How State and National Political Leaders Employ Values-Based Leadership in Service of Passing Policy Initiatives, Building Consensus, and Building Followings

Submitted by

Vincent Michael Tamagna

A Dissertation for Introduction Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements of Doctor of Philosophy

in Organizational Leadership

Concordia University – Chicago

River Forest, Illinois

January 2023

© by Vincent Michael Tamagna, 2023

All rights reserved.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

How State and National Political Leaders Employ Values-Based Leadership in Service of Passing Policy Initiatives, Building Consensus, and Building Followings

by

Vincent Michael Tamagna

has been approved

January 26, 2023

Christopher Esposito, PhD., Dissertation Chair

Pamela J. Konkol, PhD., Committee Member

Arthur Safer, PhD., Committee Member

Abstract

The turbulence of contemporary world issues coupled with contentious leadership styles has created public suspicion of their elected leaders. Values-based Leadership (VBL) has been shown to lead to better decision-making, increased support for decisions and leader transparency, better follower morale, and opportunities to build trustworthy relationships. This phenomenological study examined how state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings through the lived experiences of leaders in the Northeast and Midwest. National and state political leaders must discover how they employ values-based leadership in passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings. VBL offers an opportunity to replace the "Agendized Government" and "Herd Mentality" currently found in the U.S. Congress and State Houses with a more collaborative and mindful approach to leadership, especially critical in times of crisis. As animosity grows between political combatants, political leaders may choose to either embrace one side or the other or find new tools with which to achieve the traditional goals of building consensus. Values-based leadership may be the tool to accomplish a more collaborative and transparent leadership paradigm and represents a potentially novel and effective way of diffusing partisan paralysis by grounding leaders and followers through a set of core values. Values-based leadership engages followers and may be especially relevant in navigating America's contemptuous political climate today. This study found that leaders thought it is important to spend more time reflecting during the decision-making process and should be proactive in communicating with their constituents by asking for input and feedback more frequently. It was also found that leaders should be transparent with their values, treat others with respect and humility, and listen to the opinions and perspectives of others.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and friends. I am grateful for their understanding of the many hours spent as a researcher, and the time that it required. Special gratitude to my loving parents. I am truly thankful and honored to have you as my parents, and grateful for your examples of strength, determination, and well-defined values. You have taught me to be proud, unique and determined, to believe in myself, and that I can accomplish anything. To Joseph Cook and Dr. Frank Bumpus, thank you for your unwavering love and support.

This is also dedicated to my extended family, Carol Powell, David Barton, and Alex Garcia: words can hardly describe my thanks and appreciation to you for your generosity of time and support over the past decade. I am grateful for the spiritual guidance of Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool, Assistant Bishop Episcopal Diocese of New York, and also grateful to Mrs. Gwen Walz for her positive energy and support.

Acknowledgements

I want to acknowledge my dissertation committee at Concordia University Chicago and recognize the contributions of chair, Dr. Esposito, methodologist Dr. Konkol, and reader Dr. Safer to my personal growth and development. This academic journey has supported the relevance and timeliness of my research and challenged and inspired me. I am also grateful for the many candid and open conversations with all study participants: the political leaders with tremendous time-constraints who participated in this study and who shall remain anonymous. Finally, a special acknowledgement to many academic mentors who guided me on this journey, especially my Marist College family, President Emeritus Dr. Dennis Murray, Dr. James (ret'd Col), Lois Johnson, the Hudson River Valley Institute, Cohort 35, and Dr. Viviane Lopuch.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction of the Study 1

Background of the Study 2

Problem Statement 3

- Significance of the Study 5
- Theoretical Framework 6
- Researcher Positionality 7
- Purpose of the Study 8
- Research Questions 9
- Rationale for Methodology 10
- Definitions 13
- Summary 13

Chapter 2: Literature Review 15

- Literature Search Strategy 15
- Conceptual Foundation 18
  - Self-Reflection 18
  - Balance and Perspective 19
  - True Self-Confidence 19
  - Genuine Humility 19
  - Real-World Application of Values-Based Leadership 20
- Significance of the Values-Based Leadership Model to Current Study 22
- Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts 24
  - Historical Context 24
  - Value in Leadership 28
  - Leadership Qualities and Roles 30

Use of Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling in Leadership Roles ... 31
Leadership Styles and Engagement With Ethical Behaviors ... 32
Ethics in Leadership ... 33
Focused Ethical Issues ... 36
Social Responsibility as Ethical Practices ... 36
Other Forms of Ethical Leadership ... 38
Transparency in Ethics ... 39
Values-Based Leadership ... 40
Public Sector Leadership ... 43
Political Leader Leadership ... 44
Summary and Conclusions ... 46
Chapter 3: Methodology ... 49
Research Methodology ... 50
Research Design ... 51
Setting/Context ... 53
Participants and Recruitment ... 53
Data Collection Methods ... 55
Data Analysis Methods ... 56
Trustworthiness ... 58
Ethical Processes ... 59
Limitations ... 59
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results ... 61
Demographics ... 62
Data Collection ... 63
Data Analysis ... 65

Evidence of Trustworthiness 66
Findings 67
Theme 1: Going Against Other Leaders to Help Address Constituent Needs .. 68
Theme 2: Reflecting Before Policy Descisions That Affect Constituents 71
Theme 3: Improving Their Understanding of Constituent Needs 74
Theme 4: Creating Respect for Other Leaders, Staff, and Constituents 76
Theme 5: Maintaining Relationships through Transparent Communication 78
Theme 6: Presenting Their Values Honestly 80
Theme 7: Enhancing Their Capacity to Understand the Situation 82
Theme 8: Prioritizing Public Interest 84
Summary 85
Chapter 5: Introduction 88
Interpretation of the Findings 89
Going Against Other Leaders to Fight for Constituents' Needs 90
Reflecting Before Making Decisions 92
Knowing and Working for Constituents' Needs 93
Respecting Other Leaders, Staff, and Constituents 94
Maintaining Relationships Through Transparent Communication 95
Presenting One's Values Honestly 96
Having the Capacity to Understand the Situation 97
Prioritizing Public Interest 97
Limitations of the Study 98
Recommendations 99
Implications 100
Conclusion 101

References 103

Appendix A 118

Appendix B 120

Appendix C 121

Appendix D 123

List of Tables

Table 1. Viable Resources Extracted from Databases 16

Table 2. Leadership Values..... 21

Table 3. Demographic Information..... 62

Table 4. Top Leadership Values by Participant..... 63

Table 5. Overview of Themes..... 68

List of Figures

Figure 1. Flow Chart of Literature Review Selection..... 17

Figure 2. The Four-Stage Value-Based Leadership Development Model..... 23

Chapter 1: Introduction

The study of leadership arose from the study of political leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994). In the days since, this discipline has evolved to encompass a wide array of fields, especially business administration (Top et al., 2020). However, political leadership remains as important as ever, if not more important than in the past (McLean & Ewart, 2020). Political leaders face an increasingly challenging political environment to lead as societal divides widen and partisan polarization continues to increase; especially in the United States (Pierson & Schickler, 2020). Therefore, new ways of thinking about political leadership are especially important. The idea of values-based leadership is relatively intuitive, but the formal theory of values-based leadership is quite recent, having evolved in the business domain (Kraemer, 2011). Therefore, the theory may offer new and valuable insights when applied to political leadership, especially at the national and state levels of government in the United States.

This chapter introduces the study examining how values-based leadership is used by state and national-level political leaders. The chapter begins with a section addressing a brief background of the two key topics. Next, the problem statement lays out the research problem to be addressed in the study. The purpose of the study is derived from the problem and addresses what the study will be designed to achieve. The purpose then gives rise to the research questions guiding the study. The theoretical framework, values-based leadership theory, is addressed next, followed by an overview of the major methodological dimensions of the current study. Key definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are later addressed. Chapter 1 concludes with a discussion of the study's significance and a summary of key points.

Background of the Study

Most modern leadership theories were originally developed out of consideration for political leaders. Perhaps the most pertinent example is Bass and Avolio's (1994) transformational leadership theory. Today, the study of transformational leadership is ubiquitous in business (e.g., Top et al., 2020) and a wide array of other fields, such as medicine and education (Giddens, 2018). However, the idea of transformational leadership was originally developed through Bass's analysis of the shared characteristics of the most charismatic and effective U.S. presidents (Bass & Avolio, 1994). In many ways, political leadership is the purest form of leadership. Some scholars (e.g., Budur, 2020) have argued that applying leadership theory to management is not even appropriate. The business literature is the most significant nexus of leadership research (Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019). Although this research has centered on applying existing leadership theories, such as transformational and transactional leadership styles (Top et al., 2020), some novel notions have emerged.

Values-based leadership is one of these novel ideas originally developed in the managerial context. As the name suggests, values-based leadership focuses on the idea that effective leadership should make decisions after carefully considering values (Kraemer, 2011). Researchers have shown values-based leadership to lead to benefits, such as increased follower morale and conviction (Mayes et al., 2019) or improved leader-follower dynamics through acknowledgment of aligning and conflicting values (Stewart, 2019). It is time for values-based leadership to be applied outside the discipline within which it was developed. Mayes et al. (2019) and Smikle (2019) requested expanding literature surrounding values-based leadership, thus, expanding beyond the business realm.

At the same time, given its status as the originator of leadership theory, political leadership has been studied relatively exhaustively using most traditional theories. These include studies applying transformational leadership (Andersen et al., 2018), transactional leadership (Efianda & Iswahyuni, 2021), servant leadership (Kgatle, 2018), and others. Because of its origins in business, values-based leadership has not yet been applied to political leadership. In this regard, values-based leadership represents a potentially novel and limited way of studying political leadership.

Furthermore, aspects of values-based leadership consensus-building (Stewart, 2019) may be relevant in navigating America's political climate today. The current political climate is defined by increasing levels of polarization and partisan rancor (Jiang et al., 2020). Popular media and researchers have well-documented this phenomenon (Pierson & Schickler, 2020). As animosity grows between political belligerents, political leaders may choose to either embrace one side or the other, or find new tools with which to achieve the traditional goals of building consensus. Though many political leaders have adopted more extreme positions, often driven by partisan media outlets (Kelkar, 2019), others seek to retain moderation. The latter may already use values-based leadership without identifying it as such. However, the truth is yet unknown due to the lack of research on values-based leadership in the political context. Further research is needed to determine if and how political leaders leverage values-based leadership to achieve various important political goals.

Problem Statement

We have not known how national and state political leaders employ values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. Effective political leadership is critical in times of crisis (McLean & Ewart, 2020). The ongoing COVID-19

pandemic has emphasized this need further (Kutor et al., 2021). However, understanding the values that lead political leaders to success is complex (Müller & Van Esch, 2020). For example, many people rate political idealism and concern as more important in political leaders than integrity (Lionardo et al., 2019). Understanding these issues is important because of the ongoing shifts in power between different types of political actors within nations on the global stage today (Ozga, 2021). Leadership can be understood in many ways, but researchers have already explored many facets (Scott et al., 2020). Therefore, addressing the problem may require a less-developed approach, such as the theory of values-based leadership (Kraemer, 2011); as values are a fundamental building block of society and social interaction (Hester, 2020). A values-based approach has proved effective in better understanding leader-follower dynamics in the healthcare sector (Stewart, 2019).

Values-based leadership is used within the business sector. However, Mayes et al. (2019) and Smikle (2019) requested future studies to explore values-based leadership outside the business sector instead of looking at other sectors in which values-based leadership may be used. Completing this current research fills the gap in the literature concerning understanding values-based leadership within the political sector. Further research is needed to understand how value-based leadership can make leaders successful in functional outcomes (Mayes et al., 2019). Additionally, researchers should better examine the relationship between individual-level factors, such as values and leadership development (Smikle, 2019). Research is also needed into how political leaders can engage with their followers and co-create desired outcomes (Bentzen et al., 2020).

Significance of the Study

This study has practical and academic significance, as it addresses a research gap. This gap is characterized by the lack of research applying values-based leadership theory to political leadership. In addition, the research gap can be triangulated from three calls for research in the existing literature. First, research is needed into the functional outcomes of values-based leadership (Mayes et al., 2019). Studying its role in political leadership represents one facet of the answer to that question. Second, research is needed to explore the relationship between individual-level factors such as values and leadership development (Smikle, 2019). Leadership development remains an elusive goal, and whether values-based leadership can catalyze this goal is significant. Third, research must explore how political leaders engage with their followers and co-create desired outcomes (Bentzen et al., 2020). Given that such interactions and consensus-building are part of values-based leadership theory, examining the role of values-based leadership in political leadership also answers this call for research.

The practical significance of the study originates from the need to understand how political leaders can better navigate the present state of political polarization (Pierson & Schickler, 2020). Values-based leadership represents a potential path to consensus building and attracting followers for political leaders who are cognizant of different values and their role in making decisions. By applying values-based leadership to the case of political leadership, it may be possible to understand these key political actions and outcomes better. This study may help political leaders better understand how they may carefully consider and engage with values to improve their leadership and achieve better political outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the study was Kraemer's (2011) values-based leadership theory). Values-based leadership theory was developed for the managerial context. Therefore, unlike other leadership style theories, this theory originated in business and spread elsewhere (rather than developing elsewhere and then being applied in business). The basic principle of values-based leadership theory is that a leader makes decisions based on careful consideration of their values and the values of others impacted by the decision. For example, a business leader using values-based leadership theory may need to consider the congruence of a decision with their values, the values of the company, and the values of the employees responsible for a decision (Kraemer, 2011).

Values-based leadership theory may entail leaders unilaterally imposing their values on others if used incorrectly. Therefore, Kraemer (2011) suggested four key pillars of judicious usage in developing values-based leadership theory: 1) self-reflection, 2) balance, 3) self-confidence, and 4) humility. Self-reflection is the centermost pillar because the leader must be aware of their principles and the consequences of them to use values-based leadership theory. Without self-reflection, the leader may fail to realize their values, much less put them into practice. The second key pillar is balance—in particular, a balance between the leader's beliefs and the beliefs of others. As these values will not always align, there must be a balance between them, in which the leader avoids taking morally unacceptable steps while attempting to avoid asking others to go strongly against their values.

A leader who has reflected on their values and sought balance should also have self-confidence (Kraemer, 2011). As a decision based on the careful consideration of principles and balancing conflicting values is inherently sound in values-based leadership theory, a leader who

has decided based on such factors must have the self-confidence to stand by that decision. At the same time, such self-confidence should not become arrogant. Per Kraemer (2011), it is intended to be balanced by humility and a willingness to acknowledge when a decision is not made for the right reasons or is not managed to balance conflicting values.

In the literature, researchers have not yet examined values-based leadership theory in politics. However, political leaders are elected for the values they espouse. At the same time, these leaders must often balance their values against the conflicting values of the political opposition to achieve meaningful results. Therefore, applying values-based leadership theory to politics was a natural extension of the theory. The present study explored how values-based leadership theory was (or was not) used by elected political leaders and to what extent the tenets of values-based leadership theory could be used to understand effective political decision-making.

Researcher Positionality

Qualitative research aims to explore and understand participants' unique opinions (Moustakas, 1994). To do this, the researcher must remain objective, realizing that their experiences and intrinsic biases may impact how they identify with participants or interpret the data or results (Lin, 2015). Thus, within qualitative research, a researcher must remain as impartial as possible to mitigate the impact of researcher bias on study results (Lin, 2015).

I was a previously elected official (18 years) and ran for local office on November 2, 2021. Although positions were not held at the federal, congressional, or state level, I was familiar with the expectations for individuals who held public office and the importance of creating consensus and bolstering follower relationships. Additionally, I knew the stressors elected officials faced, which might impact the use of values-based leadership within the political sector.

Because the research design was developed from the philosophy of phenomenology, it inherited several valuable tools for addressing researcher bias. When using transcendental phenomenology, a researcher can use bracketing and applying *epoche* (a suspension of judgement) to separate themselves from biases and preconceptions to see the data with new eyes (Moustakas, 1994). Thus, I kept a bracketing notebook throughout the entirety of the study. I wrote in it often, taking notes of my thoughts and opinions throughout this process. This process allowed me to remain mindful of preconceived notions and potential biases at each step within the study and how they might impact study results (see Moustakas, 1994). I reflected on this process often, ensuring to reduce biases to the extent possible within qualitative research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. Values-based leadership is commonly used within the business sector. Completing this current research fills the gap in the literature concerning understanding values-based leadership within the political sector, as previous researchers have indicated a need to explore values-based leadership in other areas. For example, Mayes et al. (2019) indicated that future research is needed to understand how values-based leadership can make leaders successful in functional outcomes. Additionally, research should comprehensively explore the relationship between individual-level factors such as values and leadership development (Smikle, 2019). Finally, according to Bentzen et al. (2020), research is needed to explore how political leaders can engage with their followers and co-create desired outcomes.

A qualitative transcendental phenomenological approach was appropriate for this study. The qualitative methodology allowed me to understand the subjective perceptions of individuals who had experiences with the phenomena of interest (Taylor et al., 2015). The use of phenomenological design also allowed me to gather rich and full data from participants' lived experiences, providing a unique understanding of how politicians identified and used values-based leadership.

The population under study was state- and national-level politicians, namely governors and federal and state legislators. The study involved a sample of seven participants, split as evenly as possible regarding party affiliation. The study involved semi-structured interviews conducted remotely. Data from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis and eidetic reduction. The study was based on the theoretical underpinning of values-based leadership theory and served to expand that theory into the political realm. The study's results may be valuable to current and aspiring politicians in understanding how values-based leadership can be leveraged to be authentic to one's values and build political support at multiple levels.

Research Questions

The study was guided by a single overarching qualitative research question and three related sub questions. The following research question and sub questions pertained to the central phenomenon under study, that of the role of value-based leadership in affecting political leaders:

R1: How do state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings?

S1: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives?

S2: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building consensus?

S3: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building followings?

Rationale for Methodology

The research methodology used in this study was the qualitative method. Qualitative methods are exploratory and describe a holistic phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In qualitative inquiry, a researcher seeks to understand individuals' subjective perceptions with first-hand, relevant experience with the phenomenon, and uses these experiences to understand the larger issue (Taylor et al., 2015). The qualitative method is broad and open-ended. Qualitative researchers ask open-ended questions that can elicit a full range of responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In this regard, the qualitative methodology is ideal for exploring new theoretical grounds because it allows the researcher to explore new ideas and draw out all the perspectives present within the study population (Taylor et al., 2015). Qualitative research is also ideal when a topic can be better illuminated by drawing rich data from a small sample of individuals with significant experience, than by seeking to draw more superficial data from a large sample size—or where only small sample sizes are feasible (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Qualitative research is also contextual, incorporating aspects of the participants' context and the context surrounding the phenomenon rather than seeking to divorce the two (Taylor et al., 2015).

A qualitative methodology was appropriate for this research for several reasons. First, the study addressed a broad phenomenon, the use of values-based leadership in a political leadership context. Second, the issues under study were not yet well understood. Values-based leadership theory emerged from the business arena, meaning its applications to political leadership were not

yet well understood. Qualitative exploration allowed this gap to be investigated thoroughly and without the support of a preexisting theoretical understanding. Third, political leaders, especially at the state and national level, were exclusive, and it would not be easy to access a large sample size of such leaders. A smaller qualitative sample was feasible. Finally, political leadership was deeply contextual, given that a politician's success depends on the specific condition under which they were elected and with which the constituencies gave rise.

Qualitative research methodology has numerous specific research designs. In this study, the research design was transcendental phenomenology. Phenomenology is derived from the philosophy of the same name (Moustakas, 1994). When adopting a phenomenological research design, a researcher seeks to elicit the essence of the participants' shared experiences from a deep appraisal of their lived experiences (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). Hence, phenomenological studies reply on small sample sizes, even by qualitative standards, and draw rich data from each participant (Moustakas, 1994). The main advantages of phenomenological research are the data's depth and the tools of the philosophical tradition (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003).

Phenomenology was also most appropriate for this study. The small sample sizes used in phenomenology, even by qualitative standards, were well suited to the inaccessible population under study. These were all individuals with limited availability and tremendous time constraints. By drawing in-depth data from a few political leaders, a phenomenological research approach allowed me to make the most of the available participants. Moreover, as a researcher, I expected biases and preconceptions about political leadership to stem from my experience as a politician. The phenomenological research method offered uniquely effective tools for minimizing the effects of those biases and preconceptions on the results of the study and allowed

me to look at the data from a fresh perspective. I could report the results as the participants indicated rather than reporting on my expectations.

The population under study included national and state level political leaders in the United States. In particular, the state level politicians of interest were governors and legislators. The national level politicians of interest were members of the U.S. Congress. The inclusion criteria were that the participants be elected to their positions (not appointed) and that they currently served in such a position. No other exclusion criteria were applied, given that these criteria limited the population under study to seven individuals. If this population proved inaccessible, state representatives from the New York State Assembly were considered. Per Mason (2010), qualitative sample sizes are determined by saturation, not an *a priori* sample size calculation. For this study, the expected sample size was five or six participants, which was within the norm for a phenomenological study. The final sample size was seven. To the extent possible, the participants were balanced between Republicans and Democrats (with Independents considered a member of the party with which they caucused).

