THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION IN LEADERSHIP

by

Wendy Hicks

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Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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Liberty University, School of Business

May 2022
Abstract

This qualitative research study explored why there is a lack of communication in leadership within the financial services industry in federal agencies in the southeastern region of the United States. The general problem to be addressed is a lack of communication in leadership resulting in ineffective lower-level management. This case study finds solutions to what is causing the lack of communication and how ineffective management can improve. The research questions aid in exploring the existing gap in the existing problem and guide the investigation. The case study consisted of interviews from 12 participants employed in the financial services industry. Several themes were discovered during the research study. The interpretation of the themes indicated that to improve a lack of communication in leadership in the federal government, leadership should work on providing clear direction and more effectively communicate organizational processes to their followers. There were two recommendations found based on the results of the research study. The first recommendation is for the organization to provide a volunteer survey asking questions regarding a lack of communication in leadership to get both leaders’ and followers’ perspectives. The second recommendation is for the federal government to implement the above potential application strategies as a pilot in one or two federal agencies to determine the effectiveness of the strategy.

*Key words:* leadership, communication, leaders, followers, lack
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Approvals

_________________________________________  ____________________
Wendy Hicks, Doctoral Candidate              Date

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Dr. Kimberly Anthony, Dissertation Chair     Date

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Dr. Kimberly Johnson, Committee Member       Date

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Edward M. Moore Ph.D, Director of Doctoral Programs Date
Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my late parents, Council and Constance Webb, who died in October and November of 2020. They were loving parents who could not bear to live without each other. As I worked on my dissertation while I sat with them the last year of their lives, their actions showed me that they were proud of me. Losing my mother unexpectedly and then my father just five days later changed my outlook on life. I know that they are in a better place now and they are celebrating this accomplishment along with me. This work is dedicated to my parents with the assurance that they are smiling while looking down on me.
Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who supported me during my journey in earning my doctoral degree. I am grateful and appreciative in having my husband, Dwayne Hicks, by my side every step of the way. He spent many long nights up with me as I struggled through exhaustion during several research projects. He has given me the time, space, support, and love that I needed to push forward in completing this degree. I could not have done it without him. I would also like to thank my parents, Council and Constance Webb, who passed in 2020 for teaching me the value of hard work and what persistence is all about. I am also incredibly grateful to those family members who gave me the encouragement to hang in there to the end. Thank you, God, for watching over me and helping me get through some challenging times.

I am very appreciative of the role that my Dissertation Chairperson, Dr. Kimberly Anthony, played in guiding me through this doctoral program. The encouragement and the weekly inspirational guidance were a significant part of my journey. I would like to thank all the participants that contributed to my research study. The personal time they took to participate in the research study will never be forgotten. Thank you to my friends and co-workers that have always let me know that they were rooting for me to complete this doctoral degree.
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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore why there is a lack of communication in leadership within the financial services industry in federal agencies in the southeastern region of the United States. This study primarily focuses on level five leadership in federal agencies. According to Momeny (2019), leadership is a skill that many leaders wish to master in their lives and is known for providing a vision and inspiration toward changes for a future that cannot always be seen. Studies have shown that leadership is critical to improving employees’ perceptions of an organization’s service climate (Kia et al., 2019). Before this study, there was a lack of literature about leadership communication in the financial services industry in federal agencies.

In section one, the research study aims to advance the existing knowledge regarding leadership and communication. This research study will identify some of the negative effects of a lack of communication in leadership, as well as positive results (Cheetham et al., 2019). The research study begins with addressing the general problem, a discussion of the background of the problem, and the purpose statement. Section one also addresses the research questions, which reflect leaders as one of the driving forces in an organization (Naidoo et al., 2019). The nature of the study provided the researcher’s best choice of the research paradigm, research design, and research method. There is a brief discussion regarding the triangulation method as part of the nature of the study. The conceptual framework highlights and discuss the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs related to the findings in the research study. The conceptual framework diagram also shows a brief visual of the problem, outcomes, and relationships between the literature and the results from the findings. A definition of terms is provided, along with the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations to show the boundaries and limitations of the study.
The rationale for conducting the study is included to show the significance of the study, the reduction in the gaps in the literature, the implication for biblical integration, and the benefit to business practices. Section one concludes with a professional and academic literature outline and a summary of section one. Additionally, there will also be tables, figures, appendices, and references as supporting documentation of the study.

**Background of the Problem**

Over the last 30 years, communication has drastically changed causing leaders of organizations to change the ways they communicate (Rosen et al., 2019). According to Dunford (2020), employees in the eastern part of the United States spend 385 million working days addressing workplace conflicts concerning leadership communication. Research has found that 65 to 75% of employees relate their failures to lower-level management (Trojak et al., 2020). Organizations often face internal and external challenges due to a series of changes in processes, procedures, and functions that affect leaders and employees (Naidoo et al., 2019). According to Udin (2019), manager effectiveness is a matter of influence in leadership, which entails having good communication skills that can convey facts, data, instructions, and direction.

Cary (2020) suggested that organizations lack in leadership abilities that keep them from reaching greater levels of success. According to Momeny (2019), leaders in the organization provide vision and motivate individuals to develop and transform others toward change to support organizational development goals. Organizations cannot obtain positive results in leadership if they do not have a clear line of communication between leadership and the employees (Momeny et al., 2019). Federal agencies have explored how effective leadership is viewed and suggest that leaders must demonstrate the core concepts of negotiation, collaboration, managing change, and leading effectively (Patwardhan et al., 2019). To be an
effective leader, the individual should be more than a good communicator; they should also be able to effectively convey their message to meet the intended goal (Udin et al., 2019).

A notable study has identified problems with effective communication between leaders and the employees (Arendt et al., 2019). Another study found that federal government agencies have attempted to establish the relationship between leadership and employees to develop the gap in effective leadership to maximize performance management (Fu et al., 2019). Cary (2020) indicated that many organizations have a lack in leadership, and that transformation leadership has a greater chance of success in the organization. Udin (2019) found that due to a lack of organizational development, management does not take the time to interact with lower-level management causing a lack of communication between the employee and management. According to Adiguzel, (2019), current research has suggested that if an organization has effective leadership and communication, this could shape and have a positive effect on the future of the organization. (Adiguzel, 2019). According to Trojak (2020), successful leaders could add millions to the value of the organization.

**Problem Statement**

The general problem to be addressed is a lack of communication in leadership that results in ineffective lower-level management. Over the last few decades, there has been a growing concern that leaders who have a lack of communication with their employees are destructive (Aravena, 2019). Leadership has a direct impact on individual and team performance (Kindarto et al., 2020). According to Grant (2019), financial factors affect communication and performance in the financial services industry. A recent study of organizations in the financial services industry found that financial workers are likely to experience high levels of stress due to a lack of organizational support (Vogazianos et al., 2019). Federal agencies have identified that there is
a need for improved interpersonal compatibility between employees and leaders to improve a better work environment (Wang et al., 2019). The specific problem to be addressed is a potential lack of communication in level five leadership within the financial services industry in federal government agencies in the southeastern region of the United States, which resulted in ineffective lower-level managers.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to understand and evaluate the factors impacting the lack of communication in level five leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry. This case study aims to find solutions to what is causing the lack of communication and how ineffective management can improve. There is a need to investigate the impact of high performance in government organizations to support business goals (Hai et al., 2020). This case study research can add to the existing knowledge and influence the gap in the literature regarding leadership communication by providing results from interviews and expert opinions. Utilizing this case study method was appropriate to help determine the factors of how communication contributes to ineffective management and adversely affects the financial services industry. The information covered in this case study can provide additional factors concerning the lack of communication in leadership and may also explain why there is a larger impact on federal government agencies in the eastern region of the United States. This research will include and provide qualitative data that is interpretable, and that clearly defines the barriers that are identified in the analysis of interviews (Dir et al., 2021)

**Research Questions**

Research questions play a very important role for the researcher in guiding the study. The research questions in this study are associated with the general and specific problem of the lack
of communication in leadership. Korstjens (2017) pointed out that research questions lead to unexpected findings in qualitative studies and assist in understanding the specific problem. According to Ratan (2019), research questions aid in exploring the existing gap in the specific problem and guide the researcher in the right direction to investigate. This qualitative study will consist of three questions that will ask “how or why” and will reference the specific problem. Research questions help fill the gaps of the specific problem and will add value to the development of the study (Hargreaves et.al., 2020).

RQ 1: In what ways does leadership communication play an important role with employees in the organization?

RQ2: What does a lack of communication in leadership mean in an organization?

RQ2a. How does a lack of communication in leadership contribute to ineffective management in the organization?

RQ3: What are some of the reasons for a lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry?

These research questions examine the positive and negative effects of communication. The first research question examines how leadership’s communication plays an active role with employees in the financial services industry. Discovering how communication can directly affect leadership and the employee can be significant to this case study. The second question attempt to explain what a lack of communication in leadership means for the organization based on responses from case study participants and expert opinions. Research question 2a explain how a lack of communication can contribute to ineffective management of employees in terms of transformational leadership and growth. The third research question identify some of the reasons
why a lack of communication exists in the financial service industry. This research question also identifies organizations in the financial services industry that are currently having this problem.

**Nature of the Study**

There is a need to explore how leadership communication is articulated in organizations (Jivan, 2020). To address that need, a qualitative case study was selected to address the problem with the help of the nature of the study. The nature of the study describes the researcher’s choices for the research paradigms, the research design, and the research methods. The nature of the study consists of a discussion of the various paradigms. Those paradigms include positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, and pragmatism. The research design discussion describes a fixed, flexible, and mixed methods and will indicate why the chosen design is appropriate for the study. The nature of the study also includes a discussion of the research method selected. According to Pathiranage (2020), research methodologies and designs require a thorough understanding and are very important to address the study process.

**Discussion of Research Paradigms**

According to Haigh (2020), research paradigms allow the researcher to account for their views regarding the nature of the reality of the study, the expansion of existing ideas, and the reflection of the criteria used to make a judgment for the study. Kankam (2019) suggested that research paradigms have the objective of improving the credibility of the study and providing guidance for the researcher. According to Azadi (2017), there is no question that in qualitative research, the researcher is considered an important tool that can screen data through the choice of their respective paradigms. Research paradigms including positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, and pragmatism are all worldviews that a researcher can bring to their study.
Out of the four primary research paradigms mentioned in this study, Kankam (2019) indicated that positivism, post-positivism, and pragmatism are the three that are most widely used. According to Park (2020), positivism centers around recognizing explanatory affiliation connection through quantitative methodologies while post-positivism focuses on what happens after the interaction. Research on pragmatism complements the qualitative method and encourages the researcher to assess data collection and analysis objectively and their reflections subjectively (Igwe et al., 2020).

The research paradigm for this research study is constructivism. According to Yalcin (2019), the constructivism approach can exceed the restrictions of the existing theoretical approaches. Constructivism has been known for interacting with the world, which includes using the surrounding environment to create a view of reality (ChongWoo et al., 2020). This paradigm was chosen because of the potential observation and interactive processes with leadership. Constructivism has the potential to work well with this study because the exploration of the thinking process of decision-making reflects real-life problem-solving practices. Constructivism encourages collaboration and allows the use of existing ideas to address problems.

**Discussion of Design**

The research design is very important in a research study because of the role played in the study process (Pathiranage et al., 2020). The research design is the blueprint for the research, the logical plan for getting from here to there, and the logical sequence that ties the actual data to the research questions and conclusion (Yin, 2018). The research designs that can be used in a research study are fixed, flexible, and mixed methods.
The fixed design is theory-driven and is most often used with the quantitative method (Zyphur et al., 2020). Quantitative research can be defined as observations that are translated into numerical quantities that are related to various forms of statistical analysis (Edwards, 2020). According to Zyphur et al., (2020), researchers have found that quantitative research practices have been about the invention of statistics and probability since the 1600s. Research has shown that management and organizational research rely on quantitative research (Edwards, 2020). Researchers feel that they can find more purposeful ways to research through quantitative fixed designs (Zyphur et al., 2020). The fixed design method involves statistical and numerical techniques for presentations and will not provide the opportunity to explore the mechanisms of the lack of communication in leadership like the qualitative method would (Nooraie et al., 2020).

According to Acikgul (2020), the mixed-method research design consists of elements that were explored and includes a combination of qualitative and quantitative research studies. Additionally, Jeffries (2019) supports that the mixed method design should combine quantitative and qualitative approaches simultaneously or sequentially and should be equally proportioned throughout the study. Mixed method research is sometimes more difficult to execute than single-method studies and may depend on a survey or other quantitative techniques for investigations (Creswell et al., 2018).

The flexible design is often used with the qualitative method because of the flexibility in collecting data and having the ability to adjust the research at any time during the research period (Vitee et al., 2020). The flexible design is known for collecting data in natural settings that are sensitive to people and places (Creswell et al., 2018). The flexible design does not test hypotheses like the quantitative fixed design because of the flexibility and subjectivity of the design (Haven et al., 2019). This research design allows flexible processes that are supported by
methods and techniques that guide the study (Louw et al., 2018). The qualitative methodology was appropriate for this study because of the nature of studying leadership in an organization.

The study was conducted with a flexible design using qualitative methods. A multiple case study design was used. A flexible design was appropriate for this study because the researcher can expand on the problem statement using multiple data collections while exploring opportunities and strategies to improve organizational performance (Low et al., 2018). This research design was appropriate because the study was conducted using multiple data collection methods, such as interviews, observations, expert opinions, and secondary research, which will include feedback from the data collected from participants. A flexible design allows the study to be observed from both the individual and organizational levels and will also be ideal for this study because data will be collected in natural settings, such as organizations, and sensitive people may be associated with the leadership and their employees (Creswell et al., 2018).

A fixed design would not be a good choice for this study because of the frequent use of quantitative tools for research. The fixed design also tests hypotheses, which is not possible for the qualitative study, and uses numerical research or statistics and probability, which is also not a characteristic of the qualitative study; therefore, a fixed design would not be appropriate for this study (Zyphur et al., 2020). A mixed-method approach would also not be suited for this study since there will not be a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods used, along with surveys or quantitative tools used for collecting data (Acikgul et al., 2020).

**Discussion of Method**

Research methodology plays a very important role in a study because of the description used and how the research is carried out based on various factors, such as the research process, research questions, and the resources that are available (Pathiranage et al., 2020). The qualitative
approach was chosen because of the assumptions and use of theoretical frameworks that address areas in the study, such as social or human research problems of individuals or groups (Creswell et al., 2018). There are five approaches under the flexible design that are available for use with a qualitative methodology (Creswell et al., 2018). These approaches include narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, and ethnography (Creswell et al., 2018).

Several research methods fall under the flexible design. Narrative research is one of them. According to Creswell (2018), narrative research is a phenomenon being studied and is typically concerned with collecting individual experiences lived and told stories so they can be analyzed using various strategies. The narrative is considered the advocacy approach that pays special attention to what is said and written, recognizes thematic analysis, and is especially concerned about content (Ghodrati et al., 2019). Narrative research differs from other methodologies in that the research sample is small so that researchers can spend time with participants to glean multiple types of information (Creswell et al., 2018).

