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A Mixed-Methods Study on the Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication Within the Financial Service Sector

Pablo R. Reyes-Cruz

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A MIXED-METHODS STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND
EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT TO SUPERVISOR ON SERVICE STANDARDS
COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE FINANCIAL SERVICE SECTOR

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Pablo R. Reyes-Cruz

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

May 2019

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of Professional Studies in Education

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Pablo R. Reyes-Cruz

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

David M. Piper, D.Ed.
Professor of Employment and Labor Relations,
Chair

Sue A. Rieg, Ed.D.
Professor of Education

Meghan M. Twiest, Ed.D.
Professor of Professional Studies in Education

ACCEPTED

Randy L. Martin, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: A Mixed-Methods Study on the Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication Within the Financial Service Sector

Author: Pablo R. Reyes-Cruz

Dissertation Chair: Dr. David M. Piper

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Sue A. Rieg
Dr. Meghan M. Twiest

Servant leadership and its influence on communication within the workplace is gaining the traction and attention it finally deserves, yet many opportunities exist to fulfill the call to action identified by the founder and wise father of servant leadership, Robert K. Greenleaf. In the words of Dr. Stephen Covey, “it may be possible to buy someone’s hand and back, but not their heart mind and spirit” (Covey, 2012, p.2). This study sought to measure the value of those words as our nation continues to grow and be dominated by large institutions that do not serve us well (Greenleaf, 2012).

Delivering from a successful 76 percent response rate and active focus group registry, this mixed-methods study utilized a compilation of previously validated psychometric instruments (Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996; Lytle, Hom, & Mokwa, 1998; Stogdill, 1963; Winston & Field, 2015) and focus group interviews to examine and observe the effects of servant leadership and employees’ commitment to their supervisor, as perceived by the employee, on service standards communication within the financial service sector. In this study, a diverse sample was sought from two financial service institutions to answer the study’s 42-question survey. With the additional collection of qualitative feedback and focus group interviews, triangulation of data identified positive correlations between servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication.

The data showed a significant and positive relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor ($r = .70, p < .01$); employee commitment to supervisor and task-oriented behavior also showed a significant and positive relationship ($r = .42, p < .01$). Servant leadership was also found to have a significant and positive relationship with task-oriented leadership behavior ($r = .58, p < .01$).

Furthermore, highly significant correlations between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor resulted in supportive findings for the servant leadership academy on the effects of servant leadership behavior within the financial service industry.

By implementing this study in the financial service industry, best practices for improving employee productivity, commitment, and communications between managers, employees and ultimately, the customers, were identified.

DEDICATION

This dissertation would not have been possible if not for the support of my family, friends, and community of educators. To have the opportunity to pursue my education to such a degree is a blessing and one of the greatest accomplishments of my life.

To the scholar, educator, administrator, mother of many, and mentor who forever changed my life from the day I applied for graduate school, Dr. Erinn Dyan Lake Brozewicz. Words cannot express the gratitude and appreciation I have for you. Your essence has defined for me what it means to be an educator and true servant leader – genuine, inspirational, and unconditionally supportive. I thank you for being the inspiration so many seek in their lives. I dedicate this study to you, and thank you for every lesson, word of encouragement, and belief you had in me to achieve my fullest potential. You recognized more in me than I ever thought I could achieve in one lifetime.

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The power of education has no end. I am a living testament of its ability to transcend one's conceived limitations in an effort to identify purpose that may be channeled to assist the common good.

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Finally, to a future doctoral student, whomever you are, when you read this, I want you to know you are worthy, you have what it takes to go all the way, and regardless of the challenges you encounter in your path, let them serve as catalyst to finish. This process is a test of persistence and self-driven collaboration. Remember, no one becomes successful on their own; it requires a support-team of educators, family, friends, and loved ones.

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to develop a better understanding of the effects of servant leadership behavior and employee commitment to supervisors on service standards communication. These communications guide employees by providing a framework of what is expected of them and the actions they can take when dealing with members, or customers, in for-profit and non-profit traditional financial service institutions (banks and credit unions) in Northwestern Pennsylvania (Maden, Goztas, & Topsumer, 2014). Research on this topic is plentiful for other industry and cultural settings (Dierendonck, 2011; Maden et. al, 2014; Russel & Stone, 2002; Sokoll, 2014). Lack of similar research in the financial service sector leaves institutions in this industry vulnerable and susceptible to increased employee miscommunication, under-developed employee-supervisor relationships, and overall ineffectiveness when serving others (Vandenberghe & Bentein, 2009).

Service and communication in the workplace require ongoing maintenance, especially between managers and employees. As institutions evolve in order to meet the needs of their customers, they become arenas for conflicting behaviors, ideas, and verbal and non-verbal communications (Phutela, 2015). Rooted in an employee's ability to provide effective communication and service to others in the workplace is morale. Individual morale in the workplace can determine the overall group morale in the organization. Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2009) emphasized that a leader has the ability to most effectively impact an employee's emotions in the workplace, while Mersino (2013) affirmed the responsibility of leaders to manage workplace relationships.

Servant leadership is a style in which “the servant-leader is servant first” (Robert K. Greenleaf, see Center for Servant Leadership Web Page <http://www.greenleaf.org>). Servant leadership focuses on the needs of employees, as servant leaders speak, act, and base their decision-making on the interests of their employees first, before all else. Greenleaf (2012), in his conceptualization of servant leadership, predicted the development of a new ethic that would prioritize employees’ needs. As organizations within the financial service industry become more competitive, the time to explore the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisors on service standards communication, communications that guide employees when dealing with customers and members, is now.

Research on servant leadership (Amin, 2012; Coggins, 2012; Jordan, 2015; Persaud, 2015; Sokoll, 2013; Wallitsch, 2016; Williams, 2012) has increased exponentially with a number of dissertations dedicated to studying the relationship between servant leadership and employees (e.g., employee engagement, employee commitment to supervisor, listening and persuasion, team effectiveness, and top-down environment effectiveness). Developments in this field over the past decade have created, tested, and proven reliable metrics to measure servant leadership (Sokoll, 2014; Winston & Field, 2015). The subject has begun to gain attention among scholars and practitioners, and various studies on servant leadership indicate its ability to improve communications among employees across various industries.

Traditional Financial Service Institutions

Traditional financial service institutions, banks and credit unions, are most commonly known for providing financial services including checking and saving accounts, home mortgages, and auto loans (Haralson, 2007). In delivery of service, employees are trained and expected to use specific communication guidelines, service standards communications, to

streamline how they assist customers and members consistently and accurately. Considering the increased regulatory pressures financial service institutions are experiencing post-financial crisis of 2008, employees and services within these institutions are under consistent scrutiny for continuous optimization and systematic improvements (Targeted News Service, 2016).

Financial service institutions rely on their employees and service standards communications to serve as the backbone and voice of the organization. Both non-profit (credit union) and for-profit (bank) institutions, introduced later in this study, incorporate service standards communications guidelines when onboarding and periodically training their employees. Organizational charts are also utilized at both the non-profit (Appendix N) and for-profit (Appendix O) organizations to further assist employees with an understanding of how the overall organization is structured while also providing information of roles, responsibilities, and relationships within their individual institutions.

Statement of the Problem

Supervisors are tasked with transparent communication and maintaining ongoing contact with employees. Changes in employee roles, leadership, and organizational practices impact the consistencies in communication in the workplace, creating challenges that may impact the performance and commitment from an employee, relationship between supervisor and employee, and overall performance and commitment. Ultimately, ineffective communication between supervisor and employee has the ability to impact overall operations and productivity of the organization.

Financial service institutions continue to compete for consumer loyalty, particularly among the maturing millennial generation. According to Cahan (2015), findings from a decade-long study with 10,000 millennials revealed their dislike of the four largest national for-profit

banks, as consumers value non-profit financial service institutions for their personable customer service, low fees, and transparency. As financial service institutions continue to develop strategies to encourage new customers and membership, service communications standards should also be reviewed as leadership behavior can impact employee behavior in the workplace (Yukl, 2010), which, in turn, impacts the customer experience.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated methods of improving internal communications for employees in the financial service industry. This researcher conducted a voluntary participatory investigation in an effort to identify options to streamline communication from supervisors to employees responsible for assisting customers. The researcher investigated variables influencing relationship(s) between employee and supervisor, both in the credit union (non-profit) and banking (for-profit) sectors.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The scholarship on servant leadership will provide the theoretical framework for this research. For this study, servant leadership is characterized by seven behaviors (Northouse & Lee, 2016, p.16):

1. Conceptualizing
2. Emotional healing
3. Putting followers first
4. Helping followers grow and succeed
5. Behaving ethically
6. Empowering
7. Creating value for the community

Greenleaf (2012) argued that servant leadership emerged in colleges and universities following the social turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s, as institutions searched for solutions in response to instability. Institutions at large, including businesses, religious organizations, governments, and labor unions, were also included in this dilemma as many organizations still did not have the measurements they needed to serve the needs of their employees first, also known as “serve-first” (Greenleaf, 2012).

As these large institutions continue to exist, leaders in the financial service sector continue to face behavioral and communication pressures from their employees, who are looking for direction and instruction when performing service processes in the workplace (Greenleaf, 2012, Maden et al., 2014). Servant leadership and service standards communication techniques have proven to assist colleges and universities in identifying problem-based solutions and improving employee performance and commitment, yet minimal research has been done in the financial service sector to measure the correlation between either variable. Maden et al. (2014) acknowledged servant leadership and service standards communication as effective mechanisms to pass informational competencies to employees. Communicated further in the theoretical framework of this study, Greenleaf (2012) described how servant leadership promotes communication between leadership and employees. With servant leadership being measured in various education, healthcare, religious institutions, why are so few financial service institutions evaluating servant leadership and communication standards in the workplace?

Significance of Study: Financial Service Institutions Still Lack Leadership Insight

Large institutionalism (universities, businesses, hospitals, churches) is on the rise as the globalization of markets and technology continues to dominate the workforce (Covey, 2010; Greenleaf, 2012). With the challenges of globalization, there lies a critical challenge in

measuring the effectiveness of leadership and employees in financial service institutions today. Former President and Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Reserve's Bank of New York, William C. Dudley (2016), spoke of this challenge during the opening remarks of a Washington, D.C. conference on monitoring large, complex financial institutions. In his remarks, Dudley attributed the financial meltdown in 2008 to a lack of supervision, regulation, and daily oversight of financial institutions. Although supervisory regulations and monitoring of financial service institutions have since improved, further research and discussions are encouraged among financial leaders in efforts to develop enhanced measures and policy to further assess supervision and employees within institutions of all sizes. Dudley elaborated, "For example, if a bank fails is this evidence of poor supervision, or instead evidence that even good supervision can't prevent all bank failures?" (2016, p.3). This study seeks to identify factors that have the potential to improve and contribute financial assessment measures of leadership, commitment, and communication effectiveness between leadership and employees within two financial service institutions.

In addition to communication, the relationship between an employee and manager can impact the overall success of an organization. Such scholars as Greenleaf, Northouse, and Yukl (2010) have acclaimed servant leadership as a proven strategy for improving employee communication, commitment, and performance. Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) reiterated Greenleaf's (1977) perspective on servant leadership and its ability to improve communication by reminding organizations that servant leaders do not require force to get their employees to perform but empower through persuasion. Reviewing financial service institutions and identifying elements of strategy most helpful to institutional growth (such as service standards and servant leadership) may prove beneficial to boards of directors, chief executive officers, and

other administrators and employees in the financial sector seeking to develop and/or improve similar programs. Therefore, developing a better understanding of the effects of servant leadership behavior and employee commitment to supervisor(s) on service standards communication within the financial service industry may aid in identifying best practices for improving employee productivity, commitment, and communications.

Identified by scholars of servant leadership (Field & Winston, 2010; Russell & Stone, 2002) are 45 servant leadership attributes. Through non-experimental convenience survey design and data analysis, this study is expected to measure and reveal additional information about the attributes previously discovered, if they are instilled within the organization, and how the attributes contribute to the non-profit and for-profit financial service sectors.

Scholarship on servant leadership has addressed various functional (e.g., communication, credibility, and competence,) and accompanying attributes (e.g., “vision, honesty and integrity,”) in addition to compensation (Maden, 2014; Russell & Stone, 2002, p. 147; Sokoll, 2014, Winston and Fields, 2015, p. 422). Identifying the most important attributes within the financial service sector could have a positive effect on the industry as well as contribute to scholarship in this area (Sokoll, 2014, Winston and Fields, 2015).

Servant Leadership Has Not Been Widely Measured in Financial Service Institutions

Despite reported success in other industries, servant leadership has not been widely measured in the financial service sector. Jones (2012) and Reese (2017) found that servant leadership had a positive influence on employee outcomes, enhancing employee satisfaction and their attention to customers and members. Lack of research on employee commitment to supervisor and service standards communication may be associated with ambiguous terminology or phrasing initially communicated by Greenleaf (1977), but has only recently been empirically

studied over the past decades (Field & Winston, 2010; Russell & Stone, 2002; Sokoll, 2014).

Winston and Fields (2015) explained why servant leadership may have presented a challenge in the past to leadership seeking to implement its design:

The vagueness explicit in these re-definitions of servant leadership weakens theory.

Indeed, an effective management theory needs to contribute knowledge, so it provides intimate understanding of a problem or phenomenon and provide relevant insight to the professions in order to apply that knowledge to the practice of management. (Winston & Fields, 2015, p. 415)

Since many institutions have various forms of leadership within their organizations, it was not long before instruments were created to measure the behaviors and attributes of servant leadership of supervisors (Winston & Fields, 2015).

Irving (2005), Sokoll (2013), Dierendonck (2011), and Brown (2017) have shown that organizations measured for servant leadership behaviors and attributes demonstrate a positive correlation between employee commitment, communication, and overall organization success. As noted by Dierendonck (2011), servant leadership is a new field of research in leadership studies. Sokoll's study also showed servant leadership heightened employee commitment substantially:

Managing and retaining valuable human resources and top talent is a topic commonly seen in the popular press and talked about in executive circles. Employee retention has been found to be linked to employee commitment to a supervisor; the higher employee commitment to a supervisor, the higher the level of retention. This study showed that servant leadership behaviors of a supervisor heighten employee commitment to the supervisor. (Sokoll, 2014, p. 97)

Dierendonck (2011) asserts that while views of leadership behavior continue to change, “the current demand for more ethical, people-centered management, leadership inspired by the ideas from servant leadership theory may very well be what organizations need now” (p. 218).

As previously noted, financial service institutions lack supervision, regulation, and daily-oversight of leadership and employees (Targeted News Service, 2016). Further implementation of this study has the ability to provide feedback that may be utilized in resolving these dilemmas. Dierendonck (2011) also suggested that leaders have the ability to further engage employees through further examination of their societal and corporate interests. This study sought to serve as a catalyst of the employees’ perspective within the participating financial service institutions.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions:

1. What relationship does servant leadership have on service standards communications, as perceived by the employee?
2. What relationship does employee commitment to supervisor have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?
3. What relationship does task-oriented leadership behavior have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?
4. Is there a difference between profit versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspective on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, c) service standards communication?

This study’s null hypotheses, based on the theoretical construct, design metric, and reported research findings from the literature, are as follows:

H₀1: There is no relationship between servant leadership and service standards communication as perceived among employees.

H₀ 2: There is no relationship between employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication as perceived among employees.

H₀ 3: There is no relationship between task-oriented leadership behavior on service standards communication as perceived among employees.

H₀ 4: There is no difference between profits versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspective on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards communication.

Research Design

In previous research, Sokoll (2013), Winston and Fields, (2015), and Maden et al. (2014) revealed valuable data on the impact of leadership attributes on employees' communication of workplace standards when studying attributes of servant leadership behavior, employee commitment to supervisor and service standards communication. Additional research acknowledges that service standard guidelines are only as effective as the manner in which they are communicated to employees (Maden, et. al, 2014). An area recommended for further research involves measuring industry and cultural settings to further explore "how much" the relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment has on service standards communication practice in the workplace (Maden, et. al, 2014; Sokoll, 2013). In addition, this study sought to develop a greater understanding of the reason, opinions, and motivation of employees through qualitative exploration. Thankfully, metrics are available to measure service standards communication (Lytle, Hom & Mikwa, 1998) and its relationship to servant leadership

behaviors (Winston & Fields, 2015) and employee commitment to supervisor (Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996).

A mixed-methods study will be used, consisting of a quantitative non-experimental convenience survey design with a qualitative component, along with focus group interviews, followed by quantitative and qualitative analysis. A quantitative non-experimental convenience survey design methodology will be used to first provide a value for servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisors (independent variables) and impact on service standards communication (Maden et al, 2014; Sokoll, 2014). Second, participants had the opportunity to fill out another survey in order to provide additional feedback through an interview, scheduled contingent on the overall survey response rate of the survey. The intent of this study was to collect as much data from a sample of participants from a precise population in order to incur an overall perception of the population based on the degree of relationship between leadership and employees.

A mixed-method study of the leadership and employee bodies at the non-profit and for-profit financial service institutions could be beneficial to both the financial service sector and to the academic study of servant leadership. Utilizing previously measured and tested instruments and qualitative questions on servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor could assist other financial organizations in identifying practices, policy, and programming relevant to hiring and retention and overall stakeholder satisfaction (Maden et al, 2014; Sokoll, 2014). As noted in other servant leadership studies, exploring the relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication could reveal communication fallacies, improve the organization, and provide valuable insight for the

individual financial service institutions and other organizations seeking to enhance their service standards communication (Greenleaf, 2012).

Assumptions and Limitations

Quantitative and qualitative studies thus far seeking to expand the construct of servant leadership, while also further exploring variables like employee commitment to supervisor and service standards communication, have been effectively executed. However, research on servant leadership and its ability to impact communication in the workplace is still in its infancy (Maden et. al, 2014; Parris & Peachy, 2012; Persaud, 2015; Rennaker, 2008; Sokoll, 2014). Although previous research has shown servant leadership to have a positive correlation with employee commitment to supervisor (Sokoll, 2014), an additional assumption rests on the notion that servant leadership has a positive effect on service standards communication among employees.

Further assumptions revolve around the idea that employees' performance, commitment, and communication are intertwined with the supervisors who lead them. Institutions like General Motors, Sears, and AT&T all have had servant leaders who created notable organizations that honored their contributions and influence years later (Greenleaf, 2012). An additional assumption to consider is whether employees view leadership, workplace commitment, and organizational communications as something they value. Greenleaf's (2012) new ethic of "work and person" assumes a connection between servant leadership, employer-supervisor relations, and communication leading to enhanced organizational operations. This study sought to clarify some of these assumptions through quantitative and qualitative methods.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions will be used in the study:

Accompanying attributes: “appear to supplement and augment the functional attributes. They are not secondary in nature, but rather complimentary and in some cases prerequisites to effective servant leadership; e.g. vision, honesty, integrity” (Russell & Stone, 2002, p.147)

Employee Commitment: “psychological attachment of workers to their workplaces” (Becker et al., 1996, p.464)

Employee Fulfillment- “degree to which employees of an organization feel that the organization continually satisfies their needs” (Grandzol & Gershon, 1998, p. 102)

Employee Motivation: “motivation based on values, behaviors and the way managers lead; employees become more involved and committed to their tasks and assignments and work hard for the achievement of organizational goals” (Zareen, Razzaq, & Mujtaba, 2014)

Employee Satisfaction – is the degree to which employees are content or pleased with their jobs and work environment (Brown, 2017).

Functional attributes: “the operative qualities, characteristics, and distinctive features belonging to leaders and observed through specific leader behaviors in the workplace; e.g., communication, credibility, competence” (Russell & Stone, 2002, p.146)

Leadership: “the ability of management to influence a process(es) that assist groups of individuals toward goal attainment” (Northouse, 1997, p.2)

Organizational Culture: “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Tharp, 2009, p.5).

Organizational Commitment: “a strong belief in and acceptance of the organizations goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization” (Keskes, 2013, p.28)

Organizational Uncertainty: “the uncertainty of the external business environment” (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998)

Relationships: “the act of making a genuine effort to know, understand, and support others in the organization, with an emphasis on building long-term relationships with immediate followers” (Liden et al., 2008, p.163)

Serve: “to bend one’s efforts to serve others with skill, understanding and spirit” (Greenleaf, 2012, p.18)

Servant-first: “natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first; then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead” (Greenleaf, 2012, p. 27)

Servanthood – “a way of being marked by one’s self-categorization and desire to be characterized by others as someone who serves others first, even when self-sacrifice is required” (Liden et al., 2008, p.163)

Servant Leadership: Robert K. Greenleaf (1970) defines servant leadership as a style in which “the servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types.” (see Center for Servant Leadership Web Page <http://www.greenleaf.org>)

Service Standards Communication: communications that guide employees by providing a framework of what is expected of them and the actions they can do when dealing with members or customers affiliated with the organization (Maden et. al, 2014).

Work Engagement: refers to an attachment to, identification with, and involvement in an object or activity, the work itself, rather than the organization (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014)

Summary

Employees evaluate their places of employment beyond compensation and benefits; they seek to find supervisors who are empowering, trustworthy, and nurturing (Greenleaf, 2012; Rezaei, Salehi, Shafiei, & Sabet, 2012). Furthermore, findings from this study can benefit financial institutions seeking to improve policies and practices during a time when it is socially important and scientifically relevant (Targeted News Service, 2016). Evaluating a successful financial service institution on servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor and its effects of service standards communication could have positive consequences on improving internal satisfaction, transparency, and communications for employees when interacting with both internal and external constituents.

In chapter two, a review of literature review details the historical relevance and quantitative measurements of servant leadership developed in recent decades. Servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication variables were also independently explored and synthesized. Finally, criticism of servant leadership was included, along with additional leadership styles identified by scholars as similar to servant leadership, although different in theory and style.

In chapter three, the methodology detailing the design for this study, instrumentation, target populations, and site selection are included, along with descriptions of financial service

institutions A (non-profit) and B (for-profit). At each site, service standards communications are promoted among employees and included in this study for future comparison.

In chapter four, a discussion of findings will be compared with existing servant leadership behavior theory, with additional contributions to the academy of servant leadership and recommendations for areas of further study provided in chapter five.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction to the Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to research and measure the effects of 1) servant leadership behavior of supervisors and 2) employee commitment to supervisor on 3) service standards communication. Literature on these research variables will be synthesized in this chapter. Documenting insights and previous literature relevant to this study will further examine how the servant leadership approach and its ethics can improve communications within the financial service sector (Greenleaf, 2012).

Commemorating Servant Leadership

In the foreword to the 25th anniversary edition of *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, Dr. Stephen Covey commemorated servant leadership pioneer and visionary Robert Greenleaf's work by summarizing its relevance for organizations today:

It may be possible to buy someone's hand or back, but not their heart, mind, and spirit. And in the competitive reality of today's global marketplace, it will be only those organizations whose people not only willingly volunteer their tremendous creative talent, commitment and loyalty, but whose organizations align their structures, systems and management style to support the empowerment of their people that will survive and thrive as market leaders. (Covey, 2012, p. 2)

Covey suggested the key leverage points for servant leadership include aligning structures, systems, and management styles to meet the needs of the employee in order to develop self-empowerment, to better serve the individual first, the organization second, and the servant leader

last. This is the essence of servant leadership – to serve, influence, and inspire employees to reach their fullest potential.

The Current Research Gap of Financial Service Institutions

This study sought to measure the attributes of the two financial service institutions (one for-profit and one not for profit) in an effort to identify “best practices” that have brought success to these organizations, which are fundamentally different, yet, perhaps, similar in mission. Both organizations have been recognized in the community and among their peer institutions as exemplary service models for the local, state, and financial communities (AdvisoryHQ, 2017; Erie Choice Awards, 2012-18; ERIEBANK, 2017-18). The current gap in research, specifically the lack of research in the financial sector, shows a need to further explore the relationship between leadership and its impact on employee commitment and communication.

Other studies have measured aspects of employee commitment, such as evaluating job performance (Dierendonck, 2011), commitment to supervisor (Sokoll, 2013; Sokoll, 2014), and turnover intention (Hunter et al., 2013; Linden et al., 2008), as well as particular servant leadership behaviors and attributes (Russell & Stone, 2003; Winston & Fields, 2015) and implementing theoretical construct and design metrics (Lytle et al., 1998; Parris & Peachy, 2012) of servant leadership behavior into the workplace to further assess employee customer service communication, perceptions of their leaders, and overall performance in the workplace. However, minimal data exist on how servant leadership and employee/supervisor relationships affect communications, specifically the service standards communications on workplace expectations (Maden et. al, 2014; Rennaker, 2008; Sokoll, 2014).

Scholarship on servant leadership is relatively new (Rennaker, 2008; Rezaei et al, 2012). Only in this decade have tested, reliable metrics been developed to measure the servant

leadership characteristics and their relationship to other attributes (Sokoll, 2014; Winston & Field, 2015). Thus far, research on servant leadership and service standards communication has not been explored in the United States financial service sector, although other relevant studies on the financial service industry have been conducted abroad (Garcia, et al., 2010; Iacob, 2015; Maden et. al, 2014). Greenleaf's (1977) initial call to action reminds us that applications of servant leadership need to be explored continuously and applied across institutions, including business, education, and churches, among others.

Hunter et al. (2013) argued that the topic of leadership requires continuous study in order to find data that assists both leaders and subordinates in their professional development. Although leadership behavior has been shown to influence employees' communications, customer service, and overall job performance and attitude (Hunter et al., 2013), additional empirical research linking servant leadership, commitment to supervisor, and the effects of both on service standards communication are needed.

A review of literature seeking best practices for measuring the characteristics of servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication suggest that further research is needed to understand the impacts of servant leadership on service standards communication. Since servant leadership has been identified as a relationship-oriented leadership behavior (Northouse, 2010; Sokoll, 2014), evaluating the relationship between the employee and supervisor, from the perspective of the employee, may be helpful to improving dynamics in the workplace. Measuring servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor and its effects on service standards communication would address the problem of this study; hence the purpose of this study is to evaluate the relationship between these variables

from the perspective of the employees in an effort to provide data that will improve the financial service industry.

Historical Overview

Servant leadership has been described by many researchers in different terms, the most frequently used including “servant leadership,” “service leadership,” “supportive leadership,” and “servant leadership behavior.” Regardless of the terminology, the premise of servant leadership has remained consistent.

As an example, Northouse (2010), in his book *Leadership Theory and Practice*, defined servant leadership as “supportive leadership as a consideration behavior” focused on being friendly, supportive of the “human needs and well-being” of subordinate (employee), and driven by treating those who follow as equals, with respect for their status (p. 91). Derived from ongoing studies at The Ohio State University, this particular leadership style was not yet labeled until years after its initial inception, when later empirical studies cited his work.