Data collection began after institutional review board (IRB) approval. Then, the offices of prospective interviewees were contacted to request participation. To minimize the disruption from participating, I offered to interview participants in person or over Zoom (or their choice of other teleconferencing software). Each interview was semi-structured and lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews were conducted according to an interview guide I prepared in advance and validated by three content experts. The interviews were audio recorded, then later transcribed. The data from the interviews were analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2014) and phenomenological eidetic reduction (Moustakas, 1994). Both

analysis components represented ways of reducing the data to key central ideas that best answered the research questions.

Definitions

Political leadership: In this study, political leadership was understood as the public-facing acts of elected political leaders (politicians).

Values: Values represent beliefs or ideas that hold specific importance to individuals (Stewart, 2019). Values can stem from multiple sources, including personal experiences, education, family, or religion.

Values-based leadership: Values-based leadership is an approach to leadership in which the leader focuses on values when making decisions (Kraemer, 2011). Not only are the leaders' values important, but also the values of other stakeholders in the decision.

Summary

Largely, we do not know how state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. There has been a gap in academic research regarding how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership. This study addressed this problem. The purpose of the qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings. This purpose was addressed through the overarching research question: How do state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings?

The study involved a qualitative method and a transcendental phenomenology research design. The population under study were state and national level politicians, namely governors,

legislators, and U.S. members of Congress. The study involved a sample of seven participants, split as evenly as possible by party affiliation. Data from the participants were collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews and analyzed with qualitative thematic analysis and eidetic reduction. This chapter introduced and overview of the study. The next chapter, Chapter 2, presents a more in-depth discussion of the supporting literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings. The turbulence of contemporary world issues coupled with contentious leadership styles has created public suspicion of elected leaders. To counter such, the application of values-based leadership used by national and state level political leaders may provide the necessary political behaviors to prompt support from the public, along with improving the leader-follower dynamics regarding the alignment of conflicting values (Mayes et al., 2019; Smikle, 2019; Stewart, 2019). In addition, values-based leadership may be a path forward to building trust and transparency between public sector leaders and the public. Chapter 2 presents a synthesis of the existing literature associated with value-based leadership. Past research and studies related to this type of leadership include values in leadership, ethics in leadership, focusing on ethical issues, social responsibility as ethical practices, transparency in ethics, values-based leadership, public sector leadership, and political leader leadership.

Literature Search Strategy

A literature search was conducted in databases using keywords and phrases associated with leadership. These terms and phrases included *ethics in leadership, focused ethical issues, forms of ethical leadership, leadership roles, planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, political leadership, public sector leadership, social responsibilities as ethical practices, transparency in ethics, trust in leadership roles, values-based leadership, values-based leadership roles, value in leadership,* and *values in leadership*. I searched the databases listed in Table 1. The table also shows the number of viable resources extracted from each database using

this list of keywords and phrases and the number of articles suitable for examination with the inclusion criteria.

Table 1

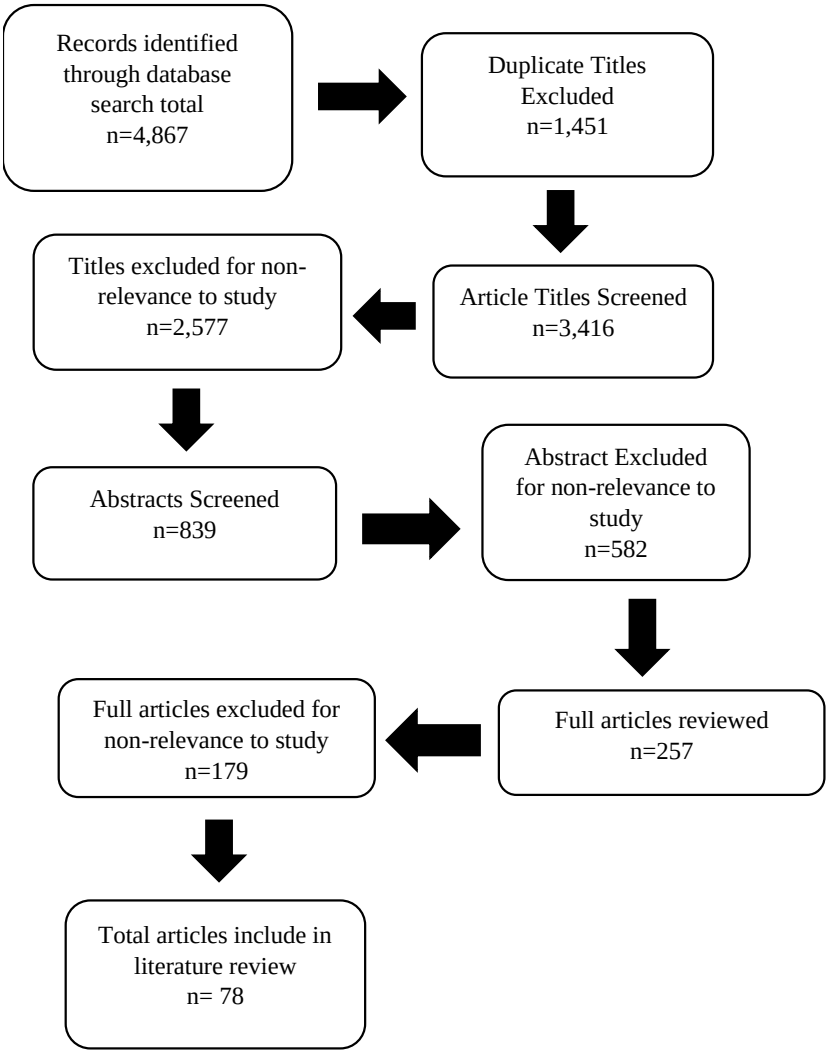
Viable Resources Extracted from Databases

Database	Number of articles found (published 2017 to 2021)	*Number of articles suitable for examination with inclusion criteria*
Google Scholar	15,700	1,255
IARP	6,512	615
JSTOR	1,482	492
Jurn	896	308
Research Gate	12,586	1,025
Science Direct	11,525	986
Scopus	7,856	186
Total		*4,867*

I selected appropriate content for the chapter's literature using inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria established that: 1) all selected works were peer-reviewed, 2) all selected works were published in English, 3) eighty five percent of the selected works were current and published between 2017 and 2021, and 4) the work's topic was relevant to the study's topic of interest. In addition, the selection included the removal of duplicated and irrelevant works. Figure 1 shows how I arrived at the selected number of works reviewed.

Figure 1

Flow Chart of Literature Review Selection



The types of resources included 85.8% of works published after 2017 and 14.2% considered foundational and before this date from scholarly literature.

Few studies were available about leaders' values on their leadership approach; particularly from their perspective, which represents a significant gap in scholarly studies on how values-based leadership affects public-sector leaders. Experts did find that people know a great deal more about what leaders do and how they do it, but there is a report regarding the decision-

making process a leader appoints as they lead (Azad et al., 2017; Lemoine et al., 2018; Smikle, 2019). Therefore, a gap in the research regarding understanding how a leader chooses to make public policy decisions was noted.

Conceptual Foundation

I used the conceptual framework of a values-based leadership model. Kraemer (2011) first established this model when asserting that the theoretical countenance of leadership must have values and that people motivated by values would only succeed in leadership when they recognize them and connect with their followers' principles. His model is underpinned by his value-based leadership theory. Kraemer posited that successful leaders in business must recognize their beliefs and apply such within the decisions made as leaders for their organization. Kraemer developed this value-based model of leadership using four essential principles: 1) self-reflection, 2) balance and perspective, 3) true self-confidence, and 4) genuine humility. The four principles were established to deliver successful results for leaders who valued ethical constructs from their lives and applied such to their business or leadership practices.

Self-Reflection

The first principle of the value-based leadership model is self-reflection. This principle is applied by leaders who identify and reflect on their values, ethics, and beliefs (Kraemer, 2011). These values prompt ethical behavior and are recognized by the leader as essential for leadership practices within their organization. However, Kraemer (2011) emphasized that self-reflection is not self-absorption. Ethical leaders must first understand that their actions must reflect their beliefs and values. As the central pillar of values-based leadership, leaders will also recognize the consequences due to their actions.

Balance and Perspective

A balanced perspective is the second principle of the value-based leadership model. Kraemer (2011) declared that all leaders have an opinion but recognize and appreciate all perspectives of the subject because they understand multiple sides of an issue. The recognition of maintaining a balance between a leader's values and the values of others may not always be the same. However, the value-based leadership model necessitates a leader focusing on balancing the two opinions. The leader must avoid making morally unacceptable decisions yet ensure others do not compromise their principles. Kraemer also emphasized that the values-based leader knows to instill a work-life balance that incorporates equally work, health, and spirituality. Maintaining a work-life balance prompts ethical decisions framing the ideals contained with business decisions.

True Self-Confidence

The third principle of values-based leadership is true self-confidence. True self-confidence contends that the leader using this model will reflect on their values seeking to not only achieve balance but provide such balance to their team (Kraemer, 2011). The self-confident leader is transparent, understands that they do not know everything, and admits when they need help or need more education. Such self-confidence within the value-based leader establishes the leader's understanding of their weaknesses and strengths while pursuing new learning, knowledge, and education. A workforce views a leader's self-confidence, thereby prompting others to have self-confidence in their leader.

Genuine Humility

The self-confidence of a values-based leader is balanced with having genuine humility. Kraemer (2011) claimed that the most successful leaders listen to their team and make informed decisions based upon the team's opinions and perspectives. Such humility is emphasized by

transparency, in which the leader's humility functions as a respected mechanism. When a values-based leader discusses the planning before a final decision is made, the team recognizes that the leaders' focus is not singularly on themselves but on everyone involved in a project, change, or problem.

Real-World Application of Values-Based Leadership

Organizational leaders use values-based leadership in many disciplines and many industries. However, there is a concept redundancy within applying values-based leadership behavior. The overabundance of commonalities that many leadership qualities share exemplifies an overlapping use of values within several leadership styles (Brown et al., 2005). For example, ethical leadership values a "…demonstration of normatively appropriate behaviors and leader conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and the promotion of such conduct to followers through a two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120). Based on this definition, there is a similarity or overlapping of applied values between ethical and values-based leadership. However, based on expert examination and study, ethical leadership is a part of values-based leadership: with these experts concluding that values-based leadership had a significant relevance within an organization and showed sustainability within a complex organization (Kim et al., 2018; Žydžiūnaitė, 2018).

Žydžiūnaitė (2018) contended that values-based leadership evolved and developed as a byproduct of failures when private and public sectors became disheartened by the unethical behaviors of leaders. For decades, experts have discussed the value of and predisposition for leadership values, claiming three unique concepts united successful and ethical leadership: personality, interaction, and relationship and action (Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). However, leadership values must be understood according to the theoretical construct to establish values-based

leadership. Table 2 defines the leadership values common to experts, as discussed by Žydžiūnaitė (2018).

Table 2

Leadership Values

Name of a leadership value	Description
Respect	Self-respect and respecting others regardless of differences; treating others with dignity, empathy and compassion; and the ability to earn the respect of others. Three differing types of respect are appraisal, recognition and identification.
Making difference	Making a positive impact on individuals, systems, and/or organizations or positively affecting outcomes.
Integrity	Moral courage, ethical strength, and trustworthiness; keeping promises and fulfilling expectations.
Authenticity	Consistency, congruency, and transparency in values, beliefs, and actions; integrating values and principles to create a purposeful life and to contribute to the growth of others.
Courage	Possessing a strength of self to act with intention on behalf of the common good; taking a stand in the face of adversity; acting boldly in the service of inclusion and justice.
Service	Commitment that extends beyond one's own self-interest; personal humility for the sake of a greater cause.
Humility	A sense of humbleness, dignity and an awareness of one's own limitations; open to perspectives different from one's own.
Wisdom	A broad understanding of human dynamics and an ability to balance the interests of multiple stakeholders when making decisions: can take a long-term perspective in decision-making.
Self-discipline	Focusing your attention consistently on your most important goals requires self-discipline.
Personal development	An increase in quantity, quality, and / or development over time. We can grow individually, increasing our skills, understanding, etc., as well as grow as a team and an organization, increasing our ambition, our sites, ability to serve clients, etc. Growth can be characterized by a breakthrough change, a transformation as a significant development, which is great. More often, though, growth takes the form of incremental improvements over time. Self-awareness and self-reflection help enable us to know our areas of potential growth.
Respect of teamwork	Respect is at the core of high functioning teams – and the lack of respect between team members is often times the cause of poorly performing teams. It's about respecting the person, their abilities, ideas, and contributions to the team. Self-respect and respect for others is learnable. It is not learnt or encouraged by putting a group of "values" on a wall plaque or on a sheet of paper. It is learnt and encouraged by the team getting to know each other and themselves well.

	Self-respect is also encouraged by managers who mentor and coach. Respecting others is implemented through showing support, encouraging participation, giving positive feedback, being honest, and listening before speaking.
Belief in human potential	The possibilities human beings are capable of accomplishing. The idea that with hard work, every person — regardless of age, background or religion — has the opportunity to succeed and achieve. Fundamental to this dream is that leaders remain small and limited, giving maximum freedom to the individual. The great potential of leadership lies in people.
The power of positive psychology	Strengths are underlying personal qualities that energize us, contribute to our growth and lead to peak performance. When we tap into these sources of energy, we can reach full immersion in our task at hand. Meaning is what gives purpose to our existence and to what we do. We gain happiness from our actions when they are based on choices that make sense to us. Many definitions of employee engagement include energy and meaning. Accordingly, employees are engaged when they are energized by work and show a genuine willingness to go the extra mile. What does this mean for leadership? To boost their employees' engagement, leaders have to help their people play to their strengths and find purpose at work. Positive leaders drill for strengths and make meaning.
Acceptance complexity	Leadership as a complex interactive dynamic from which adaptive outcomes (e.g., learning, innovation, and adaptability) emerge. A leadership paradigm that focuses on enabling the learning, creative, and adaptive capacity of complex adaptive systems (CAS) within a context of knowledge-producing organizations. This conceptual framework includes three entangled leadership roles (adaptive leadership, administrative leadership, and enabling leadership) that reflect a dynamic relationship between the bureaucratic, administrative functions of the organization and the emergent, informal dynamics of complex adaptive systems.

Significance of the Values-Based Leadership Model to This Study

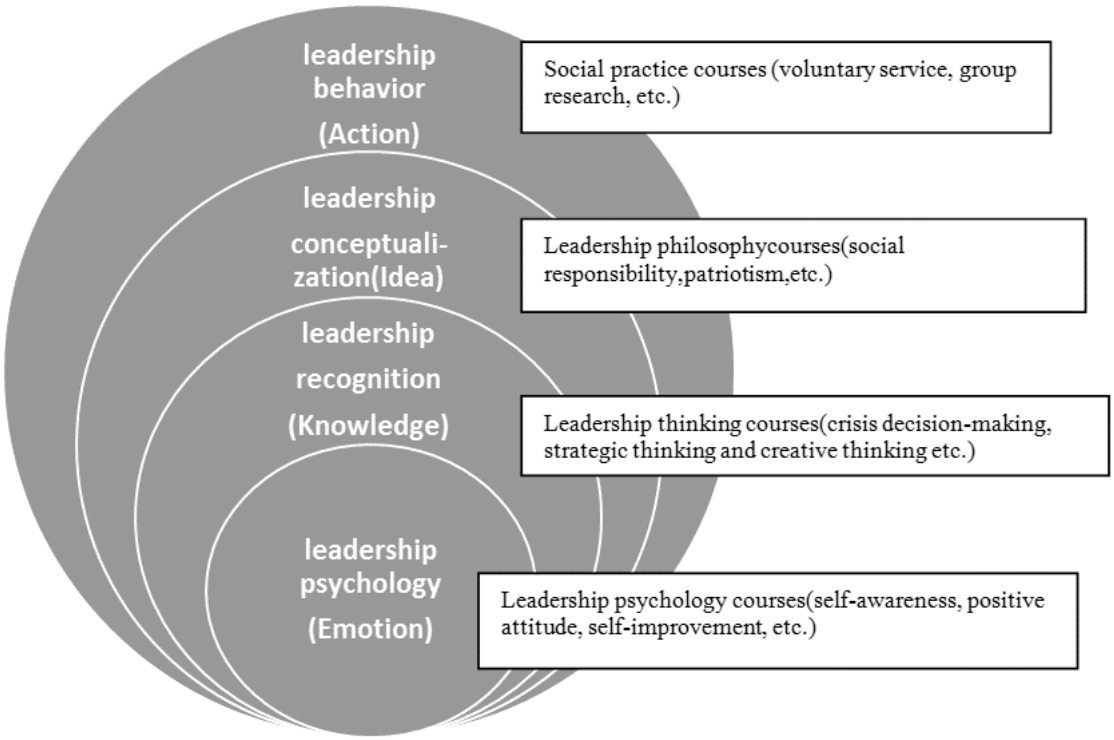
The theory of values-based leadership explored by me established that with its application, values-based leadership, governance, and communication could provide a foundation to restore public confidence (Caldwell et al., 2008; O'Toole, 1996). Experts claimed that values-based leadership offered a way of supporting leaders by purposefully, systematically, and reflectively aligning organizational values (Caldwell et al., 2008; Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Leaders may profit by understanding the role of trust in the leader/follower relationship and how values-based leadership strengthens relationships and builds organizational support.

For this study, this theory and model were considered a lens through which I could view and contextualize the existing literature. The theory was instrumental in developing the research

questions, while the model provided a four-stage applicable plan used with the collected data. Figure 2 shows this model based on previous research by Weng and Yan (2019).

Figure 2

The Four-Stage Value-Based Leadership Development Model



Observation of the action occurs when leadership behavior consists of observing social leadership practices. The leadership conceptualization (idea) was based on the participant's social responsibility and patriotism. The knowledge established through leadership recognition was observed through the leader's thinking courses, such as crisis decision-making, strategic thinking, and creative application. The central focus of emotion was observed through leadership psychology, viewed as self-awareness, positive attitudes, and self-improvement (Weng & Yan, 2019).

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

This research aimed to find if any elected leaders applied values-based leadership through their authentic leadership style. Although some gaps were evident from the existing academic scholarship, the research reflected a connection between values-based leadership and trust in leadership. Experts claim that a values-based leadership application provides the most significant benefits for many in business culture and is the right action to take (Chang et al., 2021). However, such action would be provisional based on the ethical dilemma and the business' belief system in handling such. For example, in long-term care, those involved in the business culture use the term *long-term care* instead of the negative connotation of the term *nursing home*. This change in rhetoric provides a positive connotation that contrasts the negativity surrounding the past social understanding of the public's perceptions of a nursing home. Such a change in descriptive verbiage for such services may not sound like a big issue; however, without a fair and reasonable description to clients (especially for those of a specific age and mental capabilities), there is an unethical tone to such sales. The ethical stance with which an organization should participate is an explanation of what long-term care consists of with the understanding of the actual facility as a nursing home. When such ethical considerations are taken into account, value-based leadership emerges.

Historical Context

The success of an organization depends on elements used to run a business, including the role and leadership qualities of a management team. Although experts have provided multiple suggestions on leadership qualities, specific qualities and skills are necessary for most leaders and managers in the entrepreneurial environment (Burns, 1978). Organization leaders expect to illustrate those qualities essential for success in the role of a leader in an entrepreneurial

environment. For example, a significant number of leaders use the planning-organizing-leading-controlling framework. This framework consists of the inputs of each for the dimension of success applied to leadership positions where values-based leadership is established (Burns, 1978).

According to Burns (1978), trustworthy leaders demonstrate a morally virtuous commitment through values and beliefs which people are willing to follow (Wood & Winston, 2005). Fairholm and Gronau (2015) posited that followers need to understand how leaders internalize and process decisions if followers support leaders. Fairholm and Gronau focused on the leaders' sense of inner spirit, which defined and determined their guiding values and demonstrated their spiritual intelligence. Comparatively, Wood and Winston (2005) stated the same about leaders. Wood and Winston (2005) and Burns (1978) agreed that trustworthiness was the primary building block to earning follower support and confidence. Trustworthiness and development of trust were accomplished through the commitment of the leader to work under a set of principles: values-based rules (Burns, 1978; Wood & Winston, 2005).

Wood and Winston (2005) described how leaders earn trust by being honest and accountable. Caldwell et al. (2008) designated such by explaining that "…by honoring the commitments owed to integrate goals and values-both instrumental and normative-trustworthy leaders demonstrate a morally virtuous commitment that others are willing to follow" (p. 500). Prodigious organizations and exceptional leaders show how integrated character and competence develop trust with followers. Researchers claimed that trust in leaders was essential when generating the necessary added value for organizational stakeholders, which increased the probability of organizational success (Caldwell et al., 2008; Wood & Winston, 2005).

