicated a 33% awareness for use of biblical and secular servant leadership. Further, 55% of the leadership behaviors were identifiable as biblical and secular servant leadership behaviors. Those identified biblical leadership behaviors were *integrity, humility, resilience,* and *flexibility*. Those identified secular servant leadership traits were *conceptual skill, empowering, putting subordinates first, helping subordinates grow and succeed,* and *behaving ethically*. This study's findings suggest that biblical and secular servant leadership could be verifiable and influential to the leadership styles of the SES. This study's findings suggest that the SES role may not be a transformational leadership style as previously thought. Further, this study's finding suggest that the SES community may want to move leadership training and understanding to one of the servant leadership styles of this study.

Empirical and Theoretical Literature Discussion

This study contributes to the empirical literature by providing an understanding of the use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership behaviors in the SES leadership position. With the changing leadership styles of today, leadership needs to have a heart (Bevans, 2017). Colossians 3:23 (*NIV*, 1978/2011) states, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." This study provided an exclusive look into biblical servant leadership among the SES population; therefore, this study is grounded in ethical

leadership theory. Biblical servant leadership centers on ethical leadership. The research focused on the SES position and the six biblical servant leadership related to it: empathy, integrity, humility, resilience, flexibility, and stewardship. As discussed before, this leadership style produces groups, corporations, and businesses that are open to change, creative thinkers, and results-driven (Harris, 1990; Fry, 2003). Prior research into the SES position was conducted on diversity, online learning, dominant leadership style, job satisfaction and turnover; however, research into the leadership behaviors of the SES from a biblical servant leadership standpoint has not been conducted prior to this study. Those in the SES are held to government standards of ethical responsibility (Civil Service Reform Act, 1978).

RQ1 of this study asked what the most common behavioral traits of the SES were. Authors related that leadership behavior and ethical standards are important in government agencies (Carey, 2012; Hassan et al., 2014; Henson, 2016). The ASQ and SLQ surveys indicated that integrity was important in the SES position, finding that integrity was a chosen behavior by 100% of the research participants. This research question provides a narrative to the SES leadership behavior position that indicates biblical and secular servant leadership behavioral traits are prevalent in the SES position. Those common behavioral traits identified as the most common from ASQ with a mean score of 2, and a sum of 6, were empathetic, authentic, caring, honest, and self-aware (see Figure 1). Further, those common behavior traits identified as the most common within the SLQ with a range score between 23–26 and a sum range between 68–78 were conceptual skill, empowering, putting subordinates first, helping subordinates grow and succeed, and behaving ethically (see Table 3). Both Paylor (2018) and Nelson (2015) identified transformational leadership as the perceived important leadership style for the SES; however, with 66% of those in this research indicating servant leadership behaviors, this leadership style

should be noted within the hiring process of the SES since the U.S. Office of Personnel

Management is facing a very significant loss in personnel in SES positions (Whetstone, 2017).

RQ2 of this study examined if any relationship exists between the most common

behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership. No prior research

examining the relationship between SES leadership behaviors and biblical or secular servant

leadership exists; however, Paylor (2018) stated that the new leadership approach of the SES is

founded upon transformational leadership theory. This question underscored Paylor's statement

as RQ2 indicates that many of the behaviors identified strongly by the participants fall under the

lines of servant leadership (whether biblical or secular). However, given that data were only

collected from three members, this author cannot definitively contradict this statement from prior

research.

RQ3 of this study asked to what degree are leaders in the SES aware of their use of

biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership. The ASQ, SLQ, and HTIV were used

to measure this question. The ASQ contained three parts within the survey. Part one of the

survey covered the 10 servant leadership traits (listening, empathy, healing, awareness,

persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth of people, and

building community) and also incorporated all six of the biblical servant leadership traits

(empathy, Integrity, humility, resilience, flexibility, and stewardship). The third part of the ASQ

asked the participants to identify their leadership style. The SLQ and HTIV both identified

servant leadership behaviors and leadership style. The standard predictor for this question was if

the participant would identify their leadership style as any form of servant leadership, select

biblical and secular servant leadership behaviors, and if the HTIV result indicated they were

servant leaders. As related before, 33% was the awareness factor for this question for those that

participated, even though 55% of the behavior traits identified for this study were biblical servant leadership traits. Further, the HTIV survey data suggest the SES make-up of behavior servant leadership traits was at 66%, with a mean score of 17.33. Washington's (2015) study found that only 16% of SES personnel surveyed for awareness of what servant leadership is had ever heard of it, and 83% had no clue as to what servant leadership was. The results of Washington's study and this study show that even though an understanding of servant leadership is low within the SES positions, the traits are robust.