Phenomenology is another method that is commonly used in a qualitative study. According to Celik (2020), by using the phenomenological method, researchers seek to gather information carefully and examine their participant’s behaviors and actions to get to know their perceptions and lives. Macdiarmid (2020) suggested that phenomenology, the study of lived experiences, aims to describe the phenomenon under study. Creswell (2018) noted that the phenomenological approach is too structured for qualitative researchers and requires some knowledge of the broader philosophical assumptions to be documented in the study. The phenomenological approach tends to focus on the study of individuals and provides a holistic understanding of lived experiences, which allows for interpretation of individuals (Peoples et al., 2019).
Grounded theory is a systematic method that has been welcomed by several disciplines (Razali et al., 2020). The grounded theory is another research method under the flexible design that has distinctive characteristics apart from narrative, phenomenology, and ethnography methods. According to Creswell (2018), narrative research features stories told by participants, while phenomenology concentrates on common experiences of individuals. Grounded theory’s focus is to generate or develop a theory of a process or an action that include steps or phases the occur over time (Creswell et al., 2018). Researchers use the grounded theory to analyze human behavior and experience (Razali et al., 2020). Grounded theory can be used when a researcher is trying to understand the individual’s experience in the process while theory-building appears through the simultaneous repetitious data collection and structuring the various analysis procedures (Creswell et al., 2018). This approach would be ideal for individuals that seek to increase their knowledge of the grounded theory approach and who are looking for guidance through the research process (Creswell et al., 2018).

The ethnography method differs from the other four research methods under the flexible design. According to Creswell (2018), the purpose of ethnography is to focus on and examine the larger culture-sharing groups that have been interacting for a long period to experience social behaviors that can be used for a research study. One of the challenges with ethnography is the requirement of being in the field for long periods to ensure that there is thorough observational and interview evidence (Yin, 2018). Researchers have found that many studies reflect how this method has been used related to the social relations that govern organization at the frontline of businesses (Talbot, 2020).

The research method that was used for this study was the case study method. According to Yin (2018), the case study method is used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in detail
using real-life experience. The processes that are involved in case studies are very important to qualitative researchers (Azadi et al., 2017). Researchers have found that qualitative case study research methods have exceeded expectations by helping individuals to understand the context, the expansion of research questions, and the results from descriptive data collection (Kegler et al., 2019).

The case study method was the most appropriate choice because the case study allows the researcher to thoroughly explain the data collected, acquire feedback during the research period, and use a method frequently associated with the qualitative design (Vitee et al., 2020). This case study method will also allow for the exploration of real-life through detailed data collection and descriptive data along with other multiple sources of information (Alpi et al., 2019). Additionally, material that is descriptive and explanatory is better suited for qualitative case studies. The case study method will utilize several empirical materials, such as case studies, interviews, and individual experiences to get a better understanding of the research study (Johnson et al., 2020). The case study method was the best choice to collect and analyze present data to help bring the case study to closure (Yin, 2018).

The research methods that were not suited for this qualitative research study were narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, and ethnography. According to Creswell (2018), narrative research focuses on detailed stories of individuals, phenomenology is more suited for a study surrounding common or shared experiences of individuals, and grounded theory is appropriate when a theory is not available to understand the process. The ethnography method is appropriate when conducting investigations on larger cultural groups (Creswell et al., 2018). None of the four research methods described were characteristics that could be used in this
research study.

**Discussion of Triangulation**

Researchers have found that the triangulation method is a good way to establish the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the qualitative data collected (Snowdon et al., 2020). According to Farquhar (2020), triangulation is recommended for qualitative case study research and is known for offering validity through discoveries, sources, or methods. Triangulation relies upon the examination of results from qualitative studies to answer the research questions so that there are several potential results, including convergence, and complementarity (Morgan, 2019). The triangulation type used for this case study research is methodological. This method was chosen to improve the validity and credibility of the study. The triangulation method will include multiple methods of data collection, interviews, observations, and questionnaires. If using the triangulation method is successful, results may produce new ways of looking at problems and discover additional creditable findings.

**Summary of the Nature of the Study.**

The nature of the study provided an understanding of how leadership communication is articulated in organizations (Jivin, 2020). The nature of the study also provided a discussion of potential research paradigms, designs, and methods. The constructivism paradigm was chosen because of the exploration of the thinking process and the use of existing ideas to address the problem. The discussion of the research designs showed that the fixed and mixed-method designs were not good choices for this study due to the fixed design being associated with quantitative methods and the mixed design showing elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The flexible design was the best choice for the study because of the flexibility of multiple data collections and the frequent use of the qualitative method (Vitee et al., 2020). The
A qualitative case study was appropriate for this study because of the thorough explanations of the descriptive data collected and the processes involved in case studies. The triangulation type that was the best approach for the case study was methodological. Researchers have found that this method improves the validity and credibility of the study to produce discoveries and creditable findings (Farquhar et al., 2020).

**Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework in a qualitative study is used to connect the major features of the study by combining the concepts of the available research with the data collected in the study (Salehi et al., 2019). The conceptual framework was used to illustrate patterns, connections, interactions of factors, and suggested avenues for research (Payne et al., 2020). Figure 1 shows the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs. The framework described the significant elements related to the problem (Caner et al., 2020). The lack of communication in leadership leads to many issues within an organization. This research study concentrates on the effects of the lack of communication in leadership within the financial services industry in federal government agencies in the southeastern region of the United States. The conceptual framework was used to describe the elements of the study. Those elements include conflict, job performance, transformational theory, behavioral theory, level five executive leaders, lower-level management, transformational leadership, and communication. The researcher discussed transformational leadership. Northouse (2019) indicated that the leader should always be aware of the follower’s behavior so that they can identify the needs of the follower. Communication is another element that was explored. The researcher focused on the leader’s communication and other developmental skills, such as job performance in the workplace (Hopkinson et al., 2019) and how transformational leadership and communication directly affect level five executive
leaders and lower-level management, and how both can affect conflict and job performance. The conceptual framework explains how human behavior is associated with transformational theory and the relationship between the cognitive process and behavioral theory. The framework described how both theories have a direct impact on level five executive leaders and lower-level management. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs.

*Figure 1. Relationships Between Leadership and Concepts*

![Conceptual Framework Elements](image)

*Note.* This conceptual framework shows how transformational theory and behavioral theory are related to level five executive leaders and lower-level management. This structure shows how leadership is influenced by transformational leadership and communication, as well as how leadership may affect conflict and job performance.
**Concepts**

Brown (2021) claimed that researchers have found that there are various conflicts in the workplace that affect individuals or teams. Ivanov (2019) indicated that conflict can be defined as a form of manifestation of contradictions and eternal human and public phenomenon based on the interaction of at least two or more parties caused by a difference of opinion. Part of a business organization’s success relies on its ability to control conflict (Ivanov, 2019). Research has shown that poor communication can lead to relationship conflict when ineffectively addressed and interpreted as a personal attack (Brown et al., 2021). Many organizations are facing issues of bad attitudes, absenteeism, and employee stress due to conflicts within the organization’s leadership, which impact the organization both directly and indirectly (Suparman et al., 2020). According to Tommy (2019), conflict related to communication can sometimes engage people in conflict negotiations, which could stem from ineffective management. The goal of researching this concept was to show how leadership conflicts lead to ineffective management. Suparman et al. (2020) suggested that there is a connection between conflict and leadership that has a direct impact on employee morale.

Fogaca (2018) defined job performance as the behaviors that employees engage in and how well an individual performs in the workplace. According to Liu (2020), job performance is influenced by communication-based on the negative impact of task complexity and cognition. Adeniji (2020) further stated that research has shown that leadership plays an important role in enhancing employee job performance within an organization. Zhang (2020) highlighted how communication affects job performance and how both are essential to achieving organizational performance. Adeniji indicated that job performance is influenced by a manager’s ability to communicate the organization’s goals and objectives to employees. Researchers have found that
job performance is still a central concept in the field of psychology and that there is still no comprehensive theory (Fogaca et al., 2018).

Theories

Transformational leadership theory can be defined as an overall perspective of individual concerns that require a leader to know about their conduct and identify with the needs of their followers and the changing elements inside their organization (Northouse, 2019). Transformational leadership theory represents the foundation of leadership research. Seitz (2021) suggested that transformational theory is about followers being uniformly transformable and the personal theories of the relationship between transformational leadership and the followers’ engagement and performance. According to Northouse (2019), transformational leadership theory focuses on how a leader should be aware of their followers’ behavior and how this behavior relates to the needs of the employees. Momeny (2019) emphasized that transformational leadership was known to be a trait-based approach to leadership and not something that could be taught or learned.

American psychologist John Watson is best known for his work with behavioral theory. According to de Freitas (2019), Watson preferred to study observable behavior because he believed that most things were connected to conscious experience and individual behaviors. Pekdemir (2019) stated that behavioral theory is one of the theories that was developed to help understand human behavior. According to de Graaf (2019), behavioral theory explores the cognitive processes and investigates what individuals do daily. Examples of cognitive processes include thinking, communicating, and problem-solving. This study provided explanations of why there is a lack of interest in the financial services industry and how the disinterest affects
leadership’s ability to communicate in an organization. The key factors surrounding some of the issues may be determined by behavioral theories.

According to de Graaf (2019), behavioral theory has played an important role in business management for many decades. Recent studies have shown that finance professionals and managers in the banking and finance industry have been criticized for their lack of concern for daily decision-making approaches and societal interests (de Graaf, 2019). Gupta (2020) asserted that behavioral theory explores the behaviors of organizations’ relationships, specifically between leadership and their employees. Bettinazzi (2020) claimed that the logic behind behavioral theory is for organizations to recognize when their leader’s performance levels are not meeting expectations and to rectify the problem of unsatisfactory performance levels by making powerful strategic decisions. Behavioral theory has helped researchers understand human behavior and shed some light on why there is a lack of communication in leadership. Exploring the behaviors of leaders using behavioral theory is of major importance and an asset to the research study.

**Actors**

Level five executive leaders play an important role in an organization by shaping the organization’s ability to utilize existing capabilities (Tushman, 2017). Kumar (2020) suggested that leadership is a life-long journey that requires assistance along the way to meet the intended goal of an organization. Figure 1 illustrates a visual of the role level five executive leaders play in an organization. Kumar added that teamwork, communication, prioritization, listening skills, negotiation, networking skills, commitment, and courage are all necessary to become a good leader (Kumar, 2020). According to Caldwell (2017), level five leaders exhibit many of those qualities and the leaders that do not should seek to understand the importance of humility in
building trust. According to Strobl (2019), level five executive leadership is an approach that can shed some light on understanding how leadership fosters innovative behavior.

Many organizations have their hierarchical levels structured in a pyramid fashion that ranges from upper-level to middle-level to lower-level management. Lower-level managers have the most interaction with workers that are responsible for day-to-day operations. Leaders have an instrumental role in making sure that the organization has a positive workplace environment (Usadol et al., 2019). According to Siket Ujvarine (2020), management’s communication has an impact on the employee and is key to solving the problem of a lack of communication in leadership. Research has shown that when lower-level management is supportive, communication is key to showing empathy to their subordinates (Usadol et al., 2019).

**Constructs**

Northouse (2019) defined transformational leadership as leaders having the ability to engage with others, being attentive to the needs and motives of followers, and helping followers reach their highest potential. Jacobsen (2021) suggested that managers could do a better job at leading in communication and claimed that transformational leadership is linked to internal communication. The goal of transformational leadership is to foster employees’ perceptions of knowledge sharing and to assess the interactive impacts of group-level conceptualizations of transformational leadership (Coun et al., 2019). Transformational leaders inspire and motivates their followers to innovate and change to pursue a collective goal (O’Reilly et al., 2020). Transformational leadership addresses team effectiveness its impact on team interaction processes to improve organizational development (Khan et al., 2020). A research study showed that transformational leadership encourages joint decision-making among employees in an organization and can be associated with high levels of team learning (Chiu et al., 2021). Potential
positive results using transformational leadership are psychological gains for both the leader and follower, the development of more effective leaders with better work outcomes, and performance that goes above what is expected (Northouse, 2019).

Communication is included in this study to explain the importance between a leader and their followers. This research study explains the significance of communication within an organization. Figure 1 illustrates how leadership is influenced by communication. Communication has a very important role in the workplace and consists of several primary methods, such as meetings, emails, phone calls, and text messages (Mohd et al., 2020). The study provided several ways that a lack of communication in leadership can lead to ineffective management and employee conflict. Over the past century, researchers have found that communication brings both positive and negative effects to the workplace and has a direct impact on employee performance (Kelly et al., 2019). According to Ismail (2019), ineffective communication and poor interactions with followers often lead to conflict, problems, frustrations, and failure for both the leader and their followers. Kelly (2019) suggested that communication in leadership does not solely focus on the leader but is a relational communication process between the leader and the follower.

**Relationships Between Concepts, Theories, Actors, and Constructs**

The following section features the relationships and the interactions between the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs of the research framework. Conflict in an organization between leadership and their followers can affect job performance, which is essential to organizational functioning (Mackey et al., 2019). According to Liu (2020), leaders’ communication skills can have a positive and negative impact on their leader’s ability to manage effectively, which may lead to conflict. Transformational leadership has been shown to have a
positive effect on job performance as leaders inspire and motivate their employees (Kammerhoff et al., 2019). Watson’s (1913) behavioral theory supports the observation of the human behavior of individuals, while transformational leadership theory advocates for how leaders focus on identifying their followers’ needs. Both theories build on the relationships between leaders and followers that stem from Watson’s theory of human behavior and transformational theory’s objective of inspiration and motivation. See Figure 1 for the elements and flow of action for the framework.

**Summary of the Research Framework.**

The conceptual framework was used to illustrate the connection between each element. Qualitative researchers often use the conceptual framework to provide key principles to enhance a research study (Moyer et al., 2021). In addition to the key principles, the conceptual framework is a clever way to provide a logical structure and show a visual of ideas related to the study (Gregory, 2020). Transformational theory and behavioral theory share a connection to the problem and demonstrate a need for the research study. Figure 1 provides a brief visual of the relationship between the elements.

The framework in this qualitative research study considered two concepts: conflict and job performance. The conceptual framework explained how a lack of communication in leadership is important to an organization and can lead to conflict and decreased job performance within the organization. The conceptual framework also showed how lower-level management and level five executive leaders are a very important part of the organization and how their close interactions and experience with their followers affected the leaders the most. The conceptual framework was useful in showing the connection between transformational leadership, level five executive leaders, and management. These actors share a close relationship with the concepts.
According to Moore (2019), leaders play an essential role in helping their followers make sense of organizational processes and are instrumental in framing their follower’s environments. Federal government agencies in the financial services industry can benefit from the results of the various studies to enhance leadership abilities. The conceptual framework may provide an addition to the current research on improving leadership excellence (Mea et al., 2019).