Research revealed the development of leader and follower values incorporating more ethical traits and the enhancement brought through values-based leadership. According to Jorgensen (2007), the public sector nation-state was challenged, becoming increasingly important to understand social values. Jorgensen believed that values such as accountability to society-at-large, due process, equal opportunities, and transparency were vital as the intermediate priority values were found within the constructs of public administration. Jorgensen's values were inherent in democracy and grounded in the traits and characteristics of values-based leadership. Agreeing with Jorgensen, Reilly, and Ehlinger (2007) noted that values-based leadership theories have become more prevalent in the past decade as people search for ethical, authentic, and ethical leadership approaches and focus on authentic, ethical traits. Reilly and Ehlinger further claimed that such leadership practices were a more holistic way of cultivating followership, noting that values-based leaders strive for values in a changing environment by aligning positive personal and professional ethics with organizational culture and values.

Liu et al. (2008) and Caldwell et al. (2008) agreed that values-based leadership theory goes beyond considering behavior but strikes a chord of values and attitudes with a follower's ideology. Liu et al. (2008) found that values-based leadership emphasized how leaders introduce collectives and organizations, working with ideological values by articulating a utopian vision. The authors posited, "[S]ince values-based leadership theory focuses on the internalized motivation in the followers' ideology, the effects of such motivation caused by values-based leaders on followers' commitment should be much more significant than the effect of other kinds of leadership behavior" (Liu et al., 2008, p. 54). However, Caldwell et al. (2008) also warned that values-based leadership was a psychological motivation that relied on constant and continued leader reinforcement to articulate their values to followers. The scholars deemed

values-based leadership motivational and transformational; followers and leaders were found to be motivated through shared values and beliefs (Caldwell et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2008).

Beyond the ideas associated with values-based leadership, experts highlighted that the emergence of leadership is concerned with inner processes. People recognize and are ready and willing to influence (Shatalebi & Yarmohammadian, 2011). Authoritarian management methods, budgeting, planning, and precise control were balanced with the axial values. Shatalebi and Yarmohammadian (2011) found that management and leadership approaches and traditional paradigms are changing increasingly due to the shift in cultural and descending values. Leadership has become a set of conflicts and crises.

Analyzing axial values found in the early works of Garg and Jain (2013), who incorporated the Blake and Mouton leadership model in their study on public sector leadership, described the difference in leadership styles of public and private sector leaders. Garg and Jain showed that the X-axis represented a concern for tasks, and the Y-axis, a concern for people. The authors found that public sector leadership was focused on people-orientation and were less optimistic about the outcome of their actions while considering a more thoughtful approach. Private sector leaders were fundamentally attentive to quick outcomes from short-term applications concerned with completing specific tasks (Garg & Jain, 2013).

Garg and Jain (2013) supported the work of O'Toole (1996) in their description of public sector leadership. O'Toole (1996) stated, "[T]he value-based leader believed the welfare of followers is the end of leadership and not those followers are the means to the leader's goals" (p. 9). O'Toole (1996) supported the idea that the government focuses less on profit and more on people, while the private sector is more about the bottom line and is task and profit driven.

Comparatively, Garg and Jain (2013) explained that leaders should have a complete blend of task and people orientation.

Hopkins and Scott (2016) emphasized that respectful consideration of one's values was vital in how it created a positive diversity climate. The researchers found that the complexity of value-based leadership occurred as different individual value systems existed in an organization. A message of inclusion and acceptance was revealed by clearly communicating these values as having positive implications on the organization (Hopkins & Scott, 2016). Hopkins and Scott (2016) built on the early scholarly work of Garg and Jain (2013), adding that because of globalization and diversity of values, leaders, and followers must increasingly collaborate and build relationships of trust in the interconnected world today.

Value in Leadership

Experts explained that there was a struggle with leaders' establishing values in leadership (Kjellström et al., 2020; Mayes et al., 2019). Such failing was based on the lack of creating a balance in purposes, attitudes, values, acts, sayings, and fighting with opposing behaviors of workgroups (Chang et al., 2021). The benefits of values-based and trustworthy leadership traits in public-sector leadership remain to be examined through certain public-sector leaders' lived experiences and leadership philosophies. The importance of values-based public-sector leadership in scholarship is scarce. Future research becomes essential to test and measure the consequence of values-based leadership skills on public sector leaders and encourage future scholars to study this sector of leadership.

Andersen et al. (2018) claimed that the value of leadership was made up of leader and follower relationships, which were vital to an organization's success. The research distinguished between trustworthiness and trustfulness. The researcher explained that the results suggested that

team leaders need to consider how to earn team members' trust and trust the team members (Andersen et al., 2018). Moreover, trusting team members and being trusted by them might have distinct effects on team member effectiveness (Andersen et al., 2018). Scholars found that trust is reciprocal, and relationships built on a firm foundation of trust are both trustful and honest (Bentzen et al., 2020; Boylan & Turner, 2017). Believing in team members and being trusted by them might have distinct effects on team member effectiveness. In the fast-moving global environment, teams are better suited to respond to challenges and deal with the change and complexity of issues more effectively than the top-down authoritarian leadership model.

Fairholm et al. (2018) studied trust, culture, and leadership in the workplace, finding values, norms, beliefs, rituals, myths, physical settings, and material objects resulted in a broader precept they identify as the *trust-culture*. The authors claimed that the theme of projecting trust and its connection values and beliefs of the individual was undeniable. They further developed the concept of trust-culture and studied key trust-culture leadership elements (Fairholm et al., 2018). The researchers identified traits by category and themes, which reveal how leadership develops and cultivates a culture in public administration. According to Fairholm et al. (2018), values-based culture is built on the foundations of language, interpersonal relations, and organizational structures. Fairholm et al. regarded trust as a central variable in local government activity because of its relation to its citizens and found few studies on the matter. According to the authors, the issue of trust as a central variable in the leadership engaged in by local government managers as they relate to the public organization and the public servants within them necessitated further research (Fairholm et al., 2018).

Leadership Qualities and Roles

Leadership qualities offer strategies for motivation, vision sharing, goal achievement, teamwork, and team building. It is often challenging, but it can be mastered by using many feasible methods of leadership skills learned. Leaders will influence others to achieve the goals of any given organization. The leadership qualities needed for success include interacting between the manager (leader), the employees (followers), and the situation. According to Olanrewaju and Okorie (2019), a boss says, "Go," but a leader says, "Let's go." A leader knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way (Olanrewaju & Okorie, 2019).

Successful leaders exhibit specific and common qualities that are learned and improved over time. These include effective communication skills, understanding strategic thinking, goal setting, and competency in leadership abilities (Olanrewaju & Okorie, 2019). However, researchers explained that five specific qualities make an effective leader measuring the basis of leadership qualities against the success of an organization (Madanchian et al., 2017; Moin, 2018). Fundamentals such as being self-aware and prioritizing personal development were noted as a main developmental focus that emphasized emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills. Leadership success is established when leaders recognize the need to refine and improve their skill sets (Madanchian et al., 2017).

Refining such qualities may include improvement in being adaptive, resilient, and accepting of feedback from others. A self-aware leader is an effective listener,open to change. Studies showed that improving leadership qualities incorporated increasing self-awareness behaviors that helped focus on personal development (Madanchian et al., 2017). Experts suggested that such improvements come from setting and prioritizing goals while also taking responsibility for accomplishing such goals (Madanchian et al., 2017). The self-aware leader

recognizes their failing and if they are falling short of achieving a stated goal. Successful leaders emphasize an overall and pertinent goal, avoiding distractions while practicing effective time management skills.

Leadership qualities and roles also focus on developing others within their workforce and delegating, mentoring, coaching, and assigning duties to emphasize a leader's ability to rely on and trust others. An effective leader adapts to their group's readiness and, if willing to, takes specific action and more responsibility (Moin, 2018). Successful leaders have qualities they encourage by incorporating innovation, strategic thinking, and ethical attainment of values. The ability to communicate well is necessary for a successful leader. They must possess a knowledge of motivating others, handling and delegating responsibilities, listening to both ideas and feedback, and of maintaining flexibility for problem-solving in a continuously changing environment (Madanchian et al., 2017).

Use of Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling in Leadership Roles

An introspective look at the significant skills, tactics, and principles needed for successful leadership in an entrepreneurial environment was examined by experts who reviewed methods such as planning, organizing, leading, and controlling methods used by many entrepreneurs in leadership roles (Azad et al., 2017; Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020). Scholars suggested that to succeed in any given organization, one must first understand leadership qualities and review those qualities that encompass planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (Asar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2018; Sayyadi, 2019). Leadership qualities offer strategies for motivation, vision sharing, goal achievement, teamwork, and team building. It is often challenging, but it can be mastered by using many feasible methods of leadership skills learned. Furthermore, when the leadership position of management provided an advantageous way of classifying the activities, scholars

suggested that leaders engage as they attempt to achieve organizational goals (Asar-ul-Haq, & Anwar, 2018; Sayyadi, 2019).

Leadership Styles and Engagement with Ethical Behaviors

There are multiple leadership styles, with experts differing on the traits, engagement, and association with ethical behaviors (Avolio et al., 2020; Guenter et al., 2017). Authentic leadership is one leadership style that emphasizes ethics through legitimacy (Avolio et al., 2020). The legitimacy is developed through relationships between leaders and their workforce based on a trusting and shared ethical foundation. Authentic leadership is used in a simple form. Leaders promote direction and supervisory practices based on their values and convictions, displaying consistency between words and behaviors, with outcomes prevalent for high levels of trust and performance from followers (Guenter et al., 2017).

Researchers examined the shared model for the role of authentic leadership in ethical practices (Avolio et al., 2020; Guenter et al., 2017). Experts observed how shared authentic leadership and productivity effectiveness produced such variables as self-awareness, transparency, processing, and moral perspectives (Gutermann et al., 2017; Lemoine et al., 2018). Gutermann et al. (2017) measured specific variables, such as self-awareness, transparency, processing, and moral perspectives, to find which mediating factors were observed with authentic leadership practices. These mediating factors included trust and coordination and showed high performance based on leadership and team cooperation (Gutermann et al., 2017). The authors found that authentic leadership did influence ethical behaviors in both leaders and employees, and was collectively productive (Gutermann et al., 2017). However, further examination showed teams with high trust and an increased mental model of the group being overall less productive. The authors concluded that there needed to be a balance within authentic

leadership regarding ethical behavior, including self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and moral perspective (Gutermann et al., 2017).

Lemoine et al. (2018) observed the use of the authentic leadership model within the parameters of a leader's abilities with emotional intelligence. The researchers defined emotional intelligence as an ability to recognize, understand, and influence our own emotions, along with the emotions and feelings of others (Lemoine et al., 2018). The application of emotional labor was compounded with workforce energy and effort by managing individual emotions and feelings at the workplace. Emotional intelligence and emotional labor connect to ethical behaviors through authentic leadership. Authentic leadership focused on ethical behavior was emphasized through trust and achieved through a leader's self-discourse, information sharing, and self-expression (Lemoine et al., 2018). Information was processed and balanced before making decisions, regardless of the sentiment of viewpoint. Authentic leaders incorporated internalized moral perspectives, which guided decision-making and behaviors (honesty, altruism, and kindness).

Ethics in Leadership

Ethical foundations for any company begin with understanding specific principles and values imparted upon employees through a business culture (Asif et al., 2019; Hegarty & Moccia, 2018). Experts found such ethics were created to manage employee behavior, actions, and decisions about business practices (Martinez et al., 2021; Metwally et al., 2019). Most businesses have multiple employed persons with different cultural and ethical backgrounds, with opposing perspectives and understanding of ethics. Any business's employees may not always have the same business ethics or belief patterns. They need to recognize the company they work for and their respective ethical foundations (Metwally et al., 2019). A leader pursuing ethical

practices in business applications would consider their workforce to follow such ethical patterns even if the employees' beliefs differ.

Ethical leadership practices suggest that trust is a significant part of the role of a leader. However, experts claimed that trust was not a control mechanism but a substitute for control that reflected a positive attitude toward the intention of others (Grigoropoulous, 2019; Javed et al., 2018). Studies focusing on trust in ethical leadership practices encompassed an examination of trust as a subconscious state containing the purpose of accepting vulnerability based on positive expectations of the intended behavior (Javed et al., 2018). Grigoropoulous (2019) found that psychological motivation transferred through the leader/member's values and beliefs are vital to successful organizational outcomes. Regarding ethical responsibilities, a business leader must be prepared to contend with fundamental, diverse, and significant decision-making issues.

Oswald and Mascarenhas (2019) discussed and encouraged the components of ethical leadership that can be broken into three categories, the leader (themself), the direction (behavior), and the part of the followers. The authors explained that within each category, there were actions, behaviors, beliefs, and characteristics (Oswald & Mascarenhas, 2019). These behaviors and beliefs were critical to ethics (and charisma). Several cases highlight the importance of all three factors. Mo and Shin (2017) showed that ethical leadership was positively related to employees' trust in leaders; and negatively related to employees' destructive behavior toward a direction.

Fayyaz et al. (2019) considered the factors contributing to ethical leadership development. The authors cited that individual circumstances were critical when considering moral and ethical leader antecedents and somewhat based on personality. The authors further noted that when defining ethical leadership, the norm was demonstrated through personal

actions, interpersonal relationships, and conduct promotion within outside environments (Fayyaz et al., 2019). Fayyaz et al. (2019) further supported additional scholars noting that ethical leadership was developed from four constructs: transparency, justice, responsibility, and humanity. The authors emphasized the significance of building an ethical culture because ethical leadership would mediate the relationship between the organization's culture and employee performance.

Studies showed that in terms of business practices, the legal, ethical, and social responsibilities that must be recognized were often based on the industry the business entity belongs to (Kolic & Bari, 2019; Mahmood & Bashir, 2020). However, Nguyen et al. (2021) claimed in using a general sphere, addressing problematic occurrences, and based on the order of importance, that there are vital aspects of legal issues, including if the business complies, what business structure should be implemented, and how do leaders protect their organizations. In ethical practices, experts found that legal issues were wide-ranging, with organizations requiring an understanding of compliance with local, state, and federal paperwork addressed correctly.

However, those legal issues that must be addressed immediately, focusing on compliance, the structure of the business, and protection methods must also include such tangible items as getting rid of waste, to those intangible facets such as how to address potential sexual harassment (Zhang et al., 2018). Scholars claim that to ensure ethical practices, many leaders will prepare with legal representation a list of compliances implemented throughout the organization before, an employee's hiring (Shakeel et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2018). Filing for tax identification, standard business protection agreements, and even determining what type of health care plan should be offered to employees, should fall under the compliance umbrella, and should be considered based on ethical practices.

Focused Ethical Issues

The fundamental topics requiring emphasis on ethical issues in any organization should be centered on the need to focus on trust and integrity (Martinez et al., 2021). These issues include conducting a business that shows honesty and fair treatment for employees and customers. Customers must see that the company is committed to its clientele in a way that is first and foremost steeped in trustworthiness. This practice provides the foundation for a stable relationship and presents an ethical face for the overall business.

A business also must consider its ethical practices with an understanding of diversity issues. With many organizations focusing on culturally appropriate communication and ethical practices for all cultures, leaders of a company's culture should maximize the value of contributions made by its employees (Martinez et al., 2021). Such contributions will provide an environment that recognizes differences in culture and ethnicity among its employees, preparing for a successful and ethical business foundation. Recognizing diversity within the workplace with all of the necessary accommodations, such as cross-cultural communication, also exemplifies the means for a business's ethics within its decision-making methods (Kim et al., 2017). Research shows that when a company recognizes an ethical issue and immediately decides to address and manage such, it exhibits a sound and valued ability to make moral choices for the good of the company and its employees (Hester, 2020; Kim et al., 2017). Thus, such behavior enhances the organizations' reputation for being ethically able to make sound decisions.

Social Responsibility as Ethical Practices

Practicing ethical leadership decisions may incorporate social responsibilities. Social responsibility issues are just as crucial as those legal and ethical issues. They should address those facets that may undermine how the community perceives the company and its actions are

presented to society. Most business leaders consider environmental issues a social responsibility requiring accountability for activities and conduct within their research and development department (Kao et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2021). The ethical framework a business must establish also may focus on its social responsibilities. The benefit for society a company may have must be perceived by its community and recognized as having that concern and consideration for its social responsibilities (Latapi Agudelo et al., 2019; Waldman et al., 2006).

For example, suppose a nuclear plant continues to dump nuclear waste into the local water supply. In that case, they are not only out of compliance with specific state and federal regulations but also present an indifferent attitude toward their immediate community. By dumping the waste, the company shows a lack of care for people within the community and the physical environment: a failure in their social responsibilities.

Organizations today must function with a presence that acts with social responsibility for the world (Latapi Agudelo et al., 2019). When they do not, there is a potential for problems that move into the legal and ethical arenas. In the long run, this can become problematic for the company, and may be the reason for the closure of the business. An example of this social responsibility can begin in a research and development department. The morality of scientists who work with such facets that affect society and the environment must recognize the potential negative consequences of their actions and applications of the invention. The scientific world has innovations, but the company must remain aware of the impact and possible abuses of these advancements – on society and the environment. A leader who wishes to practice ethical leadership must be prepared to regard their social responsibilities as a part of their decision-making processes and, as such, must be willing to respect specific fundamental issues that may come with organizational practices (Kao et al., 2018).

Other Forms of Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is valued by organization stakeholders and considered flexible in its application. For example, a relationship-based approach to successful leadership focuses on a dyadic relationship between leaders and their workforce, called leader-member exchange (Gutermann et al., 2017). Gutermann et al. (2017) found that ethical leadership and empowering leaders produce values that resonate within such applications as a leader-member exchange that fosters cooperative attitudes and behaviors among employees. Hassan et al. (2013) suggested that leaders in public and private organizations can use ethical and empowering behaviors to create quality social exchange relationships associated with positive organizational outcomes. Hassan et al. considered how society is impacted and linked to organizations as customers, employees, suppliers, and shareholders reflect the values and behaviors of those who lead and work within the organization. According to Gutermann et al. (2017), the leader-member exchange examines how leaders' work engagement impacts followers and becomes an underlying engagement process. Gutermann et al. presented an academic study that found promoting work engagement at the managerial (leadership) level is a positive starting point for fostering an organizational culture of engagement. The work revealed that a leader's state of mind concerning their work plays an essential role in shaping their relationships with their followers and their state of mind when working. This study found a significant indirect effect between the leaders' absorption and followers' work engagement through the leader-member exchange.

This scholarly research investigated the leader's perspective on the resource outcomes and benefits leaders obtain from their exchanges with members. Aggarwal et al. (2020) explained leader and member resource categories and discussed the possible two-way (leader and follower) path in resource outcomes. The authors recognized six types: money, goods, services,

information, status, and affiliation. While many other researchers focused on what the leaders may provide to followers, Aggarwal et al. articulated the reverse of most studies. They focused on the members' resources as part of the leader and member relationship exchange. However, Aggarwal et al. offered a different perspective on the leader-member exchange, mainly considering this exchange from the follower's perspective.

Transparency in Ethics

Transparency as part of the organization's culture is key to employee performance. Transparency has a great deal of impact within the role of a leader and thus is key within the construct of ethical leadership. Experts on values-based leadership proposed that for a leader to maintain ethical practices in any organization, they must exhibit transparency with their workforce (Augustsson et al., 2017; Han, 2017; Roelofs, 2018). The understanding of transparency in ethics has become convoluted in its definition. Some scholars claim transparency in leadership is the recognized ability of a leader to be honest and forthcoming in all decisions and actions with a group of employees (Han, 2017; Rego et al., 2021). However, other researchers consider transparency as consistent in recognizing behavior integrity, suggesting that transparency was akin to the credibility of any individual in a leadership position who recognized the need for open and transparent communication, methods of training, and other facets associated with leadership positioning (Augustsson et al., 2017; Roelofs, 2018).

Studies providing support for transparency showed the need for leaders to be transparent (Edmondson, 2018; Lemoine et al., 2018). Edmondson (2018) observed a need for transparency, claiming, "[A]s a leader in this point in time, you don't want to be faking your emotions. There is an enormous need for genuineness and transparency" (p. 21). The effectiveness of other leadership styles, such as authentic, ethical, or transformational, fails to provide full disclosure or

transparency from its leaders with the workforce. However, other experts suggest this finding is untrue and that there is an overlap in these models: transparency is a feature showing up in ethical, authentic, and transformational leadership (Kim et al., 2018; Mo & Shin, 2017). What is necessary for understanding leadership transparency and ethical behavior is that any given leader models that hold transparency within the construct hold transparency within the architecture frame (Hoch et al., 2018; Lemoine et al., 2018).