Northouse and Lee (2016), in their book *Leadership Case Studies in Education*, provided their own description of servant leadership behavior:

Servant leadership encompasses both service and influence. A servant leader is a leader and a servant simultaneously. They are leaders who put followers first, empower them, and help them develop their full potential. In an ideal world, servant leadership results in community and societal change. Servant leaders make a conscious choice to serve first, to place the good of followers over the leaders’ self-interest. They build strong relationships with others, are empathetic and ethical, and lead in ways that serve the greater good of followers, the organization, the community, and society at large. (Northouse & Lee, 2016, pp.90-92).

Similarly, Greenleaf (1970) introduced the premise and vocabulary of servant leadership by introducing leadership behavior as influencing followers by taking on the role of servants in an effort to accommodate the needs of others. Since the definition remains constant across the literature, and since the term “servant leadership” effectively captures the intent of this project, it will be the term of choice and used consistently throughout this study.

Additional research on servant leadership communicates the exciting stage of development that servant leadership has reached and the ability to now measure its effects on employee performance in the workplace (Made et al., 2014; Sokoll, 2014). Decades worth of research has provided the ability to now measure the characteristics and behaviors of servant leadership (Liden et al. Russel & Stone, 2002; Winston & Fields, 2015).

Definitions of Servant Leadership

Unfortunately, servant leadership theory has been described by many scholars from the academy as “overlapping”(Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008), “lacking accurate definition” (Van Dierendonck, 2011, p. 1231), “ambiguous; a potpourri of different literature” (Russel & Stone, 2002, p. 145), and operationalized with a large variety of dimensions where there remains little consensus about a clear definition of servant leadership or the mechanisms by which it works (Hernandez et al., 2011; Sokoll, 2013, 2014; Winston & Fields, 2015). Parris and Peachy (2012) further explained that “scholars are currently seeking publication outlets as critics debate whether this new leadership theory is significantly distinct, viable and valuable for organizational success” (p. 377). Similar discourse is noted, as Van Dierendonck (2011) stated that other researchers exploring servant leadership behavior are creating definitions lessening the degree of Greenleaf’s work, who did not leave an empirical definition of the leadership behavior (Dierendonck, 2011).

In what may be interpreted as a call to action, the term *servant leadership* was devised more than 40 years ago by Robert K. Greenleaf as he witnessed two dilemmas throughout his career: first, prime movers (rising leaders) who have the ability to lead and to combat the problems (systems, ideologies and movements) of our time, but choose conformity over action. His second observation was of individuals who have the ability to lead but choose not to when opportunities arise. In describing the role of a servant and leader, Greenleaf defined servant leadership:

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or acquire material possessions. For such, it will be a later choice to serve after leadership is established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. (Greenleaf, 2012, p. 27)

Furthering Greenleaf's work, Russell and Stone (2002) developed a practical model for identifying and measuring servant leadership characteristics. They asserted, "If servant leadership is different from other forms of leadership, then one should be able to observe characteristics and behaviors in such leaders that are distinctive" (p. 145). The authors suggested, in spite of documented concerns about creating consistent and clear definition of servant leadership, that "there is enough consistency in the literature to make it possible to discern characteristics or attributes that should be among such leaders" (Russell & Stone, 2002, p.144). Together, Winston and Fields (2015) and Russell and Stone (2002) outlined 45 key attributes of a servant leader. Emerging themes of community and relationship development,

individual engagement, influential communications and consistency authenticity are present, further aligning Greenleaf's initial definition and present-day interpretation. These values (listed below) will be utilized as a framework during the survey and analysis process of the research to determine if the financial service institution in this study possesses the following values. See Table 1: Servant Leadership Attributes.

Table 1

Servant Leadership Attributes

Russel and Stone (2002)	Winston and Fields (2015)
1. appreciation of others	1. altruism
2. communication	2. authentic self
3. competence	3. behaving ethically
4. credibility	4. caring of others
5. delegation	5. conceptual skills
6. empowerment	6. covenantal relationship
7. encouragement	7. creating value for the community
8. honesty	8. creating value for those outside the organization
9. influence	9. developing others
10. integrity	10. emotional healing
11. listening	11. forming relationships with subordinates
12. modeling	12. goal-setting
13. persuasion	13. helping subordinates grow and succeed
14. pioneering	14. humility
15. service	15. leader's agapao
16. stewardship	16. persuasion mapping
17. teaching	17. putting subordinates first
18. trust	18. responsible morality
19. visibility	19. servant-hood
20. vision	20. shared decision making
	21. team-building
	22. transcendent spirituality
	23. transforming influence
	24. voluntary subordination
	25. wisdom

Note. Servant Leadership attributes from Russel and Stone (2002) and Winston and Fields (2015)

Parris and Peachy (2012) sought to define servant leadership theory as a justifiable and significant theory within organizational contexts for assisting both leaders and followers. In an effort to understand the true essence of the term “servant leader” and the characteristics and behaviors that differentiate this particular leadership style from others, Greenleaf’s (1977) original theory has been thoroughly deconstructed and deciphered over the years in efforts to establish evidence which differentiates this leadership style from others. Parris and Peachy (2012) conducted the first systematic literature review on servant leadership in an effort to define servant leadership scholarship in a systematic, transparent, and reproducible manner (Parris and

Peachy, 2012). Driving this study were four questions: “(a) how was servant leadership defined? (b) in what contexts was servant leadership empirically investigated? (c) how was servant leadership examined, and (d) what were the results?” (p. 378). Upon completion of their literature review, Parris and Peachy (2012) synthesized 39 studies, published between 2004 and 2011, and discovered four consistent themes:

1. No consensus on the definition of servant leadership
2. Servant leadership theory investigated across a variety of contexts, cultures and themes
3. Researchers using multiple measures to explore servant leadership
4. Servant leadership as a viable leadership theory that helps organizations and improves the well-being of followers

As previously noted, Greenleaf (2012) conceptualized servant leadership during a time when powerful institutions – churches, businesses, governments, union groups, and universities – were not perceived as serving their membership, fueling the “anti-leader” culture present today. Greenleaf addresses criticism of servant leadership by describing the negative reputation that follow both terms *servant* and *leader*:

Part of the problem is that serve and lead are overused words with negative connotations. But they are also good words and I can find no others that carry as well the meaning I would like to convey. Not everything that is old and worn or even corrupt, can be thrown away. Some of it has to be rebuilt and used again. So, it is, it seems to me, with the words serve and lead. (Greenleaf, 2012, p.18)

Additional researchers have also questioned the definition of servant leadership. In *Servant Leadership: Its Origin, Development and Application in Organizations*, Sendjaya and Sarros

(2002) provided a critical perspective on servant leadership while further articulating a need for more empirical research on the concepts outlining the theory. The authors question Spears' (1995) methodology in identifying 10 key characteristics (listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and building community) of servant leadership, claiming such characteristics were based on a literature review and not research. The authors further dispute the term "servant-leader," calling it an oxymoron, as an individual cannot serve as both a manager and a subordinate (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002, p. 57). In later work, however, Spears (2004) provided detailed clarification on each characteristic, quoted below:

1. *Listening*: The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps clarify that will. He or she seeks to listen receptively to what is being said. Listening, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant-leader.
2. *Empathy*: The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of coworkers and does not reject them as people, even if one finds it necessary to refuse to accept their behavior or performance.
3. *Healing*: One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one's self and others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they also have an opportunity to "help make whole" those with whom they come in contact.

4. *Awareness*: General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant leader. Awareness also aids one in understanding issues involving ethics and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated holistic position.
5. *Persuasion*: The servant-leader seeks to convince others rather than coerce compliance. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups.
6. *Conceptualization*: Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to “dream great dreams.” The ability to look at a problem (or an organization) from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities.
7. *Foresight*: Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future.
8. *Stewardship*: Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control.
9. *Commitment to the Growth of People*: Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As a result, the servant leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual with the institution. The servant-leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything possible to nurture the growth of employees.
10. *Building Community*: The servant-leader senses that much had been lost in recent human history as a result of the shift from local community to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the servant-leader to

seek to identify some means from building community among those who work within a given institution. (pp. 8-9)

Another area of debate identified by Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) was the discrediting of Greenleaf (1977) as the founder of servant leadership, crediting instead Jesus Christ. Comparing Greenleaf's (1977) initial prophecy reference to Herman Hesse's and his journey to the East, Sendjaya and Sarros describe the story of a servant-leader who supported and guided a group of men on a mythical journey and later identified as leader and guiding spirit for his people to the works of Jesus, who educated his disciples on the principle of servant leadership by teaching his followers "greatness" or servant leadership:

Jesus demonstrated that servant leadership is by engaging in the humble act of washing the feet of his followers and they thereafter on practical service to others: "service has always been at the core of leadership in the spiritual arena, symbolized at the highest level by Christ washing the feet of his disciples." (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002, p. 58)

Referencing Farnsworth's (2007) research of servant leadership as a new model for higher education management, Hayden (2007) argued that the concept of "leadership as service" is a "feudal system" that lacks present-day relevance. Hayden acknowledged that Farnsworth's perspective continues to demonstrate that educational institutions lack career-readiness and are more interested in preparing students to be public and global servants rather than educating them about market-demand and a measurable bottom line. He further argued that Farnsworth's approach to power, which he associates with leadership, should be shared among faculty, administrators, and students. Hayden argued that educational bureaucratic systems go unchallenged and unchanged, not allowing institutions the opportunity to properly expect or be

open to change. Greenleaf developed the theory of servant leadership in an idealistic manner, perhaps for future empirical exploration of large institutions:

There is the assumption that since the effort to reform existing institutions has not brought instant perfection, the remedy is to destroy them completely so that fresh new perfect ones can grow. Not much thought seems to be given to the problem of where the new seed will come from or who the gardener to tend to them will be. The concept of the servant-leader stands in sharp contrast to this kind of thinking. (Greenleaf, 2012, p. 24).

Hayden (2007) concluded with cautioning present leaders blending “service and leadership,” suggesting further empirical research is needed to identify model effectiveness.

Comparing Transformational and Servant Leadership

Liden (2008) previously recognized that the servant leadership construct overlaps with other leadership styles. Although the servant leadership approach is similar to other leadership behaviors (charismatic, leader-member exchange, transformational, and transactional), there are significant attributes and values that make the servant leadership construct distinct. Liden et al., (2008) speaks directly about these distinctions:

Although sharing some conceptual similarities with transformational, consideration, and ethical leadership behavior, servant leadership behavior is distinct in being more focused on promoting the interests of others, particularly employees and the community. (p.1222)

In researching leadership styles similar to servant leadership, the following style was found most frequently: Transformational Leadership.

Transformational Leadership

According to Liden et al. (2008) transformational leadership behavior consists of four distinctive qualities: “influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and

individualized consideration” (p.163). Transformational leadership is credited with motivating and meeting the needs of employees with intangible rewards, “personal-value, professional value, and self-esteem” (Keskes, 2018, p.28). Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, de Windt, and Alkema (2014) investigated the fundamental theoretical differences between the transformational and servant leadership by measuring five hypotheses (Dierendonck et al., 2014, pp. 547-49):

- 1) Transformational Leadership related more strongly to the follower’s perception of leadership effectiveness than servant leadership
- 2) Servant Leadership is more strongly related to the satisfaction and psychological needs of the follower than transformational leadership,
- 3a) Transformational and Servant Leadership positively influence organizational commitment and workplace engagement among employees
- 3b) Leadership effectiveness mediates the influence of both transformational and servant leadership, but the mediation of leader effectiveness influences transformational leadership much stronger than servant leadership.
- 4) Environment uncertainty as a moderator would positively influence the relationship between transformational leadership and followers’ specific needs and personal attributes as they relate to commitment and engagement in the workplace.
- 5) Opposite effects would occur and ultimately weaken the positive relationship between servant leadership and followers’ engagement in the workplace

Regardless of leadership behavior, Simplicio (2011) suggests that the reality is that “leaders who respect and value those who work under them help create a nurturing environment and a culture for success” (p.114). Measuring leadership in the financial service industry to determine the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards

communication among employees is possible. Zareen, Razzaq, and Mujtaba (2014) surveyed 100 full-time non-managerial employees from five different international commercial banks, concluding that more than 25 percent of employee motivation is contingent on supervisors' leadership style, while the other 75 percent is dependent on other variables. Further study is needed to identify these "other variables" (Zareen et al., 2014).

Servant Leadership: Identifying a Measurable Metric

In today's organizations, effective leadership behaviors and approaches focus on the well-being of followers more than leaders (Dierendonck, 2011; Winston & Fields, 2015). Continuous scholarship since the theory's inception (Liden et al., 2008; Russel & Stone, 2002; Spears, 1998; Winston & Field, 2015) has focused on developing servant leadership metrics aligned with Greenleaf's (1977) initial problem to address large institutions that neglect nurturing servant leaders of the future.

Parris and Peachey (2012) studied how servant leadership theory was explored in a variety of contexts, cultures, disciplines, and themes with 11 qualitative studies, 27 quantitative studies, and one mixed-methods study published at the time of their study. Parris and Peachey (2012) were successful in identifying the "how and what" servant leadership previously studied, providing this researcher with a directional roadmap, filled with empirical resources leading to the identification of a consistent definition for servant leadership used by a majority of authors, initially presented by Greenleaf in *The Servant as Leader* (1970):

The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become

servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf, 1970, as cited in Greenleaf, 1977, p. 27).

Winston and Fields (2015) developed a single-scale instrument that measures the specific constructs and qualities of servant leadership in the workplace. In creating the instrument, the authors sought to re-strengthen the theory by surveying scholars and researchers in the field, resulting in the identification of 22 leader behaviors (out of a 116-item pool) rated as “contributing greatly to describing servant leaders” (Winston & Fields, 2015, p. 413). Following the identification of those behaviors, the researchers surveyed college and university students, faculty, and alumni, along with employees from a variety of organizations, asking respondents to describe a leader s/he has worked with in the past five years. With 443 responses, Winston and Fields (2015) identified the average age of respondent as 45; 47 percent were male, and 77 percent were white. Seven percent of the respondents resided internationally, and the remaining 93 percent resided in the United States. Fifty percent described working for a leader within an organization. Twenty-one percent of respondents worked in the commercial industry, 13 percent in government, 36 percent in education, 15 percent in religious organizations, 11 percent in the non-profit sector, and four percent in the healthcare field. In an effort to best serve employees (followers), Winston and Fields (2015) sought to develop a servant leadership metric that aligned with an “effective management theory,” which contributed knowledge to both the theory and managerial implementation (p.417). Utilizing a statistical method of exploratory factor analysis, driven by the development of followers as a primary concern, Winston and Fields were able to study the underlying relationships between variables, concluding employee development fosters from the “ethical and service-focused behaviors” provided by the leader” (Winston & Fields,

2015, p.423). Based on their findings, Winston and Fields identified 22 core servant leadership behaviors/attributes, listed below:

1. ___sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others
2. ___is genuinely interested in employees as people
3. ___models service to inspire others
4. ___understands that serving others is most important
5. ___is willing to make sacrifices to help others
6. ___understands that service is the core of leadership
7. ___seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity
8. ___aspires not to be served but to serve others
9. ___models service in his or her behaviors, attitudes, or values
10. ___holds high ethical standards
11. ___is always honest
12. ___would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success
13. ___values honesty more than profits
14. ___shows concern for employees
15. ___is driven by a sense of higher calling
16. ___takes resolute stand on moral principles
17. ___emphasizes doing what is right rather than looking good
18. ___leads by personal example
19. ___practices what he/she preaches
20. ___promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success
21. ___inspires me to lead others by serving
22. ___serves people without regard to their nationality, gender or race

Grounded in the research of Larry Spears (1998), Chief Executive Officer of the Greenleaf Leadership Center at the time, Russell and Stone (2002) recognized 10 major attributes of the servant leader as related to the servant leadership behavior: “listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community” (p.144). Russell and Stone (2002) identified servant

leadership attributes as behaviors that are either functional (distinctive and specific) or accompanying (complementary or supportive of functional behaviors). In efforts to further the potential for empirical research and the ability to study such characteristics communicated by Greenleaf (1977) and the Greenleaf Leadership Center, Russell and Stone (2002) conducted an extensive review of literature to compile a comprehensive list of attributes of servant leadership behavior. The following 20 attributes were categorized as functional and accompanying attributes. See Table 2: Functional and Accompanying Attributes.

Table 2

Functional and Accompanying Attributes

Functional Attributes	Accompanying Attributes
1. Vision	1. Communication
2. Honesty	2. Credibility
3. Integrity	3. Competence
4. Trust	4. Stewardship
5. Service	5. Visibility
6. Modeling	6. Influence
7. Pioneering	7. Persuasion
8. Appreciation of others	8. Listening
9. Empowerment	9. Encouragement
	10. Teaching
	11. Delegation

Note. Functional and accompanying attributes from (Russell and Stone, 2012, p.147)

Furthermore, Russell and Stone suggested that continued study of attributes such as those previously identified are subject to debate, and further research may reveal additional attributes. Liden et al. (2008) also explored leader behaviors related to “serving the needs of followers and larger communities both in within and outside of organizations” (p.162). In their efforts to

delineate between the inconsistencies currently present in the literature of the servant leadership, Liden et al. (2008) identified a set of nine dimensions, based on a thorough literature review and prior categorization of attributes (p.162):

1. *Emotional healing*: the act of showing sensitivity to others' personal concerns
2. *Creating value for the community*: a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community.
3. *Conceptual skills*: possessing the knowledge of the organization and tasks at hand so as to be in a position to effectively support and assist others, especially immediate followers
4. *Empowering*: encouraging and facilitating others, especially immediate followers, in identifying and solving problems, as well as determining when and how to complete work tasks.
5. *Helping other subordinates grow and succeed*: demonstrating genuine concern for others' career growth and development by providing support and mentoring
6. *Putting subordinates first*: using actions and words to make it clear to others (especially immediate followers) that satisfying their work needs is a priority. (Supervisors who practice this principle will often break from their own work to assist subordinates with problems they are facing with their assigned duties.)
7. *Behaving ethically*: interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with others
8. *Relationships*: the act of making a genuine effort to know, understand, and support others in the organization, with an emphasis on building long-term relationships with immediate followers.

9. *Servanthood*: a way of being marked by one's self-categorization and desire to be characterized by others as someone who services others first, even when self-sacrifice is required.

Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor

People don't quit a job...they quit a boss (Bowers, 1983; Goler, Gale, Harrington, & Grant, 2018; Lipman, 2015; Mintzberg, 1990; Romano, 1997; Skilling, 1947; Sullivan, 1951; Siegman, 1985) is an age-old claim that employees leave their employment due to poor relationships with their supervisors. Employee commitment to supervisor seeks to measure that relationship and emotional attachment between an employee and supervisor (Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996). In previous studies, Becker et al. (1996) and Sokoll (2013, 2014) found that employee commitment to supervisor and servant leadership behaviors has a positive and significant relationship on job performance. Becker et al. (1996) identified a stronger relationship between employee commitment to supervisor and job performance than overall organization and job performance. Sokoll (2013, 2014) further explored the variable of employee commitment to supervisor and measured its relationship with servant leadership, finding that a significant relationship between servant leadership behaviors positively influence employees' performance and commitment to their organizations. Jones (2012) conducted a qualitative interview study of senior and executive managers, finding that those who practice servant leadership behaviors are more efficient, honorable, and employee-focused. Grounded in Greenleaf's (1977) principles of servant leadership and Graham's (1999) understanding of servant leadership (with its focus first on followers, second on the organization, and third on the leaders themselves), Jones' (2012) findings revealed that servant leadership behaviors enhanced profit through reduced customer and employee turnover and enhanced trust among organization

stakeholders. In addition, employees' satisfaction and affinity toward their office and organization were stronger when they could identify a servant leader in their division. Jones (2012) identified seven themes associated with the initial theoretical premise of servant leadership (Jones, 2012, pp. 29-30):

1. Reduced Turnover Leads to Improved Customer Focus
2. Customer Service Increases
3. Trust Develops and Grows as a Result of Servant Leadership
4. Implementation and Sustaining Begins at the Top
5. Customer Focus is Enhanced Through Culture
6. Concern for Other Improves Customer Focus
7. Customer Churn is Reduced Through Empowerment, and Composite Textual-structural

Further assessment of the themes revealed that the servant leadership style was conducive to maintaining not only employee satisfaction, but commitment in the workplace, leading to better relationships among both employee and customer constituencies. Finally, to maintain such a positive organizational culture, interview participants communicated that it was the responsibility of senior leadership to sustain and maintain the work environment employees were accustomed to in the workplace (Jones, 2012). Greenleaf (2012) communicated this evolution of leadership and the world of business, as leadership would one day experience a change in the way decisions are made and systems are managed within the workplace. Today, leaders are "the managers of the information system," responsible more for setting and attaining goals, with the employees at the helm of the decision making and management (p.153). Within this system, an emerging business ethic was identified, centered on the idea that true leadership evolves around the notion of making employees' needs a priority, giving the employees the same level of service and value that a customer would receive. Greenleaf (2012) explained:

The work exists for the person as much as the person exists for the work. Put another way, the business exists as much to provide meaningful work to the person as it exists to provide a product or service to the customer. (Greenleaf, 2012, p.154).

Continuing the research Liden et al. (2008) began, Hunter, Neubert, Perry, Witt, Penney, and Weinberger (2013) sought to further test the relationship between servant leadership and follower and organizational outcomes on an individual-employee level. In their survey study of retail organizations, Hunter et al. (2013) found that servant leadership “may indeed be an effective leadership behavior in terms of fostering a favorable service climate, inducing positive follower behaviors” (p. 316). Liden et al. (2008), who previously tested individual-level (one-one employee) and group-level (two or more employees) servant leadership on individual outcomes, detailed only individual-level servant leadership as a significant predictor of three organizational outcomes:

1. Employees’ community citizenship behaviors
2. Employees’ in-role performance
3. Employees’ commitment to the organization

Hunter et al. (2013) surveyed employees and managers in numerous retail stores with the initial proposition that “agreeableness and extraversion” of the leader may affect the employee’s perception. Fueled with the intention of “expanding the notion that servant leaders are effective by inspiring a cycle of service in which followers learn to serve each other, their customers and the broader community” (p. 327), Hunter et al. (2013) identified personality attributes of servant leadership through empirical research. Findings revealed that leaders with high levels of agreeableness and low levels of extraversion scored highly as servant leaders. Servant leaders, Hunter, et al. (2013) found, were able to positively influence followers, instill a climate of

service, enhance followers' helping and sales behavior, and reduce follower disengagement and resignations (Hunter et al., 2013). The authors suggested further research on employee commitment to leaders in order to understand servant leadership behavior as it relates to employees' interests and values impact (Hunter et al., 2013).

Sokoll (2014) conducted a quantitative study on the employee-supervisor relationship and its impact on turnover and/or retention. It was Sokoll's (2014) hypothesis that employees are more likely to be committed to supervisors who exhibit higher levels of servant leadership in the workplace than to supervisors who demonstrate fewer servant leadership qualities. Sokoll relied on the work of Russell and Stone (2002) and Field and Winston (2010) to define characteristics of servant leadership in the workplace. Knowing that servant leadership attributes have a positive effect on employee commitment, Sokoll's (2014) intent was to further understand the level of employee commitment, with a focus on relationship-focused behaviors like servant leadership which focus more on the well-being and satisfaction of others (p.91). Sokoll (2014) utilized three instruments that had been validated and found to be reliable in prior research:

- Fields and Winston's (2010) servant leadership instrument, a single dimension tool designed specially to measure "distinctive behaviors of service leadership which focus on leaders' service and development of followers"
- Becker et al.'s (1996) employee commitment to a supervisor scale, which measures the center of interest and bases of commitment for the followers.
- Stogdill's (1963) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire VII, titled *Initiation of Structure*, to measure "supervisor task-oriented behaviors and clarification of roles and tasks for followers" on a subscale section in efforts to identify possible correlations used by survey participants. (p. 93)

Aligned with the initial hypothesis, data provided by the regression analysis found that servant leadership behaviors affect employees' commitment to their supervisors in positive and unique ways. Similar quantitative data showed employees working for servant leaders experience improved performance, reduced turnover, and stronger connections to the organization overall.

Persaud (2015) measured servant leadership and employee job satisfaction in a hospital emergency department study and identified a statistically significant relationship between employees and their perceptions of supervisors' servant leadership attributes from within hospital emergency departments. With increasing demands in employee staffing, patient care, and hospital services, Persaud found that improved employee satisfaction correlated directly with leaders' servant leadership characteristics (p.165). Further examination on this topic is recommended as the small sample size (114 participants) could be expanded to incorporate additional variables to improve employee communication and patient satisfaction.

Controlling for Task-Oriented Behaviors

Behaviors of a supervisor to an employee may be either relationship or task-oriented. Neubert, Kacmar Carlson, Chonko, and Roberts (2008) define task-oriented behaviors as transactional-driven, as completion of tasks is expected and clearly communicated discretionally, "structuring behaviors focus on clarifying what to do to get the task accomplished" (p.1221). As task-oriented behaviors facilitate goal accomplishment, relationship-oriented behaviors help followers feel comfortable with themselves, with each other, and with the situation in which they find themselves" (Northouse & Lee, 2016, p. 31). Sokoll (2014) found that employees' level of commitment to their supervisors is influenced by the motivational and inspiring behaviors of the supervisor. Task-oriented behavior, "initiation of structure," was not statistically present as an effect of employee commitment to the supervisor. Northouse and Lee (2012) express hope that

the servant leadership behavioral approach reminds leaders that their individual behaviors impact followers in both a task-level and relationship way.

Furthermore, Sokoll (2014) and Neubert et al. (2008) found that controlling for task-oriented behaviors is necessary when measuring servant leadership behavior. Since leaders' task-oriented behaviors can be measured using Stogdill's (1963) LBDQ-XII instrument, Sokoll adapted the instrument (Sokoll, 2013). Further areas of research suggest replicating this study in other industry and cultural settings, as the initial study was conducted in a higher education institution and valuable findings could surface when exploring the relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment to a supervisor in other industries (Sokoll, 2014).

Service Standards Communication

Greenleaf (2012) claimed that businesses become service institutions when they serve both the employees who produce and the customers who utilize the services. According to Maden et al. (2014), service standards communications seek to provide guidance and clarification to employees when performing operational tasks and service for customers. Asserting that as the economy develops with technology, and businesses become more complex and competitive, leaders will need to work harder to please and retain talent (employees), Greenleaf (2012) explained:

... in the new ethic service to those who produce may rise in priority above service to those who use, and the significance of work will be the joy of the doing rather than the goods and services produced. (Greenleaf, 2012, p.154)

Greenleaf (2012) continued to acknowledge that, although the value of goods and services are important business concerns, employee satisfaction, interaction, and communication are fundamental, yet often overlooked, priorities. Maden et al. (2014) attested to the importance of

measuring employee's perceptions of the service standards communication in revealing more information about the needs highlighted by Greenleaf. Findings from Maden et al.'s (2014) study indicate that service standards communication and servant leadership improve employee knowledge of strategic competence (understanding and implementing mission, vision and values into their daily agenda) and customer service skills (customer orientation), especially when working through issues with management and customers.