**Definition of Terms**

Behavioral Leadership Theory- This is a theory that explores the human behaviors of an organization’s relationships, specifically leaders and employees (Gupta, 2020).

Conflict- This is a concept in the study that describes conflict as being a negative interaction of two or more parties that have a difference of opinion (Ivanov, 2019).

Ineffective Management- Management has the inability to manage their employees due to leadership conflicts or other confrontational issues (Ortiz-Gómez et al., 2020).

Job Performance- This is a concept in the study that was used to define how job performance is a behavior that employees engage in and how well they perform in the workplace (Fogaca et al., 2018).

Lack of Communication- This is when leaders cannot communicate between management and personnel and are unable to set common goals and understanding through communication (Banaeianjahromi et al., 2019).

Leadership- This can be considered a process where a person influences another group of people to meet a common goal (Northouse, 2019).

Transformational Leadership Theory- This is when a leader uses their leadership behaviors to motivate and adopt civic behaviors of their subordinates to build commitment to the organizational goals (Khan et al., 2020).
Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

The research study summarized the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. Assumptions in a research study are considered statements that are true and include underlying theories, causal relationships, and data collection analysis (Theofanidis et al., 2018). Limitations may include barriers or restraints that are out of the researcher’s control (Sytsma et al., 2019). According to Theofanidis (2018), delimitations openly expose shortcomings to improve the quality of the research. There will be a detailed discussion of the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the research study.

Assumptions

Parker (2020) suggested that assumptions are used for investigative starting parts and triggers for collaboration. According to Ellison (2019), researchers have a choice of whether to bring a similar or different set of assumptions to the research design. Kouzes (2017) stated that all must be engaged to make the study work. A qualitative research design was used to examine the communication process between leadership and employees. The assumptions that are known to be true are highlighted throughout this research study. According to Ceci (2020), there is a need for clarifying and challenging assumptions to generate innovative approaches to research questions.

This qualitative study was based on assumptions that described and explored the interactions between leaders and employees (Nazareth et al., 2021). For example, there is an assumption that leaders sometimes have a negative effect on their employees. According to Xin (2019), scholars found that the behaviors of leaders can weaken the performance of their followers. Wen-Cheng (2019) supported Nazareth and Xin by confirming that the effects of leaders can negatively affect their employees but also argued that there can be a positive effect
depending on the situation. There is another assumption that participants involved in the interview and observation process will understand the reason for the study and their contribution to the research questions. According to Ellison (2019), to accomplish a smooth process during an interview, the researcher has a responsibility to clarify the role of the participant in the research study. To help the participant become more familiar with the research study, the researcher should provide specific questions to the participant to give them the opportunity to interpret the information before the interview (Edwards et al., 2020). There is a chance that some participants may not be able to provide detailed data that can be used in the study. A failure to provide important aspects or individual experiences for the research study can induce uncertainty and negatively affect the study overall (Teofanidis et al., 2018). Furthermore, not allowing enough time and effort to collect data from the participant, on the reasonable assumption that all selected participants will be useful resources, can lead to uncertainty (Williams et al., 2018).

**Limitations**

Even though the research study is specific to the perceptions of leaders’ behaviors in organizations, there are still limitations. According to Bencke (2020), a qualitative approach may be used to expand on an exploratory research design where a case study method was used. There was an attempt to discover the research limitations as the study continues. The objective of this study is to highlight the contributions, limitations, and gaps in existing literature, while providing insights for studies in the future (Reis Guimaraes et al., 2020). This study focuses on communication between a specific level of leadership and the employee in the financial services industry but may extend to other levels of leadership as well (Lasrado et al., 2021).

The research study was limited to individuals who work within federal service agencies. Special attention is placed on level five executive leaders and lower-level managers that work in
organizations in the southeastern region of the United States. There is a potential source of bias in this study. Those leaders that recognize there is a lack of communication in leadership are more likely to correct the problem than those leaders that refuse to acknowledge the problem. (Omilion-Hodges et al., 2018) conducted a study using the interview method to examine the effects of leader, peer, and communication. The study found that communication influenced employee behaviors and stressed to leaders the importance of organizational trust and support (Omilion-Hodges et al., 2018). Thus, those leaders that may not acknowledge the problem risk the potential impact of hindrances in the relationship between the leader and employee (Braun et al., 2019). Furthermore, continued observations and interviews are conducted in this study to minimize limitations and to add to existing research.

**Delimitations**

The research study consists of delimitations associated with the responses to the research questions. According to Babchuk (2019), the researcher outlines contributions to the literature by providing delimitations of the research study. One part of the study should show insight into the nature of the delimitations (Martin et al., 2020). The scope of the qualitative study may be limited to the observations and interviews of the leaders’ understanding of the communication problem with leadership. The study is delimited to leaders that were having communication conflicts with employees. The study does not include all leadership levels but includes level five executive leaders and lower-level managers. The scope of the research is achievable using the transformational and behavioral theories.

**Significance of the Study**

According to Naidoo (2019), leaders are the driving force of an organization and have an important role in cultivating and innovating behaviors. Johari (2021) stated that the lack of
communication in organizations creates a challenging relationship between different levels of the organization and has an impact on productivity. Research has shown that leaders in federal agencies are having problems with communication in the workplace (Liu et al., 2020). The significance of the study will explain why this research is needed and what contribution the study will bring to the field of leadership in the financial services industry. The significance of the study will provide explanations for the reduction of gaps in the literature, implications for biblical integration, benefits to business practices, and the relationship between the study and leadership.

**Reduction of Gaps in the Literature**

Zaar (2020) believed that leadership development is a very important objective and is the key to the next generation of leaders. Research has shown that in today’s business world, there is a need to understand the role of the leader (Krauter, 2020). This research study attempts to improve the fields of leadership and communication by exploring the observations of leadership practices. Additionally, the understanding of transformational and behavioral leadership through the perception of the leaders’ behaviors in organizations can add to the existing literature.

According to Rosch (2020), there is a critical need to understand the processes of leadership development. Researching the issues surrounding the lack of communication within organizations confirmed there are internal issues in leadership (Lee et al., 2019). The study can improve the understanding of leadership practices and perceptions to sustain development over time (Dematthews, 2021). This research study attempts to reduce the gap in leadership communication in federal services agencies in the financial services industry.

According to Valantine (2020), research has shown that leadership sets the tone of what is going to get accomplished and how it will get accomplished. Gfrerer (2021) stated the
perception is that leadership will always be ready to embrace change, actively empower and involve their employees, and are fully aware that the leader and employee motivational levels are different. NG (2018) indicated that there is insufficient research on organization effectiveness in financial services and a research study will help fill the gap. This study examines the perceptions and experiences of leadership to get a better understanding of how to support organizational efforts (Williams-Roberts et al., 2018). This study allows the observation of leaders’ behaviors using the transformational and behavioral leadership theories. The study provides important insights that organizations can use to reduce the gap in leadership communication and practices.

**Implications for Biblical Integration**

This research study shows the connection between biblical principles and the concepts and or theories of the study. According to Hah (2019), the biblical perspective is to show a stepwise and gradual progression of a certain goal. When thinking about the responsibility that leaders have in an organization, specifically leadership communication, the Bible lays the foundation for the biblical principles. While religious belief can be a powerful influence on the behavior of individuals, groups, and society, companies can use such ethical aspects to influence the behavior of their employees in developing more effective sustainability plans (Helfaya et al., 2018).

The Bible holds biblical principles of conflict and job performance. The book of Colossians best emphasizes how God wants people to handle conflict. The scripture indicates, to “Let your conversation be gracious and attractive and you will have the right response for everyone” (New Living Translation, 2004, Colossians 4:6). This could be the answer to handling conflict. According to Schramm (2020), when individuals attain high positions, they are more likely to be peacemakers. God would like people to strive for peace and look after everyone so
that no one fails to receive the grace of God (New Living Translation, 2004, Hebrews 12:14-15). God prefers one to avoid conflict by using clear communication, and one will reap the benefits through job performance. God wants people to work willingly at what-ever they do to receive you receive an inheritance as their reward (New Living Translation, 2004, Colossians 4:23-24).

Transformational leadership theory implies that people are changed and transformed, while behavioral theory focuses on the behavior of the leader (Northouse, 2019). One focuses on the employees in an organization, while the other focuses on leadership. The transformational leadership theory can be related to God investing in his people. God said, as I teach you, “teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others” (New Living Translation, 2004, 2 Timothy 2:2). Behavioral leadership explains more of the variance of leadership effectiveness.

Benefit to Business Practice and Relationship to Cognate

This study can influence business practices by helping organizations to understand the relationship between the leader and employee (Pranee et al., 2020). Research has shown that organizations with strong leadership business practices have the potential to do well financially (Garland et al., 2021). Pranee et al.’s (2020) work demonstrated that the quality of leader and employee communication has a significant impact on whether the employee remains within the organization. According to Gonzalez (2019), a good leader must be very flexible to respond to various business practices. Additionally, Bourke et al. (2020) conducted a study that found that an organized approach to a leader’s behaviors contributed to the health of the organization. This study attempts to provide explanations of how effective communication can result in effective management and ultimately lead to good business practices.
Over the last few decades, the nature of communication in leadership has changed, which has affected leaders’ ability to manage (Rosen et al., 2019). Leaders must be able to recognize and address the behaviors of others, as well as their values and beliefs through the lens of their own experiences to achieve effective leadership (Clohisy et al., 2017). This research study explores the effects of transformational and behavioral leadership theories. This research study also associates the concepts of conflict and job performance with leaders in the organization. Conflict impact leadership’s ability to manage, which affects the job performance of employees. This research study sought to determine why there was a lack of communication in leadership, specifically in federal services agencies, and found that there was a need for interpersonal compatibility in federal services agencies (Wang et al., 2019). Leadership plays a particularly important role in an organization not only because of the communication, but also of the supervision of various areas of business operations (Demircioglu et al., 2020). The results from the research study showed a benefit to future studies of leadership.

**Summary of the Significance of the Study.**

This research study aims to determine why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership within the financial services industry in the southeastern region of the United States. This study can make a significant contribution to the field of leadership and communication by finding solutions to the problem. There was an understanding among leaders that the lack of communication contributed to ineffective management. According to Marstand et al. (2018), understanding the importance of communication between leaders and their employees can improve management skills. This study can bring this to light by clarifying concepts and analyzing the data collected (Smith et al., 2020). This research study also contributes to the existing literature on leadership communication.
A Review of the Professional Academic Literature

Leadership is a term that is used in many organizations in the eastern part of the United States. Leadership is something that is sought after in organizations and gives vision and inspiration toward changes for the future that cannot be seen (Northouse, 2019). According to Blanchard (2016), leadership is an influence process where the leader is influencing an individual in a certain way to think, behave or develop in their professional life. Research has shown that the discussion on leadership can be complex at times because there are so many definitions of leadership by various scholars (Northouse, 2019).

Literature reviews allow researchers to identify recent developments in research (King et al., 2020). For this study, the literature review is based on a flexible design research study that includes various elements. The literature review explains, explore, and describe various aspects of a lack of communication in leadership. The literature review provides an extensive analysis of leadership in which research is conducted by experts regarding the importance of effective leadership (Gudanowska et al., 2020). The literature review consists of the business practices related to the research study. Other elements that are included in the literature review include the problem, concepts, theories, constructs, related studies, and anticipated and discovered themes. The concepts section explores conflicts and job performance, while the theories section highlights transformational leadership and behavioral theories. A detailed discussion is provided on the constructs of transformational leaders and communication. The literature review discusses four anticipated themes, which include the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective management in the organization, a lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry, and leadership in federal agencies. The literature review also provides three discovered themes, which include a discussion of employee stress, interpersonal compatibility,
and transactional leadership. The purpose of the literature review is to compare viewpoints from various scholars that support the research study. The literature review identifies relevant literature and add new knowledge to the research study (Cowhitt et al., 2020).

**Business Practices**

According to Adiguzel (2019), many organizations implement business practices to motivate employees to perform well on the job. Research has found that the individual values of the employees were different from the organization’s values (Glaserova, 2019). Daft (2016) stated that organizations need to get used to the difficulties of today’s workforce diversity, develop concerns over ethics and sustainability, as well as discover several ways to encourage employees to work together to accomplish organizational goals. According to Tian-Syung (2019), many of those goals should be accomplished by the leaders within the organization because they are supposed to be responsible for motivating and influencing their followers to achieve organizational goals. Ewing et al. (2019) affirmed that organizations are focusing on reshaping internal communication to support business practices to encourage employee engagement within an organization. According to Daft, organizations can be defined as social entities that are goal-oriented, are planned as purposely organized and facilitated activity frameworks, and are linked to the external environment. Innovation is one of the most important business practices of organizations because of the progression of organizational development (Mao et al., 2019).

The effectiveness of business practices relies upon the strength of the communication between the leader and the followers, along with the organization’s conditions (Gun, 2021). Motherway (2021) stated that setting rules and regulations in an organization, as well as supervising the activities that occur, should be a requirement of the organization. Sumlin (2021)
believed that business practices are important to implement in organizations, including the policies, rules, and regulations of formal processes, training and development, ethical behavior of the leadership, and managers showing appreciation for employees. Caillier (2021) indicated that organizations are seen as social entities, meaning that employees place a great deal of effort into maintaining a positive relationship with management and their peers which encourages the organization to support their efforts. Research has shown that maintaining a business organization relies upon the ability to adjust to innovations and working conditions (Milic et al., 2020). There are several benefits to sticking to business practices, beginning with the opportunity to improve knowledge of the employee and strengthened communication (Milic et al., 2020). Research has shown that communication should be established as a core business value and is recommended for all levels of leadership (Delport, 2020).

According to Caliskan (2020), organizational culture plays a very important role in leadership approaches to employees. Scholars have studied the effects of organizational culture and leadership for many years (Alsaqqa et al., 2021). The leadership role is essential to organizations in many ways. According to Hoert (2018), leaders in an organization tend to be the face of the organization and play an important role in shaping the general culture of the organization, including the degree to which that culture stresses wellness. Leadership can be defined in many ways. Northouse (2019) defined leadership as a process whereby an individual impacts a group of people to accomplish a shared objective. Ruiz (2019) argued that there are many definitions of leadership that scholars have difficulties comparing studies because of the inconsistencies in research. The organization must have strong leadership to motivate the employees that work under them. Leaders have been widely studied over the years and play a significant role in an organization’s practices (Kim et al., 2021). Research has shown that there are positive examples
in which formal and informal leaders have motivated and encouraged others to take an ethical position concerning issues influencing their organizations (Solinger et al., 2020). One can see and experience that many leaders are instrumental in the business practices of an organization, although not necessarily in federal agencies in the eastern part of the U.S.