Brunet et al. (2020) explained how the impact of ethical leaders, fundamental for transparency in ethical action, was relative to organizational change. The scholars revealed the significance of employees' perceptions regarding the openness of ethical leaders. Positive perceptions of the leader's corporate justice stance correlate positively to the leader's influence on positive organizational change. Brunet et al. encouraged transparency when communicating organizational changes. The authors also promoted the inclusion of critical stakeholders within the decisions. If the follower's perception of the leader is positive, the essential stakeholders may help infuse a ripple effect concerning positive organizational change.

Values-Based Leadership

Values-based leadership has been broadly defined as leadership based on foundational moral principles or values such as integrity, empowerment, and social responsibility (Denier & Dhaene, 2019; Rao, 2017). The basis for this research aimed to explore the leadership values of leaders and how their leadership styles aligned with the characteristics of value-driven, purpose-laden, spiritually motivated, and authentic leadership instincts. Scholars providing empirical data that included a ranking of the essential values of the last decade suggested that the implementation of values-based leadership would promote overall higher rates of organizational success. However, studies showed that values-based leadership contraindicates many past

leadership practices that were considered successful, based on an overabundance of challenges with implementing this leadership method (Stevens et al., 2019, 2020).

Experts examined values-based leadership and agreed there was a need for such practices; however, the same experts felt the implementation of such was both ambiguous and challenging in its construct (Kelleher & Thelen, 2019; Roelofs, 2018). The most recognized challenge with this leadership method was that many leaders ignore all the steps and engage in unethical practices that suit their needs or help with instant gratification success (Roelofs, 2018). Roelofs (2018) identified four obstacles to trustworthy relationships: poor accountability, prior accounts of reduced trust, weak corporate authority or leadership, and organizational structure. All impact a failure of implementation with values-based leadership (Roelofs, 2018).

Researchers also recognized the importance of values in leadership from organizational culture (Vogelgesang et al., 2020). Scholars recommended that leaders closely examine their leaders' behaviors and the values upon which individuals and organizations govern (Elhret, 2018; Lee et al., 2021). Studies outlining four attributes of values-based leaders' engagement: integrity, trust, listening, and respect for followers were suggested as attributes of nurture followership (Elhret, 2018). Such obstacles in the "cheating culture" promote a public witness to business and government sector scandals.

Therefore, Hester (2020) claimed that organizations must recognize the need to make the values and beliefs of their leaders transparent and ethical to improve the trust between leaders and the workforce. Jiang et al. (2020) believed that to be successful, leaders must maintain a positive reputation, allowing for transparent communication and embracing their values while projecting them onto followers. Such an approach would allow for understanding how values and beliefs impact them and the organization. Experts felt that creating a culture that integrated the

organization's ideas and aligned them with its behavior was critical to optimizing performance. Other studies concluded that business leaders and society who carefully examined the behaviors of their leaders and the values upon which individuals and organizations govern showed a higher percentage of organizational success. According to Koehn (2019), when leaders identify organizational values, they provide employees with an internal compass that allows them to act independently and responsibly, creating a values-based culture.

Leaders who apply values-based leadership believe that leaders should draw on self-determined values. Values-based leadership theory asserts that individuals find motivation through self-proclaimed values and live according to these beliefs. Scholars suggested that an individual's values are a natural motivator in leadership behavior (Andersen et al., 2018; Denier & Dhaene, 2019). Leaders need to refer to their ethical beliefs when aspiring to make decisions. Leaders should connect with their followers' values, making them more likely to act.

Van Knippenberg (2019) defined two leadership dimensions of values-based leadership: 1) making values visible and meaningful, and 2) creating moral engagement in the organization. Gingerich (2020) elaborated by adding three dimensions: 1) goals must reflect terminal values, 2) leadership behavior must reflect instrumental values, and 3) leaders must create linguistic tools that allow values to be integrated into the leadership process. Transparent and meaningful characteristics that are terminal, instrumental, and integrated into the values of the individuals are the underpinning of values-based leadership (Van Knippenberg, 2019). The values-based leadership approach presents a moral compass that weaves a thread of trustworthiness throughout the organization. Sltten et al. (2021) recommended that successful companies of the future would base their mission and strategies around creating, measuring, and managing trustworthiness and developing leader/follower relationships through shared and presented values and beliefs.

Scott et al. (2020) agreed that leaders need an integration of values, suggesting that values-based leadership refers to a process whereby leaders transmit values messages that resonate with employees. The authors admitted interest in developing values-based leaders but cautioned that values-based leadership was not a panacea for all ethical situations and problems (Scott et al., 2020). The research recognized that a values-based leadership approach must be understood within the context of the organization and society. Furthermore, future research must understand the relationship between values congruences and socialized charismatic leadership in the values alignment process.

Public Sector Leadership

The researcher's examination of existing studies also revealed that public sector leaders have difficulty developing trustworthy relationships. Society may need a new paradigm to understand how falling trust in government makes it harder to solve problems. Stevens et al. (2020) reported that Americans were worried that distrust in the government and others was taking a toll on the nation. That distrust gets in the way of solving some pressing problems due to a "…broken political culture, which keeps neighbors apart" (Stevens et al., 2020, p. 9). For this reason, it was more evident that a values-based leadership approach was productive and would promote success. Researchers viewed how public officials described their style of leadership (Andersen et al., 2018; Kolic & Bari, 2019). Contemporary public leaders embraced leadership in the public sector using values-based leadership. And if values-based leadership built follower confidence that affected public sector leadership outcomes.

Further, Nita (2017) stated that those in the public sector leadership were based on a relational endeavor, which occurred between and among individuals. Researchers further discussed meaningful work in the public sector, indicating that work was an essential mediator

between leadership and outcomes, in line with theoretical expectations. The role of work meaningfulness was analyzed as a potential mediator between leadership and outcomes, both inside and beyond the work context. Zaharris et al. (2017) highlighted the importance of studying and improving leadership in the public sector and the need to relate leadership with more meaningful work.

Political Leader Leadership

The turbulence of contemporary world issues coupled with contentious leadership styles has created a situation where the public suspects their elected leaders. Raine and Perrin (2019) noted that confidence and public trust have eroded because of repeated unethical circumstances. Research demonstrated that many people think cleaning up the trust environment is necessary. Furthermore, experts reported that 68% said it was essential to repair the public's level of confidence in the federal government. Fifty eight percent said the same about improving confidence in fellow Americans, (Baker et al., 2020; Shao & Hao, 2020). It has been discovered over the last decade, that several organizations have collapsed because of severe ethical breaches. The evolution of the political realm has deteriorated from the days when a political icon was a valued and trusted member of society, with researchers questioning where the break-down occurred (Efianda & Iswahyuni, 2021; Helms, 2020; Jiang et al., 2020).

Helms (2020) found a ubiquitous phenomenon within the succession of political leadership. The author examined and developed an integrated perspective of crucial aspects of leadership succession at the level of political chief executives in democracies and autocracies. The researcher surveyed several traits that challenged recognized ideas and typecasts of leadership succession in political administrations. The emerging patterns included succession and transitions, term limits, incumbency advantage and longevity, institutionalization and

openness, political dynasties, and leaders selecting their successors (Helms, 2020). The values examined by Helms (2020) within political leadership in democratic and nondemocratic regimes were correctly assumed with local stereotypes. They paralleled the belief that leadership in any realm conceptualized the political leaders themselves with no input from the public they lead.

Mozumder (2021) used a qualitative study interviewing 65 political leaders to understand if ethical leadership practices restored the trust of their constituents. Expert examinations of political leadership and trust in these leaders were presented with qualitative and quantitative methodologies and observing political leaders' leadership styles (Bentzen et al., 2020; Efianda & Iswahyuni, 2021; Mozumder, 2021). The author highlighted the diversity in leadership styles and focused on ethical leadership traits using Brown et al.'s (2005) definition of ethical leadership (Mozumder, 2021). A thematic analysis produced findings that exemplified such leadership characteristics in the participants as honesty, fairness, concern for others, trustworthiness, and integrity. However, public leadership in ethical leadership practices did not show a regulatory framework of being a moral leader, which Mozumder (2021) contended differed from an ethical leader. The author suggested that morality and ethical practices were not interchangeable, although society uses these terms as such. Mozumder showed a conclusion from the participant's perspectives that there was a decline in public trust for political leaders based on unethical behaviors from those men and women in government and elected offices.

Although issues were found based on leaders having a poor personal moral framework, which influences their actions, there was a distinct lack of code of conduct for these political leaders. According to Mozumder (2021), examples of moral actions or being an ethical and political leader set a tone at the top; challenge those who do not behave ethically; and encourage, support, and reward those who perform and conduct themselves well. The level of public trust in

political leaders is likely to gradually increase when politicians continue to tell the truth, keep their promises, or explain to the public why they have been unable to do so. Prolonged ethical and truthful engagement with citizens would serve both leaders and community members over extended periods (Mozumder, 2021).

Summary and Conclusions

The existing literature revealed that a values-based leadership approach and grounded value-laden leadership philosophy is both emergent and advantageous within a given organization. The literature review found some gaps, such as a dearth of research on values-based leadership from the leader's perspective. However, existing academic scholarship suggested a connection between individuals in leadership positions successfully employing values and its relation to developing trust in leadership (Madanchian et al., 2017; Moin, 2018; Olanrewaju & Okorie, 2019). Overall, the literature demonstrated the significance of using values-based leadership to examine the lived experience of leaders in their journey of building and cultivating trustworthy relationships.

Researchers demonstrated that trust in public sector leadership remains near historic lows. Those who hold positions of power and responsibility are rated low in empathy, transparency, ethics, and the ability to be more grounded (Aggarwal et al., 2020; Augustsson et al., 2017; Gutermann et al., 2017; Han, 2017; Rego et al., 2021; Roelofs, 2018). Past researchers argued for all leaders; stating that public sector, corporate entities, and nonprofit organizations need a moral foundation, aligned with the collective organization's personal values and beliefs (Helms, 2020; Metwally et al., 2019).

Society bears witness to the result of mistrust and challenges in solving societal problems. Experts question if developing a new value-laden trust paradigm is critical to

successfully implementing public policy solutions (Boylan & Turner, 2017; Fairholm et al., 2018). Nevertheless, there continues to be a lack of existing research to answer such questions. Much of the research reviewed called for public sector leaders to build follower/trust bridges and develop a trust culture (Mayes et al., 2019; Smikle, 2019; Stewart, 2019). However, this research focuses on value in leadership, not values-based leadership abilities (Andersen et al., 2018; Bentzen et al., 2020; Chang et al., 2021; Kjellström et al., 2020; Mayes et al., 2019). People should recognize their values and the value of their work for those values to align with the values and beliefs of their organizations. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to understand how experienced elected officials lead and respond, and how values-based leadership characteristics impact public-sector leadership. An understanding of various leadership characteristics and whether values-based leadership traits emerge in the styles of public sector leaders were lacking, with few studies exploring the necessity of implementing values-based leadership methods (Denier & Dhaene, 2019; Rao, 2017; Stevens et al., 2019, 2020).

Following the recommendations from several experts, I questioned how elected leaders felt about their everyday life experiences. Thus, this study may become a foundation for future scholarship related to values-based leadership (Elhret, 2018; Lee et al., 2021). This research was intended to determine how value-based leadership influenced political leaders. Values-based leadership prompted learning how public sector leaders made decisions and developed more trustworthy relationships with their followers (Helms, 2020; Mozumder, 2021). The benefits of values-based and trustworthy leadership traits were examined through certain political leaders' lived experiences and leadership philosophies. Future research becomes essential to test and measure the consequence of value-based leadership based on the perceptions of political leaders.

Chapter 3 takes this purpose and establishes the research methodology and design, with the justification of why both were selected and appropriate for the exploration. Chapter 3 reiterates the problem, purpose, and research questions guiding this study. I introduce the study's sampling method, along with the population, target population, and recruitment efforts of the sample. Chapter 3 presents a discussion on the role of a researcher, the explanation of the instrumentation used for collecting data, and the plan used for data analysis. I explain the issues of trustworthiness and present all ethical considerations.

Chapter 3: Methodology

We do not know how state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. Political leadership was the original context from which leadership studies arose (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1994), yet there was limited innovation in understanding political leadership in recent years. At the same time, an increasingly polarized and divisive political climate has escalated the challenges for and demands made of political leaders (McLean & Ewart, 2020; Pierson & Schickler, 2020). This issue creates the need for innovative ways of understanding and approaching political leadership. Values-based leadership, a leadership theory from business administration, may offer such an innovative tool.

Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. Values-based leadership is an approach to leadership in which the leader considers values—both their own and those of other key stakeholders—at the forefront of the decision-making process. The study was guided by one overarching research question and three sub questions as follows:

R1: How do state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings?

S1: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives?

S2: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building consensus?

S3: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building followings?

Chapter 3 presents the research methods by which the current study is carried out. This chapter begins with a discussion of the qualitative research methodology, followed by the transcendental phenomenology research design. The setting and context of the study are discussed, followed by the participants and recruitment. Next, the data collection methods are addressed, followed by the data analysis methods. The chapter addresses key issues of trustworthiness and research ethics. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's methodological limitations.

Research Methodology

The research used qualitative methodology. Qualitative research explores and describes a key phenomenon of interest (Taylor et al., 2015). The qualitative paradigm of research is holistic, seeking to examine the entirety of the phenomenon rather than being limited to a narrow set of specific variables (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). A qualitative researcher explores the entirety of that central phenomenon using the subjective experiences of individuals who have firsthand experience with it (Taylor et al., 2015). This approach yields high volumes of rich data, allowing for a deeply descriptive examination of the phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). However, this depth limits the breadth that can be practically achieved; as such, qualitative researchers draw data from relatively small sample sizes (Taylor et al., 2015). The depth of data achieved with a qualitative research method also means that qualitative research is ideal for capturing the contextual issues surrounding the phenomenon of interest (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Qualitative researchers seek to understand the phenomenon in context, rather than seeking to isolate it (Taylor et al., 2015). In addition, the open-ended exploration of qualitative research is ideal for

exploring new theoretical grounds because it does not need to be as deeply anchored within the purview of existing theory (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

This study was aligned with the strengths of the qualitative research method in several ways. First, the study was open-ended and exploratory. Rather than examining specific variables, the research examined the broad phenomenon of values-based leadership used by politicians. Second, this values-based leadership study was an inherently contextual topic in that its usage connected the leader's values with the values of other key stakeholders. Hence, leadership could not truly be values-based, absent the specific framework in which it existed. Third, the study targeted a population for which recruiting large sample sizes would be impossible, making smaller qualitative sample sizes ideal. Finally, and most importantly, the study represented an expansion of values-based leadership theory outside its original business domain. Therefore, the study explored new theoretical territory, a deeply qualitative research objective. Consequently, a qualitative research method was a strong fit.

Research Design

Within the qualitative approach to research, there are numerous research designs. The research design adopted for this study was transcendental phenomenology. Phenomenology is a qualitative research design descended from the philosophical tradition of the same name (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). In phenomenological research, the focus is on understanding the lived experiences of the study participants (Moustakas, 1994). These lived experiences are then synthesized to uncover the essence of the shared experience (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). Phenomenology focuses on rich, deep descriptions of an individual’s experience (Moustakas, 1994). Although qualitative research focuses, to some extent, on subjective lived experiences, a phenomenological researcher makes those experiences the primary focus (Giorgi & Giorgi,

2003). The strength of phenomenology is in extracting rich data from small samples, even by qualitative standards. In addition, the philosophical tradition of phenomenological research has developed methods for addressing researcher bias, to a greater degree than techniques found in other qualitative research designs (Moustakas, 1994).

The phenomenological research design was well-suited to the study for several reasons. First, state and national-level politicians were challenging populations to access. Therefore, a research design such as phenomenology that can maximize the utility extracted from a small sample size was ideal. Second, the usage of values-based leadership was subjective and deeply embedded in the lived experiences of those leaders. Therefore, a research design focused on understanding lived experiences to a greater extent was appropriate. Finally, as a researcher, I had biases and preconceptions about political leadership stemming from my experience as a politician. The phenomenological research method offered uniquely effective tools for minimizing the effects of those biases and preconceptions on the study results. Thus, employing a phenomenological research design benefited me as a researcher and helped improve the results.

There are two main types of phenomenological research: transcendental phenomenology and empirical phenomenology. Transcendental phenomenology, proposed by Moustakas (1994), focuses on a researcher's use of bracketing. In transcendental phenomenology, the researcher must apply epoche and carefully set aside their preconceptions, biases, and prior experience, transcending their circumstances and viewing the data with new eyes (Moustakas, 1994). By contrast, Giorgi and Giorgi's (2003) empirical phenomenology does not use the epoche principle, nor expect the researcher to bracket their experiences fully. Instead, empirical phenomenologists address researcher bias in a way more typical of qualitative inquiry and focus on the empirical examination of lived experiences (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003).

In this study, a transcendental approach was favored. The strongest reason for adopting a phenomenological research design is the ability it offered me, as the researcher, to address biases through bracketing and applying epoche. Although Giorgi and Giorgi's (2003) criticisms of the approach were not groundless—no bracketing would likely be perfect—the bracketing process was an ideal I aspired to meet as a researcher. Even if the bracketing process had been imperfect, using it made me more aware of my biases than otherwise and offered me a cognitive template from which to strive for neutrality. Hence, through transcendental phenomenology, I expected to come closer to viewing the data with impartial eyes.

Setting/Context

The study was not set in any specific geographic location but focused on the United States. The population were state and national level political leaders, specifically, state governors and legislators, and members of the U.S. Congress. This study population allowed me to examine the usage of values-based leadership by politicians with significant influence. Moreover, politicians at the state and national levels had wider constituencies than local politicians. This situation made it so that they were more likely to need to balance competing values in the way the theory of values-based leadership addressed. Politicians who had only smaller, more uniform constituencies had significantly less work to balance their values with those of their key stakeholders.

Participants and Recruitment

Within the overall population, the target population was all U.S. representatives, U.S. state governors, New York state assembly members, and New York state senators. The inclusion criteria were that the participants be elected to their position (rather than appointed) and that they served in such a position. No other exclusion criteria were applied, given that these criteria

already significantly limited the population under study. Moreover, other criteria, such as being at least 18 years of age, were inherent in the population definition. A further limitation was that the target population was delimited to those political figures with whom I had a reasonable chance of obtaining an interview using my existing connections as a former elected official in the state of New York.

As suggested by Mason (2010), qualitative sample sizes are determined by saturation, not an *a priori* sample size calculation. Saturation refers to the point at which new participants cease contributing new ideas to the research. Hence, saturation can only be determined after data collection has begun. However, the expected sample size for the study was seven participants, which was within the norms for a phenomenological study. In addition to the requirements of saturation, the study was constrained by which participants were willing to participate, as there were relatively limited prospective participants. Appendix B contains a list of prospective participants. To the extent possible, the participants were balanced between Republicans and Democrats (with Independents being considered a member of the party with which they caucused).

Recruitment of participants was conducted on an individual basis. I contacted each prospective participant using a combination of elected officials' publicly available contact information and the channels available to me as a former elected official. Each participant was provided with information regarding the study. If they expressed interest in participating, they were provided and agreed with the formal informed consent documentation (see Appendix C). Once a participant agreed to the informed-consent documentation, an interview was scheduled.

Data Collection Methods

Prior to any data collection, IRB approval for the study was sought. Once IRB approval was obtained, participants were contacted and recruited following the procedure described in the prior section. Once a participant was recruited, an interview time was scheduled. The interview was conducted online using Zoom or other comparable teleconferencing software. Each interview was audio recorded. I transcribed each interview within 24 hours of the initial interview. The participant was offered a chance to review and correct their transcripts as necessary if they so desired. Once the transcripts were finalized, they were imported into NVivo qualitative data analysis software.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were the primary and only data source for the study. The semi-structured interview is the preferred method of collecting qualitative data in most research (Kallio et al., 2016). In semi-structured interviews, the interview was partially structured. The structured portion of the interview was derived from an interview guide (Appendix A) prepared in advance. The interview guide contained a set of sample questions and key topics to guide the interview. These helped to ensure that the interview covered the ground necessary to answer the research questions. The unstructured portion of the interview was that I could have asked unlisted probing or follow-up questions to explore each participant's responses further. In addition, the participant could have volunteered extra relevant information or digressed on relevant topics, adding extra data. This balance of structure and flexibility made the semi-structured interview a strong and versatile data collection strategy.

Each interview was expected to last approximately 60 minutes. The introductory script for the interviews is found in Appendix D. Although informed consent served to familiarize participants with the study, it further ensured that they were aware of what was expected so that

the interview went smoothly. Considering the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and changing protective measures, the interviews were conducted online using Zoom or other teleconferencing software to protect the participants and me. In addition, the simple and straightforward nature of the online interviews made the participants more likely to agree to participating in the research. An audio recording of the interviews was made through the teleconferencing software's built-in recording features.