Iacob (2015), in a study evaluating attitudes, behaviors, and values of employees serving customers, identified a positive correlation between organization service and customer orientation when incorporating service standards communication into the workplace. Results from this study showed that service-oriented interactions allowed employees the opportunity to better serve customers while emphasizing the organization's mission. (Iacob, 2015). Furthermore, Iacob (2015) recommended that managers serve as role models for service standards communication policies and provide consistent training to employees, in efforts to maintain customer and service standards.

Smith's (2013) study on improving business services for customers with disabilities identified a variety of service standards (e.g., communication, understanding/knowing the customer, and responsiveness), ultimately identifying 134 standards categorized by level of importance and then restructured into business operations tiers for further assessment. Findings from this study showed that the primary area in need of attention was communication between staff, employees, and supervisors in order to identify methods of streamlining available services to customers. Furthermore, Smith (2013) found that improving customer service is contingent on improving the level of communication between the supervisor managing the organization and the employee providing the service.

Garcia, Valeria, and Del Rio (2010) found that service standards communications are enhanced when customer-facing employees (those with frequent customer contact) and managers have direct contact with one another, as employees like to be involved in decision making and, as a result, feel more invested in the organization. Jacob (2015) acknowledged that special attention should be given to applicants during the interview process, as certain service-focused attributes are easily identifiable and should be considered in overall hiring decisions. Garcia et. al (2010) agreed that an employee's "disposition or inclination" can directly impact service standards communication when interacting with customers and management (p. 70).

Greenleaf (2012) reminds us that when serving others, especially in business, persuasion surpasses force. Although laws and policy are incorporated into all aspects of our lives, they do not replace the essence of standards and moral ethics that guide our everyday behavior (e.g. use of alcohol, marijuana, driving over the speed limit). This attests to the power of a social framework that guides personal and professional reasoning. Greenleaf (2012) stressed the need for employees to question service standards in the workplace, whether mandated or not, to determine whether those standards meet the needs of institutions.

Lytle, et al. (1998) measured service standard communication variables with the organizational service orientation scale, SEV*OR, and concluded that service standards communication improves organizational service, and individual performance, and reduces failure when understood by all employees. In development of the initial scale, 11 academic and service-oriented executives were consulted, resulting in the development of an 86-item scale, a product of items receiving average scores of five or above on a seven-point Likert-scale (Lytle et al., 1998, p.466). A survey study in retail banking and retail home improvement industries utilized

five items directly measuring service standard communications in the workplace (p.485). See Table 3: Lytle et al. (1998) Service Orientation Instrument.

Table 3

Lytle et al. (1998) Service Orientation Instrument: Service Standards Communication Insert

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1. We do not wait for customers to complain, we use internal standards to pinpoint failures before we receive customer complaints (Item 17)
 2. Every effort is made to explain the results of customer research to every employee in understandable terms (Item 18)
 3. Every employee understands all of the service standards that have been instituted by all departments (Item 19)
 4. We have developed chain of objectives linking together every branch in support of the corporate vision (Item 20)
 5. Service performance measures are communicated openly with all employees regardless of position or function
-

Servant Leadership and Service Standards Communication

Servant leadership is considered a best practice in the service industry, as the relationship between leader and follower fosters “growth, development and empowerment” (Rezaei et al., 2012, p.70). Rezaei (2012) also found that servant leadership behaviors increase organizational trust and communications among employees. Maden, et. al (2014) validated the positive effects of servant leadership on service standards communications, in particular with customer orientation among customer-facing employees. As financial service institutions seek to increase customers and membership, Greenleaf (2012) identified the evolution of a new moral principle in which employees will only pledge their allegiance to leaders who have not simply received authority by their institution, but rather have proven themselves as trusted servants. Greenleaf explained:

Those who choose to follow this principle will not casually accept the authority of existing institutions. Rather, they will freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted as servants. To the extent that this principle prevails in the future, the only truly viable institutions will be those that are predominantly servant led. (2012, p. 24)

Luk, Lu, and Liu (2013), in a quantitative survey study measuring service leadership, customer treatment, and service standards, utilized the SERV*OR service instrument and found that servant leadership further promotes effective communication in the workplace, allowing employees to learn how to better address customer needs through improved communication and service delivery.

Rennaker (2008), in a study evaluating communication patterns of servant leadership, found that employees who adopt positive behaviors and dialogue attribute those behaviors to interactions and treatment from their supervisor. Utilizing the attributes of listening and persuasion, the supervisor created an environment in which employees could develop similar attributes of communication and behavior, similar to those of servant leadership: “love, humility, vision, trust and empowerment” (Rennaker, 2008, p.140). Rennaker (2008) also highlighted the need to further explore communication as a primary variable in future servant leadership studies in order to learn whether attributes of listening and persuasion further align with the servant leadership construct or are, perhaps, manipulation tactics for controlling and misleading the follower.

Iacob (2015), in a study of service orientation evaluating attitudes, behaviors, and values of employees serving customers, identified a positive correlation when incorporating service standards communication into the workplace. Results from this study show that service-oriented

interactions allow employees the opportunity to better serve customers while emphasizing the organization's mission. (Iacob, 2015). Furthermore, Iacob (2015) recommended that managers serve as role models for service standards communication policies and provide consistent training in order to maintain an open line of communication between employee and customer needs (Iacob, 2015).

The link between servant leadership and communication remains an important area of scholarship (Luk, et al., 2013; Rennaker, 2008; Yukl, 2010). Values correlated with leader-follower communication should be further explored in order to understand the communication construct more clearly and to continue progress in developing a proposed communication-based servant leadership instrument (Rennaker, 2008, p. 143).

Summary

This mixed-methods study seeks to measure the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication. Through a survey and focus group interviews, this study seeks to provide further insight into whether the interchange between previously tested variables are similar across industries (Garcia et. al, 2010; Iacob, 2015; Sokoll, 2014,). Supportive of the theory and in pursuit of developing a multidimensional measure of servant leadership, Linden et al. (2008) acknowledged the need for a research design to test the theory since "followers are nested within leaders. Servant leadership may exhibit both between-leader and within-leader variation with respect to outcomes" (p.162). Van Dierendonck (2011) supported further empirical study since servant leadership is "a people-centered leadership style as servant leaders have more satisfied, more committed, and better performing employees" (p.1248). Liden et al. (2008) reaffirmed the position that servant leaders develop and maintain strong interpersonal relations with their employees, for those leaders who invest in

developing “social exchange relationships” with their employees rely less on “economic incentives” and “authority vested in their positions” in order to promote individual employee potential, and self-motivation (p.163).

Servant leaders deliver results and derive impact by prioritizing the needs of their employees first (Klein, 2009). Greenleaf’s philosophy for servant leaders was to guide others and to provide clarification and reassurance to others of their skills and potential when completing tasks and goals, both personally and professionally (Greenleaf, 2012).

The research on servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication is interesting, yet incredibly interconnected and variably complex. Though there is documented evidence of the positive correlations between servant leadership and communication between the employee and supervisor, there remain additional research opportunities to identify additional effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication. Additional quantitative and qualitative research with surveys and focus groups to measure and analyze communication as a key variable would provide additional insight into scholarship and practice of servant leadership academy.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction to the Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology for this study of the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication among financial sector employees employed in for-profit and non-profit sectors. The chapter is configured into the following sections: Research Questions and Hypothesis, Participants, Research Method Design, Sample, Survey Procedure, Instrumentation, Data Analysis, and Summary.

In this study, two institutions are studied: a non-profit financial service institution serving nearly 58,000 members and employing 161 workers in Northwestern Pennsylvania, and a for-profit financial service institution, serving more than 13,645 households and employing over 100 workers.

While other studies have measured aspects of servant leadership such as evaluating servant leadership communication patterns (Rennaker, 2008), service standard communication and strategic competence (Maden et al., 2014), job satisfaction/commitment (Berry, 2014; Piong, 2016), employee satisfaction (Persaud, 2015), leadership effectiveness, employee commitment, and desired employee outcomes (Henning, 2016; Reese, 2017), further research is needed in measuring the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication.

Previous studies have encouraged measuring the relationships among servant leadership, employee commitment, and communication after finding the positive influence of servant leadership behavior on employee commitment and communication in the workplace (Maden et al., 2014; Persaud, 2015; Rennaker, 2008; Rezaei et al., 2012; Sokoll, 2013, 2014). This

researcher seeks to expand the study of servant leadership in order to identify additional data for a future communication-based servant leadership instrument.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study seeks to measure the relationships among three variables: servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication. With previous empirical studies moving servant leadership theory forward, the following questions and hypotheses seek to further contribute to the study of servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication:

Research Questions:

1. What relationship does servant leadership have on service standards communications, as perceived by the employee?
2. What relationship does employee commitment to supervisor have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?
3. What relationship does task-oriented leadership behavior have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?
4. Is there a difference between profit versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspective on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards communication?

This study's null hypotheses, based on the theoretical construct, design metric, and reported research findings in the literature, are as follows:

H₀ 1: There is no relationship between servant leadership and service standards communication as perceived among employees.

H₀ 2: There is no relationship between employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication as perceived among employees.

H₀ 3: There is no relationship between task-oriented leadership behavior on service standards communication as perceived among employees.

H₀ 4: There is no difference between profits versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspective on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards communication.

Participants

The participants included employees from two financial service institutions, one non-profit and one for-profit. In the non-profit there are nine branches, while there are 10 branches in the for-profit. This population is different from those in other investigations (Brown, 2017; Persaud, 2015; Rennaker, 2008; Sokoll, 2013) as it was sought in order to measure the relationship between leadership, employees and communication in the financial service sector. Measuring the effects of servant leadership behavior, employee commitment, and service standards communication delivers a unique perspective to the field of servant leadership. The sample populations are described in further detail below:

Non-Profit: Financial Service Institution A

According to the website of the non-profit, the organization was founded as a school employee credit union in 1936 by a group of local educators seeking to serve members' basic needs. For 37 years, the non-profit operated from the home of a board member until the first office was built in 1973. Infused in the organization's mission, vision, and values are 18 service standards to be followed by all employees: "acknowledge, recognize, focus, courtesy, phone service, member needs, communication, respect, correspondence, proactive, confidential, thank

you, concern, responsibility, exceed expectations, appearance, image, confidence” (Financial Service Institution A: Nonprofit Policy Service Standards, 2015). Provided within the employee manual is a detailed copy of the service standards communications expected to be adopted. See Table 4: Non-profit Policy Service Standards Communication Guidelines.

Table 4

Non-Profit Policy Service Standards Communication Guidelines

Service Standards	Definition
Acknowledge	All members should be acknowledged and greeted with a sincere smile upon entering. Acknowledge the member’s presence by looking up and establishing eye contact. Visually show the member they are important.
Recognize	Refer to the member by name at least once during any conversation or transaction. Always use Mr., Mrs., or Miss unless the member has instructed otherwise.
Focus	Your service goal is to focus 100% on the member. Each employee is expected to give undivided and individual attention to every member.
Courtesy	Excuse yourself if it is necessary to leave a member temporarily, whether on the phone or in person. Never leave a member alone or on hold for longer than one minute. If necessary, have the member take a seat or offer to phone them back while you investigate.
Phone Service	Call will be answered within three rings. Each call is to be answered and handled according to the basic telephone standards and script.
Member Needs	Determine members’ needs by clarifying their requests, offering alternatives and always suggesting the appropriate Credit Union product or service. Mention any current promotions. Actively pursue the members’ business.
Communication	Be sensitive when communicating with co-workers and members. Speak clearly and directly. Avoid using jargon, slang, and language that may be incorrect or unprofessional.
Respect	Show respect to others by always giving the member or co-worker the benefit of the doubt. Judge favorably first. Empathize. Don’t blame.
Correspondence	Ensure external and internal written correspondence is professional, error free, and accurate before mailing. Respond to written correspondence within (3) days.
Proactive	Actively look for ways to continually improve service to members and co-workers at all times.
Confidential	Maintain confidentiality. Always keep communication discreet.

As explained on the website, the goal of the non-profit “is to responsibly deliver financial solutions that meet the needs of our community.” The non-profit employs over 160 employees and serves over 55,000 members of the Northwestern Pennsylvania region, with services ranging from but not limited to personal accounts, business accounts, loans, and credit services. With current net assets of approximately \$481.5 million, pending fluctuation in the financial market, the non-profit maintains a leading role among all other regional credit union competitors.

Most recently, in August 2017, the non-profit was recognized as one of the Top 15 Best Credit Unions in Pennsylvania by the Advisory HQ, an independent online media source that ranks financial institutions across the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and (soon) Australia (Advisory HQ, 2017). In its review of the non-profit, AdvisoryHQ recognized the organization as one of the best credit unions in Pennsylvania, in part due to its substantial financial and membership growth since its founding in 1936. At the time of evaluation, the non-profit operated nine branch locations, maintained \$458 million in assets, and served 53,000 members. More recently, the non-profit has grown to over 60, 000 members with an average marginal growth rate of 1.049 percent – 1.20 percent per year over the past 11 years. With a net income average of 2,122,640 and capital gains of 11.1 percent over the past 11 years, the non-profit continues to grow at an exponential rate. In addition to financial growth, the non-profit continued to expand its employee base by 1.66 percent over the past 11 years, with 95 (90 full-time, five part-time) in 2007, 150 (147 full-time, three part-time) in 2017, and now over 160 in 2018. With 42 members of management and 118 employees, every employee undergoes continuous training and ongoing supervisor coaching to ensure communication and service needs are met in order to meet the needs of credit union members.

In January 2018, the non-profit demonstrated its commitment and focus on members by rewarding 51,521 members with bonuses, totaling \$550,000.00. 2018 was the first year the non-profit provided bonuses to its members. As the region's largest non-profit financial service institution, financial records show that the non-profit continues to grow financially and in membership. As award recipient of "Best Credit Union" in the region for the past six years, the non-profit continues to excel (Erie Choice Awards, 2012-2018). In a time when other credit unions are experiencing financial difficulties, this non-profit continues to grow steadily and has expanded its service to over 230 employer groups and absorbed other credit union branches through NCUA approved mergers.

For-Profit: Financial Service Institution B

According to the website of the for-profit, banking operations began in 2005. After a year of operations, the for-profit built its first full-service office in Erie County. Over the following 12 years, the for-profit built and acquired an additional 10 offices in five counties. Communicated in their mission statement, the for-profit strives to be the leading service provider in "integrated financial solutions" for its customers, dedicated to meet changing financial and service needs (FSIB Webpage, 2018). With approximately 100 employees, 35 managers, and 65 additional employees, and approximately \$800 million in net assets, the bank continues to grow at an exponential rate, especially when other banking conglomerates have restructured and reduced office footprints in the community and surrounding regions. Incorporated in employee manuals is "Our Wow Promise," which emphasizes communication and behavioral standards promised to customers and followed by all employees. Employees are first introduced to the service standards communication during the initial hiring process, then provided a virtual copy of the guidelines in their onboarding documentation. Finally, employees are coached on the service

standards during the first two days of hire when undergoing day-long training. Communication standards are divided into two categories: “when you visit us” and “when you call us” (Our Wow Promise, 2005). See Table 5: For-profit Policy Service Standards Communication Guidelines.

Table 5

For-Profit Policy Service Standards Communication Guidelines

Our Wow Promise!	
Our Vision	We are passionate about our customers, co-workers and community.
Our Wow Promise	We promise to do everything in our power to make your banking experience a Wow event.
Our Wow Service Standards	We are proud and honored to serve the people and businesses in each of our communities. We make a promise to you that we will meet and exceed the following standards when we serve you.
When you visit us, we will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly acknowledge you, make eye contact and greet you enthusiastically with a warm, friendly smile. • Call you by name or introduce ourselves to you on your first visit and give you our full attention. • Actively listen to determine your needs, explore alternatives for creative solutions and suggest the right product or service to meet your need and achieve your financial goals. • Keep you informed. Let you know when to expect a response from us or a resolution to a problem. • Direct and introduce you to the appropriate member of our team who is best available to serve you. • Keep your banking relationship and financial information in the strictest confidence. • Display professionalism in our appearance, behavior and speech. Keep a clean, uncluttered work area and will not engage in personal conversation with other team member in your presence. • Always offer to provide you with additional assistance • Always value our relationship with you and thank you for doing business with us.
When you call us, we will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer your call as soon as possible and by the third ring. • We will check back with you if we place you on hold. If additional time is needed, we will ask permission to call you back. • Avoid transferring your call more than once. If we need to transfer your call, we will tell you the name of the person and make certain that they are available to serve you. We will also share your need with them prior to transferring your call. • Return your call on the same day or as soon as possible. • Always thank you for calling.

As a subsidiary of a larger financial corporation, the for-profit is one of three financial divisions receiving financial backing from the larger corporation. Utilizing a community-focused approach, the for-profit has created all offices with a new concept style, community-tailored branding that includes interior design reflecting city landmarks.

Reported in the May 2017 edition of *MBA Magazine*, the for-profit has successfully expanded its footprint with 11 full-service offices in 11 years. With offices in various counties and states, leaders from the for-profit associate their success with employing local citizens who understand the community, its customers, and their needs (Staff, 2017). In addition, the for-profit has supported various community initiatives, leading as the first financial service institution to invest over \$2.5 million in redevelopment and continues to assist the city council with redevelopment in the surrounding region (Staff, 2018).

Justification for Measure

Previous studies have measured servant leadership and its impact on employee commitment, satisfaction, strategic competence, and service standards communication (Lytle et al. 1998; Maden et al., 2014; Persaud, 2015; Sokoll, 2013). Researchers have collectively validated the “service standards communication” variable of this study as scientifically relevant and socially important. Service leadership is considered a best practice in the service industry (Rezaei et al., 2012) as financial service institutions seek to improve communication, commitment, and performance among employees, Greenleaf (2012) reminded researchers that servant leadership behavior can be replicated through employee behavior within organizations, especially if organizations are seeking self-improvement.

Research Method Design

A mixed-methods study design (survey and focus group interviews) was used for this study, a design recommended by Creswell (2014) when seeking information from a large sample:

Quantitative Analysis

Belli (2008) defined non-experimental research as an exploration that involves focusing on the statistical relationship between “variables that are not manipulated by the researcher and instead are studied as they exist” (p.60). Furthermore, Belli advocates for non-experimental research since many variables, (e.g., “gender, socioeconomic status, personal characteristics”) cannot be manipulated (Belli, 2008, p.60). This study sought to produce statistical significance along with practical significance by asking two questions: First, “so what?” In other words, what is the significance of the relationship between servant leadership behavior, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication in these financial service institutions? Second, how can this study be applied to workplace managerial divisions? (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010). The survey component of this study is cross-sectional, as data was collected at a single point in time (Creswell, 2014). This researcher first collected data from a random sample and interviewed participants from a precise population in order to incur an overall perception of the population based on the degree of relationship between leadership and employees. Survey data collection was managed through Qualtrics, statistical software for creation, distribution, and preliminary analysis of questionnaires, which was submitted to participants via their work email accounts. Creswell (2014) explained that “survey designs provide a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (p. 201). Furthermore, Creswell added that

the intent of experimental design is to examine the relationship of variables while controlling for all other factors that might influence that outcome. Administering the quantitative component of the study first provided a rapid turnaround and allowed the advantage of identifying attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative Analysis

Adding a qualitative component to the initial survey and focus group interviews allowed the researcher to collect additional comparative data from as many employee participants as possible (Creswell, 2014). Utilizing this design provided the opportunity to reach more employees and more flexibly, while providing respondents the opportunity to provide feedback in multiple ways. For those participants completing only the survey, the necessary anonymity for participants to answer questions more truthfully and forthright was provided (DeFranzo, 2012). For participants wishing to provide additional feedback through the focus group, all identities and self-identifying information were removed from the transcripts. Subsequent qualitative analysis included thorough coding and theme development in order to develop clear descriptions of the relationships between the variables (Creswell, 2014).

Sample

The population for this study included all employees from both non-profit and for-profit institutions, with the sample being drawn via self-selection (Rennaker, 2008). Although this study sought to explore the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to the supervisor on service standards communication, allowing everyone the opportunity to participate, including managers, provided a larger and more diverse sample. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) attested to the ability to identify key elements of data when allowing everyone to participate, advocating for researchers to measure the largest sample size possible.

In order to maintain a level of randomness and reduce coverage error, all employees were invited to voluntarily participate in this study, in an effort to gather as diverse a sample as possible within the financial service institutions (Fielding, Lee & Blank, 2017). Employee emails were provided by members of leadership from both financial service institutions and forwarded to the applied research lab associated with this researcher's educational institution.

This study has two independent variables, servant leadership behaviors and employee commitment to supervisor, and one dependent variable, service standards communication. In addition, six control variables exist, which act in a similar capacity to an independent variable when examined and analyzed statistically. See Table 6: Study Variables.

Table 6

Study Variables

Independent Variables	Servant Leadership Behaviors Employee Commitment to Supervisor
Dependent Variables	Service Standards Communication
Control Variables	Gender Gender Similarity with Supervisor Age Group Education Job Category Tenure

With nine variables being observed, this study required approximately 100 participants to answer the survey questions regarding servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication. Hair et al. (2010) recommended a 5:1 ratio (five observations for every one variable) to generate sufficient statistical and practical significance within linear models; this mixed-methods study sought to measure and observe nine variables (independent, dependent, and control variables) in a manner in which each variable would be

measured in more than one question. Use of LISTWISE deletion in SPSS ensured that all observations analyzed included only observations that completed all variables specified in the study, deleting all others during the statistical procedure. With more than 260 potential participants, this mixed-methods study sought to obtain a 38 percent survey response rate (approximately 100 surveys completed), with the additional support of focus group interviews with employees from each financial service institution. Additional observations of variables with the incorporation of focus group interviews also provided feedback on how these variables relate and interact.

A random cross-sectional sample of employees at both financial service institutions was sought via a single-stage sample approach in which all employees were sampled at the same period in time (Creswell, 2014). Employees from all office branches of the non-profit (160 employees: 42 managers, 118 employees) and for-profit (100 employees: 35 managers, 65 employees) institutions were invited to participate in the study through email solicitation. The employees were asked to anonymously complete a web-based questionnaire sent to their work email accounts. In order to maintain anonymity, email accounts were submitted directly from the financial service institutions to the Applied Research Lab at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. In addition, at no time were employees asked to self-identify during the initial survey. Participants also had the opportunity to complete an additional survey if they wanted to participate in a focus group in order to provide additional feedback at a later interview. This approach was used in order to gather data from employees in a confidential and voluntary manner, further providing employees the privacy to complete the survey honestly (Creswell, 2014). Such practices of confidentiality sought to minimize biases among employees who might have been hesitant to complete the survey due to fear of repercussions, which would have

impacted the validity of the data. The approach to soliciting responses from within the organization was an attempt to gather more data on how servant leadership behavior and employee commitment to supervisor affects service standards communication among employees. Previous snowballing, cross-sectional, convenience sampling, and mixed-methods studies on servant leadership behaviors by previous investigators (Brown, 2017; Rennaker, 2008; Sokoll, 2013, Ice, 2016) yielded statistically significant results but also suggested that further empirical studies should be carried out among different samples in various industry and cultural settings to test for incremental validity.

Survey Procedures

In order to obtain IRB, this researcher took the necessary steps to maintain employee participation anonymity. Prior to distributing the survey, the researcher reached out to executive leadership from each financial service institution to thank them for sponsoring this research study. During the time of the study, each financial service institution was in the process of reviewing their existing service standards communication procedures in an effort to improve communication between management and employees. At the time of the study, the nonprofit was in the process of contacting a research group to conduct voluntary focus groups of current members, seeking to obtain additional feedback on the member experience. Similarly, the for-profit was in the process of facilitating its second leadership training institute and was seeking insight on how to improve managerial operations while also improving communications among managers, employees, and, ultimately their customers.

At the start of the research project (per self-selecting sampling procedure), employees received informational emails from their executive leadership officers (sponsors of the research) communicating to all employees a future study being conducted by this researcher. In the email,

the sponsors communicated the relevance of the study with a note further promoting voluntary participation while also emphasizing anonymity. Within the informational email, potential participants were informed of the following: a) the purpose of the study, b) incentives being raffled for those whom completed the survey in its entirety, and c) how surveys would be distributed via employee email (see Appendices F and G). Incentives for participants to complete the survey included four (4) \$50.00 Amazon gift cards, which were distributed through a separate Qualtrics survey that provided participants the option to register in the random-survey drawing and/or the voluntary focus group discussions. After two business days, potential participants received an initial invitational email from this researcher a) acknowledging the sponsor's previous emails and an explanation of the nature of the study, b) a link to the survey, hosted through Qualtrics, c) communication of voluntary participation and anonymity, and d) information regarding the incentive drawing. In clicking on the link, participants were greeted with a welcome message with additional instructions and statements of voluntary participation and anonymity (see Appendix H). Upon completing the survey questions, participants were invited to provide additional feedback by self-identifying and signing up to take part in an additional focus group interview. Interested participants were then directed to a secondary survey where they entered their contact information (e.g. name, email, phone, and preferred contact method) and contacted by this researcher. Survey responses and personal contact information were disconnected from one another and did not interfere with data collection. On the seventh day of the survey timeline, potential participants yet to complete the survey received a reminder message to complete the survey (Appendix I) and on the twelfth day, potential participants yet to complete the survey received a final reminder email (Appendices J and K). Upon completion of the survey, respondents immediately received a thank you message

(Appendix L). At no time during the survey process did either financial service institution have access to the participation data.

Instrumentation

This study seeks to further explore the relationship between servant leadership behavior, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication, as perceived by the employee, by using existing measurements with demonstrated reliability and validity. See Table 7: Study Instrumentation.

Table 7

Study Instrumentation

Purpose of Instrumentation:
Winston and Field's (2015), Essential Servant Leadership Behaviors (ESLB) instrument, utilized to measure servant leader behaviors of a supervisor
Becker's et al., (1996) Supervisor -Related Commitment Instrument, utilized to measure employee commitment
Stogdill's (1963) Initiation of Structure subscale from the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ-XII) instrument, utilized to measure and control the effects of task-oriented behaviors
Lytle et al. (1998) Service Orientation Instrument, SERV*OR, utilized to measure service standards communication among participants

Winston and Field's (2015) Essential Servant Leadership Behavior Instrument (ESLB)

Winston and Field's (2015) ESLB instrument clarifies and quantifies the essential behaviors of servant leadership in a ten-item instrument. Based on an extensive review of the servant leadership construct, the authors identified a need for a single-scale instrument to measure the specific constructs and qualities of servant leadership in the workplace, as various

definitions of “servant leadership” had weakened the theory. In a two-part study, the authors surveyed 23 scholars and researchers on servant leadership, resulting in the identification of 22 leader behaviors (out of a 116-item pool) rated as “contributing greatly to describing servant leaders” (Winston & Fields, 2015, p. 413). From the 456 respondents participating in the 22-item scale instrument, the authors identified a ten-item single-factor scale that accounted for 75 percent of the variance and resulted in a Cronbach’s alpha scale reliability $\alpha = 0.96$. Winston and Fields (2015) identified “convergent and discriminant validity” in the Essential Servant Leadership Instrument when compared to Liden et al.’s (2008) seven-dimension servant leadership instrument (Liden et al., 2008; Sokoll, 2013; Winston & Fields, 2015). Sokoll (2013) identified a reliable and valid level of acuity exploring servant leadership’s relationship with the study’s 10 other variables (Sokoll, 2013, p. 43). In Sokoll’s (2014) study utilizing the ESLB instrument, Sokoll reported a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.96 from 149 respondents working in multiple industries within the United States. Additional studies utilizing the instrument (Hirschy, 2012; Hirschy, Gomez, Patterson & Winston, 2014) concur with similar findings of validity, therefore attesting to the legitimacy of the ESLB for this study to examine further the relationship between servant leadership behavior and employee commitment to supervisor. An adaptation of Winston and Fields’ Essential Servant Leadership Behavior Instrument is provided in Appendix A.