According to Acimovic (2021), the business practices of organizations have shown that organizational culture is directed to employees and is a significant determinant of improving the performance of an organization. Arz (2017) stated that organizational culture ranks among one of the highest relevant subjects and has attracted increased research interest in recent years. Culture can be defined as those standard beliefs and values relating to ethnic, religious, and social groups that are unchanged from generation to generation (Bedendo et al., 2020). Shoaib (2019) found that culture can be defined as the aggregate programming of the mind that separates the individuals of one group from individuals of another. According to Arz, culture implies that rituals, climate, values, and behaviors are connected to a coherent whole. Shoaib further agreed that culture assumes a significant part in the improvement of human thoughts and behavior and shapes the individual’s view of everything influencing their everyday lives by shaping their convictions, thoughts, and feelings. Gamble (2019) suggested that organizational culture is the internal work climate that is formed by the core values, beliefs, and business principles of the organization. Caliskan (2020) supported Gamble’s suggestion but added that organizational culture is a promotive environment that impacts one’s values, assumptions, and beliefs. Spector (2013) suggested that ambition level and motivation are other important factors of organizational culture, and Samai (2021) indicated that organizations that have a strong culture with engaged employees will eventually gain a competitive advantage. Research has shown that organizational
culture has a positive effect on both organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Yusuf, 2020).

One of the key issues that organizations are dealing with in the American economy today is the problem of employee engagement (Commons et al., 2018). Yuan (2021) described employee engagement as the harnessing of employees’ physical, psychological, and enthusiastic energies toward executing their position. Ewing (2019) defined employee engagement as individuals utilizing and communicating their thoughts both, intellectually and emotionally during their job. Yuan further (2021) highlighted that the leaders in an organization have the important job of reassuring and setting the tone for their employees. According to Tian (2020), employee engagement enables employees to do a better job of connecting with coworkers and leaders in innovation. Ewing suggested that employee engagement is associated with the values and mission of the organization with an emphasis on energy, enthusiasm, and hard work. Those employees that do not have the characteristics of an engaged employee are unlikely to benefit from their leaders. However, employees who do have those characteristics of engaged employees may take advantage of the opportunities presented to them. Tian confirmed that leaders make the best of the working conditions for employee engagement by expanding cognitive resources. Commons (2018) argued that a lack of employee engagement may be due to poor job fit. As employees commit themselves to their job responsibilities, employee engagement can additionally impact a wide range of business practices (Yuan et al., 2021). Being able to embrace leadership requires confidence, vulnerabilities, making executive decisions, and advancement and learning (Clare, 2018).
The Problem

The general problem to be addressed is a lack of communication in leadership resulting in ineffective lower-level management. Over the last few decades, there has been a growing concern that leaders who have a lack of communication with their employees are destructive (Aravena, 2019). Leadership has a direct impact on individual and team performance (Kindarto et al., 2020). According to Yeo (2019), financial factors affect communication and performance in the financial services industry. A recent study of organizations in the financial services industry found that financial workers are likely to experience high levels of stress due to lack of organizational support (Vogazianos et al., 2019). Federal agencies have identified a need for improved interpersonal compatibility between employees and their leaders to improve the work environment (Wang et al., 2019). The specific problem to be addressed is a lack of communication in level five leadership within the financial services industry in federal government agencies in the southeastern region of the United States that has resulted in ineffective lower-level managers.

Concepts

Leaders are a critical part of any organization and serve as influential people within the organization (Sivarat et al., 2021). The elements of leadership concepts are explained by the researcher, as well as how they are associated with the research study. The gaps in the study are explored by using the concepts to fill in those gaps by identifying common traits (Kudirat et al., 2019). Research sources will be used to document information and evidence to support the concepts related to the research study. The concepts are explored by the researcher and shows a connection to a lack of communication in leadership. The two concepts that will be explored will be conflict and job performance.
Conflict in Organizations. Research has found that employees in organizations in the United States spend too many hours and too much money dealing with conflict, not realizing how much money they are spending on resolutions (Suklun, 2019). According to Daft (2016), organizations must adapt to and accommodate today’s challenges while finding approaches to motivate employees to work as a team to achieve organizational goals. Ivanov (2019) defined conflict as a form of manifestation of contradictions and eternal human and public phenomenon based on the interaction of at least two or more parties caused by a difference of opinion. According to Tripathy (2019), conflicts in an organization occur when individuals disagree or misunderstand one another, which often ends in a negatively. For example, a leader in an organization may have a disagreement or argument with another employee about something or someone. This is often referred to as a conflict. Ballesteros-Rodriguez (2020) shared a similar opinion of what conflict means but Ballesteros-Rodriguez ‘s idea of conflict is a disagreement or negative interaction regarding values and personal issues between individuals or groups. Ivanov (2019) believed that part of a business organization’s success relies on its ability to control conflict.

Brown (2021) claimed that conflicts in the workplace affect the development of employees. Research has shown that poor communication can lead to relationship conflict when ineffectively addressed and interpreted as a personal attack (Brown et al., 2021). Saridi (2019) argued that conflict often develops due to poor communication and is a problem in all levels of leadership and departments. Handford (2019) confirmed that organizations are inevitably full of issues but argues that many problems are not just due to conflict. Often, there are organizational pressures that cause leaders to have disagreements with their followers (Avgar, 2020). According to Tommy (2019), conflict related to communication can sometimes engage people in conflict.
negotiations, which could be a result of ineffective management. Avgar (2020) indicated that conflict not only affects executive and level five leaders, but all levels of leadership also face this problem. Kuriakose (2019) agrees that conflict exists at all levels of an organization and that leaders are often the cause of the conflict. According to Nash (2020), the characteristics of an organization are sometimes the cause of the conflict between leaders and their followers.

This research study showed that there is a lack of communication in leadership due to conflict, but sometimes conflict may cause a lack of communication. According to Suparman (2020), many organizations today face issues of bad attitudes, absenteeism, and employee stress due to conflicts with leadership within the organization, which impact the organization directly and indirectly. Suklun (2019) agreed that there are many types of problems that can occur within an organization, ie. bullying, discrimination, and distrust, but the problem is not always with the leader, but with the follower. Cech (2020) agreed that anytime there is a group of people or a team of workers in an organization, the likelihood of conflict is relatively high.

Research has shown that there is harassment in organizations that presents itself in many forms, such as bullying (Wright, 2020). Wang (2018) further confirmed that harassment in the workplace is inappropriate behavior that is caused by one person and directed against another person to cause conflict. According to Wright (2020), harassment has been studied and reported as having various facets. A study was conducted on federal agencies, which indicated that 60% of federal employees have experienced some form of harassment in the workplace has caused the conflict (Wright, 2020). Wang (2018) confirmed that harassment has continued to be researched due to the nature of its consequences. According to Cech (2020), an organization should have a conflict resolution strategy in place to advance good interactions between employees. Blanchard (2016) indicated that sometimes leaders and followers have a sense of pride that causes them to
promote their position by trying to win arguments instead of making concessions. Conflict resolution should bring a feeling of winning to the leader or follower (Cech et al., 2020).

Scholars have been researching conflict and the effects on leaders and followers for decades. (Avgar, 2020). Suparman (2020), suggested that there is sometimes a negative connection between conflict and leadership that has a direct impact on employee morale. Saridi (2019) confirmed that conflicts within an organization harm the employee’s psycho-state and have an indirect effect on the leader, follower, and organization alike. Ballesteros-Rodriguez (2020) agreed that if a leader incorrectly approaches a conflict, the conflict could create chaos and have devastating effects on the team. Vignoli (2018) suggested that transformational and transactional leadership are good leadership styles to use during conflicts because of the characteristics they exemplify, such as expedient negotiations and recognizing employee interest. Mea (2019) indicated that business leaders must understand and practice virtue to be prepared for adverse conditions under stress. Newstead (2020) described virtue as caring, reasonableness, respectability, and integrity, all of which should be often highlighted within an organization’s code of conduct.

**Job Performance in Organizations.** Akun (2021) indicated that an individual’s job performance within an organization is significant due to the evolving globalization of the economy. According to Adeniji (2020), because of the evolving and competitive service industry, new insights should be explored to determine which leadership dimensions work well with job performance. Yun (2017) supported that job performance has a significant part in the development and survival of an organization. Fogaca (2018) defined job performance as the behaviors that employees engage in and how well an individual performs in the workplace. Askun (2021) supported Fogaca’s definition of job performance but added that behavior is
associated with other factors, such as role requirements by other members of the organization during a certain period. Yanez-Araque (2021) describes job performance as a strong belief in the acceptance of an organization’s objectives and goals, as well as the ability to apply significant effort for the benefit of the organization. Sumlin (2021) argued that any work environment can affect an individual’s job performance negatively, but the leader must have the leadership skills to change the negatives to positives. Yanez-Araque (2021) confirmed that a leader’s role is to influence and use their skills and knowledge to encourage employees to move forward toward their job performance goals. Gun (2021) suggested that the behaviors and actions performed are the primary components of job performance that contribute to the goals of an organization. According to Askun (2021), there are additional factors that affect job performance, including psychological effects, feedback, communication, frustration, and turnover rate.

Considering the differences between the private sector and the U. S. federal government, the private sector has forced federal agencies to revisit and improve their communication process in organizational performance (Fu et al., 2019). Guo (2020) believed that there should be some effort by leadership to motivate their employees to understand the responsibilities of the job. Scholars have suggested that the lack of communication among leadership can be affected by several factors that impact both the leader and their followers. Valle (2018) indicated that many leaders in an organization have behavior issues and that working with them discourages their followers. Matthews (2021) stated that there are underperforming employees that exist in many organizations that contribute to a lack of leadership. However, Matthews (2021) believed that the pressures of the leaders or of work demands do not impact one’s performance of the job.

Job performance has been known to be related to organizational feedback. Yun (2017) connected feedback to job performance, stating that feedback communicates to the employee that
they have either performed well or that they are not meeting the organization’s expectations. Park (2020) indicated that organizations have suffered due to the lack of communication of organizational goals to the staff. Johari (2017) discovered that feedback positively influences the employee and significantly impact their job performance for the better. Park (2020) supported that employees’ benefit and perform well when they receive clear and accurate communication from leadership. Feedback can guide, encourage, and support effective leadership behavior concerning the job performance of the employee (Yun et al., 2017). Johari (2017) confirmed that when employees received positive feedback from leaders, they demonstrated positive attitudes and exhibited even better work behavior. Scholars have said that an encouraging workplace is beneficial to the team because of the motivation to the employee to revisit their abilities and job performance (Johari et al., 2017). According to Park (2020), the continued use of feedback can eliminate the lack of communication present in many organizations and increase job overall performance.

Research has shown that psychological well-being has been associated with employee mental health and job performance (Martin et al., 2018). Kuriakose (2019) supported that an employee’s well-being is associated to their mental and physical health. According to Gyu Park (2017), in addition to making sure that employees are a good fit for the company, organizations must make sure that the employees are emotionally connected to their work. Padmasiri (2020) also pointed out that organizations should confirm that there is a good fit between the employee, the position, and the leader to support and enhance the employee’s psychological well-being.

Scholars have indicated that psychology has become of great interest to the field of leadership because positive attitudes and behaviors are needed for effective leadership and employee job performance (Gyu Park (2017). Research has shown that federal agencies have
placed a focus on managers’ experiences; as well as employee health and well-being due to the lack of emotional support available to teams (Martin et al., 2018). According to Jain (2019), a leader’s behavior is associated with the well-being of their employees due to the leader’s ability to enable them to use their positive emotions in their communication. Gyu Park (2017) defined psychological well-being as the striving for excellence that addresses the acknowledgment of one’s actual potential. This means that the individual will have a significant degree of positive feelings and be happy with life in general (Park et al., 2017). Janin (2019) described psychological well-being as a positive measure of the individual’s insight into the importance of life.

According to Raja (2020), leaders in power tend to hinder employees’ psychological well-being. For example, leaders can create an unpleasant or disrespectful work environment for their employees that may result in a negative effect on the employees’ psychological well-being. Studies have shown that organizational working conditions can contribute negatively to one’s psychological well-being (Telle-Lamberton et al., 2017). Organizations have increased their focus on managing their employees and employee health as part of their business strategy to increase job performance in both the leader and employee (Martin et al., 2018).

Sheridan et al. (2019) found that the frustration of workers could be linked to job performance. Valle (2018) confirmed that job performance is affected by the follower’s frustration due to a lack of leadership. According to Sheridan et al. (2019), frustration can be defined as the worker’s negative responses to events that hinder and affect their ability to accomplish work objectives. Glaserova (2019) found that the inability to fulfill the needs of workers due to improper or inappropriate leadership styles can create long-term frustration, along with an increased likelihood of an employee to leave the organization. Additionally,
Glaserova (2019) stated that if workers’ needs are not met, their job performance is likely to decrease and deteriorate. Research has shown that the argument explaining the relationship between job performance and frustration has been very effective (Sheridan et al., 2019). Valle (2018) found that leadership behavior was negatively associated with employee frustration.

Shujahat (2021) suggested that a high turnover rate can sometimes affect the job performance of the manager and their employees and can present a challenge for both the leader and the organization. According to (Kuvaas (2018), there is a link between turnover rate and performance to a point where performance management is not effective. Caillier (2021) disagreed that the turnover rate affects others’ job performance but proposed that job performance is what causes turnover rate. Research has found that a person’s job performance could be affected by the performance of others (Downes et al., 2021). According to Adeniji (2020), leadership plays an important role in enhancing employee job performance.

Liu (2020) suggested that job performance is influenced by communication-based on the negative impact of task complexity and cognition. Conversely, Adeniji (2020) suggested that job performance is influenced by the manager’s ability to communicate the organization’s goals and objectives. Zhang (2020) highlighted and supported both Liu and Adeniji’s theories that a person’s job performance is affected by communication and plays an important role in achieving organizational goals. In more recent years, there have been many positive examples in which formal and informal leaders have motivated and prepared others to take an ethical position concerning issues influencing their organizations (Solinger et al., 2020).

Researchers have found that job performance is still a central concept in the field of psychology and that there is still no comprehensive theory available to address (Fogaca et al., 2018). Fu (2019) conducted a study of federal employees and job performance that resulted in employees
indicating that more job performance discussions were needed by supervision to promote job satisfaction. Research has found that leadership is a major tool for organizations, and strong leadership styles are necessary to improve employee job performance (Aun et al., 2019).

**Theories**

There are so many challenges in today’s world that lead researchers to revisit existing theories or create new ones (Burton-Jones et al., 2021). The researcher has included theories in this research study to explain the human behavior of leaders and their followers. Theories lead researchers to ask certain questions and indicate why those questions are important; furthermore, they provide discipline, both in one’s rationale and thinking (Haveman et al., 2019). The theories used to support the research study will be the transformational and behavioral leadership theories.