Data Analysis Methods

Once the data were collected, the data analysis began. All data analysis was done with NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The data analysis followed the conventions of qualitative inquiry and used Clarke and Braun's (2014) six-step qualitative thematic analysis approach combined with aspects of phenomenological eidetic reduction (Moustakas, 1994). Per Moustakas (1994), I began the data analysis process by applying the principle of epoche. This process involved a reflective session in which I reflected on my experiences as a politician and all my knowledge from my experience and studies. I did not only mentally reflect on these key topics but also documented them in a research journal prepared for personal usage. Once I identified the key sources of my biases, preconceptions, and subject area knowledge, I engaged in bracketing by purposefully setting these aside. If I could bracket successfully, I began the thematic analysis process by considering the data with new eyes.

The first step of qualitative thematic analysis was to build familiarity (Clarke & Braun, 2014). This step involved carefully and purposefully reading and rereading each interview transcript. Doing this not only cemented my viewing of the data with new eyes but also helped me build strong baseline familiarity with the data.

The second step was to perform coding (Clarke & Braun, 2014). In the coding process, I developed codes that represented the essential ideas found across the data. Example codes include ideas such as “values” or “constituents.” I coded from a phenomenological perspective. Thus, I did not develop an initial codebook defined by my preconceptions; instead, all codes were emergent and developed based on the data.

Once I developed codes, the third step was to develop preliminary themes (Clarke & Braun, 2014). Themes represented the larger ideas in the data that constituted the combination of codes in key ways. Examples of these combinations include patterns, repetition, or highly relevant co-occurrences. From a phenomenological perspective, the themes represented the essence of the lived experience; hence, I developed themes with great care.

The fourth step was to validate the themes (Clarke & Braun, 2014). In this step, I carefully compared each theme back against the data. This validation process helped ensure that I successfully bracketed out my preconceptions and correctly understood the data. Any themes that did not accurately and completely reflect the data were revised until they worked.

Then, in the fifth step, the themes were cross compared (Clarke & Braun, 2014). In this step, I considered the themes against each other, ensuring that they were sufficiently unique and that all themes represented ideas that had been fully developed to a similar extent. Any themes changed in this step were resubjected to Step 4.

The final step in the data analysis process was listing and recontextualizing (Clarke & Braun, 2014). This sixth step of the data analysis process comprised Chapters 4 and 5 of the research study. In these chapters, the results were reported and contextualized in terms of the research context and the broader literature surrounding it.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the qualitative equivalent of validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Trustworthiness refers to ensuring that the study's results are accurate and meaningful in various ways. Several key aspects of trustworthiness were addressed in this study. First, transferability is the dimension of trustworthiness that relates to quantitative external validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). However, qualitative research is not intended to be generalized. Instead, to achieve transferability, I carefully documented my research type and the context in which the study was conducted. This process would help future policymakers or researchers who read the results to determine where they were obtained.

Another key strategy for trustworthiness was alignment. Careful alignment was maintained to ensure that the research reflected the original problem. The research problem gave rise to the purpose of the research and the guiding questions. Moreover, the interview guide in Appendix A was carefully developed to address the research questions. IRB review and expert panel review helped to ensure that the interview questions were accurate, appropriate, and consistent.

Trustworthiness was pursued using transcript review. Transcript reviews involved giving each participant a chance to review their interview transcripts. In this way, the participant ensured that the interview conveyed their perceptions and experiences accurately.

A final strategy to enhance trustworthiness was bracketing. As a part of conducting phenomenological research, I applied the principle of epoche and carefully bracketed aside my context. This process is described in greater depth in the preceding section. Although bracketing was imperfect, the rigorous process of shedding biases and preconceptions helped reduce the risk of researcher bias in the study.

Ethical Processes

Ethical procedures were adhered to at all stages of the study. This process began with seeking and obtaining IRB approval before recruiting any participants. No specific study site was used, so site authorization was unnecessary. Informed consent was adhered to carefully; all participants needed to physically agree to an informed consent letter (Appendix C) to participate. Study expectations were laid out again in the interview introduction (Appendix D). Participation in the study was fully voluntary. Given the power of participants, no degree of coercion was anticipated as a concern during recruitment. Participants could have withdrawn from the study at any time before publication by contacting me with a formal written and signed withdrawal request.

Participation was wholly confidential. Only the approved university staff members and I had access to the participants' identities. Participants' data were stripped of identifying information prior to the data analysis. Each participant was assigned a codename (pseudonym), such as Aaron or Judy, in the reporting of results or when invoking any direct quotations. All study data were stored in a password-protected folder on a flash drive. The flash drive was stored in a locked drawer of my desk. All data will be retained for five years following the study's publication (March 2023), then shall be completely deleted by reformatting the flash drive, shredding notes and files folders, and permanently deleting other stored digital files from the personal computer.

Limitations

Limitations are weaknesses or drawbacks to a study (Taylor et al., 2015). Limitations primarily arise from the methodology (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). There were several limitations

in this study. Each limitation was necessary and was not expected to prove detrimental to the study's overall objectives.

The first limitation was that the study relied on self-reported data. This reliance meant that participants might not have answered accurately because of social desirability bias. However, this limitation was unavoidable in qualitative research. Measures were taken to decrease the risk, including confidentiality for participants.

A second limitation was that the study population, state and national political leaders, was difficult to access. This issue limited the sample size possible. However, as detailed above, only these politicians could make values-based leadership significant. My status as an ex-political leader should help ameliorate this limitation and facilitate population access.

A third limitation was that the results might not generalize well. This limitation was required by qualitative research, which focused on smaller, less generalizable samples. The effects of this limitation were expected to be offset by the larger volume and richness of data resulting from a qualitative research approach.

A final key limitation was that the research did not include a way to measure the effects of the political leaders' values-based leadership efforts. This limitation was inherent in the phenomenological design, which focused on direct interview data. However, should the results show that political leaders widely used values-based leadership, future quantitative researchers might make up for this limitation by studying the effects of using values-based leadership styles, approaches, and techniques.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

This chapter contains the presentation of the findings of this study. Political leaders, as public figures, are elected in part due to the values they uphold (Raine & Perrin, 2019). However, as public servants, political leaders may also face the problem of balancing their values with the values of the political opposition (Garg & Jain, 2013; O'Toole, 1996). This study addressed this social problem through the lens of values-based leadership. Values-based leadership is a leadership theory developed by Kraemer (2011) within the business managerial context. Kraemer posited that a leader who made decisions based on careful consideration of the values held the values of others impacted by the decision. The four pillars or principles of values-based leadership include: self-reflection, balance, self-confidence, and humility (Kraemer, 2011). The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings. The following research question and sub questions guided this study:

R1: How do state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings?

S1: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives?

S2: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building consensus?

S3: What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building followings?

This chapter contains descriptions of the demographics of the seven state and national political leaders, as well as descriptive information about the individual interviews. The data collection, data analysis, and trustworthiness techniques are also described. The findings are then presented in themes, descriptions, and excerpts from the data to answer the research question and sub questions. A summary is provided to conclude the chapter.

Demographics

The sample of this study was seven state and national political leaders who were duly elected and currently serving officials. The sample comprised three females and four males ages 37 to 81 years old. Three out of seven participants were from the Midwest, while the remaining were from the Northeast. I assigned each participant a code to ensure their identity was kept confidential. Table 3 contains a summary of the demographic information provided by the participants.

Table 3

Demographic Information

Participant	Sex	Party	Office
Robert	Male	Democrats	State
Mark	Male	Democrats	State
Susan	Female	Republican	National / Federal
Aaron	Male	Republican	State
Judy	Female	Democrats	National / Federal
Kelly	Female	Democrats	State
Oscar	Male	Republican	State

All participants were interviewed once, and all voluntarily shared their lived experiences of using personal values-based traits to make policy conclusions. The interviews were conducted via Zoom from March 2022 to June 2022. The interview duration ranged from 30 to 81 minutes, while the transcript pages ranged from 11 to 58.

Six participants had not heard of Kraemer's (2011) value-based leadership theory. However, all seven participants agreed to the four essential principles of self-reflection, balance, self-confidence, and humility. Six participants also identified their top five leadership values based on Žydžiūnaitė's (2018) model, while one participant, Oscar, identified his top three values. The participants' top-ranked values are summarized in Table 4. The second column contains the most important value identified by the participant, while the third the sixth columns contain other important values arranged in no particular order.

Table 4

Top Leadership Values by Participant

Participant	Most Important Value	Important Value	Important Value	Important Value	Important Value
1	service	wisdom	authenticity	acceptance of complexity	respect for teamwork
2	acceptance of complexity	wisdom	integrity	humility	respect for teamwork
3	self-discipline	integrity	humility	respect	service
4	courage	wisdom	self-discipline	humility	integrity
5	integrity	respect	character	respect for team work	acceptance of complexity
6	integrity	wisdom	authenticity	respect for teamwork	Courage
7	courage	humility	wisdom	n/a	n/a

Data Collection

The data collection methods followed the qualitative transcendental phenomenological research design to explore how duly elected and currently serving state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build following. After getting the approval of the IRB for the study, I contacted and recruited political figures through their publicly available contact information and the contact channels available to me as a former elected official. I also provided each participant with formal informed consent documentation (Appendix C) and detailed information about the study. Those participants who

expressed interest in joining the study signed physically or electronically and returned the informed consent document to me.

A total of seven duly elected and currently serving state and national political leaders in the United States agreed to participate. After obtaining their consent to participate, the interview date and time were scheduled for each participant. I used the Zoom video conferencing platform and audio-recorded all the interviews with the consent of the participants during the interview. The interviews ranged from 30 to 81 minutes. I started each interview with a brief background of the study. I assured the participants of strict confidentiality and privacy, and obtained permission through the informed consent documentation, that the information gathered from them would be treated as privileged and confidential. Using the interview guide questions I developed, the participants shared their experiences applying values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followers. Additional probing questions were also used, as needed, to deepen the discussion about the research topic. The data-gathering process started in March 2022 and ended in June 2022.

No unusual conditions were observed or seen during the data collection process. There was also no need for a second or follow-up interview for all participants. Data saturation was achieved during the sixth participant's interview because no new information surfaced that was not yet cited in the first five interviews.

Following each interview, I verified the audio recordings and completed verbatim transcripts of the interviews within 24 hours. I invited all the participants to conduct member checking by sending a copy of their interview transcripts to review their responses and the accuracy of the transcription. Because all participants agreed on the interview transcripts, no changes were made. I used these member-checked transcriptions for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis procedures were based on Clarke and Braun's (2014) six-step qualitative thematic analysis approach combined with aspects of phenomenological eidetic reduction (Moustakas, 1994). I used NVivo qualitative data analysis software to organize and categorize the data. I started the analysis process by practicing epoche to set aside my views of the phenomenon, focusing instead on the views reported by the participants on how they employed values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followers. I reflected on my experiences and knowledge as a politician. I also identified and journaled personal biases, preconceptions, and subject area knowledge to proceed with the thematic analysis process.

Data familiarization is the first stage of Clarke and Braun's (2014) thematic analysis process, in which a researcher carefully and purposefully reads and rereads each interview transcript to develop a good guideline for familiarizing with the data. I highlighted any words, phrases, or paragraphs relevant to the research topic. I created codes found throughout the data that represented the key ideas on how state and national political leaders used values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build following in the next step of the thematic analysis, which was the coding process. Because I employed a phenomenological perspective in coding, all codes that emerged and developed were based on the data rather than my preconceptions.

After generating the codes, I formulated the preliminary themes by combining patterns, repetition, and highly relevant co-occurrences to represent the larger ideas in the data. Several preliminary themes emerged from interpreting and analyzing the comprehensive list of codes.

These themes represented the lived experiences of state and national political leaders who used values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followers.

I reflected on and compared the initial themes and raw data to validate them. I ensured that I bracketed out my preconceptions and correctly understood the data. I also revised the themes that did not accurately and completely reflect the data. The themes were then cross compared to ensure that they were sufficiently unique and represented ideas that were fully developed to a similar extent. After comparing these preliminary themes to the interview transcripts to answer the research question, several final themes emerged. Each finalized theme was given a name and a brief description to verify that no themes were duplicated. The themes that had been finalized were then compiled.

Preliminary themes were validated to generate the finalized themes by reflecting on and comparing the themes and raw data. I ensured that my preconceptions were bracketed out and the data were comprehended. I also revised the themes that did not represent the data. The themes were then cross-checked to ensure that they were sufficiently distinct, had appropriate support based on the codes generated, and represented ideas on the research topic.

Several themes emerged after comparing the themes to the interview transcripts to answer the research question and sub questions. I gave each one a name and a brief description to guarantee that no themes overlapped. The finalized themes were then compiled. A report on the themes is provided in the next subsections.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I used various techniques during data collection and analysis to ensure that all data were represented truthfully and relevantly by establishing the trustworthiness of this study. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), transferability is associated with the external validity of this

study. Thus, I thoroughly described and provided a thick description of this qualitative research's documentation, including the sample used, participant recruitment and selection, sampling methods, data collection, and data analysis. By providing detailed descriptions of the procedures and documentation of the study, other researchers and future policymakers reading the results can determine where I have obtained the study findings and in what other instances these results can reasonably be used and applied.

I also used another strategy to address the research questions. The research problem was carefully aligned and maintained through thoughtfully developing the interview guide (Appendix A). I sought the IRB's and expert panel's assistance in reviewing and ensuring that the interview guide questions were relevant and suitable.

Lastly, I enhanced the trustworthiness of this study by utilizing bracketing. I carefully separated myself and my personal context. I applied epoche to remove personal biases and preconceptions, lowering the risk of researcher bias and enhancing objectivity during data analysis.

Findings

This section contains the presentation of the findings. The findings were developed from the thematic analysis with phenomenological eidetic reduction. Eight themes emerged to answer the research questions. Table 5 provides an overview of the themes with the research question/sub question alignment, number of supporting participants, and references in the data. The themes are described in the following subsections and excerpts from the data.

Table 5

Overview of Themes

R1	Theme	No. of participants	No. of references
S1	Using values-based leadership allowed them to go against other leaders to help their constituents address their needs	7	33
	Using values-based leadership involved reflecting before making decisions regarding policies that affect their constituents	7	33
S2	Using values-based leadership improved their understanding of their constituents and how to address their needs	6	22
	Using values-based leadership tended to create respect other leaders, staff, and constituents	5	15
	Using values-based leadership helped maintain their relationships through transparent communication	7	14
S3	Using values-based leadership allowed them to present their values honestly	6	14
	Using values-based leadership enhanced their capacity to understand the situation	6	11
	Using values-based leadership entailed prioritizing public interest	6	9

Theme 1: Going Against Other Leaders to Help Address Constituent Needs

All participants perceived that value-based passing policy initiatives might mean that they needed to go against the other political leaders to uphold the values that they and their constituents upheld. Six participants disclosed that contradicting opposing political values was not simply about benefitting themselves and their constituents. Their counterarguments were based on new and useful information from researchers and subject matter experts that would benefit most constituents. Mark shared voting experiences on policies implemented at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which making decisions was a crucial and urgent task for a political leader. Mark revealed how they consulted medical experts to provide a solution to the crisis. Mark stated,

> *We got the Mayo Clinic, the University of Minnesota I got some other you know infectious disease experts, and I said. What would be the most effective way, and what should we try and do in building a testing and technology system to get a handle on what*

we're up to. And they work together we work something out, there was no guarantee it was going to work. We used all that to prove you know thought it would work and then going up for the public and saying we're going to create the best testing system in the country.

The political leaders in this study tended to experience conflicts with other leaders when passing policy initiatives. Using values-based leadership allowed the participants to remain unmoved in their decisions despite contradictions from others. Mark believed that policies proposed by law makers were not necessarily right or wrong, as political leaders tended to have good intentions for their constituents.

The participants described the phenomenon of "acceptance of complexity." Mark, along with Aaron, Kelly, and Oscar, emphasized that the value they upheld when passing policies was the public's safety. The participants found themselves contradicting their values, as in the experience of Oscar, in which other political leaders thought of his policies as "conservative." Oscar explained,

But I would sit down with them, explain my goal. It wasn't to pass a bill. Well, for example, crime. I passed very tough criminal penalties for violent crime. A lot of legislators, particularly minority legislators, were afraid that this would simply mean more minorities being locked up. What I explained was that wasn't my goal at all. My goal was to prevent crime, which occurs primarily in low-income communities, that the greatest positive impact would be in low-income communities, and how the goal, just explain in terms of each legislator's constituency, what I hoped it would accomplish for their people. Oftentimes they would say, "Well, we don't think you're right, but we'll give you a chance." There's a huge difference between breaking their arm and saying, "I'm

going to fund a primary opponent if you don't support this legislation," and explaining, having them give you a chance to see if your idea works. I was able to get them passed and it did work, and we were one of the safest states.

When going against other leaders, the participants insisted on upholding their values to make themselves believable. Six participants additionally believed in the need for firmness and confidence when passing policies to be believable among other leaders and constituents. Kelly and Oscar being firm and confident resulted from genuinely believing in the initiative behind the policy. Oscar explained,

You have to be totally confident in what you're trying to achieve. If you don't believe in your goal, why should anybody else? It can't just be a fame goal-based on polling or political popularity. It's got to be something you honestly believe. When that's the case, you have the passion to fight to get it done.

The participants disclosed their beliefs that as political leaders, passing policy initiatives benefit from their use of values-based leadership. Their practices involved making decisions based on information from experts in the field, such as policies addressing health hazards informed by health experts. The participants thought that not every leader would agree with their decisions. However, as long as they thought that experts supported their decisions, they had the confidence to go against the other leaders. Their firmness and confidence typically stemmed from believing they were staying true to their advocacy. They worked to resolve problems and ensure the safety of their constituents.

Theme 2: Reflecting Before Policy Decisions that Affect Constituents

All the participants perceived that the value of reflection was essential to their experiences of passing policies. Reflection involved understanding the “big picture,” as

described by Oscar. The process of reflecting included looking back at past experiences and available data to gain insights about what could be improved when political leaders made decisions. Susan stated,

> *If you don't have insight, you can never remedy your failings … so self-reflection, crucial to being a leader who understand and also understanding other people right, you know, so you have to forgive others and forgive yourself, grow and move on.*

According to the participants, values-based leadership involved reflecting on their values relative to moral, ethical, and legal standards. Mark and Aaron contended how they reflected on improving their decisions on passing policies by making better moral, ethical, and legal decisions. Mark shared that he could "sleep at night" despite global crises such as the pandemic and wars due to knowing that he reflected on a "macro-level" and made decisions "morally, ethically, [and] legally." Aaron also reflected on "different angles" to gain insights into how he made decisions as a political leader.

In reflecting on the big picture, all the participants candidly shared their experiences of finding the balance between their personal values and the values of other leaders and constituents. Four participants shared that they remained open to other people's perspectives. Aaron, Judy, and Kelly reasoned that everyone could add value to the community. Kelly described, *"…Human potential. You got to believe that everybody has [the] potential to do something."* Aaron elaborated,

> *If you have a shared goal, you have a shared mission that you're seeking to accomplish, I think that inherently just highlights the value of your work and shows that you're making it, particularly in public service, that each person, each cog in the wheel, so to speak, has intrinsic value with the overall system… each individual player, each individual public*

> *servant, brings value. And if they don't, well, then you got to revisit the whole system. But everyone should bring value and it should be acknowledged and respected and appreciated.*

The participants generally believed that despite being leaders, they were not all-knowing. Using values-based leadership allowed them to reflect on the ideas and strengths of their coworkers. Aaron acknowledged that no single individual knew everything; therefore, they needed to reflect on their own and consider other people's ideas. Mark believed in the value that newcomers in politics add. Mark stated, *"I do think that that new energy coming in, change the dynamic of the existing group and the capacity to bring in maybe ways that would break down some of the gridlock or the structures that were already there."*

Four participants shared that their process of reflecting before making decisions included seeking insights into their role as the representative of their constituents. Robert shared his experience of fighting for providing broadband connection to rural unserved and underserved areas. He reflected on the possible consequences of conflicting with railroad companies but also thought that he was the representative of the rural constituents and that they needed the broadband connection. Robert shared,

> *The point is we had a battle over the cable companies. These guys want to come in and be in charge of some more wiring of the rural homes with a railroad easement. I don't know if anything about railroads … Anyway, I had signed onto a bill that would essentially work against what the railroads wanted in favor, what the cable companies want. And my metric was our number one priority is to have these rural homes get internet.*

Judy shared an experience of being in conflict but that the two opposing sides were her constituents. Judy reflected on the “end of life issue” in which she knew where her values were, but that half of her constituents did not agree with her. The participant admitted to being unable to decide if she was asked to vote immediately. Judy stated,

> *I'll tell you, there is one right now that I struggle with, and it is the end of life issue. And one of my democratic colleagues has a bill. And interestingly, I think a number of other Democrats share my lack of certainty you about that. I mean, normally I know exactly how I'm going to vote on something. And if that suddenly came to floor, because I have constituents on both sides and they are strongly held some who think this would be absolutely wrong to have an intentional end of life, and others would just think it's the only right thing to do. But I have to say, that's the one right now that it might be one of those difficult decisions if I suddenly had to vote on that today, I would disappoint one half of the group because they feel so strongly about it.*

Passing policy initiatives using values-based leadership involved thinking about the benefits for most constituents. The participants considered other people’s perspectives as they acknowledged that they were not all-knowing. As leaders, the participants tended to keep an open mind toward their seasoned team members who had relevant public service experience and new team members who offered new perspectives to addressing issues. However, some participants emphasized the importance of knowing how to say no and stand firm in their final decisions. The participants also reflected on their constituents' different perspectives, knowing that they were not only representative of their town but also of an entire state. They used a decision matrix to inform their decisions as part of their reflection process. Reflection allowed the leaders to gain a broader understanding of their constituents.