Becker et al. (1996) Supervisor-Related Commitment Instrument

In a similar study, Sokoll (2013) measured employee commitment to supervisor with Becker et al.’s (1996) Supervisor-Related Commitment Instrument. Becker et al., in their definition of employee commitment (“psychological attachment of workers to the workplace”), identified a method to measure both the focal points (foci) and bases of commitment

(commitment) of employees in a nine-item instrument (Becker et al., 1996, p. 464). With 469 respondents, five items measuring foci and four items measuring commitment, data revealed that overall commitment to supervisors was positively related to performance and, more significantly, linked to performance than overall commitment to the organization (Becker et al., 1996, p. 464). In a three-part hypothesis, the authors sought to distinguish among foci, commitment, and employee commitment, and performance from the employee perspective. The authors found that overall commitment to supervisors was significantly and positively related to performance ($r = .16, p < .05$), with a significant standardized regression weight of ($\beta = .18, p < .05$), justifying the relationship between employee commitment to supervisor and performance in the workplace. In a test to differentiate between commitment and performance, regression weight for overall commitment to supervisor ($\beta = .18$) and regression weight for overall commitment to organization ($\beta = -.03$) identified a difference of significance $t(274df) = 1.99, p < .05$ (Becker et al., p.474). As noted in Sokoll's (2013) study, a Cronbach's alpha scale reliability $\alpha = 0.92$ was recorded when examining the relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor, proving the validity and reliability of the ESLB instrument as this study further examined the relationship between servant leadership behavior and employee commitment. An adaptation of Becker's et al. instrument can be found in Appendix B.

Stogdill's (1963) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire VII

“Task behaviors facilitate goal accomplishment while relationship behaviors help followers feel comfortable with themselves, with each other and with the situation in which they find themselves” (Northouse & Lee, 2016, p. 31). Stogdill's (1963) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire VII, *Initiation of Structure*, was incorporated into Sokoll's dissertation study in an effort to measure the task-oriented behaviors of supervisors and identify possible

correlations of roles and tasks of survey participants (Sokoll, 2013; Sokoll, 2014). With a 10-item scale, Stogdill (1963) sought to control for task-oriented behaviors since leaders' individual behaviors impact followers in both task-level and relationship ways (Northouse & Lee, 2012). Sokoll (2013) emphasized the value in controlling for task-oriented behaviors when measuring servant leadership behavior:

Since servant leadership behaviors are relationship-oriented type behaviors, it seemed necessary that the effect of a leader's task-oriented behaviors be controlled in order to assess whether or not servant leadership has a significant effect on the cultivation of employee commitment to the supervisor above the effect of the task-oriented behaviors of the supervisor. (Sokoll, 2013, p.23)

Similarly, Neubert et al. (2008) "controlled for the task-related behaviors of the supervisor in order to examine the unique effects of servant leadership on follower outcomes" (Sokoll, 2013, p.23). This study also utilized the *Initiation of Structure* instrument to control for task-oriented leadership behaviors prior to the multiple regression analysis in order to retest for discriminatory validity since, prior to the data analysis, Sokoll found that servant leadership had a positive influence on employee commitment (Sokoll, 2013). Rennaker (2008) further validated this notion as influence and communication attributes improve workplace practices, especially when improving attitudes and skills among employees. An adaptation of Stogdill's (1963) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire VII instrument can be found in Appendix C.

Lytle et al., (1998) SERV*OR Service Orientation Instrument

The SERV*OR instrument serves as a management tool to study the relationship among leadership, employees, communication, and performance (Lytle et al., 1998). Incorporated in Lytle's et al.'s (1998) service-oriented instrument, SERV*OR, are 10 dimensions that measure

policy and procedures geared to improving employee performance. Service standards communication, a singular dimension consisting of five items, seeks to measure employee perception of service orientation in the workplace, task comprehension, transparent communication, and performance benchmarking (Lytle et al., 1998). Adapted components of this instrument have been validated and found reliable with various pretests and sampling across populations in industries including but not limited to banking, retail, and higher education. An adaptation of Lytle et al.'s (1998) SERV*OR service standards communication item can be found in Appendix D. A matrix of the research survey detailing which questions pertain to each individual instrument is provided in Appendix E. See Table 8: Research Survey Matrix.

Table 8

Research Survey Matrix

Type	Questions (#)
Demographics	1-6
Servant Leadership: ESLB Instrument	7-16
Employee Commitment to Supervisor: Supervisor-Related Commitment Instrument	17-25
Task-Oriented Leadership Instrument	26-35
Service Standards Communication: <i>SERV*OR</i> Instrument	36-40
Qualitative Feedback	41-42
Secondary Survey for Interview Participation	Three (3) Focus Group Questions

Data Analysis

Once sufficient participation was secured, statistical analysis was conducted by utilizing SPSS statistical software. Additional qualitative analysis was conducted to evaluate the qualitative feedback provided in survey and subsequent focus group interviews. In accordance

with previous studies measuring servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication (Ice, 2016; Irving, 2005; Maden et al., 2014; Rennaker, 2008; Sokoll, 2013, 2014), the following forms of data analysis were utilized: descriptive statistics and correlations, multicollinearity analysis, regression analysis and qualitative triangulation.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

As recommended by Field (2009), in an effort to identify the means and standard deviations for the independent, controlled, and dependent variables, descriptive statistics and correlations (cross-sectional) analysis were conducted. Cronbach's alpha was utilized to measure internal consistency and reliability, while Pearson's analysis measured the linear correlation between variables (Fields, 2009; Sokoll, 2013).

Multicollinearity Analysis

In SPSS, a collinearity diagnostic was run to measure the significance between servant leadership and task-oriented behaviors, as previous significance has been identified between the two variables in previous studies (Sokoll, 2013; Sokoll 2014; Winston & Fields, 2015). Since SPSS does not measure for multicollinearity, examining tolerance and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was completed as recommended by Fields (2009), as tolerance values less than 0.1 and VIF values exceeding 10 would indicate a lack of multicollinearity, further establishing that servant leadership and task-oriented behaviors are individual of each other and predict the effects the dependent variable (employee commitment to supervisor), and cannot be linearly predicted from the other (Fields, 2009; Hair et al, 2010; Sokoll, 2013).

Regression Analysis

As indicated by Hair et al. (2010), multiple regression analysis was appropriate as the dependent variable was recognized as related to the independent variables. Multiple regression

analysis was conducted to predict the changes in service standards communication in relation to servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor, beyond the effects of task-oriented behavior of the supervisor and other demographic variables included in this study. Analysis of the unstandardized (B) coefficients and the standard coefficients, or Beta coefficients, were conducted through SPSS after controlling for demographic variables (Hair et al., 2010; Sokoll, 2013). Previous studies conducted by Sokoll (2013) found viability in the variables of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor (Hair et al., 2010; Sokoll, 2013). Further study sought to analyze the additional variable of service standard communications and its relationship to the other independent variables.

Qualitative Analysis: Triangulation

Creswell (2014) emphasizes the importance of evaluating qualitative data by utilizing valid and reliable procedures. In this mixed-methods study, the qualitative data collected from the focus group sessions and qualitative component of the survey were triangulated with the data collected from the quantitative analyses (Ice, 2016). Additionally, themes and perspectives were expected to develop throughout the qualitative process, which was analyzed and organized with a matrix of codes and themes in an effort to identify subcategories, relations, and cause-effects.

Summary

The purpose of this research and design methodology was to develop a better understanding of the relationship between servant leadership behaviors, employee commitment, and service standards communication, as perceived by the employee. This chapter discussed the research and design methodology and the instrumentation and data analysis procedures of this study. The hypothesis, instrumentation, and methodology are based on previous empirical research from scholars in servant leadership and service orientation.

Exploring data that adds incremental validity to the implications of servant leadership and employee commitment may positively impact employee commitment scholarship, while also contributing to the argument that advocates for nurturing and promoting servant leadership servant leadership in the workplace. Providing more concrete and concise research on servant leadership theory would benefit the academy and combat the oversights that Greenleaf (2012) identified during the theory's inception.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study. The purpose of this research was to explore whether a positive relationship exists between servant leadership behavior and employee commitment to supervisor, as perceived by employees, on the service standards communication that employees are expected to follow when assisting customers and members in the financial service industry. This study sought to investigate these independent and dependent variables within two financial service institutions, one non-profit (credit union) and one for-profit, both headquartered in northwestern Pennsylvania, with the following research questions:

(RQ1): What relationship does servant leadership have on service standards communications, as perceived by the employee?

(RQ2): What relationship does employee commitment to supervisor have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?

(RQ3): What relationship does task-oriented leadership behavior have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?

(RQ4): Is there a difference between profit versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspective on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards communication?

This mixed-methods study sought to measure and observe nine variables, each one measured in more than one question, with additional observations from qualitative feedback through surveys and focus groups. Further, this study utilized adaptations of Winston and Field's (2015), Becker et al.'s, (1996), Stogdill's (1963), and Lytle et al.'s (1998) Instruments.

This chapter presents the study's findings with the following sections: Data Collection Procedures, Sample Population, Research Question and Hypothesis, Reliability Analysis, Descriptive Statistics and Correlations, Multicollinearity Analysis, Regression Assumptions Analysis, T-tests, and Qualitative Triangulation.

Data Collection Procedures

A diverse sample was sought from two financial service institutions for answering the 42-question survey. The survey was delivered through the survey platform Qualtrics, and respondents were also invited to participate in a focus group. For the focus group, up to 12 participants were randomly selected to participate at the conclusion of the survey collection period. In order to collect the desired sample, leadership from each financial service institution provided employee email addresses along with a sponsor email. All employees were informed about the study and received a Qualtrics survey link email two days later. Data was gathered over a two-week period and resulted in a 76 percent participation rate, with 220 of 290 employees participating from both institutions. Furthermore, of those respondents who participated in the survey, 127 registered for the random drawing and focus group interviews.

Sample Population

From the distribution summary, of the 290 participants, 242 employees started the survey, and 220 completed it within the two-week period. In reviewing participation from the non-profit financial service institution, of the 177 participants, 154 employees started the survey, and 143 employees completed it, resulting in an 81 percent participation rate. In reviewing the for-profit financial service institution, of the 113 participants, 88 employees started the survey, with 77 completing it, resulting in a 68 percent participation. Overall, 219 employees (99.5 percent) from both financial service institutions completed the survey in its entirety, which

resulted in one case being discarded. The number of cases represents a strong sample for this study, with nine variables (two independent, one dependent, and six control variables) requiring approximately 100-113 participants (38 percent participation) to obtain sufficient statistical significance and population size to answer the survey questions regarding servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication (Hair et al., 2010). To assist in the measurement and observation of variables, qualitative feedback and focus group interviews were also conducted to assist in the analysis.

Demographic Variables

In evaluating the participant sample, demographic data on gender, gender similarity with supervisor, age, and education levels was collected. Respondents identified with the following genders: 55 males (25 percent), 162 females (74 percent) and 2 others (1 percent). Regarding gender similarity with supervisor, 171 respondents (78 percent) identified as having the same gender as their immediate supervisors, and 48 respondents (22 percent) identified as having a different gender from their immediate supervisors. In assessing age, 28 respondents (13 percent) identified as being between 18 and 24 years of age, 64 respondents (29 percent) between 25 and 34 years of age, 45 respondents (21 percent) between 35 and 44 years of age, 47 respondents (22 percent) between 45 and 64 years of age, 33 respondents (15 percent) between 55 and 64 years of age, and two respondents (1 percent) between 65 and 74 years of age. Participant education was divided into seven levels, as respondents were prompted to identify their highest level of academic achievement. Two respondents (1 percent) indicated some high school, 49 respondents (22 percent) high school completion, 70 respondents (32 percent) some college, 19 respondents (9 percent) an associate's degree, 63 respondents (29 percent) a bachelor's degree, 12

respondents (6 percent) a master's degree, and four respondents (2 percent) indicated other. See Table 9 for data on demographic variables.

Table 9

Gender, Gender Similarity, Age, and Education of Participants (N = 219)

Demographics	<i>n</i>	%
Male	55	25.1
Female	162	74.0
Other	2	.9
Gender Similarity with Supervisor		
Yes	171	78.1
No	48	21.9
Age Group		
18 – 24 years of age	28	12.8
25 – 34 years of age	64	29.2
35 – 44 years of age	45	20.5
45 – 54 years of age	47	21.5
55 – 64 years of age	33	15.1
65 – 74 years of age	2	.9
Education		
Some High School	2	.9
High School	49	22.4
Some College	70	32.0
Associate's degree	19	8.7
Bachelor's degree	63	28.8
Master's degree	12	5.5
Other (please specify)	4	1.8

Participants also identified their job categories, beginning with nonsupervisory and supervisory positions. In the sample, 144 respondents (65 percent) indicated holding a position with no supervisory responsibilities: branch/support personnel (35 percent), administration/operation personnel (8 percent), specialists (8 percent), coordinators (3 percent), underwriters (5 percent), and others (7 percent). Of the 75 respondents (34 percent) who indicated supervisory responsibilities, six were directors (3 percent), nine were head tellers (4 percent), 12 were assistant managers (6 percent), 31 were managers or directors (14 percent), and 17 were members of senior management (8 percent). See Table 10 for data on supervisory roles.

Table 10

Job Category of Participants (N = 219)

Job Category	<i>n</i>	%
No Supervisory Responsibilities		
Branch/Support (Teller, MSR, FSR, MSO, Support Center, Account Services Support, Universal Associate)	76	34.7
Administration/Operations (All Finance, Back Office Operations, Branch Operations, Executive Assistant)	18	8.2
Specialist (All Specialist Titles)	18	8.2
Coordinator (All Coordinator Titles)	6	2.7
Underwriter (All Mortgage, Indirect and Consumer Lender Titles)	10	4.6
Other	16	7.3
Supervisory Responsibilities		
Director (All Director and Analyst Titles)	6	2.7
Head Teller (All Head Tellers)	9	4.1
Assistant Manager (All Assistant Managers)	12	5.5
Manager/Director (All Manager, Branch Manager, Managing Director (1) Titles)	31	14.2
Senior Management (All C-Level and VP (1) Titles)	17	7.8

In examining job tenure of participants, respondents were questioned on how long they had been working under the direction of their immediate supervisors. In response, 69 participants indicated tenure of less than one year (32 percent), 96 worked between one and three years (45 percent), 16 worked between four and five years (7 percent), and 38 respondents worked for more than five years (17 percent) for their immediate supervisors. Details are listed in Table 11: Tenure of Participants.

Table 11

Tenure of Participants (N = 219)

Working for Supervisor	<i>n</i>	%
Less than 1 year	69	31.5
1-3 years	96	43.8
4-5 years	16	7.3
More than 5 years	38	17.4

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha was utilized to measure the reliability and internal consistency among the items scaled in the four instruments of this study. The following alphas were identified: .93 for Winston and Fields Essential Servant Leadership Behavior (ESLB) scale, .90 for Becker et al.'s (1996) employee commitment to supervisor instrument, .89 for Stogdill's (1963) Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire-XIII (LBDQ-XII), which measures for task-oriented leadership behavior, and .90 for Lytle et al.'s (1998) Service Orientation Instrument, SERV*OR, which measures service standards communication among participants. See Table 12: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Instruments.

Table 12

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Instruments (N = 219)

Measure of Variable	α
Servant Leadership (ESLB)	.93
Employee Commitment to Supervisor	.90
Task-oriented Leadership (LBQDQ XII)	.89
Service Standards Communication	.90

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlation statistical procedures were conducted to measure the relationships between the independent and dependent variables (construct means, standard deviations, and correlations of linear relationships). Table 13: Construct Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Independent and Dependent Scale Variables exhibits a compilation of means, descriptive statistics, and correlations for the study's scale variables.

Table 13

Construct Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Independent and Dependent Scale Variables (N = 219)

Scale Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
Service Standards Communication	2.33	1.07	—	-.19	-.10
Employee Commitment to Supervisor	3.53	.84	-.19	—	.42**
Task-Oriented Leadership Behavior	4.11	.64	-.10	.42**	—
Servant Leadership	4.23	.67	-.76	.70**	.58**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Multicollinearity Analysis

Correlations and regression analyses were conducted between the independent and dependent variables in order to explore the relationship between variables and to estimate the behavior among variables. Table 14: Regression Analysis Collinearity Diagnostics: Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor depicts the tolerance and variance inflation factor values for all the variables measured in this study.

Table 14

Regression Analysis Collinearity Diagnostics: Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (N = 219)

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Gender	.88	1.14
Gender Similarity with Supervisor	.96	1.04
Age Group	.87	1.15
Education	.87	1.15
Job Category	.82	1.21
Tenure of Participants	.86	1.16
Employee Commitment to Supervisor	.50	2.02
Task-oriented Leadership Behavior	.63	1.58
Servant leadership Behavior	.40	2.52

Note. Dependent variable = Service Standards Communication

Qualitative Triangulation

To provide additional support for the quantitative findings, two open-ended qualitative questions were included at the end of the 42-question survey. In addition, two separate 60-minute focus group interviews, consisting of three primary interview questions, were conducted at both financial service institutions. The open-ended survey questions and the focus groups aligned with the independent and dependent variables quantitatively measured throughout this study:

Survey qualitative feedback questions:

41. Please use the space below to provide additional feedback regarding your supervisor's leadership style:

42. Please use the space below to provide additional feedback regarding your relationship with your supervisor:

Focus group interview questions:

1. How does your immediate supervisor communicate the values of service standards communication guidelines in the workplace?
 - a. How so? Can you provide an example?
 - b. How? In what ways? With what behaviors/actions?
2. How do the service standards communication guidelines influence your commitment to the organization?
 - a. How so? Can you provide an example?
 - b. How are they interpreted similarly/differently?
 - c. Does it change/influence your performance?
3. How do the service standards communication guidelines provided to you assist you when attending to (customer/member) needs?
 - a. When? Are there times when they are more/less influential?

From the 75 participants who agreed to participate, 12 respondents were selected for each focus group session. Each financial service institution provided private meeting space on different dates for this researcher and participants to meet privately. Twelve participants were recorded in attendance at the non-profit financial service institution focus group interview, and 11 participants were recorded at the for-profit financial service institution focus group interview. Prior to both focus groups, participants disabled personal electronic devices, reviewed and signed informed consent agreements, and once again were reminded of benefits and risks of participation. Duration of each focus group from beginning to end lasted approximately 60 minutes, with participants given approximately 15 minutes to provide feedback for each interview question. Following recordings, focus groups were transcribed and cleansed of

participant identities and/or self-identifying information of other employees affiliated with the respective financial service institutions.

Observation and Analysis

Aligned with the theoretical construct of Greenleaf's (1970) servant leadership theory, the qualitative observations sought also to provide additional clarification to the attributes identified by Northouse and Lee's (2016) theory: "conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, helping followers grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowering, creating value for the community" (p.16). In addition, Winston and Fields' (2015) and Russel and Stone's (2002) 45 attributes of servant leadership provided a supportive framework for the coding and theme development processes (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, when considering the possibilities of relationships between variables, Russel and Stone's (2002) functional and accompanying attributes were employed as a guide when reviewing over 373 remarks and statements of qualitative data. The 258 statements collected from the survey and 115 comments recorded during the focus groups, all coded and themed in Excel, resulted in a ten-theme thematic key. See Table 15: Qualitative Feedback Thematic Key.

Table 15

Qualitative Feedback Thematic Key

Thematic Key	
Appreciation of others; Caring for others; Developing others; Helping subordinates grow and succeed; Putting subordinates first	46
Communication; Delegation; Goal-setting; Listening	57
Empowering; Honesty; Competence; Shared decision making	26
Modeling; Transforming Influence; Integrity; Servant-hood; Wisdom; Creating value for the organization	50
Service; Authentic-self, Behaving Ethically; Competence	76
Teaching; Developing others; Helping subordinates grow and succeed	24
Team-building; Encouragement; Forming relationships with subordinates	22
Trust; Shared decision-making; Empowering; Confidence	11
N/A (Not Applicable)	16
Potential Area(s) for Improvement	45
Total amount of remarks and statements:	373

Appreciation of others. In evaluating feedback correlated with the attributes in this category, 46 statements and comments were documented. In the initial qualitative survey question regarding employees' perspectives of their direct supervisors' leadership styles, employees highlighted more than one of these attributes within each of their statements. Employees identified their supervisors as "caring and understanding," "truly appreciates the work of the team," "helpful and encouraging," "recognizes issues and helps us correct them," "truly cares about my success and goals," and "coaches and guides us." Furthermore, employee feedback communicated supervisor behavior as "not micro-managing" and "empathetic." Servant leadership attributes, specifically, the functional and accompanying attributes of a supervisor and their "appreciation of others' influence, development of others, and helping subordinates to grow and succeed" is shown to positively affect the behavior of employees

(Russel & Stone, 2002; Winston & Fields, 2015). This behavior is observed within this category of attributes as numerous comments emphasize the influence a supervisor has on an individual employee: “I absolutely love my supervisor”; “That is definitely one of the main reasons I come to work and strive each day.” Another employee commented, “She is very caring and understanding, while at the same time will make sure policy and procedures are being followed...” Another employee highlighted the behavior of a supervisor as “leading by example... appreciates the work of the team...and recognizes our efforts.” Supervisors’ leadership styles are also highly referenced in this category by employees as “genuine,” “kind,” “accommodating,” and “superior.”

When providing feedback for the second question, participants shared commentary regarding their relationships with their supervisors. Twenty-four comments were categorized under this particular theme, as reflected by the employee feedback: “My supervisor is a great supervisor”; “I was new and they immediately made me feel a part of the department family”; “we have a very open relationship”; “I consider them a friend”; “we have the same goals”; and “I feel she is not only my boss, but my friend.” Multiple participants consistently highlighted caring, appreciation of others, and other relationship attributes in practice between supervisor and employee, further demonstrating a positive relationship between employees and their immediate supervisors.

In the focus group for the non-profit institution, employee feedback highlighted similar attributes regarding how their supervisors communicate service standards communication guidelines in the workplace. Statements such as “knowing my supervisor has my back” and “he/she always tries to be respectful and positive” were shared, and statements of positive communication emphasized feeling supported by supervisors during demanding and/or difficult

moments with customers or members: “She’s not afraid to step in and say this not how it’s going to go” or “Hey, you know I kind of dropped this on you, but you really came through and took care of it.”

Additional employee feedback highlighted the value of having communication standards in place that are “adopted” and “embodied” by the employees and leadership at the credit union. Further communication revealed that service standards communication guidelines emphasized “responsibility” and “respect” among employees. As one individual shared, “If you can’t do these simple things, you do not belong here.... we do have expectations, you can follow them or not... these are not hard expectations.” Another shared, “Whether you’re a front-line teller or the CEO, (when assisting colleagues and customers) departments get back to you and that respect has a trickle-down effect.” Another employee shared how the communication guidelines enhanced that employee’s appreciation for a supervisor who asked about the employee’s individual goals and what steps could be taken from the supervisor to help the employee excel: “We’ve talked about this, as employees and members, servicing our members and embodying these standards... there is an odd part here, where leadership embodies these towards us.” This employee described working in a previous institution where similar standards of service were not present, while at the credit union, “They ask you about your goals and how they can assist you get there... that blew me away....” Additional feedback highlighted participants wishing they had these communication guidelines with previous employers and during earlier stages of their lives: “This is not standard procedure with young people and their families anymore (referencing the communication guidelines) ... I wish I would have had access to this paper to show those kids.”

Feedback from the for-profit employees regarding how their supervisors communicate service standards communication guidelines in the workplace addressed supervisor attention to employees. One employee explained, “I feel my supervisor will drop anything if I have a problem... they definitely put themselves last, similar to servant leadership.” Another employee added, “My supervisor is definitely a servant leader; I just wish I had more mentoring time with them so they could further help me develop.” Consensus continued, with others communicating a desire to spend time with their supervisors as they were viewed favorably and were admired among their subordinates. In reviewing how the communication guidelines influence employee commitment in the workplace, one employee explained, “I think you can teach a person to be a banker, but you cannot teach them to be a nice person... being empathetic, sympathetic, understanding... that’s just innate...that’s just how someone is internally, it’s not learned.” Another employee mentioned, “I think our customers feel we really do care and will go above and beyond to make them happy.”

Communication. When evaluating communication among supervisors and employees, 57 statements referenced communication, delegation, and goal setting in relationships. Employee survey feedback acknowledged supervisor leadership style attributes as “very fair and even tempered,” “open-minded,” “democratic,” “well delegated,” “collaborative,” “easily accessible,” and “direct.” One employee explained, “They strongly encourage open communication and go above and beyond to serve our members...if we are not sure about something, their door is always open.” Another comment referenced completion of tasks in the workplace: “I appreciate that my direct supervisor doesn’t micromanage me; they give me the tools to do my job and supports me when I have a question or problem” Similarly, another employee commented, “My supervisor makes sure we are doing what we are supposed to be doing and correctly without

feeling the need to constantly check on us or hover.” Additional phrases such as “easy to talk to,” “personable,” “great communication skills,” and “always willing to discuss things and provide feedback” were also frequently noted. As employees provided feedback regarding their relationships with their supervisors, one mentioned, “My supervisor is an excellent communicator and a good listener... it is a pleasure to work for them.” Another employee emphasized the correlation between the attributes within the category by stating, “My supervisor gives clear feedback and objectives. Goals are focused and measured. Communication is key to all of our functions.” Communication was also noted in correlation with relationship-building between supervisors and subordinates, as noted by an employee who stated, “I have a close working relationship with my supervisor...we interact, communicate, and share the work all the time.” Another employee added, “Reflecting on my previous employer, I feel more at ease with my current supervisor and feel comfortable asking them for feedback on a regular basis... they are more approachable and less intimidating.”