Discussion of Transformational Leadership Theory in Organizations. There is so much research available concerning leadership that transformational theory only represents a portion (Siangchokyoo, 2020). Tintore (2019) stated that transformational leadership theory is one of the most used and debated leadership theories over the past few decades. Christie (2019) indicated that there have been many ongoing changes in the characteristics of the transformational theory for over 50 years. Sahin (2017) supported that there are more studies on transformational leadership theory than any of the other leadership theories. Scholars believe that the concept behind the transformational leadership theory can be most effective in organizations because of the potential to help organizations meet their intended goals of interacting with leaders and their followers (Lu et al., 2020). Transformational leadership theory can be defined as an overall perspective about individual concerns that require the leader to know their follower’s conduct, which will identify their needs and change elements inside the organization (Northouse, 2019).
Transformational leadership theory represents the foundation of leadership research. Seitz (2021) suggested that transformational theory is about followers being uniformly transformable, as well as the personal theories of the relationship between transformational leadership and the follower’s engagement and performance. Lu (2020) believed that if one has a true understanding of transformational theory, one may agree that the theory is strong in seeking individuals’ psychological components to contribute toward the followers’ dependency. Siangchokyo (2020) agreed that the assumption behind transformational theory leadership is that followers are transformed by their leaders. According to Northouse (2019), transformational leadership theory focuses on how leaders should be aware of their followers’ behavior and how their (the leaders) behavior relates to the needs of their employees. Momeny (2019) highlighted that transformational leadership was known to be a trait-based approach to leadership and not something that could be taught or learned. Fourie (2019) found that the transformational leader should be infallible to lead but disagreed that a person who makes mistakes can still be successful in transforming others.

According to Vanderstukken (2019), research has shown that there is a continuous argument about whether leaders should communicate abstract visions based on Watson’s (1913) transformational leadership theory. Communication is of the utmost importance when leaders need to manage their followers effectively, especially when the leader is seen as viable when they are ready to collaborate with followers with the hope of building their motivation to improve performance (Vanderstukken et al., 2019).

Scholars have researched the transformational leadership theory and other theories to understand, determine the effectiveness, and establishes the differences between them (Andersen, 2018). Although studies have been conducted and have reported that transformational
theory produces positive results in an organization, Sahin (2017) found that organizations often use other theories that do not promote the abilities of the leader. Andersen (2018) re-emphasized that the transformational leadership theory focuses on leaders making significant changes in their organizations. The character from the theory is crucial to the success of the organization (Christie, 2019).

Discussion of Behavioral Theory in Organizations. Leadership theories have been a topic of discussion among scholars for years and are still an interesting subject for researchers in various fields due to the increased interest of people and groups (Uslu, 2019). Certain leadership theories, like the behavioral theory, are known for being excellent learning tools for various fields due to the employee and task-oriented behaviors (Uslu, 2019). According to Northouse (2019), leadership is an act or behavior because the leaders are using their leadership abilities to bring change to individuals. Behavioral theory is well known and is associated with the American psychologist John Watson (Strapasson, 2020). According to de Freitas (2019), researchers knew Watson as being a psychologist who preferred to study observable behavior because he believed that most things were connected to conscious experience and individual behaviors. Araujo (2019) agreed that Watson often focused on behavior to understand the connection to the problems of consciousness. According to Behrendt (2017), behavioral leadership theory focuses on the behavior of the leader and their followers.

According to de Graaf (2019), behavioral theory has played an important role in business management for many decades. Uslu (2019) argued that the effectiveness of a leader does not have anything to do with the characteristics of a person but has everything to do with the behavior of the leader. Behrendt (2017) stated that the strength of the behavioral theory is that the behavior is duplicated by other leaders and promotes enhancing, understanding,
strengthening, and motivation. According to Dong (2021), behavioral theory expands on the shortfalls of performance, assists in filling in the gaps of performance, and helps in providing solutions. Gupta (2020) asserted that behavioral theory explores the behaviors of organizations’ relationships, specifically between leadership and their employees. Bettinazzi (2020) claimed that the logic behind behavioral theory is for organizations to recognize when their leaders’ performance levels are not meeting expectations and to rectify the problem of unsatisfactory performance levels by making powerful strategic decisions. The behavioral theory can help to understand human behavior and shed some light on why there is a lack of communication in leadership. Exploring the behaviors of leaders using the behavior theory is of major importance and can be an asset to the research study.

Pekdemir (2019) supported that behavioral theory is one theory that was developed to help explain human behavior. According to de Graaf (2019), the behavioral theory will explore the cognitive processes and investigate what individuals do daily. Examples of cognitive processes include thinking, communicating, and problem-solving. This study provides explanations of why there is a lack of interest in this industry and how this disinterest affects leaderships’ ability to communicate within an organization. Key factors surrounding some of the issues can be determined by behavioral theories.

According to Chou (2021), one of the greatest experiences of leaders is having the opportunity to enhance the abilities of their followers. Behavioral theory has been associated with organizational behavior because both can have an impact on employee performance. Research has also shown that organizational reactions to workplace issues relate to the behavioral theory and are a fundamental part of organizational responsiveness to objectives (Greve et al., 2018). Some of the influences of organizational behavior include psychological
contracts, which indicates that the leader and follower have developed a trustworthy relationship (Islam et al., 2021). Al-Abrow (2019) stated that employees evaluate their leaders according to the traits they see in the leader, including integrity, honesty, and trust. According to Hughes (2018), when interactions in the workplace occur, the assumption is that leaders and their followers are displaying their behaviors, each supporting the behavior of the other. Al-Abrow indicated that the behavior of the leader is important because the leader sets the tone of the work environment, which in turn affects the behavior and work ethic of the follower. Islam (2021) supported that a leader’s behavior plays an important role in the function of the organization but argued that an employees’ positive behavior is also essential to management effectiveness.

**Constructs**

Scholars concern about leadership constructs has added to the abundance of literature on leadership (Aycan et al., 2019). The purpose of constructs is to help identify some of the aspects related to one’s research study (Price, 2018). The constructs used in this research study are associated with a lack of communication in leadership and how the leaders and followers are affected. The constructs to be explored in this research study are transformational leadership and communication.

**Discussion of Transformational Leadership in Organizations.** According to Vignoli (2018), because the business world is changing faster than ever before, organizations are having to adapt to the changes by creating innovative approaches to leadership strategies. As research has developed, Prikshat (2021) identified key factors on how transformational leadership contributed to the growth of the leader and follower relating to interpersonal communication. Northouse (2019) highlighted transformational leadership as leaders having the ability to engage with others, being attentive to the needs and motives of followers, and helping followers reach
their highest potential. O’Reilly (2020) agreed that transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to innovate and change to pursue a collective goal. When referring to transformational leadership, Muchiri (2019) affirmed that it is the ability to motivate followers to do what is best for all parties involved. Tian-Syung (2019) confirmed that transformational leaders make positive and important changes in their followers by increasing their motivation, spirit, and performance through various strategies. Vignoli supported this description of transformational leadership but added that this leadership is concerned about the well-being of the individual as well as the leader and employee relationship.

According to Tintore (2019), with this type of leadership, a leader’s communication skills are necessary to help their followers progress to their highest level of satisfaction and rise above their expectations. Battal (2017) suggested that transformational leadership highlights the most important aspects of people and their aims. Christie (2019) supported Battal’s comments and added that if leaders show respect for other people by building trust as the general mission, transformational leaders can develop power and influence over followers. According to Yousaf (2017), researchers have become intrigued with the usefulness of transformational leadership. Muchiri (2019) stated that transformational leadership encourages leaders to communicate with their subordinates to enhance their physical communication skills between them. Christie confirmed that when followers see their leaders achieving positive results, the follower is bound to want the same results, for example, to be like the leader in terms of exhibiting the same behaviors. The effect of transformational leadership helps establish and grow employee trust and influence during organizational changes (Yue et al., 2019). Tian-Syung (2019) argued that transformational leadership has many positive effects on an organization, but he believed that this type of leadership will lead to the follower losing their job satisfaction.
Transformational leadership provides a broad set of statements of what is typical of leaders who are changing or who work toward changing workplace circumstances (Northouse, 2019). As research has continued to reference the lack of communication in leadership, the term leadership style was constantly connected to transformational leadership (Northouse, 2019). According to Battal (2017), the role and behavior of a leader are crucial to meeting the objectives of the organization. Qadir (2020) suggested that specific leadership styles are needed to bring out the best outcomes in improving organizational performance. Donkor (2020) indicated that leadership style depends on the commitment of the leader and their employees to the organization. Leadership studies were conducted that identified many dimensions of differentiated leadership styles, including initiating structures and leadership behaviors (Janicijevic, 2017). Transformational leadership was identified as a leadership style that described the relationship between the leader and the follower (Qadir et al., 2020). According to Lee (2019), transformation leadership is associated with the employee’s skills in performance feedback and an increase in decision-making. Other studies were conducted that justified and confirmed that transformational leadership is a style that demonstrates managerial excellence for businesses and is appropriate for the fast-paced business environments of today (Murari et al., 2021).

A leader must understand when to apply their leadership styles and behaviors to the benefit of their followers in a way that is effective. Several key behaviors are connected to transformational leadership, such as identifying and expressing a vision, providing a suitable role model, encouraging the acceptance of group goals, having a high-performance expectation of their followers, offering individual support, and stimulating followers (Xu et al., 2021).
Jacobsen (2021) suggested that managers could do a better job at leading in communication and claimed that transformational leadership is linked to internal communication. The goal of transformational leadership is to foster employees’ perceptions of knowledge sharing and to assess the interactive impacts of group-level conceptualizations of transformational leadership (Coun et al., 2019). Transformational leadership addresses the leadership of team effectiveness and the impact on team interaction processes with the leader and the follower to produce improved organizational development (Khan et al., 2020).

Research has shown that transformational leadership encourages joint decision-making among employees within an organization and can be associated with high levels of team learning (Chiu et al., 2021). Potential positive results of transformational leadership include psychological gains for both the leader and follower, more effective leaders with better work outcomes, and performance that goes beyond what is expected (Northouse, 2019). Christie (2019) believed that showing the follower that they can achieve the goals that they thought were not possible, improves the leader’s confidence for future objectives and goals. Potential negative effects of transformational leadership may result in ineffective leadership due to the possible loss of job satisfaction and extra burdens placed upon the leaders (Tian-Syung et al., 2019).

Discussion of Communication in Organizations. Communication is included in this study to explain how important communication is between the leader, follower, and organization. This research study also explains the significance of communication within the organization. According to Momeny (2019), nothing can happen without the use of communication. Communication can be defined as the exchange and comprehension of at least two people (Crews et al., 2019). According to Momeny, communication is an excellent tool that is used in the workplace to understand the process that occurs usually between the leader and the follower.
Over the past century, researchers have found that communication brings both positive and negative effects to the workplace and has a direct impact on employee performance (Kelly et al., 2019). According to Atouba (2018), organizational scholars stressed the importance of internal communication and emphasized that adequate communication entails giving the employee clear, accurate, valuable, and timely information. Mea (2019) suggested that when business leaders act ethically, the communication assures the employee of what they can expect regarding direction, and guidance, as well as what principles of conduct fit well within the organization.

While researching the relationship between organizational structure and effective communication, Renani (2017) found that organizational structure can boost the coordination of communication. Daft (2016), defined organizational structure as the formal reporting of relationships, the grouping together of individuals into departments, and the design of systems to ensure effective communication, coordination, and integration of efforts across departments. Research has found that organizational structures make action reliable and non-contingent on personal and situational factors and are therefore at the core of our understanding of organizations (Soderstrom, 2020). Those individuals in leadership positions must communicate clearly to be effective. (Roman et al., 2019). Scholars indicated that communication is not always what you say but what you do but the right timing is pivotal to effective leadership (Gerpott et al., 2019). Leaders within an organization have the responsibility of shaping attitudes and behaviors for the good of the organization (Liu et al., 2020).

Making sure that the leader establishes a positive environment for their followers should always be of importance to the organization (Roman et al., 2019). Communication has a very important role in the workplace and consists of several primary methods, such as meetings, emails, phone calls, text messages, and other correspondence (Mohd et al., 2020). Organizations
understand that communication should be oral, written, visual, or electronic (Coffelt et al., 2019). Research has found that using these types of communication methods are good learning tools that result in positive outcomes (Coffelt et al., 2019). Having the right communication tools in place prepares the leader for any situation or circumstance that may occur with their followers (Roman et al., 2019).

The conceptual framework was included in this study to explain the importance of communication between the leader and their followers. This research study explains the significance of communication within the organization. Figure 1 illustrates how leadership is influenced by communication. This study provides several ways a lack of communication in leadership can lead to ineffective management and employee conflict. According to Banwart (2020), as communication continues to be an important part of organizational development, the connection between leadership and communication contributes to the development between the leader and the follower. Liu (2020) indicated that using their communication skills promptly during certain situations is necessary to effectively manage. Crews (2019) suggested that not using communication appropriately can lead to verbal aggressiveness, emotionality, impression manipulativeness, expressiveness, and questioning. According to Ismail (2019), ineffective communication and poor interactions with followers often lead to conflict, problems, frustrations, and failure for both leader and follower. Kelly (2019) suggested that communication in leadership does not solely focus on the leader but is also a relational communication process between the leader and the follower.

There has been a growing concern in federal agencies regarding effective communication (Peters, 2018). According to Fu (2019), the U.S. federal government has been working on strategies to improve organizational effectiveness. Liu (2020) highlighted a study that identified
a lack of communication between government leaders and that they should have a great amount of flexibility, communication, cooperation, presence, and humility to deal with a crisis within the organization. Fu supported that there is a lack of communication in federal agencies and a need for new strategies to support the priorities of the organization. Federal agencies have set specific goals and objectives to help individual employees to communicate more effectively with each other (Fu et al., 2019).

**Related Studies**

According to Northouse (2019), leadership research is increasing and often gains the attention of researchers because they are the ones asking questions about what makes a good or effective leader. A recent study showed that individuals who demonstrates strong leadership skills have the potential to emerge as leaders (Zaar et al., 2019). For example, an employee who regularly assumes a leadership role in the workplace has the potential to progress to a leadership role within the organization. Researchers are concerned with identifying the factors that support leadership (Wallenius et al., 2019). According to Dalma (2020), a study can find the barriers that contribute to a lack of communication between the leader and the follower. The purpose of this study is to explore and provide explanations and discussions about the literature that addresses the topic (Wallenius et al., 2019). Many scholars have focused on several areas of study regarding communication between leaders and followers, including the impact and risks involved (Elsayed, 2020).

There have been past and recent studies concerning the lack of communication within the leadership in business organizations. Hyung-Woo (2018) highlighted a study on federal agencies where leaders were found to lack in communicating clear goals and objectives to their subordinates. Current studies have indicated that work-related stress issues may develop due to a
lack of leadership in organizations worldwide (Mulugeta et al., 2021). For example, a turnover of supervisors could create a lack of information getting to the staff and could add pressure to organizational goals. Scholars are still researching how to make communication an effective learning tool (Elsayed, 2020).

According to Momeny (2019), studies are always being conducted on leadership, but scholars have focused much time and effort on determining which leadership style is the best. For example, a scholar may conduct a study on transformational and transactional leadership to determine which one is more effective. There have been previous studies that showed that leadership behaviors have become a growing problem for effective management due to a lack of support from leaders and a failure to create job satisfaction for employees (Dardas, 2021).