RQ4 discussed to what degree, if any, the relationship exists between this leadership style and integrity. McCarthy (2014) related that integrity is representing honesty and acknowledging mistakes. Further, the U.S. Government Publishing Office (2020) indicated that government employees must be above reproach when it comes to ethical conduct so that citizens can have total confidence in the truthfulness of the federal government. Riccucci's (1999) study found that integrity was among the behaviors demonstrated by the SES members. The ASQ and SLQ were used to support the prior research understanding that integrity is an essential characteristic among SES leaders. *Honest* and *behaving ethically* were the only behavioral traits that scored the highest on both surveys (see Figure 1 and Table 3) with a sum of 6 and mean of 6 on the ASQ, and a sum of 78 and mean of 26 on the SLQ. All participants in this study indicated that integrity was part of their leadership behavior. The literature shows that integrity is an essential characteristic of the SES position.

The current study corroborated that biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership behaviors are part of the SES leadership behavior with biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership accounting for 55% of the leadership behaviors identified. Data from the HTIV indicated that servant leadership traits were at 66% with a mean score of 17.33.

Research Limitations

In the current research study, more than a few research limitations were significant. The research used correlational design for this study to determine the relationship between leadership behaviors of SES members and biblical and secular servant leadership. However, a more in-depth approach to looking at the relationship of biblical and secular servant leadership behaviors within the SES could provide an understanding as to why SES members are unknowing using biblical and secular servant leadership behaviors. A case study approach would provide that in-depth insight. The limitations of this study are as follows:

- During this study the researcher did not collect any demographic data such as gender, age, race, or education to analyze, nor did the researcher ask about prior leadership experience.

- Surveys within this research study were self-reporting, or self-rating. Bradley et al. (2008) stated that those being ask to self-report or self-rate may tend to show overconfidence or modesty. All those surveyed presented their leadership behaviors in a positive fashion.

- The sample size for this study was less than the researcher expected. Given a presence of close to 8000 SES members in federal government service, this researcher decided to take a small sampling from the SEA organization. This narrowed the participation down to what this researcher thought would be 20; however, after coordinating with the SEA it was determined that only their board members would participate, giving a sample pool of 12 SES members. This sample size may have been the result of email linked surveys use. Leedy and Ormrod (2016) provide insight into that when they relate that email use for conducting surveys may produce a low return rate.

- The consent form within the survey mentioned and reflected the use of biblical and secular servant leadership styles which brought about discussion, declining, and movement away from a selected federal government organization to SEA, as those in the federal government organization felt participating in it would violate the First Amendment of the US Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Further Research

This study, despite its small sample size, extends the research study on the leadership

behaviors of the senior executive role within the federal government. Further, when one

considers the traits of biblical servant leadership identified and discussed within this study, this

leadership style may be ideal for the SES as those in the SES are held to a very high ethical

standard. Henson (2016) argued that moral character affects public view. Thus, future research

should take into consideration the following:

- This study focused on SES members within the SEA. Accordingly, research looking at a particular government position, such as Inspector General, could provide a more in-depth understanding of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership to the field. Further, a research question could be developed to ask if a person in that position uses any form of servant leadership.

- During this study no demographic data were collected from the SES members. As leaders have different approaches, character, and attitudes when leading, research examining the demographics, age, gender, education, and time as an SES member and the relationship with biblical and secular servant leadership should be explored.

- A similar study of the biblical servant leadership role in leadership in federal government positions should be conducted on those managers at the level right before the SES position (General Schedule [GS] 14, or GS15).

- Future research could also investigate those who have left SES positions to see if their behavior included biblical or secular servant leadership characteristics.

- Future research could also seek to answer the following questions: Are those individuals in the SES role aware of the disciple of leadership as a whole? Does it impact how they conduct themselves in their day-to-day interactions? Do they study leadership as a discipline?