Nonprofit employee feedback included a statement that “...these service standards are instilled in us by example, so it’s easy to follow, too.” Others communicated the challenges associated with not having sufficient communication in a particular department; one employee explained, “We don’t have meetings; we don’t have weekly meetings, and that is something I miss (referencing previous employment) ... my supervisor tries very hard to be respectful and positive, but sometimes we forget how to treat everyone else, within our department and those around us.” In response, another employee spoke to the responsibility that employees have to bring needs and areas for further improvement to a supervisor’s attention: “I think sometimes a supervisor just doesn’t realize things... sometimes it’s just taking that minute to say how things are and not just going along with things and saying oh well, everything’s fine...just because

someone is not complaining about something does not mean everything is ok.” Further connections between supervisor and employee responsibility to communicate and listen were emphasized when employees were asked to comment on how communication guidelines influenced their commitment to the workplace and service when assisting members. One employee said, “I think we know how with members that are pleasant and courteous...but I think we could benefit on the other side when dealing with difficult and uncontrollable members... you know, I think this (referencing a printed copy of the service standards communication guidelines) helps us.”

Additional feedback from a for-profit participant described supervisors as “willing to communicate to customers, even on days off...if they receive an email or call on a project we are working on, they will keep me in the loop.” Further statements highlighted a need to create additional communication guidelines that include more internal communication standards. Service standards communication was also discussed when employees referenced their influence on the organization, an influence grounded in relationships with their individual supervisors and customers. One employee explained, “We’re getting growing pains... we have grown rapidly and substantially, and communication can be more difficult.”

Empowering. Employee feedback resulted in 26 statements referencing supervisors empowering employees through honesty, competence, and shared decision making. One employee commented, “My supervisor’s leadership style is focused on helping us produce the best results possible; their commitment to the credit union is infectious.” Similar commentary provided by another employee emphasizes, “They are honest and true to their word... always encouraging.” Shared decision making was a leadership attribute accompanying many employee remarks: “gives us the freedom to achieve those goals,” “works extremely hard to motivate and

provide a team atmosphere where there is little drama,” and “hands-off and allows us to lead projects and issues that may arise...this method allows us each of us to grow and encourages us to grow and learn.” Additional statements regarding differences in employee and supervisor personalities highlighted attributes of shared-decision making and competence: “My boss is always glass half-full and I, always glass broken... this may not work for everyone, but the relationship we have created over the years is a perfect fit for us.” Another employee stated, “I do not talk to my supervisor much... I am very self-sufficient, but also like being left alone... it’s a two-way street, and they appreciate my work and let me be.” Additional employee feedback regarding relationships with supervisors included phrases like “we see eye to eye”; “I am very comfortable around my supervisor”; “we work well together as a team”; and “open, honest and interactive.” One employee stated,

... they are so pleasant to interact with, and we have shared personal interests regardless of our age difference... and I am allowed to take on a task myself. They never let me feel like I have said or done something stupid.

An additional attribute cited by employees was gratitude: “Working with my supervisor has been a bright spot in my employment”; “we perform as a cohesive unit ... I can’t imagine a better supervisor.”

From the non-profit group, one employee stated, “I’m treated like a member [customer]; I am always encouraged to take ownership of whatever we are working on in our department.” Similar consensus was reiterated from a participant who identified as a newer employee with feedback about the service standards communication in the workplace:

I'm a newer employee and from the get-go have felt empowered to a certain degree and just kind of given the ropes... these service standards, although they have been instilled in me as a person before coming here, they are truly embraced here.

When prompted about how the service standards communication guidelines influence their commitment to the workplace or service to members, employees identified working in a unique workplace culture unlike others they had previously experienced:

I actually like going to work every day and it's because of the culture... there is nothing here that makes you feel like I don't want to be here (referencing leadership) or I don't want to do this job (assisting members).

Another employee noted, "I have been here for five years and this is an organization that embraces communication holistically, and you see it in our outcomes." With a general consensus on the value of having service standards communications in place, many employees communicated during the focus group that such standards become second nature. One employee captured the essence of the conversation:

I kind of forgot these service standards were around... I didn't know we had to answer the phone within three rings because if someone is calling me, I make it a habit to help them right away... these service standards serve as a reminder of what is important to the credit union, and these standards influence me to be a better person.

Additional feedback from the for-profit employees briefly referenced attributes of empowerment and shared decision making in referencing the value of service standards in the workplace: "...they are empowering. They enable us to make decisions, to move forward, to help our customers, to think outside the box, to ultimately get a solution and have a good outcome."

Modeling. In evaluating modeling and accompanying attributes, 50 statements were documented. Employee feedback in the survey identified intrinsic behaviors of servant leadership through various keywords: “my supervisor is amazing”; “leads by example”; “definitely leads by example”; “leads by example and is always available”; “amazing role model.” The phrase *leads by example* is frequently used among employees to note their perceptions of how supervisors’ influence and modeling of leadership behaviors is perceived. One employee explained, “My supervisor leads by example. The thing I appreciate the most is that although they are extremely busy, they always make time for me when needed.” Another employee references similar modeling and transforming behavior, while also referencing attributes of integrity, servant-hood, wisdom, and creating value for other organizations:

My supervisor leads by example. They are extremely approachable and always willing to share their knowledge. They are honest, moral, and very philanthropic, and inspires me to be the same way. They hold others accountable and are not afraid to speak their mind.

In reviewing employee feedback associated with relationships to their immediate supervisors, phrases included, “can’t speak highly enough about them,” “feel closest to them,” “high standards,” “never worked for someone so encouraging and motivating,” “extremely helpful and wants to make sure I have all the tools I need to succeed,” and “inspires me to work harder and do more.” One employee stated, “My relationship with my supervisor is great. They are extremely knowledgeable, so I have learned so much from her and it has helped me grow further in my position...” Another employee also commented, “My supervisor is a lead-by-example kind of person... they are someone I feel closest to at work because of her attitude... they are one of the most genuine supervisors I have ever worked for.”

In statements provided by focus group participants from the non-profit, an employee referenced a supervisor modeling service standards communication in the workplace: “I am just going to say this, actions speak louder than paper... my supervisor treats me like a member and prioritizes time for me.” Following that statement, another employee referenced the communication guidelines: “The service standards are definitely instilled by our supervisor, the CEO, and our member experience training... it’s a constant and wonderful thing to experience.” Furthermore, another employee emphasized the attributes of influence, servant-hood, and creating community: “One of the things we talk about a lot is, although we do not all serve members, everyone inside is a member... we have a very positive culture internally.”

Employee perceptions of relationships with their supervisors were also discussed in regard to how service standards communication influence their ability to assist members, including statements like, “It is easy to embody these service standards because I see my supervisor do it when they are on the phone or dealing with a member,” and, as another employee explained, “... after sitting here and talking through this a little more, they are more than just a service standard; they are a commitment. It’s a commitment we make to our members, and it’s a commitment that leadership makes to us.”

Additional feedback from the for-profit focus group revealed a positive perception of supervisors’ behaviors when communicating the service standards communication in the workplace. One employee shared, “My immediate supervisor’s communications and actions speak to these guidelines.” Other employees noted, “I see a lot of leading by example by my supervisor,” and “I have a supervisor that I think is a prime example of servant leadership and when I look at the WOW promise, I think of them and their ability to communicate with us and keep us informed.” Feedback from employees and their perceptions of how the service standards

communication guidelines influence their commitment and assist in serving customers revealed the impact their service has on individual customers and community:

... I could never imagine myself in the customer service field, but again, getting back the response I do from customers and just seeing the way I have helped them, I've changed things for them, made things easier, and am making things better for them.

Service standards were also mentioned by multiple employees as a helpful tool for acclimating new employees to the workplace:

I thought it did help when I came in, just as a baseline of what we're held to and how we should handle ourselves with customers... as someone coming right out of college, it was important to know what we promise our customers.

Similarly, service standards were associated with common sense and supervisor behavior, as additional employees commented with statements like, "Sometimes you just have to have good common sense"; "I was going to say emotional intelligence, but also my supervisor, what really sells it is when you come in and your supervisor reinforces what you've been introduced to, which again starts at the top." Another employee emphasized how the communication guidelines highlight multiple attributes associated with servant leadership: "... they are like a foundation when you build a house; if it's good, you can lean on it, and if you are dealing with a difficult customer, you can lean on it and it can hold you up."

Service. Employee feedback on themes of service generated more than 76 statements. When evaluating supervisory leadership behavior, employees associated a variety of attributes correlated with service, authentic-self, behaving ethically, and competence, with expressions describing the supervisors' leadership style as "takes time to help me understand what the problem is and helps figure out a solution," "determined to satisfy employee and customer

needs,” and “excellent leaders and wonderful person...allows us to grow and thrive at our own pace... I am grateful for how they have helped me grow and become a leader myself.”

Consistency in service is also emphasized, as one employee notes: “I have many supervisors as I float through each branch; all represent what the bank values and are of the most upright of character.” Supervisor leadership style is highlighted by another employee as encompassing all attributes in this category: “My supervisor is a prime example of someone who has other people’s interest at heart first, before their own... they are hardworking, compassionate, and do everything with integrity.” Additional employee commentary regarding relationships with supervisors included words and phrases such as, “respectful,” “friendly,” “dedicated,” “healthy relationship,” “service-oriented,” “agreeable,” “comfortable talking about my personal life,” and “yin and yang, it just works so well.”

In statements provided by focus group participants from the non-profit, phrases associated with how supervisors communicate service standards communication in the workplace included “treats everyone well... you never get the feeling anyone is ever looking down on you” and “they value our opinion and do not pretend to know everything.” Another employee communicated how a supervisor’s service communications translates into behavior: “... their attitude reflects in their leadership, so if they come into work with a positive attitude to manage the things they deal with, it rubs off on everyone else.” When prompted with the questions of how service standards communication influences their commitment to the credit union and/or when serving members, employees made statements like, “Personally I think it’s really good,” and “They make a great difference.” Another employee referenced how a previous credit union employer never utilized service standards communication guidelines and may have been the reason for their merger: “... I would mention at my previous institution, if you don’t

offer these kinds of services to our members, we won't be here... this lesson epitomizes the fact these [service standards] are a way of life here and outside of the workplace." Furthermore, service standards were seen by an employee as any other daily standard: "Everyone gets up in the morning and comes to work... a member does not want you coming to work not looking your best and looking upset... these (service standards) are a great constant reminder"; "we see these standards, and our members keep coming back, sometimes three or four times a day, because we put these standards into practice." Furthering the discussion on the reference of applied service, another employee associated the goal of striving to provide service in a capacity similar to the coffee chain Starbucks:

They're giving you something no one else knows, an experience... the standard training is 22 hours long, and they're spending eight hours teaching you how to make coffee, but the rest is on how to create that experience. At the credit union, we see these standards and when our members come back three to four times a day, it tells me we create that same experience.

Additional feedback from the for-profit focus group and how supervisors communicated service standards in the workplace revealed commentary describing the communication guidelines as methods for leadership to be collaborative and progressive and to provide tools to get the job done. One employee explained, "... we are self-starters and I think that's how the bank formed, through word of mouth and sharing what we do with the people we know." Others shared, "... together we get the job done" and "these guidelines direct us how to serve the customers more." Similar themes were seen when employees were prompted to answer how service standards communication influence their commitment or abilities when serving customers: "I know customers see these [service standards] as well... they come in and tell us

how happy we appear day-to-day,” and “We talk to our customers; we listen to their needs and explore solutions for them.” Additional comparisons of influence were made between the service standards on paper and an individual’s aptitude for service; as one employee stated, “... I don’t think this piece of paper [service standards] influences my behavior at all... the bank does a good job of hiring people who are self-motivated... I agree with the previous comment; we are self-starters.” Another employee referenced the influence service standards communication have on the workplace environment: “Our culture weeds out people who do not believe in these standards... we do a good job at hiring and are very intentional on how we treat customers.”

Teaching. When evaluating attributes within this category, 24 statements were documented from the survey and focus group participants. When evaluating supervisory leadership behavior, employees shared comments like “wonderful manager, makes everyone feel involved”; “accountable” and “important, no matter the role”; “fair and takes time to get to know the employees”; “they are aware of my bank goals and strive to help the staff obtain their individual goals as well”; and “very patient, willing to explain everything thoroughly.” In addition, employees stated, “My supervisor provides me the tools I need to do my job and are very supportive in every way. They set clear goals and I really appreciate that as an employee”; “leadership is always there to help... always willing to assist.”

In reviewing statements provided by focus group participants from the non-profit, several themes were noted regarding how service standards communication influenced employee commitment to the organization or abilities to service members. Commentary from an employee included feedback regarding the practicality associated with holding a role in the organization: “... the credit union makes it very good to work for...as a whole these [service standards] are very easy to follow and everyone is committed to serving our members.” Furthermore,

employees recommended including the service standards communication guidelines in additional employee training and performance evaluations along with routine performance reviews and discussions between supervisors and employees, in commentary like “they are very helpful” and “standards you need to keep in the back of your mind when serving members.”

Additional feedback from the for-profit focus group revealed that supervisors communicated the service standards communication guidelines in the workplace in ways that influence individuals’ professional development. Employees explained, “I’ve had the opportunity to work for a couple of different supervisors here, and they all have shown the wow promise when dealing with customers,” and “I feel they [service standards] put the responsibility on you to further develop’ we are expected to develop and leadership is there to share their knowledge too.” As employees were prompted to provide feedback on how the service standards communication guidelines influenced their commitment and service to customers, references were made to the standards as a teaching tool and benchmark for serving customers effectively and consistently. Service standards were also mentioned by multiple employees as helpful for acclimating new employees to the workplace; as one employee stated, “Someone coming in without any professional work experience, this set of standards is great to present to them on the first day.” In response, another employee stated, “Sometimes we forget, not purposely, but sometimes as we act we need to keep in mind how it affects our customers and our fellow employees... these service standards are a good reminder of what is expected.” Another responded, “I think it is important that everyone has different styles of communication, and adding additional email and internal service standards communication guidelines to this existing document would be helpful.” Additional employees agreed that the service standards communication guidelines were helpful and could benefit from further internal enhancement and

implementation’ as another employee stated, “When there are new sales and promotions within the bank, it would be helpful to receive additional communications on what customers are receiving and what solutions we can offer them.” In response, one employee mentioned, “Our communications could be improved a bit...we do get customers who call and ask about offers they receive in the mail... it could be a simple statement but have no explanation of what is actually in the actual letter.” Another employee referenced the opportunity to enhance communications as the bank continues to expand: “As we continue to grow, we need improved communications in the interim...it starts at the top and trickles down.”

Team-building. In evaluating feedback coded with the attributes in this category, 22 statements were documented from the survey and focus groups. When evaluating supervisory leadership behavior, employees shared comments like “team-oriented,” “very focused on keeping employees motivated,” and “does a fine job in making us feel we are one of the most important teams.” One employee stated, “My supervisor is invested in the success of the team unit... collaborates with the team to implement new products, procedures, and operational changes.” Reference to team-building and encouragement was also made by an employee who was pleasantly surprised by the support she receives from her supervisor: “I have never worked for a supervisor who utilizes so much leadership and professional feedback...I feel I should work just as hard as my supervisor.” Further statements highlighted characteristics of positivity and collaboration, signaling relationships between employees and their supervisors: “My supervisor is a team player...they have the authority they need to be effective while still being approachable”; “we all feel comfortable going to them with our concerns, work related or not.” Another employee stated, “My supervisor tries to identify specific strengths of each member of the team and allows each member to play to their strengths to make the overall team stronger.”

Additional feedback identified similar positive correlations between employee perceptions and their relationships with their supervisors, as indicated by statements like, “we all work well as a team”; “extremely close with supervisor... we work well as a team”; and “professional feedback is given and helps me grow as a professional.”

In review of statements provided by focus group participants from the non-profit, themes of team-building and encouragement were observed as an employee shared perspective on how service standards communication positively influenced the workplace culture and the relationship between members: “...we work for a very successful credit union... the reason why is our culture, culture in fostering relationships internally and externally, and we strive for excellence.”

Feedback from the for-profit focus group revealed additional insight on how team-building, encouragement, and relationship development occurred when supervisors incorporated service standards communication into the workplace. One employee mentioned, “My supervisor really just takes time to sit there, connect, and help us grow... they really know how to help my customers better, too.” Other employees referenced “quality time” with and without their supervisors: “There’s a lot going around my supervisor when we meet” and “... I think they have a tendency to become overwhelmed as there is a lot on their plate... it’s hard to find the time for mentorship.” When employees were asked to provide feedback on service standards communication and how it helps when assisting customers, participants were observed referencing a customer service taskforce as a process to streamline compliments and complaints from customers. Employees described the process as having a positive effect on the organization and improving communication within the organization.

Trust. In reviewing feedback associated with this category, 11 statements from the qualitative feedback in the survey and focus groups were documented. When evaluating supervisory leadership behavior, employee comments were brief and direct: “Our supervisor trusts us,” “I feel my supervisor has my back,” and “honest and trusting.” When prompted to provide additional feedback regarding relationships with their immediate supervisors, employees provided statements like, “We have a great relationship”; “she trusts my decisions and always let me know what to do better next time”; and “we have built trust between us and we have each other’s back.” A few employees provided additional insight as to why they trust their supervisors, revealing themes of empowerment, open communication, and shared decision making: “I have a great relationship with my supervisor”; “we have open communications and I respect their opinion...I can call with any question and they will take time to speak with me...I trust and admire their professionalism.” Furthermore, an employee documented having trust and respect for their supervisor, even when mistakes are made: “Positive and negative feedback is done so in a manner that represents coaching and not discipline or judgement...this style of leadership maintains a level of respect for each other, as well as trust.”

In review of statements provided by focus group participants from the non-profit, attributes of trust were not observed, although shared decision making, empowerment, and confidence were observed in other thematic categories.

In a review of statements provided by focus group participants from the for-profit, trust and accompanying attributes were observed in reference to when supervisors communicate service standard communication guidelines in the workplace. One employee mentioned having multiple supervisors and witnessing trust directly: “... there is a lot of trust, they know I’m doing my job and I see how they treat clients to the highest standard... and my value has been

communicated back to me directly and I see it in their actions.” Another employee mentioned trust as an earned attribute: “...I can trust my supervisor to listen, be truthful, respectful and professional.”

Not applicable. In reviewing all qualitative feedback provided through the survey and focus groups, 16 statements communicated during the data collection and observation processes included only one or two words without applicable feedback (e.g. no, yup, idk, maybe), and were therefore discarded.

Potential area(s) for further improvement. In reviewing all qualitative feedback provided through the survey and focus groups, the remaining 45 remarks suggested areas for further improvement in the following: a) reduce micromanagement, b) improve relationships further between employees and supervisors, c) incorporate service standards communication in additional trainings and individual employee performance meetings, d) augment the service standards communication to incorporate internal communication service standards, and e) provide members of management additional training in conflict and talent management.

Research Questions and Hypotheses Analysis

Research Question 1

To address the initial question of this study (RQ#1: What relationship does servant leadership have on service standards communication, as perceived by employees?), descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analysis were conducted, along with qualitative analysis. A strong internal consistency among variables (servant leadership, $\alpha = .93$, service standards communication, $\alpha = .90$) was identified. In review of the mean values, all scale variable means averaged scores between 3.79 and 4.74. High means showed that respondents agree with “Serves people without regard to their nationality, gender, or race” (SL2; 4.74) and “genuinely

interested in employees as people” (SL4; 4.36). Further review of low means showed that respondents agree less that their immediate supervisor “is driven by a sense of higher calling” (SL9; 3.79) and “promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success” (SL10; 3.90). Standard deviations showed nine of the 10 scale variables falling within one standard deviation of the mean scores for each servant leadership scale variable (.56 - .94), with the remaining scale variable falling within two standard deviations (1.01); concluding responses are standard and expected. Pearson correlation identified no statistically significant relationship between the total or individual variables of service standards communication. Additionally, regression analysis was conducted to predict the changes in service standards communication in relation to servant leadership and the other variables within the study, identifying no statistically significant influence or impact on the dependent variable. Table 16: Construct Means, Standards Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among Servant Leadership and Service Standards Communication Scale Variables.

Table 16

*Construct Means, Standards Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among Servant Leadership and Service Standards**Communication Scale Variables (N = 219)*

Scale Variable	M	SD	P	Total SSC	SL1	SL2	SL3	SL4	SL5	SL6	SL7	SL8	SL9	SL10
Total SSC	11.63	5.33		1.00										
SL1: Practices what he/she preaches	4.19	.90	.03	-.13	1.00									
SL2: Serves people without regard to their nationality, gender, or race	4.74	.56	.18	-.06	.44	1.00								
SL3: Sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others	4.26	.77	.28	-.04	.57	.48	1.00							
SL4: Genuinely interested in employees as people	4.36	.90	.05	-.11	.63	.56	.58	1.00						
SL5: Understands that serving others is most important	4.34	.79	.14	-.07	.60	.54	.73	.69	1.00					
SL6: Willing to make sacrifices to help others	4.21	.84	.24	-.05	.51	.41	.63	.66	.66	1.00				
SL7: Seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity	4.28	.94	.22	-.05	.69	.51	.61	.74	.66	.69	1.00			
SL8: Is always honest	4.23	.93	.16	-.07	.75	.47	.56	.68	.62	.59	.72	1.00		
SL9: Is driven by a sense of higher calling	3.79	.89	.36	-.03	.44	.29	.53	.42	.50	.46	.42	.53	1.00	
SL10: Promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success	3.90	1.01	.46	.01	.51	.33	.49	.53	.52	.52	.52	.57	.61	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

In review of qualitative feedback provided in the survey and observations from the focus groups, more than 231 remarks and statements from respondents were documented, identifying an overall positive relationship between the leadership behaviors of their immediate supervisors and the service standards communication guidelines required within the financial service institutions. Themes identified consisted of attributes directly associated with the high mean scale variables, and the construct of the servant leadership theory (appreciation of others, communication, empowerment, modeling, service, team-building, and trust) with the majority of commentary categorized in the appreciation for others (46 statements), communication (57 statements), and service (76 statements) referencing a positive relationship between the two variables referenced in employee remarks and statements. Supportive commentary is described as positive, as one employee highlights the behavior of their supervisor as “leading by example... appreciates the work of the team...and recognizes our efforts.” Another employee acknowledges supervisor behavior and communication style as “very fair and even tempered; open-minded; democratic; well delegated; collaborative; easily accessible; and direct.” One employee mentioned, “My supervisor strongly encourages open communication and go above and beyond to serve our members...if we are not sure about something, their door is always open.” Additional themes such as “easy to talk to; personable; great communication skills; always willing to discuss things and provide feedback” were also frequently documented. Supervisors’ leadership styles are also positively referenced in this category by employees as “genuine; kind; accommodating; and superior.” A consistency in service was also emphasized; as one employee notes, “I have many supervisors as I float through each branch, all represent what the bank values and are of the most upright of character.” Furthermore, supervisor leadership style is highlighted by another employee as encompassing of all attributes within this

category: “My supervisor is a prime example of someone who has other people’s interest at heart first, before their own... they are hardworking, compassionate and do everything with integrity.” Additional employee commentary regarding their relationships with their supervisors amassed words and phrases such as, “respectful, friendly, dedicated”; “healthy relationship, service-oriented”; “agreeable”; “comfortable talking about my personal life”; “ying and yang, it just works so well.”

Additionally, a number of similar quotes were documented in the qualitative feedback provided in both the survey and focus group sessions. After conducting a field search in Excel, the following quotes were observed when measuring servant leadership and service standards communication. Table 17: Themed Quotes Related to Servant Leadership Behavior and Service Standards Communication depicts the supportive evidence of the positive relationship between variables.

Table 17

Themed Quotes Related to Servant Leadership Behavior and Service Standards Communication

Quotes	# of References
My supervisor leads by example when modeling these standards	30
My supervisor empowers me to take ownership	4
My supervisor treats me like a customer (or member)	8
My supervisor’s attitude reflects in their leadership (and service)	20
My supervisor encourages shared responsibility	6
Service Standards are empowering (or important)	18

The first null hypothesis ($H_0 1$), which states there is no relationship between servant leadership and service standards communication, as perceived among employees, cannot be fully rejected, as qualitative findings indicate a positive relationship between variables.

Research Question 2

To address the second question of this study (RQ#2: What relationship does employee commitment to supervisor have on service standards communication, as perceived by employees?), descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analysis were conducted, along with qualitative analysis. A strong internal consistency was identified between the variables (employee commitment to supervisor, $\alpha = .90$, service standards communication, $\alpha = .90$). In review of the mean values, all scale variable means averaged scores between 3.20 and 3.80. High means showed that respondents either “neither agree nor disagree” or “somewhat agree” that “the reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values” (ECS9; 3.75) and “my supervisor's success are my successes” (ECS3; 3.80). Further review of low means showed a neutral response to two scale variables referencing respondent’s immediate supervisors: “If the wishes of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor” (ECS6; 3.20) and “I feel a sense of ‘ownership’ for my supervisor” (ECS5; 3.33). Standard deviations showed that eight of the nine scale variables fell within two standard deviations of the mean scores for each employee commitment to supervisor scale variable (1.10 – 1.22), with the remaining scale variable falling within one standard deviation (.95), concluding that responses are standard and expected. Pearson correlation identified no statistically significant relationship between the variables. Regression analysis was conducted to predict the changes in service standards communication in relation to employee commitment to supervisor and the other variables within the study, identifying no statistically

significant influence or impact on the dependent variable. Table 18: Construct Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Correlations among Employee Commitment to Supervisor and Service Standards Communication Scale Variables shows no significant relationship between scale variables.

Table 18

Construct Means, Standards Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among Employee Commitment to Supervisor and Service Standards Communication Scale Variables (N = 219)

Scale Variable	M	SD	P	(T)ECS	ECS1	ECS2	ECS3	ECS4	ECS5	ECS6	ECS7	ECS8	ECS9
Total SSC	11.63	5.33		1.00									
ECS1: When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult	3.53	1.18	.28	-.04	1.00								
ECS2: When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say "we" rather than "they"	3.63	1.21	.12	-.08	.44	1.00							
ECS3: My supervisor's success are my successes	3.80	1.15	.03*	-.12	.46	.59	1.00						
ECS4: When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment	3.43	1.10	.10	-.09	.61	.53	.66	1.00					
ECS5: I feel a sense of "ownership" for my supervisor	3.33	1.22	.22	-.05	.53	.49	.58	.59	1.00				
ECS6: If the wishes of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor	3.20	.95	.08	.09	.36	.34	.37	.42	.41	.57	1.00		
ECS7: My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor	3.67	1.12	.05*	.11	.44	.44	.46	.49	.49	.57	.64	1.00	
ECS8: Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become similar	3.44	1.11	.07	.10	.44	.37	.40	.45	.43	.45	.64	.65	1.00
ECS9: The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values	3.75	1.15	.39	-.02	.55	.52	.57	.59	.53	.37	.66	.65	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

In the qualitative feedback provided in the survey and focus groups, more than 178 statements were documented related to the two variables, identifying an overall positive relationship between employee commitment to supervisor and service standards communication required within the financial service institutions. Themes identified provided additional insight as the high mean scale variables quantitatively identified were heavily neutral. Qualitative feedback depicted the construct of servant leadership theory (appreciation of others, communication, empowerment, modeling, service, team-building, and trust), with the majority of commentary themed as modeling (50 statements), empowering (26 statements), and team-building (22 statements), indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. Examples of the commentary provided throughout the study include one employee mentioning, “I absolutely love my supervisor; that is definitely one of the main reasons I come to work and strive each day.” Another employee commented, “They are very caring and understanding, while at the same time will make sure policy and procedures are being followed. . . .” Additional qualitative observations identified workplace culture, trust, mutual respect, and lack of micromanagement as accompanying attributes to commitment as another employee comment referenced completion of tasks in the workplace: “I appreciate that my direct supervisor doesn’t micromanage me; they give me the tools to do my job and support me when I have a question or problem.” Similarly, another commented, “My supervisor makes sure we are doing what we are supposed to be doing and correctly without feeling the need to constantly check on us or hover.”