According to Lee (2019), employees that experienced internal organizational communicative problems shared negative information about the organization externally. Gara (2020) pointed out that organizations are exploring ways to build trust in areas of internal communication. A study regarding leadership strategies and internal communications supported that organizations are working to improve the way leadership communication flows within the organization to set the stage for better performance (Jacobsen et al., 2021). Gara (2020) suggested that to build trust within organizations, an internal communication strategy that is reflected in management is needed. Although psychological well-being and leadership have been associated, research has shown that very few studies have associated the transformational and transactional leadership styles with positive enhancements (Vignoli et al., 2018). A study of leadership and communication found that if transformational leadership is effectively used, positive outcomes can be accomplished (Banwart, 2020). These outcomes may result in encouraging others to meet
future goals, develop their strengths, and develop and recognize the communication practices of leaders (Banwart, 2020).

**Anticipated and Discovered Themes**

Many anticipated themes could have been included in the research study, but the researcher selected the themes that were associated with or were most relevant to the problem. According to McAvoy (2021), many themes may be anticipated, but the contribution that the theme makes to the research study is the unique part. One of the purposes of the anticipated themes is to see if additional themes are discovered during the research study (McVay et al., 2018). The anticipated themes that will be explored and have an instrumental role in the research study are the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective management within an organization, lack of communication between leadership factors in the financial services industry, and leadership in federal agencies.

The Role of Organizational Leaders. The organizational structure consists of components in an organization that include the roles and responsibilities of managers. The organizational structure also identifies how those responsibilities are accomplished by identifying manager roles. Rahul (2018) indicated that organizations are entering the global arena, so organizational leaders are facing new challenges while coordinating their current leadership roles of managing a team. Waddock (2019) confirmed that organizations are branching out to do business with the global industry which increases the leader’s role in developing current employees. Alsaqqa (2021) stated that the role of leadership focuses on creating values that motivate employees; as well as giving them meaning, direction and purpose. Due to economic growth, organizations are expecting their leaders to be able to handle existing and future challenges in their jobs (Affum-Osei et al., 2020. The increase in leadership roles can be a determining factor in the lack of
communication in leadership. Sandhu (2019) discovered that sustainability managers examine the interaction between the forces of organizational structure and the impact of managerial discretion on developing organizational roles.

Communication plays a very important role for leaders, especially during daily teamwork and conversations with their followers (Erickson, 2021). According to Crews (2019), leadership is a process that influences individual groups of people to reach the common goal of the organization. Naidoo (2019) described leaders as being the driving forces of the organization and having the responsibility of providing support and guidance to their followers. Organizational leaders should be open and available to new techniques, create and provide support for group vision, and carry out and execute strategies effectively (Yunus et al., 2019). According to Sibbald (2020), leaders have been given the responsibility of strengthening their teams by communicating the goals, visions, value of team support, and empowerment to their teams. Lee (2020) confirmed that leaders have a role in influencing internal communication and encouraging creativity among their employees. Naidoo (2019) supported Sibbald’s and Lee’s views of leadership roles by adding that leaders are put in place to develop their employees into leaders so that the leaders can enhance their skills to manage effectively. Shujahat (2021) indicated that managers within the organizations often have issues with clearly outlining and communicating the responsibilities of the job.

Emotional intelligence has been researched by scholars extensively because of the leader’s connection to communication (Fianko et al., 2020). Researchers have found that emotional intelligence enhances leader efficiency and provides growth for both leader and follower (Eun-Ock et al., 2021). Masaldzhyska (2019) agreed that emotional intelligence is important to human work behavior, employee engagement, and the organization’s goals.
According to Deutsch (2021), emotional intelligence can be defined as a person having the ability to identify their emotions as well as other people motivating themselves to manage their emotions and their followers. Sanchez-Gomez (2021) described emotional intelligence as the ability to see and comprehend emotions, as well as use them appropriately (Sanchez-Gomez et al., 2021). Abu Awwad (2020) supported Deutsch and Sanchez-Gomez’s definitions of emotional intelligence but argued that emotional intelligence also requires the leader to be empathetic and able to interact with others.

Individuals who exhibit increased levels of emotional intelligence communicate well, and share their expectations, thoughts, and objectives, all of which are vital to the outcome that employees accomplish in the work environment (Masaldzhiyska, 2019). Based on existing research, scholars have identified the special relationship between emotions and leadership but argue that research has failed to explore the role of one’s emotions (Yeung et al., 2019). According to Sanchez-Gomez (2021), emotional intelligence enables leaders to utilize their emotions to coordinate their thinking, and to deal with their own emotions as well as their followers’. Momeny (2019) affirmed that leaders should have outstanding communication skills and emotional intelligence to be able to effectively manage their emotions and aid their followers. Fianko (2020) confirmed that when emotional intelligence is not utilized, leaders are not effective in their leadership. Momeny further stated that if a leader does not invest the time in their followers and does not use their communication skills and emotional intelligence to develop the follower, the leader is not fulfilling their leadership role.

Newstead (2020) suggested that the role of organizational leaders should include the characteristics that inspire, empower, and strengthen organizational identification among their employees. Dobbs (2019) highlighted the importance of the leader’s character, qualities, and
behaviors because they are related to the follower’s performance and job satisfaction. According to Sindhu (2017), top leadership within an organization has the most authority to make the necessary changes to improve the leader’s role and to address any issues relating to ineffective management. Dirik (2018) supported that there could be more positive changes in an organization if leadership styles and roles were maximized. Organizations can improve their effectiveness by making the best use of extra-role behaviors (Dobbs et al., 2019).

Ineffective Management in the Organization. According to Raja (2019), when one discusses ineffective leadership, lack of leadership is synonymous because both imply that the leader’s behavior is harming the follower. There has been a significant amount of research regarding the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of leadership and the impact leadership has on employees in organizations in the U.S (Ruiz et al., 2019). According to Raja (2019), ineffective leadership not only affects the follower, but also affects the organization both directly and indirectly. The survival of organizations depends on leaderships’ ability to manage their followers (Ortiz-Gómez et al., 2020). The topic of leadership has continued to be researched due to the importance of what effective leadership brings to organizations (Frawley et al., 2018). Masaldzhiyska (2019) agreed that leaders should be able to recognize the feelings and emotions of their followers and have the emotional education to respond to those feelings. Management communication has an impact on the employee and is key to fixing the problem of a lack of communication in leadership (Siket Ujvarine et al., 2020). However, one must consider that the leader is not the only cause of ineffective leadership. According to a study conducted by de Vasconcelos (2019), managers often have barriers that contribute to communication breakdown. Dardas (2021) confirmed that there are often outside factors that affect the work experience of leadership and management that are translated into work-environment practices. The following
section will explain how poor workplace culture, leadership styles, and turnover rates contribute to ineffective management within organizations.

Kanako (2021) suggested that the workplace culture may be a determining factor for organizations to hire new employees and maintain current ones. According to Wood (2021), there are many things that take place inside an organization that are compounded by poor workplace culture. Wood (2021) believed that poor workplace culture is not given much attention because organizations are inundated with other issues within the organization, like financial pressures and employee crises. Organizational culture was connected to employees not being able to accomplish workplace tasks due to a lack of leadership interactions (Kittel et al., 2021).

The lack of communication in leadership can result in ineffective management which can lead to high employee turnover. Atouba (2018) stressed that communication is essential in organizing and plays an important role in having an effective organization. According to Kang (2019), because of the wide range of employment opportunities, in today’s business environments, organizations are facing challenges with high turnover. Apostel (2018) confirmed that organizations are facing challenges with the turnover of personnel. The high turnover of employees in organizations is not only important to the organization but also very important to the leaders within the organization because of the negative effects that are left on existing employees (Basnyat et al., 2020). For example, negative effects may include the productivity of employees, the leader’s communication among the remaining employees, and the organizational culture. Kang supported that the employee is part of the effectiveness and success of the organization, so organizations should place great importance on trying to retain the employee or
prevent the turnover of one. Moleder (2019) suggested that organizations should develop ways to communicate better with employees to prevent them from leaving the organization.

According to Lee (2029), leadership training is at the core of managerial and leadership effectiveness based on the interaction between the leader and the employee. In a study by DiPietro (2018), 70% of men and women in the U.S. reported that they had some type of interference with leadership regarding work responsibilities. Molders (2019) stated that some studies have shown that women have some of the highest turnover rates, while other studies have shown that men hold the record for the highest turnover. According to Dipietro (2018), a lack of perceived management concerns for employees surrounds employee respect and recognition, communication with employees, and valuing the work of employees, a lack of which all contributes to employee turnover. In fact, there was a crucial link between the relationship quality of the manager and the employee, which showed a lack of interaction with managers that demonstrated a strong connection to turnover (Kang et al., 2019). According to Ruiz (2019), ineffective managers are often found to be selfish, which is a characteristic of a person that is self-protective or self-serving. To retain employees, managers need to practice and demonstrate more ability, kindness, and integrity (Molders et al., 2019).

Researchers have found that organizations also often lack an organizational learning culture that helps to solve some of the problems that arise while managing employees (Lin et al., 2021). According to Alsaqqa (2021), an effective leader should be able to assess the culture of the organization and assist the follower in understanding the culture. An organizational learning culture is a process of using the organization’s values and practices to motivate the employees and the organization to develop and improve knowledge in the workplace (Lin et al., 2021). According to Mosadeghrad (2020), when a lack of organizational learning culture was not used,
there was an increase in low employee morale, a lack of communication, a lack of management support, and ineffective management.

Research has shown that there is a need for improved leadership styles due to ineffective management to handle the different types of situations that may routinely arise within an organization (Aun et al., 2019). According to Aun et al. (2019), leadership styles can be described as having the ability to provide guidance, inspiration, and the carrying out of plans that stem from the personality, character, and experience of the leader. Qadir (2020) described leadership styles as providing great work for employees and relating to various employee and organizational needs, including responsibility, trust, fulfillment, and execution. Girardin (2020) indicated that values and behavior patterns are associated with poor leadership styles, which lead to negative effects on the company. Yaari (2020) supported that a leader’s style of work may contribute to the challenges that organizations face when trying to promote their mission. According to Aun et al. (2019), leadership styles affect everyone in an organization, including all levels of leadership, and have the potential to affect employee performance due to a lack of strategic interventions. The results from a study conducted by Hossenini (2020) found that there was a relationship between the leader’s leadership style, organizational culture, and organizational learning, which confirmed that leadership style influenced both organizational culture and organizational learning.

Lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry. Due to the competitive business environment, the financial industry is going through several changes internally (Ng et al., 2018). For example, some organizations are switching some of their employees to virtual teams, which means that employees may never meet in person to communicate. According to Pettinicchio (2020), a variety of market mechanisms in the financial
industry have created a problem for organizations when monitoring and managing their regular activities. Hain (2019) confirmed that the financial services industry accounts for over half of the country’s products and services and is a significant part of meeting the needs of many organizations. As such, Swid (2019) stressed the importance of keeping leadership up to par with the growing changes in the financial services industry. Yeo (2019) asserted that financial factors are causing high levels of stress and a lack of communication within organizations. To address this growing challenge, employee innovation is needed by leadership within the financial services industry (Naidoo et al., 2019). Recent studies have shown that finance professionals and managers in the banking and finance industry have been criticized for their lack of concern for daily decision-making approaches and societal interests within their organizations (de Graaf, 2019).

Discussion of Leadership in Federal Agencies. Globalization has affected organizations all over the world, to a point where the trends of globalization have prompted government facilities to change their management style due to retaining employees (Lin et al., 2021). Federal agencies have spent great effort and time trying to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizations (Aragon et al., 2017). According to Hyung-Woo (2018), there was a need to research the effects of leadership in federal agencies to fill the gap concerning leadership practices and organizational behavior. Lee (2018) pointed out that federal agencies also believe that there is a gap in the process of leadership practices that affect organizational performance (Lee et al., 2018). Effective leadership in federal agencies is needed to promote strategic planning and performance (Park et al., 2021). Research has shown that federal agencies need management strategies that promote cooperative behaviors to meet organizational goals (Fu et
al., 2019). Federal agency leaders were identified as being key components in providing leadership development to their staff (Flores et al., 2018).

**Anticipated and Discovered Themes**

Several themes were discovered during the research process. According to McVay (2018), many themes are discovered while researching the anticipated themes. This study explains the key anticipated themes related to the study, while presenting the discovered themes that add to future studies (Xiao et al., 2017). Potential discovered themes that could be found in this research study are employee stress, interpersonal compatibility, transactional leadership, clear direction, and organizational processes.

**Discussion of Employee Stress in Organizations.** While researching the information included in the study, there were several discovered themes, one of which was employee stress. Work-related stress is a problem that occurs in many organizations around the world and has a major impact on the day-to-day operation of the organization (Petkovic et al., 2020). Research has shown that the pressures of the modern business world make it difficult for organizations to see what is missing internally (Mea et al., 2019). Usman (2021) described stress as individual experiences caused by intense pressures that individuals are not able to cope with. Candeias (2021) noted that there is one word to describe stress and that is “burnout”, which may be caused by a high level of new or current responsibilities. Kim (2020) believed that employee stress stems from a person’s characteristics interacting with the responsibilities of their job. This interaction can result in changes such as depression, anxiety, and psychological fluctuations. Usman (2020) believed that productivity, as well as the completion of other objectives within an organization, depends on the employee’s psychological wellbeing. Unfortunately, research has
confirmed that stress has become a regular part of many people’s lives, both personally and in the workplace (Kim et al., 2020).

According to Mulugeta (2021), stress related to an employees’ work environment can contribute to the employee’s physical and mental health, as well as their behavior. Petkovic (2020) found that stress affects organizations directly and indirectly, impacting employees inside an organization and eventually spreading to the economy. Celik (2018) confirmed that workplace stress is one of the causes of employees’ psychological problems and is one of the reasons why employees search for other job opportunities. According to Petkovic, there are indications that stress contributes to employee health conditions and affects leadership’s role and productivity. Kil-Won (2021) characterized employee stress as a hindering physical and emotional response that happens when job responsibilities do not fit with an employee’s abilities and desires. Furthermore, stress influences the mentalities of employees, which has an impact on organizational productivity and effectiveness (Petkovic et al., 2020).

According to Buick (2018), the job of leaders is sometimes overwhelming and stressful due to the increased levels of responsibilities, extended work hours, and other daily challenges. Kim (2020) asserted that working conditions and leadership are some of the main causes of employee stress, and Erickson (2021) argued that leadership communication plays an important role within an organization, especially during these high levels of stress. Shoaib (2019) conducted a study that showed that employees were stressed due to task overload, which led to a breakdown in communication. Ilamath (2021) confirmed that employee stress can be related to overload, pressures, and dissatisfaction with the job.