- Lastly, future research focusing on duplicating this study should be performed on an on-going basis, such as every 5–10 years. To lead in today's environment is not to command and direct, but rather to touch needs, communicate, empower, inspire trust, and to forge a common vision for a better future. "Leadership in organizations is effective only when senior executives in the federal government understand the integration of various leadership theories and identify their own individual style" (Athanasaw, 1997, p. 3).

Summary

This current study was a quantitative correlational study to discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models were identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of the SES role. The following four research questions were used in this study: What are the most common behavioral traits of the leaders in the Senior Executive Service within the federal government? What relationship, if any, exists between the most common behavioral traits and biblical servant leadership and the most common behavioral traits and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, are leaders in the Senior Executive Service aware of their use of biblical servant leadership and secular servant leadership? To what degree, if any, is the relationship between this leadership style and integrity? The findings revealed statistically that a relationship could be seen or existed between the behavioral traits of the participating SES members and biblical and secular servant leadership. Even though a small sample size was studied, a statistical correlation beyond chance could be determined for a relationship between biblical servant leadership or secular servant leadership traits and awareness of the use of biblical servant or secular servant leadership. However, sample size within this researcher should be noted, as it did not allow for definitive result findings for this study. This current study also filled a gap in the research examining leadership behaviors within the SES position. This study was a contribution to the theological and theoretical framework of literature on biblical and secular servant leadership as the study examined the leadership behaviors of the SES using a biblical and secular servant leadership method

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 22, 2021

Eugene Quinn
Gary Bredfeldt

Re: Modification - IRB-FY20-21-685 Biblical Servant Leadership and the Senior Executive Service (SES) Role in a Federal Government Agency: A Quantitative Correlational Study

Dear Eugene Quinn, Gary Bredfeldt:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has rendered the decision below for IRB-FY20-21-685 Biblical Servant Leadership and the Senior Executive Service (SES) Role in a Federal Government Agency: A Quantitative Correlational Study.

Decision: Exempt

Your request to expand your participant criteria to Senior Executive Service (SES) members within the federal government as opposed to focusing on SES members associated with a specific agency and to increase your planned number of participants from 12 to 20 has been approved. Thank you for submitting your revised study documents for our review and documentation. Your revised, stamped consent form and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study in Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for complying with the IRB's requirements for making changes to your approved study. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

We wish you well as you continue with your research.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: Consent Form

Consent Form

Title of the Project: Biblical Servant Leadership and the Senior Executive Service (SES) Role in a Federal Government Agency: A Quantitative Correlational Study
Principal Investigator: Eugene Quinn, Jr., Doctoral Student in Christian Leadership, Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity.

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be a Senior Executive Service (SES) member in the Federal Government. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study will be to discover the extent to which foundational elements of biblical and secular servant leadership models are identifiable in the essential leadership behaviors of a Senior Executive Service (SES) member. The design of the study will be used to determine to what extent a correlation exists between biblical servant leadership and the leadership behaviors of the Senior Executive Service role.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Within the allocated timeframe allowed (10-15 days), complete the online surveys/ questionnaires, which should take 20-25 minutes each:
   a. The Servant Leadership Scale: A survey instrument constructed to provide data on the extent to which leaders manifest servant leadership behavior
   b. The Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values: A survey instrument constructed to assess a leader's values and servant leadership traits.
   c. The Awareness Survey Questionnaire: A survey instrument constructed to assess the awareness of the use of biblical servant leadership.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. However, benefits to society include expanding on the limited, existing SES research and providing guidance for future training purposes.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey prior to submitting it and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Eugene Quinn, Jr. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at ███████████████ You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Gary J. Bredfeldt, at ████████████████

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515, or email at ████████████

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part in this study, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided.

Appendix C: Permission Letters

Author: █████████████████████
Author email: ███████████████████
Subject: Re: [External] Re: Info for permission to use Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values
Sent datetime: ████████████████

Hello Eugene

I am gong to say, "Yes!", to supporting your research with all the HT Values Management Inventories you need and my time and expertise to discern the results to get you started in making correlates etc. From just the names of the other instruments, I am excited about them and sense (intuitively) a close correlation in what they purport to measure and what the HT VMI measures.