Additionally, a number of similar statements were documented in the qualitative feedback provided in the survey and focus group sessions. After conducting a field search in Excel, the following quotes were noted when measuring employee commitment to supervisor and service standards communication. Table 19: Themed Quotes Related to Employee

Commitment to Supervisor and Service Standards Communication further depicts the positive relationship between the two variables.

Table 19

Themed Quotes Related to Employee Commitment to Supervisor and Service Standards Communication

Quotes	# of References
My supervisor does not micromanage	7
My relationship with my supervisor is very good	9
I appreciate the working relationship I have with my supervisor	45
I have very open relationship with my supervisor	27
My supervisor cares about me	12
My supervisor trusts me	10

The second null hypothesis ($H_0 2$), which states there is no relationship between employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication as perceived among employees, cannot be fully rejected, as qualitative findings indicate a positive relationship between variables.

Research Question 3

To address the third question of this study (RQ#3: What relationship does task-oriented leadership behavior have on service standards communication, as perceived by employees?), multicollinearity analysis, descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analyses were conducted, along with qualitative analysis. A strong internal consistency was identified between the variables (task-oriented leadership behavior, $\alpha = .89$, service standards communication, $\alpha = .90$). In reviewing the mean values, all scale variable means averaged scores between 3.74 and 4.44. Respondent high means were noted for the statements “he/she lets group members know

what is expected of them” (TLB1; 4.32) and “encourages the use of uniform procedures” (TLB2; 4.32), as well as “asks the group members to follow standards rules and regulations” (TLB10; 4.44). Further review of low means showed that respondents “sometime agree” with an immediate supervisor as “schedules the work to be done” (TLB8; 3.74) and “decides what shall be done and how it shall be done” (TLB5; 3.84). Standard deviations showed nine of the 10 scale variables falling within one standard deviation of the mean scores for each task-oriented leadership behavior scale variable (.79 – .97), with the remaining scale variable falling within two standard deviations (1.05), concluding that responses are standard and expected.

Multicollinearity analysis was conducted after identifying a significant relationship between servant leadership and task-oriented leadership ($\alpha = .89$), identifying a lack of multicollinearity and statistical distinction between variables as tolerance greater than .10 and variance inflation factor less than 10 ($t = .66$, $vif = 1.51$). Table 20: Construct Means and Standards Deviations among Task-Oriented Leadership Behavior and Service Standards Communication depicts the scale variables.

Table 20

Construct Means and Standards Deviations among Task-Oriented Leadership Behavior and Service Standards Communication Scale Variables (N = 219)

Scale Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Total SSC	11.63	5.33	
TLB1: He/She lets group members know what is expected of them	4.32	.79	.00**
TLB2: Encourages the use of uniform procedures	4.32	.84	.04*
TLB3: Tries out his/her ideas in the group	3.86	.95	.57
TLB4: Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group	4.17	.92	.18
TLB5: Decides what shall be done and how it shall be done	3.84	.97	.62
TLB6: Assigns group members to particular tasks	4.00	.85	.85
TLB7: Makes sure that his/her part in the group is understood by the group members	4.11	.95	.60
TLB8: Schedules the work to be done	3.74	1.05	.49
TLB9: Maintains definite standards of performance	4.24	.90	.24
TLB10: Asks the group members to follow standard rules and regulations	4.44	.83	.01**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Pearson correlation identified statistically significant negative relationships between task-oriented leadership behavior and the total and individual scale variables of service standards communication. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Small, negative correlations were identified between two scale variables of task-oriented leadership behavior (TLB1, TLB10) and service standards communication, TLB1 $r = -.19$, $n = 219$, $p < .01$, and TLB10 $r = -.18$, $n =$

219, $p < .01$, indicating that the more employees believe in these leadership traits, the lower the score will be for service standards communication. Table 21: Pearson Correlations Among Task-Oriented Leadership Behavior and Service Standards Communication depicts the values of the scale variables.

Table 21

Pearson Correlations Among Task-Oriented Leadership Behavior and Service Standards Communication Scale Variables
(*N*=219)

Scale Variable	Total SSC	TLB1	TLB2	TLB3	TLB4	TLB5	TLB6	TLB7	TLB8	TLB9	TLB10
Total SSC	1.00										
TLB1: He/She lets group members know what is expected of them	-.19**	1.00									
TLB2: Encourages the use of uniform procedures	-.14*	.56	1.00								
TLB3: Tries out his/her ideas in the group	-.04	.61**	.45**	1.00							
TLB4: Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group	-.09	.52**	.39**	.49**	1.00						
TLB5: Decides what shall be done and how it shall be done	.03	.35**	.31**	.32**	.50**	1.00					
TLB6: Assigns group members to particular tasks	.01	.34**	.26**	.43**	.35**	.56**	1.00				
TLB7: Makes sure that his/her part in the group is understood by the group members	-.04	.53**	.51**	.51**	.53**	.50**	.51**	1.00			
TLB8: Schedules the work to be done	-.05	.45**	.42**	.47**	.26**	.47**	.46**	.48**	1.00		
TLB9: Maintains definite standards of performance	-.08	.52**	.52**	.47**	.46**	.38**	.37**	.55**	.45**	1.00	
TLB10: Asks the group members to follow standard rules and regulations	-.18**	.62**	.63**	.44**	.35**	.32**	.30**	.50**	.44**	.56**	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Stepwise regression analysis was conducted to predict the changes in total sum of service standards communication variables in relation to 10 variables measuring task-oriented leadership behavior. Assumptions associated with multiple regression were addressed, with generalizability satisfactorily obtained through a 219-sample population and multicollinearity analysis to confirm distinction between variables. Preliminary analyses were tested utilizing residual scatterplots: normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The total variance explained by the model as a whole was 34 percent. The unstandardized (B) coefficients and the standardized Beta (β) coefficients from the multiple regression were evaluated for significant contributions, further identifying a predictor variable removed the first scale variables of task-oriented leadership behavior (TLB1), “He/She let group members know what is expected of them,” as having a highly negative significance on the outcome variable, total service standards communication ($beta = -.19$, $p < .00$), concluding the more employees believe in the significant findings, the more likely it is, with 34 percent certainty, that service standards communications will be lower. The remaining nine variables controlling for task-oriented leadership indicated no significant influence over the total sum of the dependent variable. Table 22: Stepwise Multiple Regression Summary for Variable(s) Predicting Service Standards Communication depicts the statistical results influencing the dependent variable.

Table 22

Stepwise Multiple Regression Summary for Variable(s) Predicting Service Standards Communication (N=219)

Scale Variable	Coefficients						
	B	SE B	β	Sig.	t	95% CI	
Constant	17.03	1.98		.00**	8.61	13.14	20.93
TLB1: He/She lets group members know what is expected of them	-1.25	.45	-.19	.01*	-2.78	-2.14	-.36
R^2		.34					

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Dependent variable: Total Service Standards Communication

The third null hypothesis ($H_0 3$), which states there is no relationship between task-oriented leadership behaviors on service standards communication as perceived among employees, was rejected. Although qualitative data was not directly collected to measure the relationship between these two variables, as the servant leadership study sought to control this variable to measure distinction between the two leadership behaviors, remarks from the survey and focus groups identified respondents' disapproval of micromanagement in the workplace, as viewed in Table 10 and the negative correlation identified between supervisor expectations and service standards communication (TLB1). Additional recommendations for research are suggested in the subsequent chapter of the study.

Research Question 4

To address the fourth and final question of this study (RQ#4: Is there a difference between profit versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspective on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, c) service standards communication?), descriptive statistics and independent-sample t-tests were conducted to compare the mean scores

of the independent and dependent variables to measure the statistical significance between the non-profit and for-profit financial service institutions. Group statistics consisted of a 219-sample population, with 76 participants representing the for-profit and 143 participants representing the non-profit, with no missing data present. In reviewing assumptions, variances among the scores from each group were evaluated (equal variances assumed, equal variances not assumed) to identify the proper *t*-value to report when assessing the differences between financial service institutions and calculating the effect size for the independent-sample *t*-tests.

In evaluating the differences between financial service institutions and servant leadership variables among employees, no statistical significance was identified. In evaluating the differences between financial service institutions and employee commitment to supervisor, a statistically significant difference in scores for for-profit ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.20$) and non-profit ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 1.21$; $t(217) = 1.96$, $p = .05$, two-tailed) was identified. Levene's test indicated that equal variance was assumed with a value of .87. With a significant value ($p = .05$, two-tailed), a significant difference in means scores of the dependent variable (service standards communication) was identified between the non-profit and for-profit institutions. The magnitude of differences in means (mean difference = .34, 95% *CI*: -.00 to .67) was small (eta squared = .02). Two percent of the variance in employee commitment to supervisor is explained by ECS5: "I feel a sense of 'ownership' for my supervisor." To identify the mean difference between the groups, the mean value of the non-profit was subtracted from the for-profit (3.55 minus 3.22 = 0.33). Since the sign of the mean difference corresponded to the sign of the *t* value ($t = 1.96$), a positive value indicated the for-profit financial service institution mean value of service standards communication was significantly greater than the mean score of the non-profit financial service institution when comparing scale variable ECS5, as perceived among

employees. In evaluating the differences between financial service institutions and service standards communication variables among employees, no statistical significance was identified. See Table 23: Descriptive Statistics and Independent-samples T-test Values for Non-Profit and For-Profit Financial Service Institutions.

Table 23

Descriptive Statistics and Independent-samples t-test Values for For-Profit and Non-Profit Financial Service Institutions (N = 219: For-profit = 76; Non-profit = 143)

Scale Variable	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values					
	N	M	SD	t	DF	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI	
SL1: Practices what he/she preaches	76	4.20	.92	.07	217	.95	.01	-.25	.26
	143	4.19	.90						
SL2: Serves people without regard to their nationality, gender, or race	76	4.74	.53	-.06	217	.96	-.00	-.16	.15
	143	4.74	.58						
SL3: Sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others	76	4.21	.77	-.64	217	.53	-.07	-.28	.15
	143	4.28	.76						
SL4: Genuinely interested in employees as people	76	4.42	.84	.73	217	.47	.09	-.16	.34
	143	4.33	.93						
SL5: Understands that serving others is most important	76	4.29	.81	-.66	217	.51	-.07	-.30	.15
	143	4.36	.77						

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Scale Variables	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values					
	N	M	SD	t	DF	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI	
SL6: Willing to make sacrifices to help others	76	4.17	.86	-.56	217	.58	-.07	-.30	.17
	143	4.24	.84						
SL7: Seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity	76	4.24	1.01	-.48	217	.63	-.06	-.33	.20
	143	4.30	.90						
SL8: Is always honest	76	4.32	.84	.97	217	.34	.13	-.13	.39
	143	4.19	.97						
SL9: Is driven by a sense of higher calling	76	3.78	.90	-.22	217	.83	-.03	-.28	.22
	143	3.80	.89						
SL10: Promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success	76	3.86	1.02	-.47	217	.64	-.07	-.35	.22
	143	3.92	1.02						

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Scale Variables	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values				
	N	M	SD	t	DF	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI
ECS1: When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult	76	3.54	1.19	.13	217	.90	.02	-.31 .35
	143	3.52	1.18					
ECS2: When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say "we" rather than "they"	76	3.75	1.11	1.11	217	.27	.19	-.15 .53
	143	3.56	1.25					
ECS3: My supervisor's success are my successes	76	3.82	1.13	.11	217	.91	.02	-.30 .34
	143	3.80	1.17					
ECS4: When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment	76	3.59	1.01	1.55	217	.12	.24	-.07 .55
	143	3.35	1.15					
ECS5: I feel a sense of "ownership" for my supervisor	76	3.55	1.20	1.96	217	.05*	.34	-.00 .67
	143	3.22	1.21					

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Scale Variable	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values				
	N	M	SD	t	DF	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI
ECS6: If the wishes of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor	76	3.13	.98	-.73	217	.47	-.10	-.37 .17
	143	3.23	.94					
ECS7: My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor	76	3.79	1.15	1.14	217	.26	.18	-.13 .49
	143	3.61	1.10					
ECS8: Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become similar	76	3.54	1.05	.94	217	.35	.15	-.16 .46
	143	3.39	1.14					
ECS9: The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values	76	3.88	1.11	1.25	217	.22	.20	-.12 .53
	143	3.68	1.17					

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Scale Variable	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values				
	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>	<i>MD</i>	95% CI
TLB1: He/She lets group members know what is expected of them	76	4.34	.78	.31	217	.76	.03	-.19 .26
	143	4.31	.80					
TLB2: Encourages the use of uniform procedures	76	4.24	.81	-1.13	217	.26	-.13	-.37 .10
	143	4.37	.85					
TLB3: Tries out his/her ideas in the group	76	3.84	.85	-.24	217	.81	-.03	-.30 .24
	143	3.87	1.01					
TLB4: Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group	76	4.20	.88	.28	217	.78	.04	-.22 .29
	143	4.16	.94					
TLB5: Decides what shall be done and how it shall be done	76	3.74	.90	-1.20	217	.23	-.17	-.44 .11
	143	3.90	1.00					

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Scale Variables	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values				
	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>	<i>MD</i>	95% CI
TLB6: Assigns group members to particular tasks	76	3.96	.89	-.56	217	.58	-.07	-.31 .17
	143	4.03	.83					
TLB7: Makes sure that his/her part in the group is understood by the group members	76	4.07	1.00	-.45	217	.66	-.06	-.33 .21
	143	4.13	.93					
TLB8: Schedules the work to be done	76	3.64	1.03	-1.02	217	.31	-.15	-.45 .14
	143	3.80	1.07					
TLB9: Maintains definite standards of performance	76	4.17	1.00	-.79	217	.43	-.10	-.35 .15
	143	4.27	.85					
TLB10: Asks the group members to follow standard rules and regulations	76	4.33	.79	-1.49	217	.14	-.18	-.41 .06
	143	4.50	.85					

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Scale Variable	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values					
	N	M	SD	t	DF	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI	
SSC1: We do not wait for customers to complain, we use internal standards to pinpoint failures before we receive customer complaints	76	2.17	1.19	-.63	217	.53	-.11	-.45	.23
	143	2.28	1.24						
SSC2: Every effort is made to explain the results of customer research to every employee in understandable terms	76	2.37	1.11	-.60	217	.55	-.10	-.43	.23
	143	2.47	1.23						
SSC3: Every employee understands all of the service standards that have been instituted by all departments	76	2.42	1.26	-.18	217	.86	-.03	-.40	.33
	143	2.45	1.31						
SSC4: We have developed a chain of objectives linking together every branch in support of the corporate vision	76	2.37	1.35	1.02	217	.31	.19	-.18	.55
	143	2.18	1.27						
SSC5: Service performance measures are communicated openly with all employees regardless of position or function	76	2.29	1.33	.24	217	.81	.05	-.32	.41
	143	2.24	1.30						

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Scale Variable	Descriptive Statistics			Independent-samples t-tests Values				
	N	M	SD	t	DF	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI
Total SL	76	42.21	6.46	-.15	217	.88	-.15	-2.01 1.72
	143	42.36	6.78					
Total ECS	76	32.59	7.05	1.15	217	.25	1.24	-.88 3.37
	143	31.35	7.86					
Total TLB	76	40.53	6.75	-.89	217	.37	-.82	-2.62 .99
	143	41.34	6.28					
Total SSC	76	11.62	5.29	-.01	217	.99	-.01	-1.50 1.48
	143	11.63	5.37					

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Although qualitative data provided through focus group interviews at both financial service institutions revealed similarities in positive feedback and requests for further improvement, needs communicated by employee participants varied relative to the service standards communication guidelines in effect at their respective institutions. In reviewing differences in needs from a service standards communication perspective, employees from the non-profit communicated a need to incorporate the communication guidelines in supervisory meetings, especially during times of onboarding and performance evaluations. One employee stated:

I'm just saying when I was hired, this was one paper of a stack about that high (motioned hands to depict a stack of papers on a desk) that I said signed... maybe this (service standards) should get switched to your immediate supervisor to give to you... I'm not saying I never say this, but I really had to sit down and read it again.

Another employee communicated the opportunity to further discuss service standards in performance review as an ability to drive areas for individual improvement:

...maybe even discussing them during evaluation...that's once a year with your supervisor going over it with you and saying, "you know what, you do this really well, but maybe you can work on this area a little bit more."

Another request from non-profit employees regarded the current service standards communication to include guidelines to address situations of conflict. One employee's comment garnered additional non-verbal support from the group:

I think one way where these communication guidelines could be improved is giving us a little more direction of how to cope because it's very difficult when you have someone screaming at you, and no matter what you do, and no matter how nice you are, and no

matter how helpful you may be, even when they get what they want in the end, they're still unpleasant.

In reviewing feedback from the for-profit institution, employees communicated a need to add an internal communication component to the service standards communication guidelines, as they appear to be more directed to inform clients and customers of service expectations (promises). One employee commented:

...everybody has different styles of communication...email might work better for one customer or one coworker, whereas if somebody else is just downstairs or right upstairs, they may just take a walk up and go visit them. And just keeping in mind that some people respond differently to different types of communication.

Another employee responded, "...we move fast every day trying to get to the next task, the next goal, the next customer, and I think sometimes things are lost in translation." As employees were wrapping up the conversation, an employee concluded conversation on the topic with the following statement:

Sometimes we forget, not purposely, but sometimes things are just forgotten about and it may affect someone else. So, as you're doing something, you need to think, you know, as you move this off your desk and onto somebody else's, I'm again speaking internally. You need to remember who it affects and ask yourself, "have you done everything you can do?" So, if not, then you do need to communicate better to that person or remember to bring them in early on, versus just an afterthought. I think many of us are proactive, but there is always room for improvement...

Furthermore, for-profit employees highlighted an area for further improvement related to communication, requesting leadership to streamline communication when revealing new products and promotions. One employee explained:

One example that I think probably all of us are comfortable or familiar with would be some of our promotions. Recently, this year we had a goal to build the deposits at the bank and we have these super-secret CDs that came out and it was the first time I really thought, wow, this was not handled well. A lot of our employees didn't know about the new promotion and it wasn't on the internet, in an email, or in print. I think sometimes we have an idea at the bank and little pieces of it come out to certain employees, but not everyone, so we had no idea, and were not informed. It makes us look uneducated.

The fourth and final null hypothesis ($H_0 4$), which states that there is no difference between profit and non-profit financial sector employees and their perspectives on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards communication, was rejected.

Other Interesting Findings

Additionally, as numerous inferences towards servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor were made throughout the focus group discussions, no observations were made that differentiated either institution. Qualitative data gathered in the survey and focus group discussion showed numerous positive correlations between the variables. Given the insight provided by survey and focus group participants, descriptive statistics and correlations of the independent variables were conducted to identify whether significant relationships existed between the total sum of servant leadership, total sum of employee commitment to supervisor, and its 10 individual variables. Given the qualitative findings, further analysis was warranted,

revealing a positive and highly significant correlation between each and every variable. See Table 24: Pearson Correlations Among Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor Scale Variables.

Table 24

Pearson Correlations Among Employee Commitment to Supervisor and Service Standards Communication Scale Variables (N = 219)

Scale Variables	Total SL	Total ECS	ECS1	ECS2	ECS3	ECS4	ECS5	ECS6	ECS7	ECS8	ECS9
Total SL	1.00										
Total ECS	.70**	1.00									
ECS1: When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult	.50**	.73**	1.00								
ECS2: When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say "we" rather than "they"	.53**	.71**	.44**	1.00							
ECS3: My supervisor's success are my successes	.56**	.77**	.46**	.59**	1.00						
ECS4: When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment	.47**	.80**	.61**	.53**	.66**	1.00					
ECS5: I feel a sense of "ownership" for my supervisor	.51**	.76**	.53**	.49**	.58**	.59**	1.00				
ECS6: If the wishes of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor	.29**	.63**	.36**	.34**	.37**	.42**	.41**	1.00			
ECS7: My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor	.54**	.77**	.44**	.44**	.46**	.49**	.49**	.57**	1.00		
ECS8: Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become similar	.50**	.72**	.44**	.37**	.40**	.45**	.43**	.45**	.64**	1.00	
ECS9: The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values	.75**	.82**	.55**	.52**	.57**	.59**	.53**	.37**	.66**	.65**	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The legacy of the late Robert K. Greenleaf's (1970) servant leadership theory remains influential today. A theory that classified behaviors of genuine, authentic, service-driven actions more than 49 years ago is viewed as the model for measuring service within the service sector today. Greenleaf's (2012) new ethic of "work and person" predicted a time when institutions (work) and employees (person) would find invested value in each other (p.154). The time has come for large institutions to realize that enhanced leadership, employer-supervisor relations, and communication has the ability to improve organizational operations, especially if organizations are seeking avenues to further serve their constituents. In the words of Dr. Stephen Covey (2012), "servant leadership's time has come" (p.1).

Over nearly 50 years, servant leadership scholarship and theory itself has grown in attributes (Dierendonck, 2011; Russel & Stone, 2002; Sokoll, 2013; Sokoll, 2014; Winston & Fields, 2015) and evolved with theoretical construct and design (Lytle et al., 1998; Parris & Peachy, 2012), while maintaining its essence of service-first to others before all else. This study, with the assistance of previously validated psychometric instruments (Becker et al., 1996; Russel & Stone, 2002; Stogdill, 1963; Winston & Fields, 2015), sought to add to servant-leadership scholarship by exploring servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisors on service standards communication. With the proper instrumentation (Lytle et al., 1998) and direction from previous scholars (Maden et. al, 2014; Rennaker, 2008; Sokoll, 2014), this study explored the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication, while also exploring a variety of demographic variables and task-oriented

leadership within the financial service industry. This chapter includes a summary of results, implications, discussion of conclusions, recommendations, and strengths and limitations to further assist in exploring the research questions in this study:

Discussion of Conclusions

Research Question 1: What relationship does servant leadership have on service standards communications, as perceived by the employee?

Quantitative analysis identified a strong internal consistency between servant leadership ($\alpha = .93$) and service standards communication ($\alpha = .90$). Although Pearson correlation identified no statistically significant relationship between the variables, qualitative analysis of survey and focus group participants showed more attributes of servant leadership. In addition, statistical significance was also found between servant leadership (relationship-oriented) behavior and task-oriented behavior through multicollinearity.

Qualitative feedback included more than 161 statements from respondents, which were categorized into themes comprised of 45 servant leadership attributes previously identified by other scholars (Russel & Stone, 2002; Sokoll, 2013, 2014; Winston & Fields, 2015) when measuring servant leadership.

The first null hypothesis could not be fully rejected after qualitative data attested to the positive influence of servant leadership on service standards communication guidelines among participants. Although Cronbach alpha showed a strong correlation between servant leadership ($\alpha = .93$) and service standards communications ($\alpha = .93$), Pearson correlation identified no statistically significant relationship between the variables. Conversely, qualitative analysis showed that servant leadership had a positive influence on service standards communication, as perceived among employees. This study showed a majority of the servant leadership scale

variables reflecting high value means, falling within one standard deviation of the mean values, indicating a relationship between variables worthy of further exploration. Further investigation of how servant leadership behaviors of an employee's immediate supervisor affects an employee's service standards communication provides an opportunity to identify additional correlations between the scale variables of servant leadership and its influence on employees' leadership preference.

Research Question 2: What relationship does employee commitment to supervisor have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?

For the second question of this study, quantitative analysis showed a strong internal consistency between employee commitment to supervisor ($\alpha = .90$) and service standards communication ($\alpha = .90$). Pearson correlation identified no statistically significant relationship between the variables. Qualitative findings from survey and focus group participants included more than 178 statements from respondents related to employee-supervisor commitment and service standards communication.

The second null hypothesis could not be fully rejected after supportive qualitative data revealed the positive influence of employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication guidelines. Although Cronbach alpha identified a strong correlation between employee commitment to supervisor ($\alpha = .90$) and service standards communications ($\alpha = .90$), Pearson correlation identified no statistically significant relationship between the variables. Conversely, qualitative analysis showed that employee commitment to supervisor had a positive influence on service standards communication, as perceived among employers. This study found that a majority of the employee commitment to supervisor variables reflected moderate value means, falling within two standard deviation of the mean values, indicating a relationship

between variables needing further exploration as many respondents provided responses in the “neither or disagree” and “somewhat agree” ranges. Further investigation of an employee’s commitment to immediate supervisor and its effects on service standards communications provides an opportunity to further explore the relationship between variables and their influence on individual commitment within the financial service sector or service industry in general.

Research Question 3: What relationship does task-oriented leadership behavior have on service standards communication, as perceived by the employee?

For the third question of the study, quantitative analysis showed a strong internal consistency between task-oriented leadership behavior ($\alpha = .90$) and service standards communication ($\alpha = .90$). Pearson correlation identified a statistically significant negative relationship between task-oriented leadership behavior scale variables, TLB1: “He/She lets group members know what is expected of them” and TLB10: “Asks the group members to follow standard rules and regulations,” further emphasizing the negative effects of particular task-oriented leadership behavior traits on service standards communication as perceived among employees.

The third null hypothesis was rejected after quantitative data showed the negative influence of task-oriented leadership behaviors on service standards communication guidelines among participants. Cronbach alpha identified a strong correlation between task-oriented leadership behavior ($\alpha = .90$) and service standards communications ($\alpha = .90$), and Pearson correlation identified a significant negative relationship between two of the 10 scale variables of task-oriented leadership behavior and service standards communication. This study showed a majority of the task-oriented leadership behavior variables reflecting moderate value means, falling within one standard deviation of the mean values, indicating a relationship between

variables worthy of further exploration. Further investigation of task-oriented leadership behaviors of an immediate supervisor may identify whether other scale variables have a negative influence on service standards communication among employees within the financial service sector or service industry in general.

Research Question 4: Is there a difference between for-profit versus non-profit financial sector employees and their perspectives on a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards communication?

Finally, for the fourth question, both non-profit and for-profit financial service institutions were compared for differences in servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication. A significant difference in mean scores ($p = .05$, two-tailed) of service standards communication was identified for responses of the employee commitment to supervisor scale variable (ECS5), indicating that the for-profit financial service institution had a significantly greater mean score of service standards communication than the non-profit financial service institution when comparing the effects of employee commitment to supervisor, as perceived by employees. Although no other statistically significant difference was detected between the two financial service institutions, additional independent-samples t-tests showed a significant difference for three other demographic variables. A significant difference was identified when evaluating gender ($p = .05$) and highly significant differences when evaluating age ($p = .00$) and education ($p = .00$). Qualitative feedback also showed no differences in themes from either group, aside from a positive relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication.