Krauter (2020) believed that if organizations understood the demands of the leader’s role, leaders would better know how to handle their power and stress. According to Reb (2019),
organizations have increased their awareness over recent years regarding their employee’s needs, but there is still a lack of leader-member exchange. Abdullah (2018) agreed that to manage effectively, communication skills are necessary for leaders to handle their stress. According to Eldor (2018), a part of the organization’s understanding of the leader’s role is encouraging leaders to show a sense of compassion toward subordinates even when nothing is expected in return. Shuck (2019) believes that compassion matters because every person should be treated with interest and respect, including leaders and followers. Vogel (2021) confirmed that with the current stressors in today’s world, leaders should show some compassion as a level of support to their followers. Compassion can be defined as expressed feelings toward others or all of humankind; containing sentiments, cognitions, and behaviors that are centered around caring, concern, and delicacy moving in a direction toward supporting, helping, and understanding others (Eldor, 2018). Shuck (2019) argued that compassion should not only be given, but should also be received, especially during the most difficult circumstances in the organization.

One of the most important objectives in business organizations is productivity (Usman et al., 2020). Participation in the financial services industry has been extremely stressful for employees in many countries, including the United States (U.S.) (IIamath et al., 2021). According to Vogazianos (2019), financial workers experience high levels of stress because they are not receiving the proper organizational support from leaders. Adiguzel (2020) noted that this could lead to a stressful and oppressive environment, which may affect employees’ psychological and physiological health. Current research has shown that stress is still affecting a substantial number of leaders in the workplace and is challenging for many organizations (Krauter, 2020).
Discussion of Interpersonal Compatibility in Organizations. Due to the growing geographic coverage among organizations today, relationships among employees and leaders have changed drastically (Udin et al., 2019). For many years, scholars have researched the interpersonal relationship in organizations to understand why employees help their colleagues (Thompson et al., 2018). Although scholars believe that interpersonal compatibility is crucial for the organization, there is a need for clarity on how job performance is affected (Thompson et al., 2018). Interactions with employees have become an important role for the leader as a representative of the organization (Udin et al., 2019).

Interpersonal compatibility is another discoverable theme concerning the business relationship between the leader and the follower (Wang et al., 2019). Changing business environments may cause organizations to adjust their leadership styles to demonstrate softer interpersonal skills to manage their workforce (Cirtautiene, 2018). Interpersonal can be defined as the attributes that permit individuals to effectively do their job (Mashavira et al., 2019). Interpersonal compatibility has been described as a good motivator for conflict where people within the organization are working together (Tripathy et al., 2019). According to Crews (2019), interpersonal compatibility can be described as two-way communication between the leader and the follower in a work setting between a supervisor and subordinates. When one discusses an interpersonal relationship in the workplace, the conversation is often about what is occurring between a leader and a follower (Northouse, 2019). According to Mihelic (2019), working in a team setting has become the norm for many organizations.

The workplace is an environment where each employee can participate in interpersonal relationships with their co-workers that may influence their lives in either a positive or negative manner (Saridi et al., 2019). Not only is the interpersonal compatibility discussion about the
leader alone, but it also includes the responses of the follower for the interaction to be successful (Northouse, 2019). Managers within an organization should make a point of emphasizing the importance of interpersonal skills to their employees if they want to succeed in the business world (England et al., 2019).

Tripathy (2019) argued that conflict interferes with interpersonal relationships and creates a negative environment for the entire team and department gradually. The inquisitiveness of asking questions and reaching out to others for advice leads to information sharing, which reinforces interpersonal relations (Kouzes et al., 2017). Guo (2020) believed that when there is a discussion of interpersonal compatibility, the words feedback quality comes to mind because of the representation of long-term motivation for the employee and the effective strategy that represents a connection between the leader and the follower. Research has also shown that social loafing interferes with interpersonal compatibility due to the reduction it causes in job performance (Kim, 2021). Scholars and management in organizations have researched the subject of social loafing for many years (Vveinhardt et al., 2017). According to Kim (2021), social loafing has been researched not only for the role of the follower, but also to evaluate leadership behavior. Social loafing is a major inhibitor in group settings, like in organizations, and is a challenge for leaders (Rajaguru et al., 2020). According to Shih (2017), social loafing can sometimes be described as the loss of motivation in performing under certain circumstances that lead to a lack of effort by an individual employee when working in groups when compared to working by themselves. Penarroja (2017) confirmed that social loafing is when individuals make less effort when in a group setting compared to when alone. Mihelic (2019) suggested that in practicing interpersonal exchanges, the leader-follower exchange has minimized social loafing.
Transactional Leadership in Organizations. Scholars believe that leaders are the key to the organizational success and can guide their followers to exceed organizational performance levels (Crews et al., 2019). Transactional leadership was first introduced by author Weber (1947) and further explored by Bass (1981) while researching transformational leadership (Qadir et al., 2020). In many cases during the research process, the comparisons were made between transformational and transactional leadership (Hansen et al., 2019). Transactional and transformational leadership are known to be linked due to the interaction effect of the two types of leadership styles (Puni et al., 2021). Both leadership styles are used in many organizations, but when there is a lack of use or they are used inappropriately, the communication breaks down (Crews et al., 2019). With both leadership styles having an influential effect on the leadership role, it is important to note that transactional leadership and has a different influence and control than transformational leadership (Kark et al., 2018). According to Legutko (2020), transactional leadership can easily get lost in the communication process because of the primary focus on leaders and not the employee. Emphasizing how important communication is within an organization, Crews (2019) asserted that leadership styles matter to the productivity of employees in the organization.

Transactional leadership can be defined as a person having the ability to influence another person’s actions to achieve their goals (Nadeak et al., 2019). According to Northouse (2019), transactional leadership is the exchange that takes place between the leaders and the followers and can be observed through various management levels of an organization. Transactional leadership, like transformational leadership is a type of leadership style that exhibits supervisory coaching behavior known for empowering employee job performance (Lee et al., 2020). According to Qadir (2020), transactional leadership encourages followers to
achieve their objectives, reduce their working environment apprehension, and center their attention on the objectives of the organization through measures of quality improvement. With a lack of communication being a consistent problem within organizations, specifically federal agencies, transactional leadership supports leaders and followers as they try new problem-solving approaches in their organizations (Northouse, 2019). Research has shown that transactional leadership has the important role of improving the quality of the employees within an organization (Nadeak et al., 2019). Sitthiwarongchai (2020) believed that to truly understand transformational leadership, one must study transactional leadership to identify and explore the impact of both leadership styles. Hansen (2019) also conducted a study on transactional leadership and affirmed that to gain a detailed understanding of the leadership style, a study may be required of other leadership styles (Hansen et al., 2019).

Several leadership research strategies have been developed using the transactional leadership framework (Nielsen et al., 2019). This type of leadership style helps a person engage and interact with others while creating a relationship to motivate the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2019). According to Jacobsen (2021), transactional leadership works well with internal communication and the goals of the organization. Research has shown that the transactional leader is very influential and considers the best interest of their followers (Northouse, 2019). Transactional leadership focuses on employee behaviors, efforts, and results (Nielsen et al., 2019). According to Young (2021), transactional leadership is the most common and focal of the leadership styles used in organizations. Scholars believe that transactional leadership has a positive effect on employee commitment and that organizational leaders need improvement in that area (Puni et al., 2021). With desired outcomes as an intended goal, transactional leadership is focused on promoting self-interest, impact, and scope (Tintore, 2019).
With a lack of communication in leadership an issue among many leaders today, transactional leadership may be beneficial to the employee because of its focus on encouraging the leader to communicate more with the employee (Northouse, 2019).

As leadership communication continues to be a conversation among many scholars, studies are still being conducted with results indicating that transformational and transactional leadership styles are still very instrumental in the workplace regarding employees’ work engagement and behavior (Gemeda et al., 2020). According to Legutko (2020), research has shown that transactional and transformation leadership were more effective on performance when used together. As various scholars recommend these leadership styles to leaders, Oh (2021) suggested that this leadership style is most appropriate for the private sector.

Needing clear direction in the organization is another discovered theme. The researcher attempts to explain why there is a lack of clear direction in the financial services industry within federal government agencies in the southeastern portion of the U.S. When directions are set by the organization, clear boundaries are discussed with management first and then with the leaders of departments (Verweire et al., 2019). Sometimes, clear directions are not communicated to followers well. Leaders are the driving forces of the organization and play a key role in supporting the organization (Alblooshi et al., 2021). According to Zhao (2021), knowledge is the most crucial resource in organizations and is critical to the improvement of organizational performance. Jacobsen (2021) further discussed the close association between human behavior and communication that prevents people from translating clear organizational goals. The researcher found evidence in the study relating to clear direction and how this contributes to a lack of communication in leadership within federal government agencies.
Organizational processes are other potential themes that will be found in the research study. Organizations are working to improve their organizational processes at the request of their employees (Kopina, 2019). According to Gara (2020), trust and organizational processes are those that uphold the organization while communication provides a sense of security for the organization. When employees are trained on organizational processes, the results produce positive changes in individuals (Abad-Segura et al., 2021). According to Alblooshi (2021), organizations are not only concerned with organizational processes, but often look for potential opportunities to improve and strengthen the organization. Developmental coaching promotes the growth of the employee, and will grow their skill base, which will benefit the individual and the organization (Hunt et al., 2017). This study will provide explanations of how these themes contribute to the lack of communication in leadership.

**Summary of the Literature Review.**

The literature review has shown the relationship between the current body of knowledge and the present research study. Literature reviews allow the researcher to identify recent developments in research and practice (King et al., 2020). This literature review is based on a flexible design research study that includes various elements. This literature review summarized various business practices and how organizations rely on the strength of communication between the leaders and their followers to meet organizational goals. The elements included in this literature review are the problem statement, concepts, theories, constructs, related studies, and anticipated and discovered themes. The concepts section explains how conflict and job performance affect the role of the leader, while transformational and behavioral theory explore human behavior. There is a detailed discussion of the constructs of transformational leaders and communication. Anticipated themes included the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective
management within an organization, a lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry, and leadership in federal agencies. The researcher discovered themes of stress, interpersonal compatibility, and transactional leadership as additional causes of ineffective leadership. The purpose of this literature review is to compare viewpoints from various scholars that supported the research study. Additional literature was discovered that can be added to existing knowledge and future research studies (Cowhitt et al., 2020). Based on the information obtained in this literature review, organizations need leaders and followers to make the necessary changes to resolve leadership challenges. Furthermore, future studies regarding the lack of communication in leadership should put more emphasis on the leader and their followers. Organizations should continue to work with leaders to achieve effective leadership communication and employee well-being.

**Summary of Section 1 and Transition**

There are three sections in this qualitative research study that are explored by the researcher. The first section summarizes the foundation of the study. The researcher introduced the problem statement by detailing the reason for the research study. The foundation of the study will not be overemphasized, but all problems should be addressed (Judkowiakm 2019). The purpose of this first section is to help explain why there is a lack of communication in leadership. The research study will help all involved, including the researcher, to gain a better understanding of the problem (Abma et al., 2020). The researcher presented the details of what is in the research study. The first section includes the background of the problem, problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, and nature of the study. The research study also includes the conceptual framework, definitions of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, the significance of the study, and a review of the professional and academic literature outline.
The researcher started with the background of the problem to give an overview of the problem and to show the gap in the existing literature. The purpose statement provided the intent or the need for the study, while the research questions provided significant knowledge of the specific problem. The nature of the study described the researcher’s paradigm, research design, and research method. The researcher chose constructivism as the research paradigm, flexible as the research design, and the case study as the research method. The conceptual framework summarized the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs of the study and will discuss the individual components (Corrigan et al., 2020). The definition of terms will define the most important terms of the study, while assumptions, limitations, and delimitations will describe the limits and impediments. The significance of the study provided the reasoning for conducting the study. To help explain the reasoning, the researcher included information regarding the reduction of gaps in the literature, implications for biblical integration, benefits to business practices, and the association between the research study and leadership. The section concluded with a review of the professional and academic literature outline that provided a brief overview of the upcoming literature review in the next section. The goal of this section was to investigate and research the factors associated with the problem (Vena et al., 2021).

The upcoming second section of the research study is the project. The purpose of section two is to collect detailed and iterated analyses of data to enhance and add to the foundation of the study (Mullins et al., 2018). The project will consist of several parts that will add to the existing knowledge of the study. The project will begin with a full literature review. The objective of the literature review is to research and organize previous research referencing the research study (Cillo et al., 2019). The study will then provide an area called the research, which will consist of the role of the researcher and the research methodology. The researcher will provide a discussion
of the participants involved in the study, the population, and the sampling. There will be an overview of the data collection plan, which will include instruments such as interview guides, archive data, and data organization plans. To complete section two, the researcher will add the data analysis and the reliability and validity discussion. The elements discussed in section two will complete the section two project.

**Section 2: The Project**

This research project was created to understand and clarify how a lack of communication in leadership contributes to ineffective management in the financial services industry in federal agencies. The research project will identify factors and aspects that are significant to the research study (Durmic, 2020). This research study will focus on the roles of business leaders and the work relationships between the leaders and followers inside the organization. The research project may help with providing solutions to the research questions in the study (Eliasson et al., 2020). This section of the research project includes the purpose statement, the researcher’s roles and actions, a discussion of bracketing, the research method, the research design, and the triangulation method. This research project will also cover a discussion of the participants, population, and sampling, which will include the characteristics and size of the population, as well as the sampling method, frame, and size. The data collection and organization section will provide an overview of the data collection plan, instruments, data organization plan, data analysis, and reliability and validity. This research project will help the researcher during the data collection and analysis phase to ensure that the research study is completed on time.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative case study research is to understand and evaluate the factors regarding why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership among federal
government agencies in the financial services industry. The case study aims to find solutions to the lack of communication and how ineffective management can improve. There is a need to investigate the impact of high performance in government organizations to support business goals (Hai et al., 2020). The case study research may add to the existing knowledge that influences the gap in the research regarding leadership communication by providing results from interviews and expert opinions. Utilizing the case study method is appropriate to help determine the factors of how poor communication contributes to ineffective management and adverse effects in the financial services industry. The information covered in the case study may provide additional factors concerning the lack of communication in leadership and may also explain why there is a larger impact within federal government agencies in the eastern region of the United States. The research will aim to collect and provide qualitative data that is interpretable, and clearly define the barriers during the analysis of interviews (Dir et al., 2021)

**Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher is very important in a qualitative research study, as the researcher is responsible for documenting their interactions and experiences of their findings (Demirtepe-Saygili, 2021). The motivation for this study was due to several encounters of a lack of communication between the leader and the follower in federal agencies. Conducting a study based on real-life experiences of leaders in business organizations enhances the experience roles of leaders. The researcher interacts with leaders and their followers within federal government agencies in the financial services industry to establish a rapport. This study confirms the presence of the researcher’s role, as well as shows the personal capabilities of the researcher when presenting the findings (Horlings et al., 2020).
Discussion of the Action Taken by the Researcher. There will be several participants included in the interviews and questionnaires to provide insight into their experiences and outlook as leaders within an organization. The role of the researcher will also include documentation of the recruitment of participants. The interview questions will inquire about their communication experiences in the leadership role with their subordinates, their views on communication and ineffective management, and their views on the causes of a lack of communication. The role of the researcher will be to carefully select participants that have a common interest and relation to the researchers’ study (Creswell et al., 2018). Additionally, the researcher’s role in the research study will be entirely participatory, as the data is collected from interviews as the emergent themes are presented. The findings and recommendations from the study was documented by the researcher, which will hopefully expand the scope of the research study (Kelly et al., 2020).