↩ Reply ⌄   🗑 Delete   ⊘ Junk   Block   ■

[External] Re: Info for permission to use Servant Leadership Scale

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

Dear Eugene,
We put the scale in the public domain, so you may use the scale and it is attached along with a recent article.
Best of luck with your research,
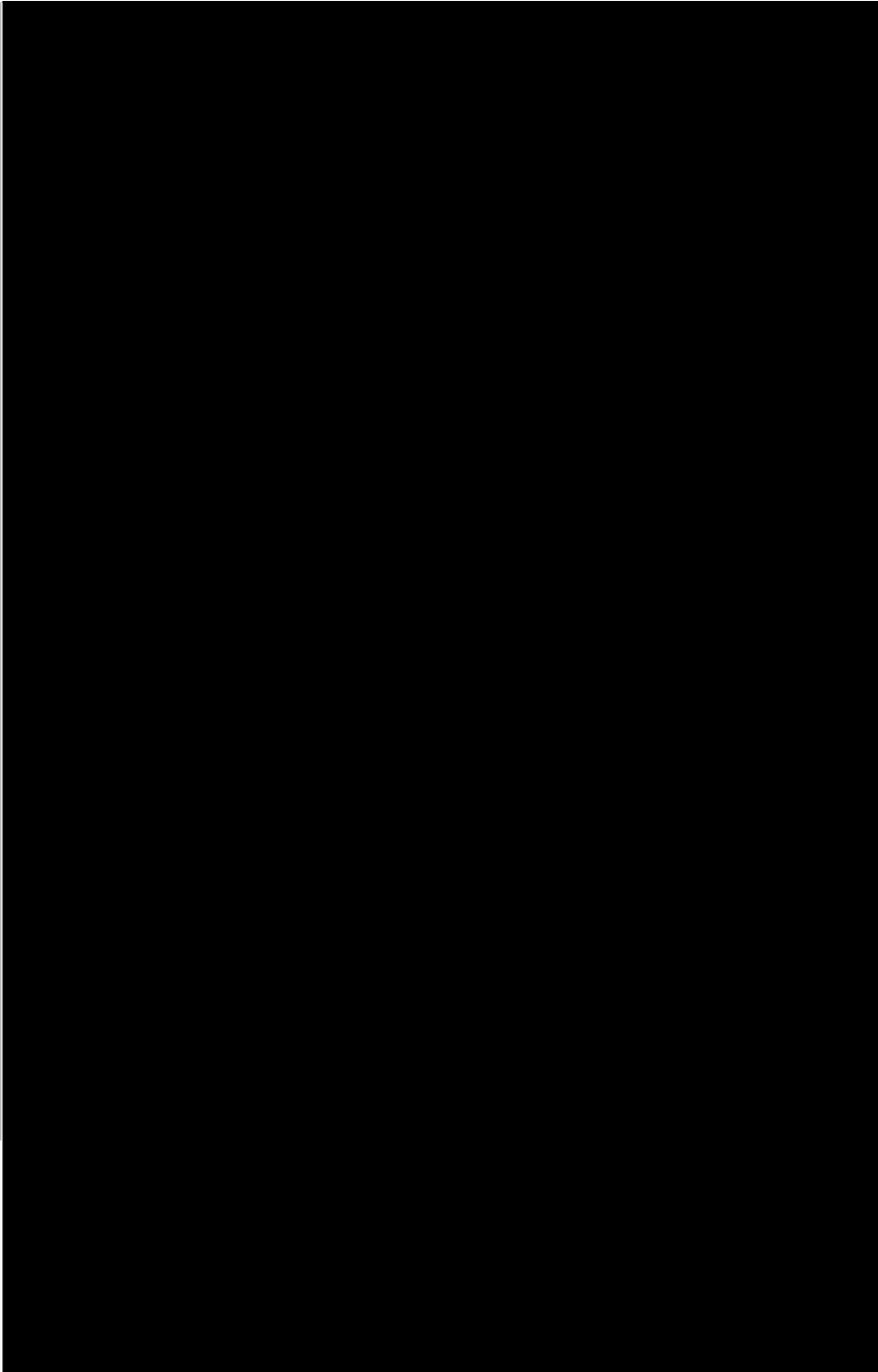
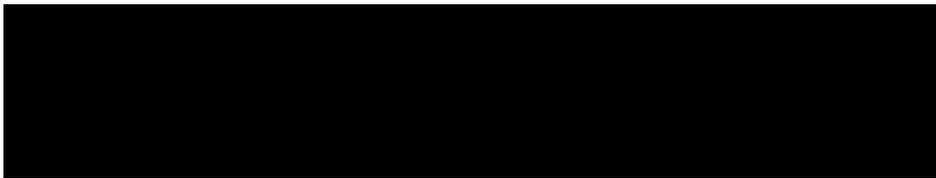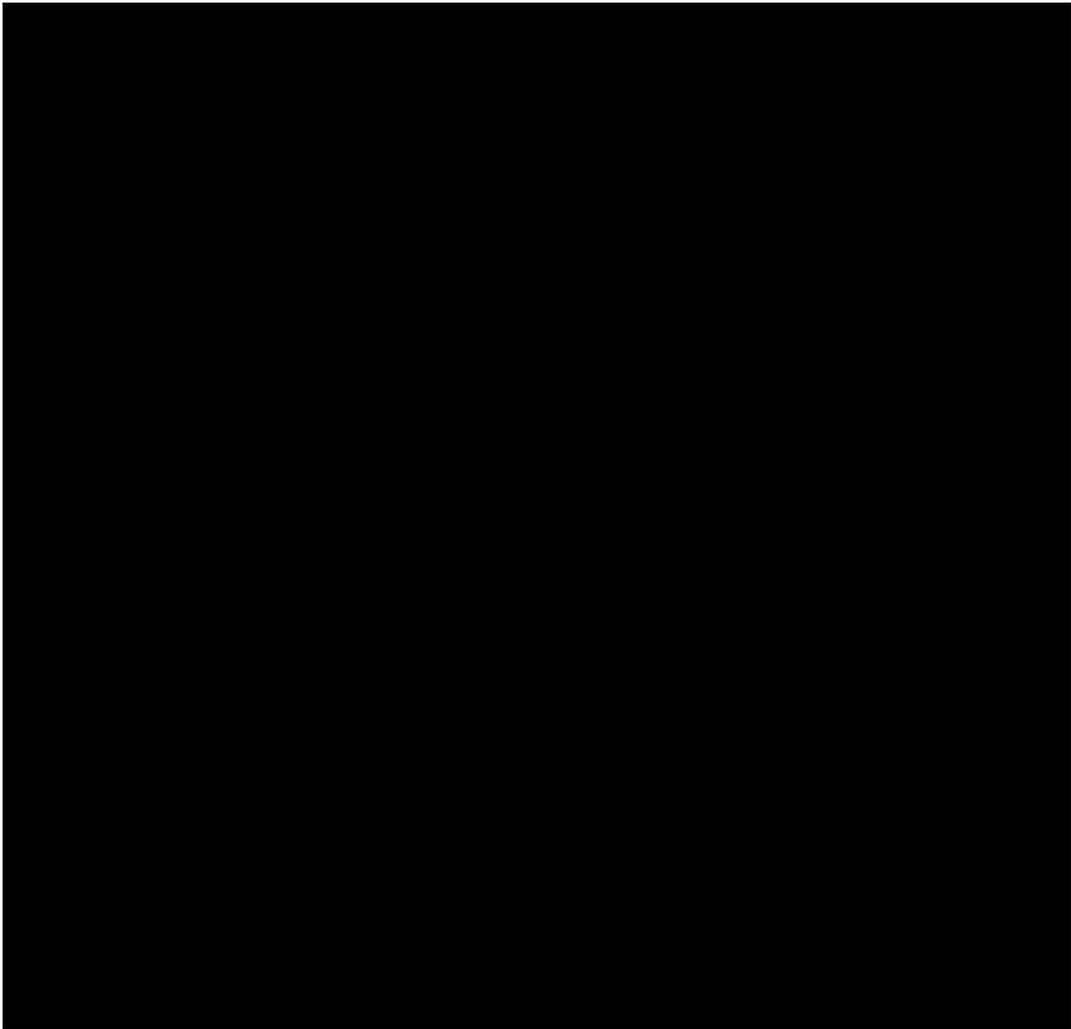On Thu, Mar 4, 2021 at 1:16 PM Quinn, Eugene ███████████ wrote:

Thanks,

Eugene

--

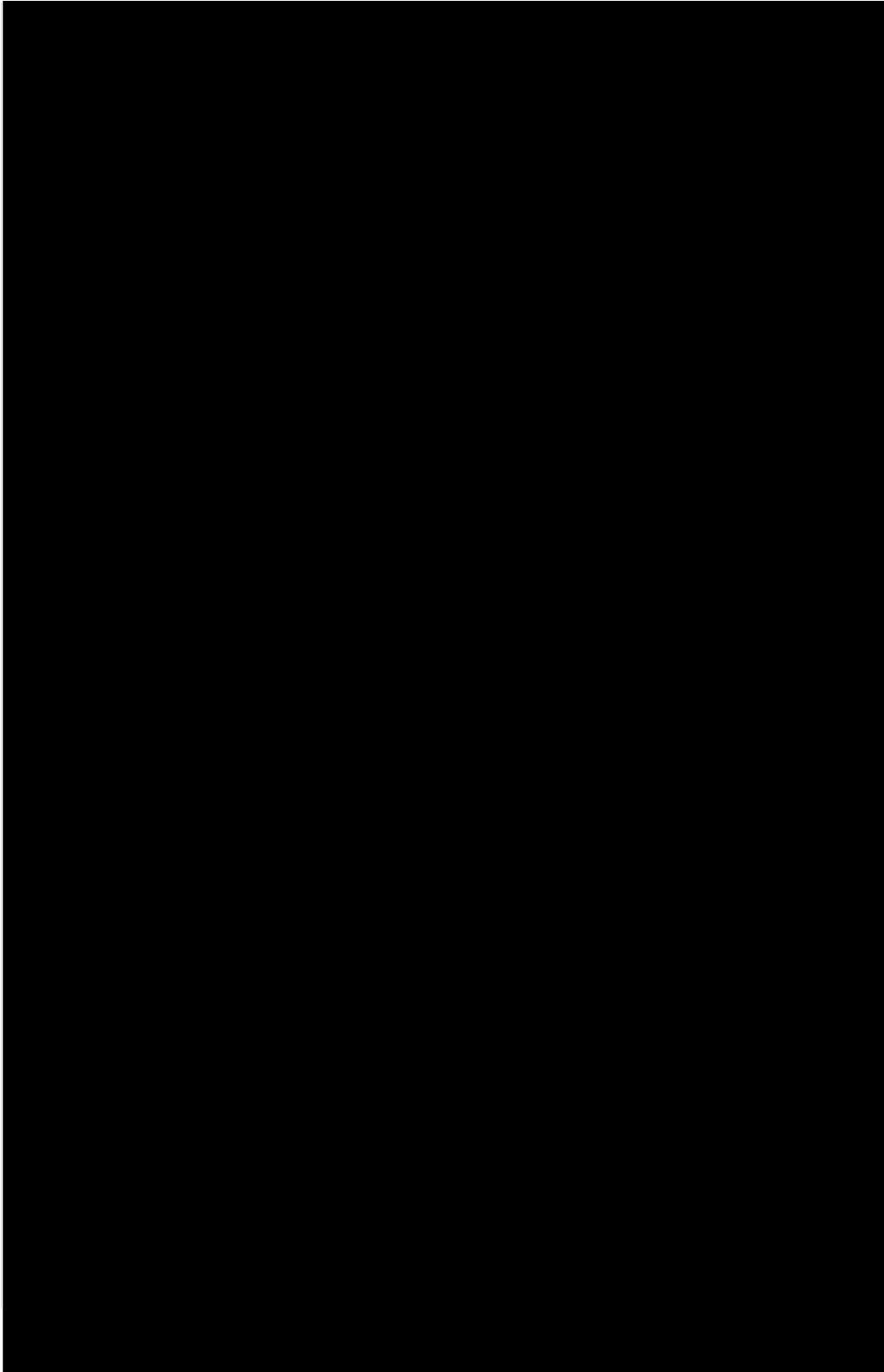**Appendix D: Servant Leadership Questionnaire Form**

Removed to comply with copyright

Appendix E: Awareness Survey Questionnaire

Removed to comply with copyright

Appendix F: Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values Questionnaire

This section contains a sample test of the Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values. The questionnaire

was administered via internet, and approval was obtained. No part of the questionnaire maybe

used without prior permission from Values Technology, Inc.

Hall-Tonna Inventory of Values