The fourth null hypothesis was rejected after quantitative data revealed a significant difference between the financial service institutions relative to employee commitment to

supervisor, as perceived among employees. While no statistical significance was identified between servant leadership and service standards communication, descriptive statistics and independent-sample t-tests showed the for-profit financial service institution mean value of service standards communication to be significantly greater than the mean score of the non-profit financial service institution. This study showed that the employee commitment to supervisor scale variable ECS5, “I feel ownership for my supervisor,” had a positive influence on service standards communication, as perceived among employees. Further investigation of how these variables compare with other institutions may provide an opportunity for additional comparison and benchmarking across the financial service sector.

Implications

This study, along with others (Hirschy, 2012; Hirschy, Gomez, Patterson & Winston, 2014), provides evidence of Winston and Field’s (2015) Essential Servant Leadership instrument’s validity and legitimacy when utilized across broad and narrow scopes of industries. The ESLB instrument was utilized to measure servant leadership behaviors, revealing a Cronbach alpha of .93 in reliability and consistency among the four instruments used in this study. Winston and Field (2015) identified an alpha of .96 when compared to Liden et al.’s (2008) seven-dimension servant leadership instrument, and Sokoll (2013) reported an alpha of 0.96 when examining reliability and consistency to three other instruments when measuring the effects of servant leadership on employee commitment. Although a significant correlation was identified between servant leadership, task-oriented leadership, and service standards communication, statistical significance was not found when measuring the effects of servant leadership on service standards communication. Further research is needed as results were not as conclusive as previous studies in measuring the effects of servant leadership behavior. The first

null hypothesis could not be fully rejected after supportive qualitative data attested to the positive influence of servant leadership on service standards communication guidelines among participants.

Second, Becker et al.'s (1996) Supervisor-Related Commitment Instrument was incorporated in the instrumentation of this study to measure employee commitment to supervisor, revealing a Cronbach alpha of .90 in reliability and consistency among the four instruments used in this study. Becker et al. (1996) identified a significant correlation and distinct difference between employee commitment and performance, later validated with Sokoll's (2013) study with Cronbach's alpha scale reliability $\alpha = 0.92$ between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor. Although a correlation was found, statistical significance was not found between employee commitment to supervisor and service standards communication in this study. Further research is needed as results were not as conclusive as previous studies when measuring the effects of employee commitment to supervisor. The second null hypothesis could not be fully rejected after supportive qualitative data attested to the positive influence of employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication guidelines among participants in the study.

Third, Stogdill's (1963) Initiation of Structure subscale from the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ-XII) instrument was incorporated in the instrumentation of this study to control for task-oriented leadership behaviors, revealing a Cronbach alpha of .89 in reliability and consistency among the four instruments used in this study. Stogdill's (1963) instrument showed that two-scale variables of task-oriented leadership behaviors had a negative influence on Lytle's et al.'s (1998) five-dimension service-oriented instrument, SERV*OR, within their individual financial service institutions. In addition to a significant correlation

between the control and dependent variable (Lytle et al.'s (1998), $\alpha = .90$), negative statistical significance was also identified. Lytle et al. (1998) previously tested this instrument to ensure validity and reliability when measured across various sample populations and industries, including the financial service industry. This study provided additional validity and reliability of the service standards communication instrument when comparing the variables in the financial service industry. The third null hypothesis was rejected after quantitative data showed the negative influence of task-oriented leadership behaviors on service standards communication guidelines among participants.

Fourth, descriptive statistics and independent-sample t-tests were conducted to compare the mean scores of the independent and dependent variables in order to measure the statistical significance between the non-profit and for-profit financial service institutions. Although no statistical significance was identified between servant leadership and service standards communication, statistical differences were found between employee commitment and supervisor scale variable ECS5: "I feel a sense of 'ownership' for my supervisor." Mean differences between the groups showed the for-profit financial service institution mean value of service standards communication to be significantly greater than the mean score of the non-profit financial service institution when comparing scale variable ECS5 as perceived among employees. The fourth null hypothesis was rejected after quantitative data showed a significant difference between the financial service institutions relative to employee commitment to supervisor, as perceived among employees.

Lastly, qualitative data yielded feedback from 219 survey respondents and 23 focus group participants. All remarks and statements were coded with previously tested attributes of servant leadership (Northouse & Lee, 2016; Russel & Stone, 2002; Winston and Fields, 2015).

The most dominant themes directly correlated with the independent and dependent variables of the study: servant leadership (service; authentic-self, behaving ethically; competence); employee commitment to supervisor (modeling; transforming influence; integrity; servant-hood; wisdom; creating value for the organization); and service standards communication (communication; delegation; goal-setting; listening). Commentary coded as “not applicable” (N/A) and discarded or “potential areas for improvement” are discussed in the recommendations of this study. In total, 373 remarks and statements along with quantitative analysis were used to determine whether to accept or reject the null hypotheses.

Additionally, although no statistical significance was identified between the dependent (service standards communication) and independent variables (servant leadership, employee commitment to supervisor, and task-oriented leadership behavior), significant and positive relationships were identified when measuring the relationships between the independent variables. When calculating descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analysis, a significant and positive relationship was identified between servant leadership and task-oriented leadership behavior ($r = .58, p < .01$), in addition to a significant and positive relationship between servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor ($r = .70, p < .01$), as well as a significant and positive relationship between employee commitment to supervisor and task-oriented behavior ($r = .42, p < .01$). In addition, descriptive statistics and independent-sample t-tests were conducted to compare the mean scores of the independent and dependent variables in order to measure statistical significance between the non-profit and for-profit financial service institutions. These tests identified a significant difference in gender ($p = .05$) and highly significantly differences when evaluating age ($p = .00$), and education ($p = .00$). Previous studies (Sokoll, 2013; Sokoll 2014) measuring servant leadership and employee commitment to

supervisor identified a significant regression coefficient for servant leadership ($\beta = 1.02, p < .00$) after controlling for task-oriented leadership and the other demographic variables. Suggestions for further exploring the relationship between these variables are provided in the recommendations section of this chapter.

Recommendations

For Practice

This mixed-methods study provides valuable insight for future researchers seeking to measure the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication in the financial services industry. In evaluating feedback provided by study participants, requests for further improved communication among peers, additional time to develop relationships with employers, and supplementary policies and procedures to improve internal operations when servicing customers and members were noted. Additionally, feedback collected provided insight aligned with the initial purpose of this study, which was designed to consider how to improve communication, commitment, and performance among employees. Recommendations were drawn from survey (70 statements provided in the qualitative feedback area) and focus group data (45 comments coded as potential areas for improvement) and shared with each individual institution.

Recommendations for the non-profit. Forty-six statements from surveys and focus groups involved recommendations. First, participants recommended augmenting the current service standards communication guidelines to further assist employees when managing conflict with members and colleagues. They also advocated for incorporating the communication guidelines in more dialogue between supervisor and employees, such as during the initial onboarding process and yearly performance reviews. Second, they suggested requiring

department meetings across all divisions. Feedback shared throughout the study indicated that some employees do not get the opportunity to meet with their supervisors and coworkers as a group on a routine basis. Furthermore, employees also requested additional time with their supervisors in order to get acknowledgement for work accomplished, learn new skills, and experience personal mentorship. Finally, with the non-profit showing continued growth and consistently promoting a positive workplace culture, addressing service problems or employee issues may be difficult for certain employees to acknowledge. Creating an avenue or outlet in which employees can communicate their needs and concerns in a confidential manner may further enhance employee commitment and workplace culture. Furthermore, assigning or hiring an employee relations professional to manage employee needs and concerns, while further promoting the service standards communication guidelines within the workplace, could help to provide exemplary service to employee and members.

Recommendations for the for-profit. Sixty-nine statements from surveys and focus groups involved recommendations. First, participants suggested augmenting the current service standards communication guidelines to incorporate standards for internal communication among employees, particularly to address both verbal (face-to-face) and electronic communication (email) practices in the workplace. Second, they advocated for streamlining communications among all staff before releasing updates to customers, especially when releasing new promotions, policies, and procedures. Furthermore, they recommended assigning or hiring a communication professional to streamline internal communication processes in order to meet employee needs. Third, they suggested more team-building exercises and mentoring opportunities between employees and their immediate supervisors. Many employees revealed how much they value having the opportunity to meet directly with their supervisors in order to

learn and share best practices. Furthermore, many employees requested additional time to network and share recent accomplishments with supervisors and fellow members of management. Finally, they requested that supervisors share corporate goals and the for-profit's five-year plans with all employees. As the institution continues to grow rapidly, employees voiced interest in further developing strategy with management on best practices for expanding the for-profit's financial footprint while maintaining community-focused relationships with customers.

For Future Research

Although internal consistency was shown among the instruments in this study, additional testing is needed to verify whether service standards communication is further influenced by servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor in other financial service institutions or industries. First, identifying other organizations where service standards communication guidelines are adopted and commonly practiced may be useful. Second, further research is also needed to understand the values correlated with leader-follower communication in order to test the reliability of this combination of instrumentation as a future communication-based servant leadership instrument (Rennaker, 2008). Third, future researchers may consider changing the method and relationship by which variables are measured. Previous literature suggests that institutions are left susceptible to increased employee miscommunication, under-developed employee-supervisor relationships, and overall ineffectiveness when serving others (Vandenberghe & Bentein, 2009). Fourth, expanding the qualitative methods may provide additional insights related to the research questions. In addition, measuring servant leadership behavior over an extended period of time may also be helpful (Sokoll, 2013).

In this study, employees had an overall positive perspective regarding their supervisors in relation to servant leadership behavior, employee commitment to supervisor, and service standards communication guidelines. Additional research is needed to understand the behaviors and communication fueling leadership behavior, employee commitment, and communication guidelines in the workplace (Greenleaf, 2012; Maden et al., 2014). Furthermore, with globalization and technology advancements affecting all industries, developing a further understanding of how these variables and their relationships change over time will provide a true test to the strength of the servant leadership construct (Covey, 2010; Greenleaf, 2012). Finally, future studies could include different methodologies for studying servant leadership behavior, such as phenomenological research, in order to obtain further understanding from individuals and small groups of participants (Northouse, 2010).

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this study are attributed to the sample and the mixed methods design. Initially, the goal was to achieve a 38 percent participation rate in order to obtain statistical significance and population size to adequately measure the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 2010). This study doubled the initial expectation of individual and organizational participation with a 76 percent response rate and 99.5 percent (219 participants) completion rate. In a study seeking to identify the average response rate levels and trends in organizational research, Baruch and Holtom (2008) identified 490 surveys after analyzing over 1,607 studies published in 17 journals between 2000 and 2005, discovering a) the average response rate for surveys collected from individuals yielded an average 52.7 percent response rate, and b) surveys collected from organizations yielded a 35.7 response rate. This study surpassed both average responses rates by a 23.3/40.3 percent margin. With approximately

81 percent of the non-profit and 67 percent of for-profit employee populations represented in the study, successful attainment of a diverse and majority perspective from both financial service institutions was obtained. Furthermore, a broad range of ages, education, tenure, and job categories were documented, further emphasizing the strengths of the sample populations. Considering the size of the sample and scope of the study, the collective participation rate was truly a strength, as anonymity in participation among small employee populations can easily be questioned and compromise the ability to collect an adequate sample size. In addition to 219 employees completing the survey and/or participating in the focus group, 127 participants registered to be entered to win one of four \$50-dollar gift cards from Amazon, further emphasizing employees' intrinsic desire to share their perspectives. Considering that an employee's chance of winning a gift card was less than 2 percent, and 134 employees completed the survey within the first nine hours of the study being electronically distributed, it can be inferred that the survey distribution garnered a positive reaction.

The survey was strategically designed to further the research of Sokoll (2014), which measured the relationship between the independent variable of servant leadership and the dependent variable of employee commitment to supervisor, further identifying a significant positive relationship between the variables. With both serving as independent variables in this study, this new survey design sought to further measure the relationship reported in the literature between servant leadership and service standards communication. With the addition of the SERV*OR instrumentation, the relationship between independent and dependent variables were further explored with a 40-item, five-point Likert scale to be completed in no more than 15 minutes. Of the respondents randomly selected to participate in the focus group interviews, a few from each financial service institution communicated "how easy" and "quick" the survey was to

complete, with a majority of participants completing it within 10 minutes. Feedback collected from the two qualitative questions of the survey also exceeded expectation, with approximately 70 percent of qualitative feedback coming directly from the survey. In addition, the 115 statements shared by focus group participants contributed further insight into the service culture at each institution. Lastly, the collaboration this researcher enjoyed from leadership at both organizations contributed to this study's success. Two days prior to the survey dissemination, all employees were informed of the research study from a senior member of leadership at each financial service institution sponsoring the study (Appendices F and G). The study's methodology, accompanied by years of research and months of strategic planning and communication, finished with a highly successful response rate and collection of data to contribute to the scholarship of servant leadership.

Limitations were also present. First, the gender of survey participants consisted of 55 male (25 percent) and 162 females (74 percent). Female participation also dominated the focus groups at each organization. A more balanced division of gender between participants would strengthen the generalizability of the study. Second, this study surveyed 20 branches from two financial service organizations within the same geographical region; generalizability of findings may be challenged. The limitations presented, although limited, are important to acknowledge in order to identify areas for further study and improvement.

Conclusion

Servant leadership matters. This mixed-methods study demonstrates the significance of servant leadership for employees, drawing to the conclusion one very important notion: service to members and customers in the financial service industry begins with service to its employees first. In his description of servant leadership, Greenleaf (1970) cited the prophetic story of Leo

in Herman Hesse's *Journey to the East*: "... Leo who accompanies the party as the servant leader who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song" is a reminder that leadership is more than the perception of authority and responsibility. Servant leadership is about providing service, direction, and unconditional support to others, in times of success and failure. It is also about developing relationships with those around you to improve their well-being, both personally and professionally.

The endeavor to measure and observe servant leadership across a variety of industries and organizational settings comes at a time when large institutions need to continue to listen, learn, and leverage their individual workforces with service and increased relationship development, as defined by a variety of attributes by leading experts (Northouse 2016; Russel & Stone, 2002; Spears, 2014; Winston & Fields, 2015) and scholars (Dierendonck, 2011; Dierendonck et al., 2014; Henning, 2016; Hirschy, 2012; Hirschy et. al., 2014; Hunter et al., 2013; Iacob, 2015; Ice, 2016; Piong, 2016; Reese, 2017; Rennaker, 2008; Rezaei et al., 2012; Sendjaya et al., 2002; Sokoll, 2013; Sokoll, 2014) who have contributed countless hours of research to enhance the construct and spirit of the theory of servant leadership. It is this researcher's assumption that the late Robert K. Greenleaf would be very pleased by the evolution of servant leadership stemming from the original construct and, now, its incorporation across education and industry through various quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies. In conclusion, as institutions continue to grow and the needs of their employees, customers, and members continue to change, the question is how to properly assess productivity, commitment, and communications among constituents, both internally and externally. The answer will be servant leadership.

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Appendix A

Servant Leadership Instrument

Winston and Fields' (2015) Essential Servant Leadership Behaviors (ESLB) Scale

Items comprising the ESLB ($\alpha = .96$)

1. Practices what he/she preaches
2. Serves people without regard to their nationality, gender, or race
3. Sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others
4. Genuinely interested in employees as people
5. Understands that serving others is most important
6. Willing to make sacrifices to help others
7. Seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity
8. Is always honest
9. Is driven by a sense of higher calling
10. Promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success

Response scale for extent to which this statement describes the behavior of your immediate supervisor

Coded: 1 = definitely no; 2 = no; 3 = neutral; 4 = yes; 5 = definitely yes

Note. Adapted from “*Seeking and measuring the essential behaviors of servant leadership*” by Winston, B., & Fields, D. (2015). School of Business and Leadership. Regent University. Virginia Beach, VA

Appendix B

Employee Commitment to Supervisor Instrument

Becker, Billings, Eveleth, and Gilbert's (1996) Supervisor-Related Commitment Instrument

Items measuring *overall employee commitment to the supervisor* ($\alpha = .89$)

1. When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult
2. When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say "we" rather than "they"
3. My supervisor's successes are my successes
4. When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment
5. I feel a sense of "ownership" for my supervisor
6. If the wishes of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor
7. My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor
8. Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become similar
9. The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values

Response scale for extent to which the employee agrees with the statement:

Coded: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = undecided; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Note. Adapted from "Foci and bases of employee commitment: Implications for job performance," by T. E. Becker, R. S. Billings, D. M. Eveleth, and N. L. Gilbert, 1996. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39(2), p.467. Copyright 1996 by Academy of Management.

Appendix C

Task-Oriented Leadership Instrument

Stogdill's (1963) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire: Subscale – Initiation of Structure.

Items measuring supervisor's initiation of structure, meaning clearly defines own role and lets followers know what is expected.

1. He/She lets group members know what is expected of them
2. Encourages the use of uniform procedures
3. Tries out his/her ideas in the group
4. Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group
5. Decides what shall be done and how it shall be done
6. Assigns group members to particular tasks
7. Makes sure that his/her part in the group is understood by the group members
8. Schedules the work to be done
9. Maintains definite standards of performance
10. Asks the group members follow standard rules and regulations

Response scale for extent to which the employee agrees with the statement:

Coded: 1 = Never acts as described by the item; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often;

5 = Always

Note. Adapted from "Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire-Form XII," by R. M. Stogdill, 1963. Retrieved from <https://fisher.osu.edu/supplements/10/2862/1957%20LBDQ%20MANUAL.pdf>1962%20LBDQ%20MANUAL.pdf

Appendix D

Service Standards Communication Instrument

Lytle et al. (1998) Service Orientation Instrument: SERV*OR Service Standards

Communication Scale Items

-
1. We do not wait for customers to complain, we use internal standards to pinpoint failures before we receive customer complaints (Item 17)
 2. Every effort is made to explain the results of customer research to every employee in understandable terms (Item 18)
 3. Every employee understands all of the service standards that have been instituted by all departments (Item 19)
 4. We have developed chain of objectives linking together every branch in support of the corporate vision (Item 20)
 5. Service performance measures are communicated openly with all employees regardless of position or function (Item 21)

Response scale for extent to which employees agree with the statement:

Coded: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = undecided; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Note. Adapted from *SERV*OR*, by Lytle, et al. (1998).

Appendix E

Research Survey



Indiana University of Pennsylvania

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Administration and Leadership Studies

Stouffer Hall, Room 136
1175 Maple Street
Indiana, PA 15705-1058

P 724-357-5593

F 724-357-4815

www.iup.edu/ALSDEd

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. You are eligible to participate because you are an employee affiliated with a financial service institution which has agreed to participate in this study.

1. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to research and measure the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication in the financial service industry, in order to share how effective servant leadership can improve employee communication, specifically when transmitting desired service standards from leadership to employee to members or customers.
2. Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to answer a survey with (40) multiple choice questions and (3) open-ended questions, regarding your perception of leadership, commitment to your immediate supervisor and service standards communication are practiced in the workplace.
3. Duration/Time: 15 minutes (approximately)
4. Statement of Confidentiality: Participation in this study will be completely voluntary and confidential. Your supervisor and or any other employee will not know if you participated in this study
5. Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Pablo R. Reyes, D.Ed. Candidate, M.A. at 814.450.1680 with questions or concerns about this study.

6. Payment for Participation: Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a thank you message acknowledging that you have completed the survey in addition to being entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of (4) \$50 Amazon gift cards.
7. Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators or IUP. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits or employment associated with your financial service institution. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by closing the internet browser administering the survey. Upon closing the browser, all information pertaining to your participation will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on your employment with such financial service institution. Your responses will only be considered only in combination with those from other participants. The information obtained in the study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will not be requested nor identified.

Directions:

1. Read each item carefully
2. Think about and select the answer that best represents the extent to which the statement best describes the behavior of your direct supervisor (e.g. the person you report to, your “boss”) and the service standards communications (communication guidelines) expected of you in the workplace.

		Mixed-Methods Research Survey	
Type	#	Variables	
Demographics		Demographics	
	1.	With which gender do you most identify?	
		Female Male Other	
	2.	Do you have the same gender as your supervisor?	
		Yes No	
	3.	Age Group	
		18 – 24 years of age 25 - 34 years of age 35 - 44 years of age 45 - 54 years of age 55 - 64 years of age 65 - 74 years of age >75 years of age	
	4.	Education	
		Some High School High School Some College Associate degree Bachelor degree Master's degree Doctoral degree Other	
	5.	Job Category	
		No Supervisory Responsibilities Branch/Support Administration/Operations Specialist Coordinator Underwriter Director/Analyst Other	Supervisory Responsibilities Head Teller Assistant Manager Manager/Director Senior Management Other
	6.	Tenure	
		What is the number of years working for your current supervisor? Less than 1 year 1-3 years 4-5 years More than 5 years	

<u>Servant Leadership: ESLB Instrument</u>	Servant Leadership: ESLB Instrument	
	Response scale for extent to which this statement describes the behavior of a focal leader: Coded: 1 = definitely no; 2 = no; 3 = neutral; 4 = yes; 5 = definitely yes	
	Preface: Think about and select the answer that best represents the extent to which the statement best describes the behavior of your direct supervisor (e.g. the person you report to, your “boss”) in the workplace	
	7.	Practices what he/she preaches
	8.	Serves people without regard to their nationality, gender, or race
	9.	Sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others
	10.	Genuinely interested in employees as people
	11.	Understands that serving others is most important
	12.	Willing to make sacrifices to help others
	13.	Seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity
	14.	Is always honest
	15.	Is driven by a sense of higher calling
	16.	Promotes values that transcend self-interest and material success

<u>Employee Commitment to Supervisor Instrument</u>	Employee Commitment to Supervisor: Supervisor-Related Commitment Instrument	
	Response scale for extent to which the employee agrees with the statement: Coded: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree	
	Preface: Think about and select the answer that best represents the extent to which the statement best describes the behavior of your direct supervisor (e.g. the person you report to, your “boss”) in the workplace	
	17.	When someone criticizes my supervisor, it feels like a personal insult
	18.	When I talk about my supervisor, I usually say “we” rather than “they”
	19.	My supervisor’s successes are my successes
	20.	When someone praises my supervisor, it feels like a personal compliment
	21.	I feel a sense of “ownership” for my supervisor
	22.	If the wishes of my supervisor were different, I would not be as attached to my supervisor
	23.	My attachment to my supervisor is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by my supervisor
	24.	Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become similar
	25.	The reason I prefer my supervisor to others is because of what he or she stands for, that is, his or her values

<u>Task-Oriented Leadership Instrument</u>	Task-Oriented Leadership Instrument	
	Response scale for extent to which the employee agrees with the statement: Coded: 1 = Never acts as described by the item; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often; 5 = Always	
	Preface: Think about and select the answer that best represents the extent to which the statement best describes the behavior of your direct supervisor (e.g. the person you report to, your “boss”) in the workplace	
	26.	He/She lets group members know what is expected of them
	27.	Encourages the use of uniform procedures
	28.	Tries out his/her ideas in the group
	29.	Makes his/her attitudes clear to the group
	30.	Decides what shall be done and how it shall be done
	31.	Assigns group members to particular tasks
	32.	Makes sure that his/her part in the group is understood by the group members
	33.	Schedules the work to be done
	34.	Maintains definite standards of performance
	35.	Asks the group members to follow standard rules and regulations

<u>Service Standards Communication Instrument</u>	Service Standards Communication: <i>SERV*OR</i> Instrument	
	Response scale for extent to which employees agree with the statement: Coded: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree	
	Preface: Think about and select the answer that best represents your perspective regarding the service standards communications (communication guidelines) expected of you in the workplace	
	36.	We do not wait for customers to complain, we use internal standards to pinpoint failures before we receive customer complaints
	37.	Every effort is made to explain the results of customer research to every employee in understandable terms
	38.	Every employee understands all of the service standards that have been instituted by all departments
	39.	We have developed chain of objectives linking together every branch in support of the corporate vision
	40.	Service performance measures are communicated openly with all employees regardless of position or function

<u>Qualitative Feedback</u>	Qualitative Feedback	
	Preface: Your feedback is very important, please take a moment to provide additional feedback to the following (2) open-ended questions:	
	41.	Please use the space below to provide additional feedback regarding your supervisor's leadership style:
	42.	Please use the space below to provide additional feedback regarding your relationship with your supervisor:

<u>Focus Group Interview Questions</u>	Secondary Survey for Interview Participation
	We thank you for your time and appreciate your feedback! If you would like to participate in an interview and provide additional feedback, please click here: (link provided redirecting participants to secondary survey)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How does your immediate supervisor communicate the values of service standards communication guidelines in the workplace?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. How so? Can you provide an example?b. How? In what ways? With what behaviors/actions?2. How does the service standards communication guidelines influence your commitment to the organization?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. How so? Can you provide an example?b. How are they interpreted similarly/differently?c. Does it change/influence your performance?3. How do the service standards communication guidelines provided to you assist you when attending to (customer/member) needs?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. When? Are there times when they are more/less influential?b. What about times when work flow is more/less demanding?
	Information collected: name, email, phone and preferred contact method

Note. Adapted from Winston, & Fields (2015); Becker, Billings, Eveleth, and Gilbert's (1996); Stogdill, (1963); and Lytle, Hom, & Mokwa (1998).

Appendix F

Non-Profit Sponsor Informational Email

Greetings everyone:

Within the next two days, you will be receiving an e-mail inviting you to complete a survey regarding the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication. I have been working with a doctoral student who is completing dissertation research that has the opportunity to provide us information regarding leadership effectiveness, employee commitment, and service communication emphasized within our organization. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. Upon the initial distribution of the survey, the link to the survey will remain open for two weeks. Please note: at no time throughout this study will I, or any employee of (organization) have access to your individual survey responses.

You will be able to complete the survey online, and it should only take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Every participant who completes the survey in its entirety will be entered in a random drawing to receive one of four \$50 Amazon gift cards. Gift cards will be distributed after the survey period has ended, giving everyone a fair opportunity to win!

Once again, I welcome you all to complete the survey. Your participation will serve us with insight to better meet your needs!

Thank you very much!

Mr. _____

Chief Executive Officer

Appendix G

For-Profit Sponsor Informational Email

Greetings everyone:

Within the next two days, you will be receiving an e-mail inviting you to complete a survey regarding the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication. I have been working with a doctoral student who is completing dissertation research that has the opportunity to provide us information regarding leadership effectiveness, employee commitment, and service communication emphasized within our organization. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. Upon the initial distribution of the survey, the link to the survey will remain open for two weeks. Please note: at no time throughout this study will I, or any employee of (organization) have access to your individual survey responses.

You will be able to complete the survey online, and it should only take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Every participant who completes the survey in its entirety will be entered in a random drawing to receive one of four \$50 Amazon gift cards. Gift cards will be distributed after the survey period has ended, giving everyone a fair opportunity to win!