Theme 3: Improving Their Understanding of Constituents Needs

Six participants believed that building consensus involved understanding the different needs of the community and knowing how to address the constituents' needs. Five participants explained that in voting for political leaders, the constituents have their goals built from what they value or believe in that would improve their lives. Susan specified that the constituents were voting for their representative. Susan stated, "*When you're in Congress you're representing your constituents."* Susan, along with Robert, Judy, and Kelly, contended that political leaders must engage with the community to build a consensus. Kelly elucidated,

> *Well, the first advice I'd give, and I think that this relates to where we're going in the future, my first advice is that you should to be involved in your community in some way before you ever start to run for office. And right now people say, "Oh, I'm 25. I'm out of college. I'm just going to run for Congress." First of all, maybe they haven't even been homeowners to understand paying property tax. They haven't had a lot of life experiences. They may not have gone through healthcare with their parents or whatever, they just lack that experience … When I first ran for the county board, it was like, "Well, you can't run for the county board because you're not a lawyer." Well, I was a real involved community advocate for United Way and Youth Employment Service and libraries and everything else, Visiting Nurse Service, so I was getting that kind of experience, not the legal experience. Although you kind of enter into it a little bit, even though you're not a lawyer. So, I think that's what we're missing right now.*

Five participants shared that to understand the community's needs, political leaders also needed to consider the population's diversity and include everyone in addressing the problems.

Mark and Aaron shared that they did not easily dismiss any issues, as what might seem like a small problem for them might be a heavy burden for others. Mark explained,

> *If I wanted to view it on the macro scale that the state of Minnesota is my classroom. And I must believe every one of those citizens it's, the most important person in the world to somebody and to not try the best to make that right for everybody would be really painful for me because I can't Imagine going into a classroom and just dismissing some child because they're late or they haven't been able to change their clothes, we know these things happen in public schools all the time.*

To become familiar with the constituents' needs, Susan, Aaron, and Kelly reiterated the importance of listening. Kelly noted, *"...And you're listening to people, you're finding out what the problems are."* Aaron likened serving the community to a business catering to its customers. Aaron highlighted "actively engaging" with and listening to the constituents. Aaron stated,

> *Ideally, you get people that come into these positions of power and authority that have the qualifications, that have the merit to hold that particular office. But that alone isn't enough. They need to be actively engaged with listening to people, learning from them, so they can be the very best at their job. So I think that's absolutely critical, whether it's elected or it's appointed, you got to be able to deal with your constituents, just like you would in business, dealing with your customers.*

Along with understanding the needs, five participants also expressed the significance of political leaders working toward achieving the goals that would address the identified needs of the constituents. Aaron believed building consensus involved taking small, consistent actions on issues instead of doing nothing. Aaron articulated,

But in my experience, even the slower steps, as long as you're showing action, as long as you're showing you're moving the football forward toward the next 10 yard line, people can understand that, and they appreciate it because they're seeing that you're actually acting and delivering on something, and you're not just sitting on your hands, because there are some politicians that just kind of take the wait and see approach to everything and they do nothing, and that creates a very frustrated electorate.

As a leader of an entire state, the participants described their constituents as comprised of a diverse population. Using values-based leadership, they considered an equal representation of mainstream and minority groups to reach a consensus. Some participants reiterated the importance of listening to every constituent regardless of how small their problem may be. The participants believed that understanding their constituents involved engagement in the community. Their work included identifying shared goals and bringing their constituents to work toward those goals.

Theme 4: Creating Respect for Other Leaders, Staff, and Constituents

According to five participants, building consensus entailed respecting other leaders, staff, and constituents regardless of their values. As public servants and political leaders, the five participants believed that they encompassed pursuits that had no racial, gender, or religious boundaries, which meant that they needed to accept serving a diverse population. Oscar expressed,

But when you constantly live and work and go to school or work with people of different races, you don't see them as an African American. You see them as Mr. Smith or Bill and you just forget their color or their religion or what country they came [00:26:00] from because they are who they are. It's just something that we have lost because we have

politicized the basic concept of humanity, which is that we should all get along and we should all respect each other for who we are, not from where we came from or what our background is… So diversity was always something that just was inherently a logical thing to do, based not on quotas, but based on the desire to treat people as equals.

According to the participants, political leaders typically work with a team experienced in public service. Using values-based leadership involved maintaining the belief that their team was capable and worthy of respect. Thus, respecting the team was a benefit of using values-based leadership. Robert and Susan also believed in respecting their staff, particularly because staff tended to have more experience than some political leaders, due to not having term limits in their work. Kelly specified,

You as an elected official are going to be gone, but the staff is going to stay there. So actually, going back to [name redacted], he probably has more information than the staff because the staff hasn't been there as long as he has and he probably trains the staff.

Robert added that the foundation of democracy enjoyed in the United States was respecting each other despite the freedom to express different beliefs. Robert shared,

I don't know if you caught the State of The Union speech, but what I heard the president say is, "Look, we may not agree, but we got a country on out there with people fighting and dying for their freedom and their democracy. And we take it for granted here sometimes. Let's come together." And I saw both parties stand up and applaud that. That's what I think makes most Americans, the ones in the middle, the ones that don't chain themselves to pipelines, happy. And I think it should, that's really our greatest blessing, is Democracy.

When using values-based leadership, the participants of this study generally expressed their beliefs on respecting others. Political leaders' values should include treating their team members as equals and not having racial, gender, or religious boundaries when serving their constituents. The participants perceived that they should humbly accept others and try to include all constituents to build consensus.

Theme 5: Maintaining Relationships Through Transparent Communication

All seven participants perceived that building consensus involved maintaining relationships. Values-based building consensus entailed integrity, particularly in communicating with constituents. Robert and Mark experienced that to get the constituents on the same page, they asked for input from the community instead of waiting for one. Robert perceived that asking for feedback instead of waiting meant expressing how genuinely he cared for his constituents, particularly during this age of social media, during which communication was accessible. Mark perceived that asking for community input would maintain relationships with constituents, as the act was a gesture of treating the people with respect and dignity. Mark shared,

> *Before the Commissioner of Transportation decides to put out a plan on a construction of a new highway, they're going to follow through all of these steps and then what we believe is that leads you to a point of the shared values and community input where we're not going to make mistakes, like building a freeway through the middle of an ethnic community that destroys them which we've seen historically been something and I think values-based leadership.*

Aaron and Kelly also believed in the value of information, but in the form of education, to maintain relationships with constituents. Both participants perceived that political leaders

needed to be informed and educated about their constituents before making public statements that could impact policies affecting the lives of their constituents. Aaron noted,

> *So social media, all the other pressures you get from instant gratification that people want, it's a blessing and a curse. The blessing is obviously you can engage with a whole host of people in real time and they can engage with you back so you can get real-time feedback. It's obviously skewed because you're in an echo chamber of people that follow you, either because they hate you or they like you. It's not a real sample of the people in general. And it can deter, and if you let it, it can completely take over and all you'll do is be on social media. And when you have real-time challenges that affect thousands or millions of people, those are decisions you can't just rush into, you have to do your homework and do your due diligence.*

Six participants perceived that political leaders needed to maintain transparency and hold themselves accountable for their statements as they reflected their values in a public setting. Susan and Kelly highlighted the importance of maintaining relationships with constituents by educating them instead of manipulating them so that the conversations regarding any issues would be transparent. Susan stated,

> *But you know we vote for stupid and when you vote for stupid well, you'll get stupid, you know, so be you can't expect some of these people kind of probably do know better, but they're not going to you know they're not going to leave lucrative positions. To tell their electorates that guess what everything I've been saying to you way off it's bad news pardon my French it's crazy, but you know I can't know yeah. So, we need a values-based electorate any bottom line of the electorate, the electorate must be values-based, and I*

think a lot of that problem also has to do, and you are a man of deep faith lot of it has to do with the fact that we have abandoned faith.

Political leaders are public servants, which means they rely on the vote of the majority to secure their positions. To build consensus, the participants perceived that the value of transparency when communicating helped them gain the trust of their constituents. The participants practiced transparency by educating themselves before making public statements and educating the voters to help them make informed decisions about the advocacies of political leaders. Some participants took the initiative to ask for their constituents' feedback rather than wait for their reactions toward their work. Social media proved useful in maintaining transparent communication with constituents.

Theme 6: Presenting Their Values Honestly

Six participants perceived that to build followings, political leaders did not only need to have values but also to show their values as honestly as possible. Being true to oneself despite conflicting political values was more effective for the participants than choosing to vote for policies against their beliefs. Judy perceived that some followers might fall for deceptions of manipulative politicians; however, the following might not last long and may not be genuine. Judy explained that when political leaders did not believe in the policies they voted for, they could not keep their promises to their constituents. Judy shared,

There's a colleague of mine. He's a Republican … I mean, that's the opposite of values-based leadership. So his values, he knows where they are, he that he thinks differently, but when he votes, he's got to vote differently. The opposite of values-based leadership. So I think being true to the values and the partnership and promises you've made to constituents, I think becomes so important.

Judy stated that she would not choose to act like her colleague, as she shared her experience of being honest with the values she believed in despite the consequence of being removed from one leadership position. Judy described,

> *Actually, it's not how I operate. I'm not going to tell people how to vote. I'm not going to tell them to vote. No, even though the right answer should be yes. And so I went and helped pass that bill and my punishment was, I was no longer chair of capital investment. Based on the participants' interview responses, the value of honesty meant that political leaders remained true to themselves while being accountable for their decisions.*

Mark also believed in gaining genuine followings through honesty with one's values. Mark stated, *"You are who you are, and if it fits to what people need, people gravitate."* Part of being honest with one's values is to take ownership and accountability for one's decisions. Kelly articulated,

> *Yeah, we've passed things and then all of a sudden, we realized six months later, "Ooh, we have a problem here." We have to go back and correct it, but we should go back and correct anything that we have made an error, whether we made it purposely or not. I don't think we ever probably make it purposefully, but sometimes it's consensus and you're dealing with part of it and then you have to back and alter.*

Building followings using values-based leadership involves honesty. Political leaders should present themselves as honestly as possible to establish trust among their constituents. The participants revealed doing honest work and taking ownership of their work regardless of the results. The participant also shared the importance of being true to their values and trusted that their constituents would gravitate toward them if they also believed in the same values.

Theme 7: Enhancing Their Capacity to Understand the Situation

This theme emerged from the perceptions and experiences of six participants. The participants' interview responses concerning understanding the situation to build followings based on values involved a conversation on term limits. Four participants perceived that the length of experience was not a deterrent to political leaders' value of serving the needs of their constituents. The four participants shared their experiences of focusing on the needs of their followers, resulting in receiving more votes to serve longer in the office. Kelly elaborated,

> *I've never supported term limits because I feel like the public needs to be responsible for term limits. If an elected official is not doing the job for you, you got to pay attention as the public. If they're not doing the job for you, then you need to find a replacement. But if you feel that they're doing a good job for you, then you should keep them there.*

However, Robert also perceived that political leaders with long years in service might have the advantage of understanding what their constituents needed and how to address those needs. According to Robert, voters knew they would benefit from "long-standing relationships" with "incumbent" politicians. Thus, longer-serving political leaders may understand how to gain more votes.

Mark similarly stated that political leaders who have served longer tended to have had "practice" and were equipped with the skills needed for the situations of their constituents in addition to the trust and relationship built. Mark stated,

> *I also think the time in office … is also beneficial …. The more you practice it, the more skillful you become and in a business that no matter if people want to think it is or not, it is relationships and trust.*

Robert corroborated Mark's statement, citing how the experience helped him understand which of his constituents' concerns were more urgent and relevant. Robert noted his " triage " method when assessing his constituents' situation. His assessment method was a result of years of experience in public service. Robert stated,

> *There's an incredible amount of triage … I could have easily 16 or 18 hours of meetings a day. If I wanted to, you have to understand no, that's important. You have to sit down with those people for 20 minutes. You're going to go on the committee and vote on this sucker later today. If you don't have that meeting, you'll be under prepared or less prepared or whatever term you want to use. So time management, triage, whatever term, you have to be able to successfully prioritize that skill is hardly limited to politics of course, as you watch successful people in all the spectrum of jobs, that's the same thing.*

Kelly and Oscar expressed that regardless of the situation faced by the community, political leaders needed to display compassion. Political leaders needed to have the capacity to understand their constituents and have the compassion to help them access the resources they needed. Oscar shared,

> *September 11th was the time when just dealing with … There were so many critical things to deal with at one time. But one was to honor the pain that the thousands of family members of those who were lost were going through. One of the things I had learned was the importance of that compassion, not just for yourself, but to show as a people. So after the TWA-800 flight, I vowed if there was ever a catastrophe of that nature again, one of the first things we do would be to set up a center for the loved ones, the families of those who were lost. On September 11th, we did it the first day. We found an armory and all the family members who were wandering around lost, begging for information about their*

loved ones, we had a separate total center for them where they could get the mental health counseling, the Red Cross medical advice, plus all the information as soon as we got it as to the status of their loved ones.

Being a political leader means serving the people. To be able to serve, political leaders should understand people's needs. Using values-based leadership could help improve one's understanding of the community, which helps build a following. The participants experienced that serving the needs of their constituents resulted in their longer terms in office. Understanding the community also allowed them to work with more compassion and efficiency, as they tended to know how to use their time and resources. Therefore, more people trust and follow them.

Theme 8: Prioritizing Public Interest

Prioritizing public interest referred to the highlight of public service focused on initiatives that would improve the constituents' lives. Susan believed in humility as a pillar of values-based leadership and perceived that she was not the only political leader who believed so. Susan shared that most political *leaders "…were willing to put service to the public above their own self-interest."* Aaron perceived that the public thought of politicians to lack humility as they *"…think they are the greatest thing in the world."* However, Susan expressed that most political leaders, including herself, practiced humility, particularly during elections. Susan explained that the elections entailed facing both supporters and opposing individuals. Political leaders needed to accept the results of the voting and focus on the purpose of serving the public regardless of what happened. Susan elaborated,

Most politicians are running for office, and they think they're the greatest thing in the world … But I think elections have a tendency to give people humility, right? Well, you win or you lose, or you win by less and you thought. I mean, that certainly does things.

You knock on doors as a public figure, you'll get people that love you, you get people that hate you, and that's important. It'll either boost you up or it will remind that, hey, not everyone loves you, and you got to get out there and continue to work hard.

Kelly also believed similarly and perceived that being a political leader was a job that entailed doing one's best to "help the people." Mark and Judy shared their experiences of persevering despite the challenges they faced concerning conflicting with other public servants with opposing political values. Both participants expressed that their initiatives were for improving their constituents' lives, which was why they strived to serve. Mark stated, *"I think the most successful leaders were always viewed that they were truly doing service, and it was to try and further and better the lives of as many people."*

Political leaders interviewed in this study emphasized service above any other value. Service, especially to improve constituents' lives, helped the participants build a following. The participants perceived that in serving, they prioritized public interest rather than winning an election. Thus, constituents tended to consider themselves devoted to public service rather than serving their self-interest.

Summary

This chapter contained the findings of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study. The findings addressed the purpose of gaining insights on how state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. The findings also addressed the problem of political leaders balancing their values with the values of political opposition. Seven state and national political leaders were selected from the Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States. The participants were interviewed individually using a semi-structured format to elicit responses about their lived experiences

concerning values-based passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings. The participants were also asked about their perceptions and experiences of self-reflection, balance, self-confidence, and humility (i.e., the four pillars of the values-based leadership theory; Kraemer, 2011).

The essence of the participants' lived experiences was that they perceived themselves as representatives of their constituents, and they prioritized public service more than their own and their political opposition's values. The participants focused on passing policies that emphasized public safety and orderliness. This essence emerged in the context of controversial and urgent issues shared by the participants, including emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the legalization of marijuana, allowing euthanasia, and the reversal of the *Roe vs. Wade* constitutional right to an abortion. The essence of the participants' lived experiences involved their insights on values-based passing policy initiatives, which entailed the possibility of going against most leaders to stand up for their constituents' needs and the need to reflect on the circumstances surrounding an issue before deciding. Reflection was often done by oneself or with staff and subject matter experts to understand the "big picture." The essence of the participants' lived experiences also involved their insights on values-based building consensus, which included engagement with constituents and respecting the opinions of others. Six participants highlighted the trait of respect for teamwork as an important value of a good leader. Lastly, the essence of the participants' lived experiences involved their insights on values-based building followings through honesty and service.

The findings presented in this chapter are interpreted in the next chapter. The discussion centers on how the themes answered the research questions and contributed to the literature on

values-based leadership in the context of political leaders. The study's limitations, implications, recommendations, and conclusions are also presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The study of leadership essentially arose from the study of political leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Though leadership discipline has evolved to encompass many fields, especially business administration (Top et al., 2020), political leadership remains as crucial as ever (McLean & Ewart, 2020). Political leaders face an increasingly challenging political environment to lead as societal divides widen and partisan polarization continues to increase, particularly in the United States (Pierson & Schickler, 2020).

This study explored how national, and state political leaders employed values-based leadership in passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings, as well as the problem of political leaders balancing their values with the values of political opposition. State and national political leaders were selected from the Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States. Participants were interviewed individually using a semi-structured format to elicit responses about their lived experiences concerning values-based passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings.

The data analysis procedures were based on Clarke and Braun's (2014) six-step qualitative thematic analysis approach combined with aspects of phenomenological eidetic reduction (Moustakas, 1994). These six steps included familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, formulating preliminary themes, reviewing and validating potential themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. As a result, eight themes emerged to answer the research questions. The themes included: 1) going against other leaders to fight for constituents' needs; 2) reflecting before making decisions; 3) knowing and working for constituents' needs; 4) respecting other leaders, staff, and constituents; 5) maintaining

relationships through transparent communication; 6) presenting one's values honestly; 7) having the capacity to understand the situation; and 8) prioritizing public interest.

The theoretical framework was Kraemer's (2011) values-based leadership theory. As mentioned previously, the idea of values-based leadership is intuitive, but the formal theory of values-based leadership is relatively recent (Kraemer, 2011), having evolved in the business domain. To reiterate, values-based leadership focuses on the idea that an effective leader should make decisions after carefully considering the values and the values of others impacted by the decision (Kraemer, 2011). The four pillars or principles of values-based leadership are: self-reflection, balance, self-confidence, and humility (Kraemer, 2011). In addition, values-based leadership may lead to increased follower morale and conviction (Mayes et al., 2019). Therefore, this theory may offer new and valuable insights when applied to political leadership. This study explored how values-based leadership theory was (or was not) used by elected political leaders to discern more about the potential influence of values-based leadership on political leadership. This study focused on the extent to which the tenets of values-based leadership theory could be used to understand effective political decision-making.

This study has practical and academic significance. The academic significance of the study was developed by addressing a research gap. The research gap was characterized by the lack of research applying values-based leadership theory to political leadership. The practical significance of the study derives from the need to understand how political leaders can better navigate the present state of political polarization (Pierson & Schickler, 2020).

Interpretation of the Findings

The study was guided by a single overarching qualitative research question and three related sub questions. The research question for this study was the following: How do state and

national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings? The first sub question asked, what benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives? From the analysis, two themes emerged to answer the first sub question: 1) going against other leaders to fight for constituents' needs and 2) reflecting before making decisions. The second sub question asked, what benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building consensus? Three themes emerged to answer this research question: 1) knowing and working for constituents' needs; 2) respecting other leaders, staff, and constituents; and 3) maintaining relationships through transparent communication. The third sub question asked what benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building followings? Three themes also emerged from the data analysis: 1) presenting one's values honestly, 2) having the capacity to understand the situation, and 3) prioritizing public interest. This next section examines these themes and compares the findings with previous literature related to the study.

Going Against Other Leaders to Fight for Constituents' Needs

All seven participants perceived that values-based passing policy initiatives might sometimes mean that they needed to go against the other political leaders to uphold the values they and their constituents upheld. In addition, six participants disclosed that contradicting opposing political values was not about benefitting themselves and their constituents; but that their counterarguments were based on new and valuable information gained from researchers and subject matter experts that would benefit most constituents. Balance is one of the key pillars of the values-based leadership theory (Kraemer, 2011). Participants believed political leaders must

balance their values against the conflicting values of the political opposition to achieve meaningful results.