Once again, I welcome you all to complete the survey. Your participation will serve us with insight to better meet your needs!

Thank you very much!

Ms. _____

Vice President, Market Manager

Appendix H

Initial Survey Distribution Email from Principal Researcher

Greetings:

Recently, you received a message from Mr./Ms._____, inviting you to participate in this voluntary and strictly anonymous leadership survey, designed to measure the effects of service leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication. This survey is designed to provide leadership with more insight on how to better meet your needs in an effort to promote enhanced communication, commitment, and performance. This survey should only take approximately 15 minutes to complete (link below).

Your responses are needed to make this a valuable study, but please note that you may choose to terminate your participation in this survey at any time. Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a thank you message acknowledging that you have completed the survey in addition to being entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of (4) \$50 Amazon gift cards.

Thank you again for taking the time to complete this survey, your perspective matters!
Please note: If at any time you experience technical difficulties while completing this survey, please feel free to contact the Principal Researcher, Pablo Reyes at ggtwt@iup.edu.

Thank you,

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggtwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (PHONE 724.357.7730).

Appendix I

Reminder Emails for Remaining Potential Participants

We want to hear from you....

Just a reminder, the deadline to complete the leadership survey is December 13, 2018. Please take a moment and complete the survey by clicking on the following link below.

Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a thank you message acknowledging that you have completed the survey in addition to the opportunity to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of (4) \$50 Amazon gift cards.

Thank you again!

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

Appendix J

Non-Profit Second Follow-up Email from Principal Researcher

Greetings everyone:

The deadline for completing the leadership survey is fast approaching! If you have not yet completed the survey, please do so at your earliest convenience, by following the link below.

The survey closes on December 13, 2018 and we need everyone's participation!

Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a thank you message acknowledging that you have completed the survey in addition to the opportunity to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of (4) \$50 Amazon gift cards.

Thank you very much!

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

Appendix K

For-Profit Second Follow-up Email from Principal Researcher

Greetings everyone:

The deadline for completing the leadership survey is fast approaching! If you have not yet completed the survey, please do so at your earliest convenience, by following the link below.

The survey closes on December 13, 2018 and we need everyone's participation!

Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a thank you message acknowledging that you have completed the survey in addition to the opportunity to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of (4) \$50 Amazon gift cards.

Thank you very much!

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

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REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (PHONE 724.357.7730).

Appendix L

Thank you Email to Respondents

Thank you for completing the survey; your perspective is valued! Your responses will be essential in generating further conclusions on the relationship between leadership` and employees at your organization.

Again, thank you for taking the time to complete this survey; we value your feedback!

Pablo R. Reyes

Appendix M

Informed Consent Survey Abstract



Indiana University of Pennsylvania

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Administration and Leadership Studies
Stouffer Hall, Room 136
1175 Maple Street
Indiana, PA 15705-1058

P 724-357-5593
F 724-357-4815
www.iup.edu/ALSDEd

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. You are eligible and selected to participate because you are an employee affiliated with a financial service institution which has agreed to participate in this study.

1. **Benefits of Participation in the study:** The purpose of this study is to research and measure the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication in the financial service industry, in order to share how effective servant leadership can benefit and improve employee communication, specifically when transmitting desired service standards from leadership to employee to members or customers.
2. **Risk of Participation:** There is no risk in participating in this study. Participation in this survey is anonymous. All data collected will be encrypted and password protected. Only the principal researcher, Pablo Reyes, will have access to the overall study data. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by closing the internet browser administering the survey. Upon closing the browser, all information pertaining to your participation will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be anonymous and will have no bearing on your employment with such financial service institution. Your responses will only be considered only in combination with those from other participants. **Please note: once your survey responses are submitted to Qualtrics, request to have your responses withdrawn will not be possible. At no time throughout this study will the researcher have access to your individual survey responses.**

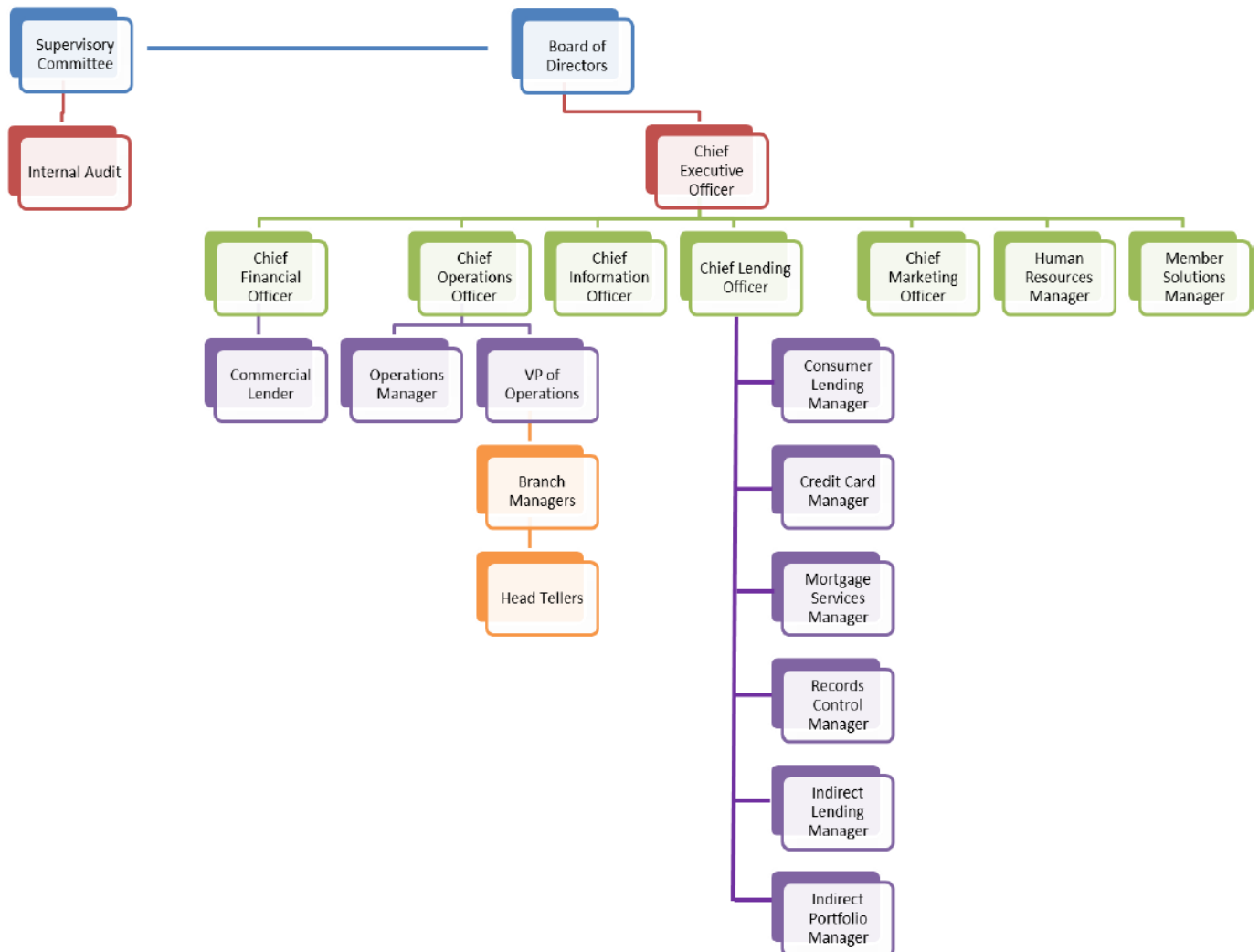
3. Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to answer a survey with (40) multiple choice questions and (3) open-ended questions, regarding your perception of leadership, commitment to your immediate supervisor and service standards communication are practiced in the workplace.
4. Duration/Time: 15 minutes (approximately)
5. Statement of Anonymity: Participation in this study will is completely voluntary and anonymous. Your supervisor and or any other employee will not know if you participated in this study
6. Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Pablo R. Reyes, D.Ed. Candidate, MA at 814.450.1680 with questions or concerns about this study.
7. Payment for Participation: Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a thank you message acknowledging that you have completed the survey in addition to being entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of (4) \$50 Amazon gift cards.
8. Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affection your relationship with the investigators or IUP. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits or employment associated with your financial service institution. The information obtained in the study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will not be requested nor identified.

Directions:

1. Read each item carefully
2. Think about and select the answer that best represents the extent to which the statement best describes the behavior of your direct supervisor (e.g. the person you report to, your “boss”) and the service standards communications (communication guidelines) expected of you in the workplace.

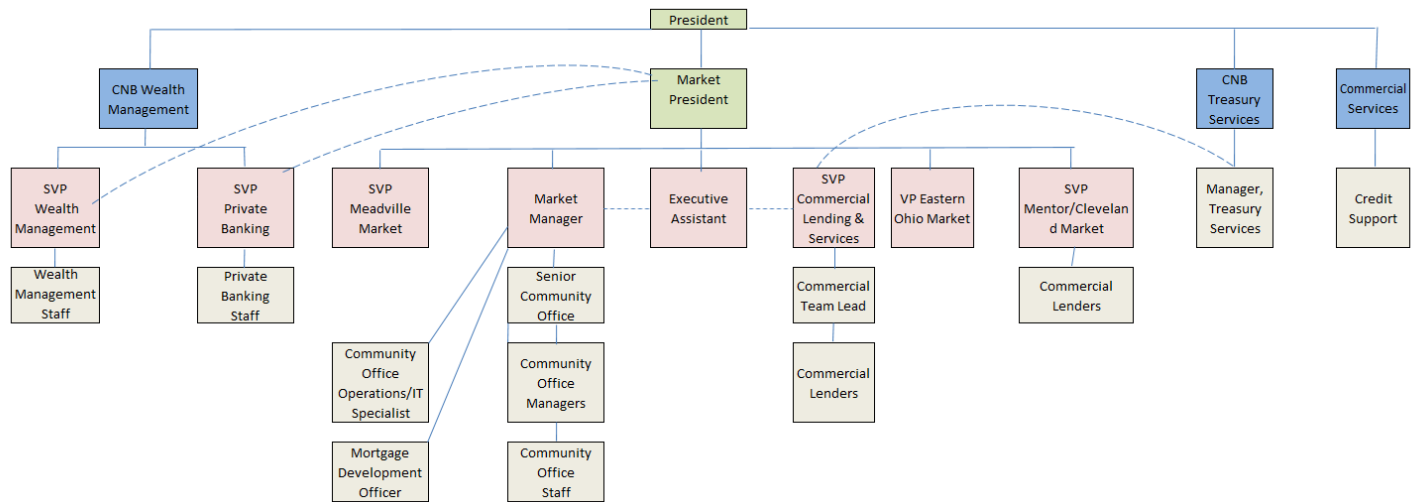
Appendix N

Non-Profit Organizational Chart



Appendix O

For-Profit Organizational Chart



Appendix P

Non-Profit Financial Service Standards Communication Guidelines

Service Standards	Definition
Acknowledge	All members should be acknowledged and greeted with a sincere smile upon entering. Acknowledge the member's presence by looking up and establishing eye contact. Visually show the member they are important.
Recognize	Refer to the member by name at least once during any conversation or transaction. Always use Mr. Mrs., or Miss unless the member has instructed otherwise
Focus	Your service goal is to focus 100% on the member. Each employee is expected to give undivided and individual attention to every member.
Courtesy	Excuse yourself if it is necessary to leave a member temporarily, whether on the phone or in person. Never leave a member alone or on hold for longer than one minute. If necessary, have the member take a seat or offer to phone them back while you investigate.
Phone Service	Call will be answered within three rings. Each call is to be answered and handled according to the basic telephone standards and script.
Member Needs	Determine members' needs by clarifying their requests, offering alternatives and always suggesting the appropriate Credit Union product or service. Mention any current promotions. Actively pursue the members' business.
Communication	Be sensitive when communicating with co-workers and members. Speak clearly and directly. Avoid using jargon, slang, and language that may be incorrect or unprofessional.
Respect	Show respect to others by always giving the member or co-worker the benefit of the doubt. Judge favorably first. Empathize. Don't blame.
Correspondence	Ensure external and internal written correspondence is professional, error free, and accurate before mailing. Respond to written correspondence within (3) days.
Proactive	Actively look for ways to continually improve service to members and co-workers at all times.
Confidential	Maintain confidentiality. Always keep communication discreet.

Appendix Q

For-Profit Financial Service Standards Communication Guidelines

Our Wow Promise!	
Our Vision	We are passionate about our customers, co-workers and community.
Our Wow Promise	We promise to do everything in our power to make your banking experience a Wow event.
Our Wow Service Standards	We are proud and honored to serve the people and businesses in each of our communities. We make a promise to you that we will meet and exceed the following standards when we serve you.
When you visit us, we will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly acknowledge you, make eye contact and greet you enthusiastically with a warm, friendly smile. • Call you by name or introduce ourselves to you on your first visit and give you our full attention. • Actively listen to determine your needs, explore alternatives for creative solutions and suggest the right product or service to meet your need and achieve your financial goals. • Keep you informed. Let you know when to expect a response from us or a resolution to a problem. • Direct and introduce you to the appropriate member of our team who is best available to serve you. • Keep your banking relationship and financial information in the strictest confidence. • Display professionalism in our appearance, behavior and speech. Keep a clean, uncluttered work area and will not engage in personal conversation with other team member in your presence. • Always offer to provide you with additional assistance • Always value our relationship with you and thank you for doing business with us.
When you call us, we will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer you call as soon as possible and by the third ring. • We will check back with you if we place you on hold. If additional time is needed, we will ask permission to call you back. • Avoid transferring your call more than once. If we need to transfer your call, we will tell you the name of the person and make certain that they are available to serve you. We will also share your need with them prior to transferring your call. • Return your call on the same day or as soon as possible. • Always thank you for calling.

Appendix R

Focus Group Interview Methodology and Protocol

The following outlines the proposed protocol for the focus groups (2) to be conducted with employees from each financial service institution (separately) following the initial survey distributed in this research study.

Meeting Objectives:

- Share the service standards communication guidelines established by each financial service institution
- Introduce each question listed below to participants and engage in additional discussion on their perceptions of a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards

Focus Group Participation:

- Participation in the focus group is completely voluntary by individuals who wished to further communicate additional feedback to this researcher regarding their perceptions of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor and its effect on service standards communication in the workplace. At the end of the initial survey, participants will be thanked for the voluntary participation and offered an opportunity to provide additional feedback through an interview process (see Appendix E).
- From the available population, the final selection of participants will be made based on the order of confirmation limiting each session to no more than twelve (12) participants

Meeting Agenda:

(Note: Meeting agenda will be proctored among a small group of non-research individuals in efforts to evaluate/modify communication process and time periods allotted to each question.)

Meeting Pre-Work: Informed Consent Agreement:

- Participants will be asked complete the informed consent see Appendix Q- Informed Consent Focus Group/Interview Form. The form will be sent via email to each participant individually prior to the focus group gathering with the researcher's contact information, along with brief description of objectives and the service standards communications present within their corresponding financial service institutions. Additional copies of the informed consent agreement will also be available on the day of the meeting.

Meeting Flow:

- Brief introduction will be provided by researcher of self, and objectives/agenda of the focus group.

Data Share: (5-10 minutes)

- Utilizing a PowerPoint and handouts, Robert K. Greenleaf's (1970) definition of servant leadership will be shared with the focus group, along with a copy of the service standards communication associated with participants' individual institutions of employment.

- A short question/answer session will be conducted to provide clarification to participants.

Discussion: (30-45 minutes)

- Through a semi-structured focus groups, participants will engage in a conversation based on their analysis of servant leadership and relationship with their immediate supervisors, in order to provide perspective on its effects on service standards communication in the workplace
- A few focus questions have been created to initiate and guide conversation.
- Order of questions may vary: the primary questions (1-3) and probing questions (a-c) illustrate the overall intent and flow for the conversation (see below). The researcher will also utilize a visual flip chart to record and assist in communications throughout the focus group.

Focus Group Questions:

4. How does your immediate supervisor communicate the values of service standards communication guidelines in the workplace?
 - a. How so?
 - b. Can you provide an example?
 - c. How? In what ways? With what behaviors/actions?
5. How does the service standards communication guidelines influence your commitment to the organization?
 - a. How so? Can you provide an example?
 - b. How are they interpreted similarly/differently?
 - c. Does it change/influence your performance?
6. How do the service standards communication guidelines provided to you assist you when attending to (customer/member) needs?
 - a. When? Are there times when they are more/less influential?
 - b. What about times when work flow is more/less demanding?

Conclusion (5 minutes):

- Researcher will conduct a quick summary of the major points of the discussion
- Express thank you for voluntary participation
- Offer follow-up for clarification
- Adjourn (on time)

Appendix S

Focus Group Interview: Informed Consent and Invitation to Participate



Indiana University of Pennsylvania

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Administration and Leadership Studies

Stouffer Hall, Room 136
1175 Maple Street
Indiana, PA 15705-1058

P 724-357-5593

F 724-357-4815

www.iup.edu/ALSDEd

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

My name is Pablo Reyes. I am a graduate student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, working with my faculty advisor, Dr. Piper to complete my doctorate in Leadership and Administration in the department of Education. You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. You are eligible to participate in this focus group because you are an employee affiliated with a financial service institution which has agreed to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate in this second phase of my research, you will be asked to participate in one 60-minute focus group discussion. A hard copy of this *Informed Consent Form* will also be provided to you for your records.

1. **Benefits of Participation in the Study:** The purpose of this study is to research and further the understanding of the effects of servant leadership and employee commitment to supervisor on service standards communication in the financial service industry, in order to share how effective servant leadership can benefit and improve employee communication, specifically when transmitting desired service standards from leadership to employee to members or customers.
2. **Risk of Participation:** Although precautions will be taken to avoid references to specific individuals/supervisors, **there is a chance anonymity could be compromised**. The session will be recorded to assist in facilitation and analysis of results. Any references to individuals or organizations will be removed from all session notes and transcripts. All information collected will be analyzed, then destroyed. Please refrain from revealing the identities or conversations of any participant to anyone outside the focus group. Only the principal researcher, Pablo Reyes, will have access to the study data. **Please note: If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by leaving the room. Upon leaving the focus**

group room, all information pertaining to your participation will be destroyed.
Following the completion of the focus group, you reserve the right to contact the researcher and have your information removed from the transcripts. Your responses will only be considered in combination with those from other participants.

3. **Procedures to be followed:** You will be asked to participate in a focus group with (3) open-ended questions, regarding your perception of leadership, commitment to your immediate supervisor and service standards communication are practiced in the workplace.
4. **Duration/Time:** 60 minutes (approximately)
5. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Pablo R. Reyes, D.Ed. Candidate, at 814.450.1680 with questions or concerns about this study.
6. **Payment for Participation:** No payment will be provided to participate in this focus group interviews.
7. **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this focus group study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators or IUP. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits or employment associated with your financial service institution. The information obtained in the study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will not be requested nor identified.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication: Focus Group

If you have any questions about this research please feel free to contact Principal Researcher, Pablo Reyes via email, ggwt@iup.edu and phone, 814.450.1680. If you have any questions about your rights or treatment as a research participant in this study, please contact the Indiana University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at irb-research@iup.edu. Thank you for considering to participate in this study!

Written Consent: If you wish to participate in this study, please sign and date below.

Participant's Name (*please print*)

Participant's Signature

Date

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (PHONE 724.357.7730).

Appendix T

Moderator/Participant Rules and Guidelines



Indiana University of Pennsylvania
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Administration and Leadership Studies

Stouffer Hall, Room 136
1175 Maple Street
Indiana, PA 15705-1058

P 724-357-5593

F 724-357-4815

www.iup.edu/ALSDEd

Moderator Rules and Guidelines:

1. Briefly introduce yourself; keep an eye on the clock
2. Communicate the objective of this focus group study: You will be asking questions seeking perspective on their perceptions of a) servant leadership, b) employee commitment to supervisor, and c) service standards
3. Share the timed agenda with the focus group (5-minute admin session, 5-minute education session, 45 minutes discussion, 5-minute conclusion)
4. Communicate to the group of your neutral role
5. Communicate to all participants the conversation is being recorded for transcribing purposes; post-transcription all recordings will be destroyed
6. Distribute service standards communication guidelines; collect informed consent agreements
7. Cover ground rules for focus group participants
8. Conclusion: Researcher will conduct a quick summary of the major points of the discussion
9. Express thank you for voluntary participation
10. Offer follow-up for clarification
11. Adjourn (on time)

Participant Rules and Guidelines:

1. Please speak one at a time and in the direction of a microphone
2. Please provide clear responses and avoid side conversation
3. Please note, 45 minutes will be dedicated to the group discussions; sessions will end on time
4. Please say what you believe, whether or not anyone else agrees with you, and allow for different points of view
5. Please work for equal “air time” so that no one talks too little or too much; I would like to hear from everyone
6. Please do not be offended if I have to stop you at any point; we have a lot to cover today in a short amount of time, so I need to make sure the conversation keeps moving forward
7. Finally, please remember there are no wrong answers

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (PHONE 724.357.7730).

Appendix U

Non-Profit Initial Focus Group Participation Emails

Greetings!

You are receiving this message because you have been randomly selected to partake in a focus group discussion seeking to obtain additional perspective on the *Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication*.

The first 12 individuals to respond to this email will receive an additional correspondence confirming your participation. Please note: participation in the focus group study is completely voluntary.

If chosen, please be sure to confirm your participation in the focus study with your supervisor (for staffing and scheduling purposes). Details of the focus group are below:

Organization: Non-profit Financial Service Institution

Room Location: Community Room; Food and beverages will be provided

Meeting Time (please be prompt): December 19, 2018; 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Thank you,

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (PHONE 724.357.7730).

Appendix V

For-Profit Initial Focus Group Participation Emails

Greetings!

You are receiving this message because you have been randomly selected to partake in a focus group discussion seeking to obtain additional perspective on the *Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication*.

The first 12 individuals to respond to this email will receive an additional correspondence confirming your participation. Please note: participation in the focus group study is completely voluntary.

If chosen, please be sure to confirm your participation in the focus study with your supervisor (for staffing and scheduling purposes). Details of the focus group are below:

Organization: For-profit Financial Service Institution

Room Location: Board Room, 2nd Floor

Meeting Time (please be prompt): December 18, 2018; 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Thank you,

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (PHONE 724.357.7730).

Appendix W

Non-Profit Final Focus Group Participation Emails

Congratulations!

You have been selected to participate in the focus group discussion seeking to obtain additional perspective on the *Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication*.

Prior to appearing at the focus group interview, please review, sign, and bring with you the enclosed *Informed Consent Agreement*. Also, please read the enclosed service standards communication guidelines associated with your organization. Details of the focus group are below:

Organization: Non-profit Financial Service Institution

Room Location: Community Room; Food and beverages will be provided

Meeting Time (please be prompt): December 19, 2018; 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Looking forward to speaking with you next week!

Thank you,

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

Appendix X

For-Profit Final Focus Group Participation Emails

Congratulations!

You have been selected to participate in the focus group discussion seeking to obtain additional perspective on the *Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication*.

Prior to appearing at the focus group interview, please review, sign, and bring with you the enclosed *Informed Consent Agreement*. Also, please read the enclosed service standards communication guidelines associated with your organization. Details of the focus group are below:

Organization: For-profit Financial Service Institution

Room Location: Board Room, 2nd Floor

Meeting Time (please be prompt): December 18, 2018; 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Thank you,

Pablo R. Reyes, Principal Investigator
Administration and Leadership, D.Ed. Candidate
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: ggwt@iup.edu
Phone: 814.450.1680

Dr. David Piper, Faculty Sponsor
Chairperson and Professor
Employment and Labor Relations
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Email: dpiper@iup.edu
Phone: 724.357.5593

Appendix Y

Research Topic Approval Form



Indiana University of Pennsylvania

www.iup.edu

Office of the Associate Dean for Research
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Sligh Hall, Room 113
210 South 10th Street
Indiana, PA 15705-1046

P 724-357-7730
F 724-357-2715
www.iup.edu/research

November 8, 2018

Pablo R. Reyes-Cruz
4410 West 28th Street
Erie, PA 16596

Dear Mr. Reyes-Cruz:

Now that your research project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, I have reviewed and approved your Research Topic Approval Form.

Based on the information you have provided on your RTAF, your anticipated graduation date is the earlier of May 2019 or your time-to-degree deadline. This means that you **must defend by no later than April 1, 2019** and all necessary documents are due by this date. A description of the required documents can be accessed at <http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=116439>. Your dissertation must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research by April 15, 2019 if you desire to graduate by your anticipated date. You must apply for graduation by May 1, 2019. For deadlines for subsequent graduation dates, please access <http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=16683>.

The Thesis/Dissertation Manual, additional resources, and information to help you start writing can be found at <https://www.iup.edu/graduatestudies/resources-for-current-students/research/thesis-dissertation-manual>.

Finally, if you change your topic, the scope or methodology of your project, or your committee, a new Research Topic Approval Form must be completed.

I wish you well and hope you find this experience to be rewarding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Creely', is written over a horizontal line.

Hillary E. Creely, J.D., Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Research

HEC/bb

xc: Dr. Lara Luetkehans, Dean
Dr. DeAnna Laverick, Graduate Coordinator
Dr. David Piper, Dissertation Committee Chairperson

Appendix Z

IRB Approval Letter



Indiana University of Pennsylvania

www.iup.edu

Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Stright Hall, Room 113
210 South Tenth Street
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1048

P 724-357-7730
F 724-357-2715
irb-research@iup.edu
www.iup.edu/irb

November 07, 2018

Dear Pablo Reyes-Cruz:

Your proposed research project, "A Mixed-Methods Study on the Effects of Servant Leadership and Employee Commitment to Supervisor on Service Standards Communication within the Financial Service Sector," (Log No 18-234) has been reviewed by the IRB and is approved as an expedited review for the period of November 07, 2018 to November 06, 2019. This approval does not supersede or obviate compliance with any other University requirements, including, but not limited to, enrollment, degree completion deadlines, topic approval, and conduct of university-affiliated activities.

You should read all of this letter, as it contains important information about conducting your study.

Now that your project has been approved by the IRB, there are elements of the Federal Regulations to which you must attend. IUP adheres to these regulations strictly:

1. You must conduct your study exactly as it was approved by the IRB.
2. Any additions or changes in procedures must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented.
3. You must notify the IRB promptly of any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects.
4. You must notify the IRB promptly of any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in items 2 or 3.

Should you need to continue your research beyond November 06, 2019 you will need to file additional information for continuing review. Please contact the IRB office at irb-research@iup.edu or 724-357-7730 for further information.

The IRB may review or audit your project at random or for cause. In accordance with IUP Policy and Federal Regulation (45CFR46.113), the Board may suspend or terminate your project if your project has not been conducted as approved or if other difficulties are detected.

Although your human subjects review process is complete, the School of Graduate Studies and Research requires submission and approval of a Research Topic Approval Form (RTAF) before you can begin your research. If you have not