Mark believed that policies proposed by lawmakers were not necessarily right or wrong, as political leaders tended to have good intentions for their constituents. Additionally, Mark described the phenomenon of "acceptance of complexity." This idea aligned with previous research, as acceptance of complexity was listed by Žydžiūnaitė (2018) as a critical leadership value.

Further, Aaron, Judy, and Oscar emphasized that the value they upheld when passing policies was the general public's safety. However, participants experienced contradictions in their values. For example, Oscar acknowledged that other political leaders considered his policies "conservative." As such, Oscar had to explain his reasoning to other political leaders and noted, *"Oftentimes, they would say, 'Well, we don't think you're right, but we'll give you a chance.'"* Previous literature has also suggested that applying values-based leadership may improve the leader-follower dynamics regarding the alignment of conflicting values (Mayes et al., 2019; Smikle, 2019; Stewart, 2019). These findings are congruent with previous research, as participants acknowledged that the application of value-based leadership is important within political leadership, especially concerning leader-follower dynamics.

Six participants believed in the need for firmness and confidence when passing policies to be believable among other leaders and constituents. Oscar and Kelly believed that being firm and confident was important and resulted from genuinely believing in the initiative behind the policy. For example, Oscar explained, *"It's got to be something you honestly believe. that's the case. You have the passion for fighting to get it done."*

As mentioned, self-confidence is another critical pillar of the values-based leadership theory (Kraemer, 2011). A leader who has decided based on carefully considering values and balancing conflicting values must have the self-confidence to stand by that decision (Kraemer, 2011). Therefore, participants' beliefs about their self-confidence aligned with their importance in values-based leadership and previous research by Kraemer (2011).

Reflecting Before Making Decisions

All participants perceived the value of reflection as essential to their experience of passing policies. Reflection involved understanding the "big picture," as described by Oscar. The process of reflecting included looking back at past experiences and available data to gain insights about what could be improved when political leaders made decisions. Susan stated, *"So self-reflection, is crucial to being a leader who understand and also understanding other people."* Self-reflection is also one of the four critical pillars of the values-based leadership theory (Kraemer, 2011). Self-reflection also enables leaders to identify areas of potential growth (Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Without self-reflection, the leader could fail to realize their values, much less put them into practice (Kraemer, 2011). These ideas align with the participants' experiences, as Mark and Aaron reflected on improving their decisions on passing policies by making better moral, ethical, and legal decisions.

All participants shared their experiences of finding the balance between their values and those of other leaders and constituents. Participants shared that they remained open to other people's perspectives. For example, Kelly, Judy, and Aaron reasoned that everyone could add value to the community. Additionally, participants shared that their process of reflecting before making decisions included seeking insights into their role as the representative of their

constituents. Kraemer (2011) stated that all leaders have an opinion but recognize and appreciate all sides because they understand multiple sides associated with a single issue.

Knowing and Working for Constituents' Needs

Six participants believed that building consensus involved understanding the different needs of the community and knowing how to address the constituents' needs. Participants explained that in voting for political leaders, the constituents have their goals built from what they value or believe in that would improve their lives. Susan elaborated, *"When you're in Congress, you're representing your constituents."* Therefore, this theme indicates that political leaders must engage with the community to build consensus. Susan, Aaron, and Kelly also reiterated the importance of listening to become familiar with the constituents' needs. Kelly argued that by *"…listening to people, you're finding out what the problems are."* Similarly, Aaron likened serving the community to a business catering to its customers and highlighted "actively engaging" with and listening to the constituents.

Participants' experiences align with Oswald and Mascarenhas's (2019) and Hopkins and Scott's (2016) research. Oswald and Mascarenhas (2019) identified the three components of ethical leadership: the leader (themself), the direction (behavior), and the part of the followers. Similarly, Hopkins and Scott (2016) suggested that because of globalization and the diversity of values; leaders and followers must increasingly collaborate and build relationships of trust in the interconnected world today. Therefore, the findings of this research and previous studies indicated that leaders and followers play an essential part in the leadership relationship.

In addition to becoming familiar with constituents' needs, five participants shared that political leaders also needed to consider the diversity of the population and include everyone in addressing the problems. For example, Mark and Aaron shared that they did not easily dismiss

any issues, as what might seem like a minor problem for them may be a heavy burden for others. Previous research on leadership within the workplace also pointed to the importance of recognizing the diversity of the population and including necessary accommodations such as cross-cultural communication (Kim et al., 2017).

Martinez et al. (2021) also noted the importance of culturally appropriate communication and ethical practices for all cultures and the importance of maximizing the value of contributions made by its employees. Thus, various studies on leadership have pointed to the importance of listening to ideas and feedback and listening before speaking (Elhret, 2018; Madanchian et al., 2017; Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Similarly, Kraemer (2011) claimed that the most successful leaders listen to their team and make informed decisions due to the team's opinions and perspectives.

Respecting Other Leaders, Staff, and Constituents

According to five participants, building consensus entailed respecting other leaders, staff, and constituents regardless of their values. Participants believed that they encompassed followings with no racial, gender, or religious boundaries, which meant they needed to accept serving a diverse population. Oscar expressed,

> *When you constantly live and work and go to school or work with people of different races, you don't see them as an African American, you see them as Mr. Smith or Bill, and you just forget their color or their religion or what country they came from because they are who they are.*

Robert and Susan also believed in respecting their staff, mainly because staff tended to have more experience than some political leaders due to not having term limits in their work.

These findings correspond with various studies that have noted that respect is a vital leadership value (Elhret, 2018; Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Leaders who wish to practice ethical

leadership must be prepared to regard their social responsibilities as a part of their decision-making processes. As such, they must be willing to respect specific fundamental issues that may come with organizational practices (Kao et al., 2018). This process includes knowing about constituents' needs and being culturally sensitive, as the values reflected in the participants' experiences.

Maintaining Relationships Through Transparent Communication

Andersen et al. (2018) claimed that the value of leadership was made up of leader and follower relationships, which were vital to an organization's success. Participants perceived that political leaders needed to maintain transparency and hold themselves accountable for their statements as they reflected their values in a public setting. Therefore, all participants perceived that building consensus involved maintaining relationships.

Values-based building consensus entailed integrity, particularly in communicating with constituents. As mentioned previously, Robert and Mark experienced that to get the constituents on the same page, they asked for input from the community instead of waiting to be told what needs doing. Robert perceived that asking for feedback instead of waiting meant expressing his genuine care for his constituents, particularly during this age of social media, during which communication was accessible. Similarly, Mark perceived that asking for community input and maintaining relationships with constituents was a gesture of treating the people with "respect and dignity."

Finally, Susan and Kelly highlighted the importance of maintaining relationships with constituents by educating them instead of manipulating them so that the conversations regarding any issues would be transparent. Participants' perspectives align with previous research, suggesting that transparency is important for a leader (Fayyaz et al., 2019; Jorgensen, 2007).

Jiang et al. (2020) believed that to be successful, contemporary leaders must maintain a positive reputation, allow for transparent communication, and embrace their values while projecting them onto their followers. These perspectives align with previous studies that have also identified the need for leaders to be transparent (Edmondson, 2018; Lemoine et al., 2018).

Presenting One's Values Honestly

Six participants perceived that to retain followers, political leaders needed to have values and show their values as honestly as possible. Being true to oneself despite conflicting political values was more effective for the participants than voting for policies against their beliefs. Participants perceived that some followers might fall for deceptions of manipulative politicians; however, the following may not last long and may not be genuine. For example, Judy explained that when political leaders do not believe in the policies they voted for, they will not be able to keep their promises to their constituents.

These findings speak to trustworthiness and accountability, which have increased trust in leaders (Wood & Winston, 2005). For example, manipulative behavior toward constituents may indicate a lack of respect. Elhret (2018) suggested that integrity, trust, listening, and respect for followers were attributes displayed by leaders that nurture followership. Participants shared their experiences of being honest with the values they believed in despite the consequence of being removed from one leadership position. For example, Judy described, *"I went and helped pass that bill, and my punishment was, I was no longer chair of capital investment."* Mark also believed in gaining genuine followers through honesty with one's values. Therefore, participants' experiences included that being honest with their values is to take ownership and accountability for their decisions. Previous literature also pointed to the importance of honesty and how being honest and forthcoming in all decisions and actions leads to transparency, which

is critical within ethical leadership (Han, 2017; Rego et al., 2021). Being honest also shows respect to others (Žydžiūnaitė, 2018).

Having the Capacity to Understand the Situation

This theme emerged from the perceptions and experiences of six participants. Participants' interview responses involved a conversation on term limits. Participants shared their experiences of simply focusing on the needs of their followers, resulting in receiving more votes to serve longer in the office. This focus on the needs of people aligns with previous research, which found that public sector leadership was focused on people and being people-orientated (Garg & Jain, 2013). Garg and Jain (2013) explained that leaders should have a complete blend of task and people orientation.

Robert perceived that political leaders with greater years in service might have the advantage of understanding what their constituents needed and how to address those needs. Therefore, longer-serving political leaders may understand how to gain more votes. Mark shared this sentiment, stating that political figures who had served longer tended to have had "practice" and possessed the skills needed for the situations of their constituents, in addition to trust and relationship building. Mark stated,

> *I also think the time in office is beneficial. The more you practice it, the more skillful you become, and in a business that no matter if people want to think it is or not, it is relationships and trust.*

These findings align with previous literature that suggests that trustworthiness is the primary building block to earning follower support and confidence (Burns, 1978; Wood & Winston, 2005).

Participants also expressed that regardless of the situation faced by the community, political leaders needed to display compassion. Therefore, leaders need to have the capacity to understand their constituents and have the compassion to help them access the resources they need. Oscar shared, *"One of the things I had learned was the importance of that compassion, not just for yourself, but to show as a people."* These findings align with previous literature, which noted that a vital leadership value is treating people with respect, which includes treating them with compassion (Žydžiūnaitė, 2018).

Prioritizing Public Interest

Prioritizing public interest referred to the highlight of public service focused on initiatives that would improve the constituents' lives. For example, Susan believed in humility as a pillar of values-based leadership and perceived that she was not the only political leader who believed so. Additionally, Susan expressed that most political leaders, including herself, practiced humility, particularly during elections. Overall, participants expressed that their initiatives were for improving their constituents' lives, which was why they strived to serve.

Kraemer (2011) also listed humility as one of the four pillars of values-based leadership. Humility is the need to remain humble and open to the perspectives of others (Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Kraemer (2011) claimed that the most successful leaders listen to their team and make informed decisions based on the team's opinions and perspectives. Additionally, Žydžiūnaitė (2018) noted that leaders must conduct personal development to improve their ability to serve clients.

Limitations of the Study

This study utilized a qualitative research design to explore how national and state political leaders employ values-based leadership. Value-based leadership was explored in

passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings, as well as the problem of political leaders balancing their values with the values of political opposition. Qualitative research explores and describes a phenomenon of interest, and researchers typically draw data from relatively small sample sizes (Taylor et al., 2015). Seven duly elected officials were interviewed in this study. This small sample size was due to political leaders at the state and national levels being exclusive and difficult to access. Therefore, the findings from qualitative research studies are not generalizable to other political leaders, sectors, or other locales.

Another limitation of this study was that the research provided no way to measure the effects of the political leaders' values-based leadership efforts. As such, this study used a phenomenological research design, which focused on understanding the lived experiences of the study participants (e.g., Moustakas, 1994). The inherent limitation of this study's phenomenological design was that the focus was on direct interview data. The self-reported nature of the collected data was another limitation of this study. The participants might not have answered accurately because of social desirability bias. However, this limitation is unavoidable in qualitative research. Measures, such as confidentiality for the participants, were taken to reduce social desirability bias. However, this issue remained a limitation that should be noted.

Recommendations

This qualitative transcendental phenomenological study explored how state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership to pass policy initiatives, build consensus, and build followings. As mentioned, although this research design provided rich data from participants' lived experiences, the study's research design limited the generalizability of the findings. Future researchers should use the findings from this study to build a quantitative study that may yield generalizable findings to a broader audience. A quantitative study may also

provide findings that measure the effects of the political leaders' values-based leadership efforts or provide order as to which values are most/least important or used. Future quantitative researchers could also study the effects of using values-based leadership styles, approaches, and techniques in other contexts or among different levels of government.

Only seven participants took place in this study. This small sample presents an opportunity for future studies to conduct similar research with a larger sample size. The sample size for this study was small due to the difficulty in accessing political leaders at the state and national levels. Future research could broaden the scope of their target population to include participants who are no longer serving in their political leadership position or different positions. Additionally, future researchers may explore one political party separately to see if the findings differ.

This study also relied on self-reported data. Future researchers can further examine the perspectives of colleagues or constituents who work with leaders who employ values-based leadership. This research may provide a unique perspective on how others observe these leaders and how they experience the values-based leadership used by these politicians.

Implications

This study used Kraemer's (2011) values-based leadership theory as the theoretical framework. Kraemer suggested four critical pillars of judicious usage of the values-based leadership theory: self-reflection, balance, self-confidence, and humility. All four of these pillars emerged in the data collected from the participants. Therefore, political leaders seeking to impact their constituents significantly should ensure they are actively practicing these values.

Leaders should also spend time reflecting on their decisions. This process of reflecting included looking back at past experiences and available data to gain insights about what could be

improved when political leaders made decisions. It is also crucial for leaders to self-reflect to understand their values better and put those values into practice (Kraemer, 2011). Findings from this study suggest that reflecting before making decisions contributes to better decisions.

Political leaders need to know what their constituents need and take steps to address those needs. Leaders should be proactive in communicating with their constituents by asking for input or feedback instead of waiting for it. Additionally, if constituents consist of a diverse population, leaders need to be able to communicate in a culturally appropriate way (Kim et al., 2017; Martinez et al., 2021).

Political leaders must ensure they engage with and listen to their constituents. Kraemer (2011) claimed that the most successful leaders listen to their team and make informed decisions due to the team's opinions and perspectives. Likewise, in the political sphere, leaders need to listen to the opinions and perspectives of their constituents. By listening to the needs of their followers, political leaders can receive more votes to serve longer in office.

Respect and humility are also valuable characteristics of leaders. It should also be respectful to other leaders, staff, and constituents. Previous studies have noted that respect is a vital leadership value (Elhret, 2018; Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Leaders also need to be humble and open to the perspectives of others (Žydžiūnaitė, 2018). Therefore, though leaders should be open to the perspectives of others, they should be willing to fight for what they believe in and have the confidence to stand up for their decisions.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore how state and national political leaders employed values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings. The theoretical framework used for the study was Kraemer's (2011)

values-based leadership theory. The basic principle of values-based leadership theory is that of a leader who makes decisions based on careful consideration of their values and the values of others impacted by the decision.

The study was guided by a single overarching qualitative research question and three related sub questions. Once the data were analyzed, eight themes emerged to answer those questions. These themes provided insight into how political leaders employed values-based leadership. This study found that political leaders use values-based leadership in their decision-making. Political leaders should actively build relationships with their constituents by communicating with them, engaging with them, listening to them, finding out what they need, and addressing those needs. The findings from this study contribute to the literature on the values-based leadership theory. Additionally, findings may help political leaders better understand how they can apply careful consideration of and engagement with values to improve their leadership and achieve better political outcomes.

References

Aggarwal, A., Chand, P. K., Jhamb, D., & Mittal, A. (2020). Leader–member exchange, work engagement, and psychological withdrawal behavior: The mediating role of psychological empowerment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*(423), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00423

Andersen, L. B., Bjørnholt, B., Bro, L. L., & Holm-Petersen, C. (2018). Leadership and motivation: A qualitative study of transformational leadership and public service motivation. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, *84*(4), 675–691. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852316654747

Asar-ul-Haq, M., & Anwar, S. (2018). The many faces of leadership: Proposing research agenda through a review of literature. *Future Business Journal*, *4*(2), 179–188. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fbj.2018.06.002

Asif, M., Qing, M., Hwang, J., & Shi, H. (2019). Ethical leadership, affective commitment, work engagement, and creativity: Testing a multiple mediation approach. *Sustainability, 11*(16), Article 4489. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11164489

Augustsson, H., Richter, A., Hasson, H., & von Thiele Schwarz, U. (2017). The need for dual openness to change: A longitudinal study evaluating the impact of employees' openness to organizational change content and process on intervention outcomes. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *53*(3), 349–368. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886317691930

Avolio, B. J., Keng-Highberger, F., Lord, R. G., Hannah, S. T., Schaubroeck, J. M., & Kozlowski, S. W. J. (2020). How leader and follower prototypical and antitypical attributes influence ratings of transformational leadership in an extreme context. *Human Relations, 75*(3), 1–34. https://doi.org/10.1177/00187-26720958040

Azad, N., Anderson, G., Brooks, A., Garza, O., O'Neil, C., Stutz, M. M., & Sobotka, J. L. (2017). Leadership and management are one and the same. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 81*(6), 102–107. https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe816102

Baker, S. R., Bloom, N., Davis, S. J., Kost, K. J., Sammon, M. C., & Viratyosin, T. (2020).The unprecedented stock market impact of COVID-19. *The Review of Asset Pricing Studies, 10*(4), 742–758. https://doi.org/10.1093/rapstu/raaa008Bass

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). Transformational leadership and organizational culture. *The International Journal of Public Administration, 17*(3–4), 541–554. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900699408524907

Bentzen, T. Ø., Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2020). Strengthening public service production, administrative problem solving, and political leadership through co-creation of innovative public value outcomes? *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal, 25*(1), 1–28. https://www.innovation.cc/scholarly-style/2020_25_1_4_sorensen-torfing_psc-problem-solving.pdf

Boylan, S. A., & Turner, K. A. (2017). Developing organizational adaptability for complex environments. *Journal of Leadership Education, 16*, 183–198. https://doi.org/10.12806/V16/I2/T2

Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 97*(2), 117–134. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.03.002

Brunet, F., Malas, K., & Fleury, D. (2020). A model of an agile organization designed to better manage the COVID-19 crisis. *Healthcare Management Forum, 34*(2), 115–118. https://doi.org/10.1177/0840470420980478

Budur, T. (2020). Effectiveness of transformational leadership among different cultures. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies, 7*(3), 119–129. http://eprints.tiu.edu.iq/390/

Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.

Cakir, F. S., & Adiguzel, Z. (2020). Analysis of leader effectiveness in organization and knowledge sharing behavior on employees and organization. *SAGE Open*, *2020*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020914634

Caldwell, C., Hayes, L., Karri, R., & Bernal, P. (2008). Ethical stewardship: The role of leadership behavior and preceived trustworthiness. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *78*(1/2), 153–164. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-9320-1

Chang, S. M., Budhwar, P., & Crawshaw, J. (2021). The emergence of value-based leadership behavior at the frontline management: A role theory perspective and future research agenda. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*(635106), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.635106

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2014). Thematic analysis. In T. Teo (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of critical psychology* (pp. 1947–1952). Springer.

Denier, Y., & Dhaene, L. C. (2019). You can give them wings to fly: A qualitative study on values-based leadership in health care. *BioMed Central Medical Ethics, 20*(35), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-019-0374-x

Edmondson, A. C. (2018). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. Wiley & Sons.

Efianda, A., & Iswahyuni, I. (2021). Political leadership and transactional leadership. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, *8*(9), 238–243. https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i9.3020

Elhret, M. (2018). *Situational awareness and transparency as core concepts of authentic leadership* (Publication No. 10844017) [Doctoral dissertation, Pepperdine University]. ProQuest Dissertation Publishing. https://www.proquest.com/openview/cf422dca3ddb3a6224ae32b9db60e45d/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750

Eliyana, A., & Ma'arif, S. (2019). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment effect in the transformational leadership toward employee performance. *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, *25*(3), 144–150. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2019.05.001

Fairholm, M., Dzordzormenyoh, M., & Binda, G. (2018). Trust-culture leadership in local public administrators work. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, *14*(4), 260–273. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPL-06-2018-0031

Fairholm, M., & Gronau, T. (2015). Spiritual leadership in the work of public administrators. *Journal of Management, Spirituality, and Religion*, *12*(4), 354–373. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2015.1060516

Fayyaz, H., Ahmad, S., Arshad, M., & Hussain, I. (2019). Ethical leadership: A drive to success. *Sustainable Human Resources*, *2*(13), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1107/335881591

Garg, S., & Jain, S. (2013). Mapping leadership styles of public and private sector leaders using blake and mouton leadership model. *Drishtikon: A Management Journal*, *4*(1), 48–64.

https://www.proquest.com/openview/989e6fc3a40c8c788db1b783e9bd32cb/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=2030942

Giddens, J. (2018). Transformational leadership: What every nursing dean should know. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 34*(2), 117–121. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.10.004

Gingerich, E. F. R. (2020). Values-based leadership: Exploring exemplary approaches. In S. Dhiman & J. Marques (Eds.), *New horizons in positive leadership and change: A practical guide for workplace transformation* (pp. 159–173). Springer.

Giorgi, A., & Giorgi, B. (2003). *Phenomenology*. Sage.

Grigoropoulous, J. E. (2019). The role of ethics in 21st century organizations. *International Journal of Progressive Education, 15*(2), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2019.189.12

Guenter, H., Gardner, W. L., Davis McCauley, K., Randolph-Seng, B., & Prabhu, V. P. (2017). Shared authentic leadership in research teams: Testing a multiple mediation model. *Small-Group Research, 48*(6), 719–765. https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496417732403

Gutermann, D., Lehmann.-Willenbrock, N., Boer, D., Born, M., & Voelpel, S. (2017). How leaders affect followers' work engagement performance: Integrating leader-member exchange and crossover theory. *British Journal of Management, 28*, 299–314. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12214

Han, Y. (2017). How leaders' transparent behavior influences employee creativity. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *24*(3), 335–344. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051816670306

Hassan, S., Mashud, R., Yukl, G., & Prussia, G. (2013). Ethical and empowering leadership and leader effectiveness. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 28*(2), 133–146. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683941311300252

Hegarty, N., & Moccia, S. (2018). Components of ethical leadership and their importance in sustaining organizations over the long term. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership, 11*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.22543/0733.111.1199

Helms, L. (2020). Leadership succession in politics: The democracy/autocracy divide revisited. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, *22*(2), 328–346. https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148120908528

Hester, J. P. (2020). Reflections on humanity's moral consciousness: Uncovering the foundation of values-based leadership. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership, 13*(2), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.22543/0733.132.1330

Hoch, J. E., Bommer, W. H., Dulebohn, J. H., & Wu, D. (2018). Do ethical, authentic, and servant leadership explain variance above and beyond transformational leadership? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management*, *44*(2), 501–529. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316665461

Hopkins, W. E., & Scott, S. G. (2016). Values-based leadership effectiveness in culturally diverse workplaces. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, *23*(2), 363–385. https://doi/org/10.1108/CCSM-11-2014-0125

Javed, B., Rawwas, M. Y. A., Khandal, S., Shahid, K., & Tayyeb, H. H. (2018). Ethical leadership, trust in leader and creativity: The mediated mechanism and an interacting effect. *Journal of Management & Organization*, *24*(3), 388–405. https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2017.56

Jiang, J., Chen, E., Yan, S., Lerman, K., & Ferrara, E. (2020). Political polarization drives online conversations about COVID-19 in the United States. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies, 2*(3), 200–211 https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.202

Jorgensen, T. B. (2007). Public values, their nature, stability and change: The case of Denmark. *Public Administration Quarterly*, *30*(3/4), 365–398. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41288275

Kallio, H., Pietilä, A. M., Johnson, M., & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: Developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *72*(12), 2954–2965. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13031

Kao, E. H., Yeh, C.-C., Wang, L.-H., & Fung, H.-G. (2018). The relationship between CSR and performance: Evidence in China. *Pacific-Basin Finance Journal 51*(C), 155–170. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pacfin.2018.04.006

Kelkar, S. (2019). Post-truth and the search for objectivity: Political polarization and the remaking of knowledge production. *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society*, *5*, 86–106. https://doi.org/10.17351/ests2019.268

Kelleher, T., & Thelen, P. (2019). Employee perceptions of CEO ghost posting and voice: Effects on perceived authentic leadership, organizational transparency, and employee-organization relationships. *Public Relations Journal*, *12*(4), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1011//2019/00000003

Kgatle, M. S. (2018). Servant leadership: An urgent style for the current political leadership in South Africa. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, *39*(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v39i1.1815

Kim, S., Tam, L., Kim, J., & Rhee, Y. (2017). Determinants of employee turnover intention: Understanding the roles of organizational justice, authoritarian, organizational culture, and organization-employee relationship quality. *International Journal of Corporate Communications*, *22*, 308–328. https://doi.org/10.1108/ccij-11-2016-0074

Kim, T. Y., Wang, J., & Chen, J. (2018). Mutual trust between leader and subordinate and employee outcomes. *Journal of Business Ethics, 149*(4), 945–958. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-016-3093-y

Kjellström, S., Stålne, K., & Törnblom, O. (2020). Six ways of understanding leadership development: An exploration of increasing complexity. *Leadership, 16*(4), 434–460. https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715020926731

Koehn, N. (2019). Leadership forged in crisis. *Leader to Leader, 2019*, 26–31. https://doi.org10.1002/ltl.20407

Kolic, S. M., & Bari, A. F. (2019). Social responsibility and loyalty in public relations codes. *Business Systems Research, International Journal of Social Advances and Business Information Technology, 10*(2), 151–162. https://doi.org/10.1177/1847979020927547

Kraemer, H. M., Jr. (2011). *From values to action: The four principles of values-based leadership*. Wiley & Sons.

Kutor, S. K., Kyeremeh, E., Owusu, B., Amoak, D., & Ishola, T. O. (2021). Wise reasoning and political leadership amid COVID-19 pandemic: An exploratory study on Ghana. *International Journal of Public Leadership*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPL-03-2021-0018

Latapi Agudelo, M. A., Jóhannsdóttir, L., & Davídsdóttir, B. (2019). A literature review of the history and evolution of corporate social responsibility. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, *4*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-018-0039-y

Lee, Y., Tao, W., Li, J. Y. Q., & Sun, R. (2021). Enhancing employees' knowledge sharing through diversity-oriented leadership and strategic internal communication during the

COVID-19 outbreak. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, *25*(6), 1526–1549. https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-06-2020-0483

Lemoine, G. J., Hartnell, C., & Leroy, H. (2018). Taking stock of moral approaches to leadership: An integrative review of ethical, authentic, and servant leadership. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *13*(1), 148–187. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0121

Lin, A. M. (2015). Researcher positionality. In F. M. Hult & D. C. Johnson (Eds.), *Research methods in language policy and planning: A practical guide* (pp. 21–32). Wiley & Sons.

Lionardo, A., Alfitri, A., Awang, M. M., Ahmad, A. R., & Khairuddin, K. F. (2019). Political concern and idealism as mediators for determining political leadership styles. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, *7*(10), 219–230. https://ijicc.net/images/vol7iss10/71020_Lionardo_2019_E_R.pdf

Liu, J., Fu, P., & Wu, W. (2008). Firm environment, leader behaviors, and leadership effectiveness: An interactive model. *Journal of Management Sciences in China*, *2*(1), 50–66. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11782-008-0004-9

Madanchian, M., Hussein, N., Noordin, F., & Taherdoost, H. (2017). Leadership effectiveness measurement and its effect on organization outcomes. *Procedia Engineering*, *181,* 1043–1048. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proeng.2017.02.505

Mahmood, A., & Bashir, J. (2020). How does corporate social responsibility transform brand reputation into brand equity? Economic and noneconomic perspectives of CSR. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, *12*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/1847979020927547

Martinez, C., Skeet, A. G., & Sasia, P. M. (2021). Managing organizational ethics: How ethics becomes pervasive within organizations. *Business Horizons, 64*(1), 83–92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2020.09.008

Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in PhD studies using qualitative interviews. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *11*(3), Article 8. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.3.1428

Mayes, J., Wall, G., & Cammock, P. (2019). *Value-based leadership in New Zealand agri-foods exporting enterprises: Literature review*. Lincoln University.

McLean, H., & Ewart, J. (2020). Political leadership in calamity. In H. McClean & J. Ewart (Eds.), *Political leadership in disaster and crisis communication and management* (pp. 63–91). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Wiley & Sons.

Metwally, D., Ruiz-Palomino, P., Metwally, M., & Gartzia, L. (2019). How ethical leadership shapes employees' readiness to change: The mediating role of an organizational culture of effectiveness. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*(2493), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02493

Mo, S., & Shin, J. (2017). Linking ethical leadership to employee burnout, workplace deviance and performance: Testing the mediating roles of trust in leader and surface acting. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *144*(2), 293–303. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2821-z

Moin, M. (2018). The link between perceptions of leader emotion regulation and followers' organizational. *Journal of Management Development*, *37*, 178–187. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-01-2017-0014

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage.

Mozumder, N. A. (2021). Can ethical political leadership restore public trust in political leaders? *Public Organization Review, 2021*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-021-00536-2

Müller, H., & Van Esch, F. A. (2020). The contested nature of political leadership in the European Union: conceptual and methodological cross-fertilisation. *West European Politics, 43*(5), 1051–1071. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1678951

Nguyen, T. T. N., Nguyen, N. P., & Hoai, T. T. (2021). Ethical leadership, corporate social responsibility, firm reputation, and firm performance: A serial mediation model. *Heliyon, 7*(4), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e06809

Nita, A. (2017). Spiritual intelligence and compassion in public administration. *The Juridical Current, Le Courant Juridique*, *20*(4), 43–51. https://ideas.repec.org/a/pmu/cjurid/v71y2017p43-51.html

Olanrewaju, O. I., & Okorie, V. N. (2019). Exploring the qualities of a good leader using principal component analysis. *Journal of Engineering, Project, and Production Management, 9*(2), 142–150. https://doi.org/102478/jeppm02019-0016

Oswald, F. S. J., & Mascarenhas, A. J. (2019). *Corporate ethics for turbulant markets*. Emerald Publishing.

O'Toole, J. (1996). *Leading change: The argument for values-based leadership*. Ballantine.

Ozga, J. (2021). Who governs? Political leadership in transnational times. *School Leadership & Management, 41*(1–2), 6–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2020.1789857

Pierson, P., & Schickler, E. (2020). Madison's constitution under stress: A developmental analysis of political polarization. *Annual Review of Political Science, 23*, 37–58. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-050718-033629

Raine, L., & Perrin, A. (2019). *Key findings about Americans' declining trust in government and each*. Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/22/key-findings about-Americans-declining-trust-in-government-and-each-other/

Rao, M. S. (2017). Values-based leadership. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership, 10*(2), 1–5. https://doi.org/10.22543/073.102.1185

Rego, A., Pina e Cunha, M., & Giustiniano, L. (2021). Are relationally transparent leaders more receptive to the relational transparency of others? An authentic dialog perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *2021,* 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04792-6

Reilly, A., & Ehlinger, S. (2007). Choosing a values-based leader: An experimental exercise. *Journal of Management Education*, *31*(2), 245–262. https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562906292565

Roelofs, P. (2018). Transparency and mistrust: Who or what should be made transparent? *Governance*, *32*(3), 565–580. https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12402

Sayyadi, M. (2019). How effective leadership of knowledge management impacts organizational performance. *Business Information Review*, *36*(1), 30–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266382119829643

Scott, H., Carr-Chellman, D. J., & Hammes, L. (2020). Profound leadership: An integrative literature review. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership, 13*(1), Article 11. https://doi.org/10.22543/0733.131.1293

Shakeel, F., Kruyen, P. M., & Van Thiel, S. (2019). Ethical leadership as process: A conceptual proposition. *Public Integrity*, *21*(6), 613–624. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2019.1606544

Shao, W., & Hao, F. (2020). Confidence in political leaders can slant risk perceptions of COVID–19 in a highly polarized environment. *Social Sciences & Medicine*, *261*(113235), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113235

Shatalebi, B., & Yarmohammadian, M. (2011). Values-based leadership paradigm. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *15*, 3703–3707. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.359

Sltten, T., Mutonyi, B. R., & Lien, G. (2021). Does organizational vision really matter? An empirical examination of factors related to organizational vision integration among hospital employees. *BioMed Central Health Services Research*, *21*(483), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-021-06503-3

Smikle, J. L. (2019). Connecting values to leader and leadership development. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership*, *12*(1), Article 8. https://doi.org/10.22543/0733.121.1248

Stevens, M. (2019, July 22). Falling trust in government makes it harder to solve problems, Americans say. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/22/us/politics/pew-trust-distrust-survey.html

Stevens, M., Rees, T., Steffens, N. K., Haslam, S. A., Coffee, P., & Polman, R. (2019). Leaders' creation of shared identity impacts group members' effort and performance: Evidence from an exercise task. *PloS ONE, 14*(7), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0218984

Stevens, M., Rees, T., Steffens, N. K., Haslam, S. A., Coffee, P., & Polman, R. (2020). Leadingus to be active: A two-wave test of relationships between identity leadership, group identification, and attendance. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology, 9*(1), 128–142. https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000164

Stewart, C. W. (2019). Coexisting values in healthcare and the leadership practices that were found to inspire followership among healthcare practitioners. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership*, *12*(2), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.22543/0733.122.1282

Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. (2015). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource*. Wiley & Sons.

Top, C., Abdullah, B. M. S., & Faraj, A. H. M. (2020). Transformational leadership impact on employees performance. *Eurasian Journal of Management & Social Sciences*, *1*(1), 49–59. https://doi.org/10.23918/ejmss.v1i1p49

Van Knippenberg, D. (2019). Meaning-based leadership. *Organizational Psychology Review*, *10*(1), 6–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386619897618

Vogelgesang, G. R., Crossley, C., & Simons, T. (2020). Behavioral integrity: Examining the effects of trust velocity and psychological contract breach. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *172*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04497-2

Waldman, D., Siegel, D., & Javidan, M. (2006). Components of CEO transformational leadership and corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Management Studies*, *43*(8), 1703–1725. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2006.00642.x

Weng, W., & Yan, W. (2019). The four-stages of values-based Chinese college student leadership development model. *Humanities and Social Science*, *7*(5), 177–184. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.hss.20190705.15

Wood, J., & Winston, B. (2005). Toward a new understanding of leaders accountability: Defining a critical construct. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *11*(3), 84–94. https://doi.org/10.1177/107179190501100307

Zaharris, M., Sims, P., Safer, L., Hendricks, A., Sekulich, K., & Glasgow, D. (2017). The impact of spirituality on school leadership. *International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership Review*, *18*(1), 78–92. https://ncpeapublications.org/attachments/article/755/ELR%20Volume%2018%20Number%201%20Fall%202017.pdf#page=81

Zhang, Y., Zhou, F., & Mao, J. (2018). Ethical leadership and follower moral actions: Investigating an emotional linkage. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *9*(1881), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01881

Žydžiūnaitė, V. (2018). Leader values and values-based leadership: What is the main focus. *Applied Research in Health and Social Sciences*, *15*(1), 43–58. https://doi.org/10.2478/arhss-2018-0005

Appendix A

Interview Questions

1) What makes a successful public leader, and why?
    a. Do you think that time in office and the number of terms influence leadership abilities?
    b. Discuss in-depth.

2) What is your idea of values-based leadership?
    a. Have you heard of it?
    b. If so, please explain it; if not, what do you think it might be?

3) Now for this section, let us visit some reflective leadership traits: Self-Awareness, vision and value, and positive use of adversity are some traits which some leader's exhibit.
    a. What are your feelings about these traits? Are they a benefit?
    b. Is there an example you can offer a time when you engaged in the positive use of adversity?
    c. Is there an example of self-awareness?
    d. Was the application of this perspective beneficial?

4) Is it a good idea to sit back and see problems from a broader context?
    a. Is there time enough in the current political environment to reframe and re-analyze situations and public sector policies?
    b. Was there a time where you engaged or wished you did?

5) Diversity and compassion may be valuable in successful leading public policy.
    a. What are your thoughts?
    b. Do you have any examples of how this might have been used?

6) Leaders sometimes engage in seeing larger patterns, relationships, and connections, having a sense of belonging. This is a holistic approach to seeing larger patterns that may be a benefit to public leaders.
    a. Do you think there is an advantage in leading with the ability to see larger patterns and relationships?
    b. Have you done so over your career, if so?
    c. Can you offer an example?

7) Some say the inner self is the voice inside that perhaps defines values, attitudes, and beliefs.
    a. Do you focus on the inner you?
    b. Do you spend time in thought regularly?
    c. Do you engage in meditations or times of inner contemplative thought?
    d. If so, how often and have they ever applied views of public leadership decisions?

8) Power and ego are a natural influence over individuals elected to office.

    a. Why do you believe that people are drawn to taking the mantle of being an elected official?
    b. What are the constraints?
    c. What are the benefits?
    d. What is the reason you ran?
    e. Why remain?

9) Select five values-based leadership traits from the twelve cards you are given.
    a. Please pick five that are most important to you.
    b. Now prioritize the top five cards from most important #1 to least #5.

Appendix B

Table of Potential Participants

Potential candidates for VBL Interviews						
#	**Name**	**Title**	**Experience**	**Age**	**Party**	**State**
1	[redacted]	State Representative	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
2	[redacted]	State Representative	[redacted]	[redacted]		MN
3	[redacted]	State Legislature	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
4	[redacted]	State Legislature	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
5	[redacted]	U.S. Congress	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
6	[redacted]	State Senator	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
7	[redacted]	State Senator	[redacted]	[redacted]		MN
8	[redacted]	U.S. Congress	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
9	[redacted]	U.S. Congress	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
10	[redacted]	State Legislature	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
11	[redacted]	State Legislature	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
12	[redacted]	State Legislature	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY
13	[redacted]	State Legislature	[redacted]	[redacted]		MN
14	[redacted]	State Senator	[redacted]	[redacted]		NY

Appendix C

IRB Consent Letter

Date: February 1, 2021

Dear Honorable….

You are invited to participate in a study, *How State and National Political Leaders Employ Values-Based Leadership in Service of Passing Policy Initiatives, Building Consensus, and Building Followings,* conducted by Vincent M. Tamagna, a doctoral student at Concordia University, Chicago.

The goal of this study is to gain opinions and synthesize the data of elected officials. The knowledge gained from this work will contribute to the understanding and impact of values-based leadership on public sector leadership. Elected leaders who participate in the study may benefit by understanding how values-based leadership theory may fit a model of organizational leadership. This academic study will address through one overarching research question and three sub questions as follows: 1) How do state and national political leaders employ values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives, building consensus, and building followings; 2) What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of passing policy initiatives; 3) What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building consensus; and 4) What benefits do political leaders perceive from using values-based leadership in service of building followings?

The study will involve qualitative methodology and a transcendental phenomenology research design. The population under study will be state and national level politicians, namely governors, legislators, and U.S. members of Congress. The study will involve a sample of five to six participants, split as evenly as possible in terms of party affiliation. Data from these participants will be collected through qualitative, semi-structured interviews and analyzed with qualitative thematic analysis and eidetic reduction.

The study will take place in the States of Minnesota and New York and include participants, ideally, balanced (elected to either county, State, or Federal office) from diverse political philosophies and persuasions, with a minimum of two terms of elected experience.

Due to COVID19 and too many unknowns, all interviews will be conducted via ZOOM. This will be convenient for the interviewees and protect them from potential health risks. The approximately sixty-minute interview will be audio-recorded. No reasonably foreseeable risks are associated with participation in this study, and participation is entirely voluntary. Interviewees have the right to stop involvement at any moment with no consequences of any kind that will follow from refusal to participate. Audio-recordings and transcripts are treated as *CONFIDENTIAL* and become the property of the researcher; kept for a minimum of three years in a locked cabinet at the home office, then properly discarded, per IRB. Participant information will always remain private: only pseudonyms will be used when reporting the results.

This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Concordia University Chicago. Any additional questions or concerns can be directed to Vincent M. Tamagna, crf_tamagnvm@cuchicago.edu. Additionally, should you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can contact Dr. Amanda Maddocks, Chair of the Concordia University Chicago Institutional Review Board by phone at irb@cuchicago.edu.

I agree to participate in this study and have read and received a copy of this consent

_____ (signature).

I give permission to audio-record the interview

_____(signature). _____ (date).

Appendix D

Interview Script-Introduction

Thank you for your time. This a critical study, and I appreciate your participation. This conversation is being recorded for research purposes. Please let me know now if you disagree to be recorded, and you may request that the recording stops at any time. As indicated in the IRB, you just signed confidentiality, and anonymity is my guarantee. Today, we are here because I want to learn about your lived experience as an elected leader and your thoughts on how you understand values-based leadership. I will be asking you questions about your values and leadership connection to them. I hope to have you share experience and how, where, when, and why your values are applied. The research aims to find how public officials describe their leadership as values-based? Any information you can recall or any stories you can share would be helpful. Please let me know at any time if you wish to stop, and I will cease the interview.

For the next sixty minutes, the questions about public leadership traits and experiences are your personal opinions. Any information and anything you can share about your journey is again confidential and for the benefit of future research to help understand elected leadership traits. If you can elaborate on these questions, feel free to share stories and personal thoughts.

ProQuest Number: 30311814

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality and completeness of this reproduction is dependent on the quality
and completeness of the copy made available to ProQuest.



Distributed by ProQuest LLC (2023).
Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author unless otherwise noted.

This work may be used in accordance with the terms of the Creative Commons license
or other rights statement, as indicated in the copyright statement or in the metadata
associated with this work. Unless otherwise specified in the copyright statement
or the metadata, all rights are reserved by the copyright holder.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17,
United States Code and other applicable copyright laws.

Microform Edition where available © ProQuest LLC. No reproduction or digitization
of the Microform Edition is authorized without permission of ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346 USA