One of the avenues where researchers must exercise caution is bracketing. Bracketing is an approach that is commonly used in qualitative research and is often seen in research studies between the researcher and the participant (Esmene et al., 2021). According to Creswell (2018), bracketing occurs when the researcher tries their best to keep individual experiences and viewpoints out of the study. For example, if the researcher introduces a personal experience in the study that could be considered bracketing because the researcher has mentioned their personal experience, which can be misinterpreted or influence the results.

Discussion of Bracketing. The bracketing approach was designed as a framework around certain subjects, in addition to recommending that the researcher avoid uncovering and/or acting on their own biases (Esmene et al., 2021). When bracketing is involved, the researcher’s biases have the possibility of affecting the result of the study, which could interfere with the
researcher’s observations in being unbiased and impartial. Transparency can be useful in the research process to enable the researcher to evaluate the facts in the research (Orsini et al., 2020). The researcher provided an explanation about being unbiased on individual experiences that may occur during the research study. To prevent bracketing from being questioned in the study, the researcher documents individual thoughts and personal experiences under separate cover. Creswell (2018) suggested finding other ways to introduce and approach personal understanding into the study so nothing will be misinterpreted.

According to Horlings (2020), the researcher’s role is essential to the research study because the researcher defines how to collect, interprets, and chooses participants. The researcher provided an understanding of the role and actions that will be taken in conducting the study. The researcher also included a discussion of bracketing to address any concerns regarding the researcher’s personal experiences during the study. Creswell (2018) suggested that the researcher set aside any preconceived experiences to gain a clear understanding of the participants’ experiences during the study. The role of the researcher contributes toward the successful completion of the research study.

**Research Methodology**

The research methodology used in the research study is the qualitative method. According to Creswell (2018), the procedure of qualitative research is described as inductive, which insinuates logical thinking related to the researcher’s experiences in gathering and examining data. The research methodology will help with explaining and presenting the data collected (Varela et al., 2021). Research methodology plays a very important role in the research based on various factors, such as the research process, research questions, and other resources that are available (Pathiranage et al., 2020). The research methodology includes a discussion of
the appropriateness of the chosen flexible design, method, and triangulation related to the research study.

**Discussion of Flexible Design**

The research design is very important in a research study because of the significant role it plays in the study process (Pathiranage et al., 2020). According to Yin (2018), the research design is the blueprint for the research, the logical plan for getting from here to there, and the logical sequence that ties the actual data to the research questions and conclusion. Scholars have suggested that research designs address the ‘why’ and ‘what’ and are needed to achieve the success of the research study (Tobi et al., 2018). The research designs that can be used in a research study include fixed, flexible, and mixed methods. The flexible design is often used with the qualitative method because of the flexibility in collecting data and having the ability to adjust the research at any time during the research process (Vitee et al., 2020). The flexible design is known for collecting data in natural settings that are sensitive to people and places (Creswell et al., 2018). The flexible research design allows for processes that are supported by methods and techniques that guide the study (Louw et al., 2018).

This study will be conducted using a flexible case study design using qualitative methods specifically, a multiple case study design. The flexible design will be appropriate for this study because the researcher can expand on the problem statement using multiple data collections while exploring opportunities and strategies to improve organizational performance (Low et al., 2018). This case study design will be appropriate because the study will use multiple data collections, such as interviews, observations, expert opinions, and secondary research, which will include feedback from the data collected from participants. The flexible design will allow the study to be observed from both the individual and organizational levels. The flexible design will
be ideal for this study because data will be collected in natural settings like organizations, and sensitive people can be associated within the leadership and employee pool of organizations (Creswell et al., 2018).

**Discussion of Qualitative Method**

The research method that will be used for this study is the qualitative method. The processes that are involved in case studies are very important to qualitative researchers (Azadi et al., 2017). According to Yin (2018), the qualitative method is used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in detail using real-life experience. The qualitative research method has a way of improving existing research, specifically for investigating the research subject (Ullrich et al., 2020). This type of exploratory approach can give a study flexibility. Qualitative research can give a verbal and visual depiction of leadership within an organization (Orel et al., 2021).

The qualitative method was the most appropriate choice because this method allows the researcher to thoroughly explain the data collected, allows for feedback during the research period, and is frequently associated with case studies (Vitee et al., 2020). This approach permits researchers to observe, record, and capture the changes that are associated with the research study (Orel et al., 2021). This qualitative case study method will include several empirical materials, such as interviews and personal experiences to help get a better understanding of the research study (Johnson et al., 2020). The qualitative method will also allow for the exploration of real-life, contemporary through detailed data collection and descriptive data, along with other multiple sources of information (Alpi et al., 2019). Additionally, material that is descriptive and explanatory is better suited for qualitative case studies. The interview method was the best choice to collect and analyze present data to personally explore the human behavior of leaders and help bring the case study to closure (Yin, 2018).
A qualitative approach was chosen because of the assumptions and use of theoretical frameworks that address areas in the study, such as the social or human research problems of individuals or groups (Creswell et al., 2018). This method provides a way for researchers to comprehend the leadership role of distinct qualities and assess the processes that are associated with the leader and their followers (Orel et al., 2021). Researchers have found that qualitative research methods have exceeded expectations by helping them to understand the context, expansion of research questions, and results from descriptive data collection (Kegler et al., 2019). This method also provides informative records and suggestions for future studies (Orel et al., 2021).

**Discussion of Methods for Triangulation**

Researchers have found that the triangulation method is a good way to establish the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the qualitative data collected (Snowdon et al., 2020). According to Farquhar (2020), triangulation is recommended for qualitative case study research and is known for offering validity through discoveries, sources, or methods. Triangulation relies upon the examination of results from qualitative studies to answer the research questions so that there are several potential results, for example, convergence, and complementarity (Morgan, 2019). The triangulation type that will be used for this case study research will be methodological. This method was chosen to improve the validity and credibility of the study. The triangulation method will include multiple methods of data collection, interviews, observations, and questionnaires. If using the triangulation method is successful, results may produce new ways of looking at problems and uncover additional, creditable findings.
**Summary of Research Methodology**

The researcher was able to provide an understanding of the qualitative research methodology used in the research study. According to Creswell (2018), the researcher has a role of bringing value to the study, but the qualitative researcher makes their value known in the study. The researcher discussed how the flexible design and the research method play a significant role in the research study. The researcher elaborated on how various designs could be used in research studies, but the flexible case study design was the most appropriate for this research study based on the data that will be collected. The researcher also discussed how the qualitative method was the most appropriate research method because of the ability to provide a better understanding of qualitative data. The methodological triangulation was discussed as the best fit for this research study because of the capability to improve the validity and credibility of the study. Research methodologies have been crucial to research studies by highlighting different methods and using various approaches to research to provide a better understanding of the problem (Erath et al., 2021).

**Participants**

According to Xu (2020), participation in the research study should be voluntary and participants should be informed of their expected role before their participation. Including participants in research studies has the potential to improve the quality and produce positive outcomes (Nunn et al., 2021). The researcher would like to have approximately 21 participants for this research study, but the number of participants usually revolves around reaching saturation. According to Guest (2020), data saturation was introduced in qualitative research in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss, who defined data saturation as the point at which no additional data can be found in the research. There are many individuals in the financial services industry in the
southeastern part of the U.S. that could be prospective participants in this qualitative research study. All the participants selected for the study will have a past or present work history in the financial industry.

In keeping ethical principles, all participants should be notified that any information obtained regarding their identity will be kept confidential (Faulkner et al., 2021). The participants that will be eligible for the research study will be associated with level five leadership in federal agencies. Level five leaders can be referred to as individuals who have achieved the highest level in the hierarchy of executive capabilities in an organization (Collins, 2001). For example, in federal agencies, those individuals would be the comptroller (level 5), accounting officer (level 4), supervisor (level 3), team leader (level 2), and regular employee that holds the lowest level (level 1). According to Collins (2001), level one makes production capabilities, level two contributes to assisting others, level three organizes others and resources toward effectiveness, level four induces commitment and vision, and level five builds upon personal humility and professional will.

**Population and Sampling**

The population and sampling play a very important role in the results of a research study (Vazquez-Cancela et al., 2021). There will be data collected from a specific group of people within the entire population. That specific group of people is called the sample. According to Creswell (2018), sampling in a qualitative research study should be based on who and what should be sampled, what form of sampling should be taken, and the number of people that should be sampled. The research study will include a discussion of the characteristics of the qualified population and why they are appropriate for this study. The discussion of the population will also
include the size of the qualified population. The research study will focus on the discussion of
the sampling method, frame, desired sample, and sample size.

Discussion of Population.

A population is a group of people within an organization, but only a portion of them will be eligible as a sample (Abdilwohab et al., 2021). For this research study, there will only be participants that are employed in the financial services division because that is where the nature of the problem exists. The eligible population will be comprised of a sample of 21 people. There will be several characteristics attributed to the specific population of this research study. The population consists of males and females of various races, ages, leadership, and non-leadership positions. What made the population eligible to be a part of the study was their role in the financial services industry in federal government agencies. Their role in the organization had to be either in leadership or as a follower. The participants must work in the financial services division. Their positions may include accounting officers, supervisors, team leaders, or regular employees. These eligibility requirements are appropriate for the research study because both the leaders and the followers play a very important role in the communication present within an organization, whether the individual is in a leadership role or is a follower. This will allow the researcher to glean perspectives, experiences, and roadblocks from both males and females of various roles. Using participants in both the leadership and non-leadership roles will allow for comparisons and explorations of experiences to be made based on the data collected from the leader and the follower.

Discussion of Sampling

Qualitative research is becoming very well known as researchers continue to study the science of business organizations (van Rijnsoever, 2017). To help with the process of the
research, a sampling strategy could be used to complete the research study. A sampling strategy allows the selection of information resources (van Rijnsoever, 2017). Selecting the right sampling strategy is essential to provide an in-depth study of the research questions (Snow, 2020). After researching the various sampling types that could be used for qualitative research, purposive sampling was chosen because this method will allow the participants to be chosen based on the judgment of the researcher and the characteristics of the population (Creswell et al., 2018).

The sample frame has an important role in a research study. The sample frame is very important because it provides a list of all items you would like to study, including the participants and their contact information (Arora et al., 2021). For example, if there were 20 participants in a research study, the frame will include the names of those 20 people. The sampling frame is appropriate to use because Sarchil (2020) suggested the frame illustrates the best of the population during the selection process. The sampling frame is different from other samples because the focus is on recognizing the list of participants. The sampling frame will consist of a combination of leaders and followers who work in the financial services industry in the southeastern side of the United States.

In this qualitative research study, a sampling method will be used in the selection of interview participants (Ak et al., 2021). Purposive sampling was chosen for this research study. Purposive sampling, also known as purposeful sampling, is a strategy commonly used in qualitative research (Creswell et al., 2018). According to Creswell (2018), the reason that this type of sampling is widely used is because of the selection process of participants in a research study. This method was appropriate for the research study because the researcher wanted to make the selection of participants in the research study. In using purposive sampling, the
characteristics of the participants are usually identified before the data is collected (Setyawan et al., 2019). According to Snow (2020), purposive sampling is a good method to use when choosing to conduct interviews and questionnaires. Ames (2019) asserted that using the purposive sampling method will also allow the researcher to address concerns about relevance and adequacy.

According to Ak (2021), in a qualitative research study, there are no specific guidelines in determining the sampling size; instead, the most important aspect is reaching data saturation. The sample size will be determined once the researcher reaches saturation. Data saturation has become very popular over the years because of the wider application of terms and concepts (Guest et al., 2020). The chosen sample size is appropriate based on the number of leaders and followers that work in the financial management division in this specific federal agency and the nature of the research questions. According to Snow (2020), there should be in-depth answers to the research questions. There will be plenty of data collected to satisfy the requirements of the qualitative study. Sample size can help in reaching saturation. Dworkin (2012) defined saturation as the collection of data that can no longer add any new information or data to the research study. Reaching data saturation will show that a thorough examination was conducted, that there was enough data to clarify and compare relationships, and that negative data was explored and ruled out (Dworkin, 2012). The data collected will be kept secure and confidential, stored on a flash drive where only one individual can gain access.

**Summary of Population and Sampling**

In addition to the other elements of this research study, emphasis was placed on the participants, population, and sampling. The discussion of the participants included a discussion of the individuals that are eligible to be a part of this research study. The discussion illustrated
that the chosen leaders and followers were eligible because they worked in the financial services division of a federal agency. The characteristics and size of the population were identified as the number of people and the size of the population. The eligible population size will be 21 people. The research study also included a discussion of the sampling method, frame, and size. A purposive sampling method was chosen for this research study. This method was found to be appropriate for the research study based on the judgments of the researcher. The sample size was recognized as being important in reaching saturation. Only one individual will have access to the sample. The participants, population, and sampling will help with generalizing the results obtained from the research study.

**Data Collection & Organization**

Qualitative research studies require data collection that involves a sampling strategy, ethical issues, a strategy for recording information, addressing field problems, and keeping data secure (Creswell et al., 2018). A system must also be created to organize the data that is collected. This is known as data organization or data management (Creswell et al., 2018). One of the most exciting things about conducting a research study is collecting data because this is when the study comes to life. According to Mahlamäki (2020), the researcher must be motivated to collect good and quality data. Creswell (2018) stated that regardless of the approach, one of the most important aspects of data collection is to make sure that the data is collected ethically. Reaching data saturation is another important process in the data collection and analysis phase. Guest (2020) described saturation as new incoming data that is presented in the study that produces minimum or new information to address the research questions. The data collection and organization section will include the data collection plan, a discussion of the instruments used,
and the data organization plan. For qualitative data collection, the focus should be on the types of data collected and the techniques for gathering them (Creswell et al., 2018).

**Data Collection Plan**

Beebe (2017) described the data collection plan as the words or numbers that represent the data and the documentation of how file naming, version control, and backups are handled during the collection of data and building of the archive. Dawson (2019) believed that there should be a plan of what data should be collected and recorded before the start of the research. Data will be collected in the form of an interview and observation process. According to Dawson (2019), there should be a well-defined goal of what the researcher aims to accomplish. Interviews will be conducted by using the research questions as a guide.

The data collection plan should include a timeline of when the collection of data will start and end (Dawson et al., 2019). The data collection plan began with verbally contacting or emailing the eligible population to explain the purpose of the research study (See Appendix C). The population resided in the southeastern region of the United States. A permission letter sent to the organization was included in the research study just in case some information needed to be sent to the participant at their work email (See Appendix E). After receiving responses from the population, purposeful sampling was used to collect the research sample from each participant. A consent form was obtained from each participant before starting the research (See Appendix D). Since all desired locations are currently shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic, personal face-to-face interviews were not possible. An open-ended, semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant via email. After all the interviews were conducted, the data was collected, gathered, and added to the research study. There were also notes taken and observations made from the follow-up interview questions between the leaders and followers.
This data collection plan was appropriate for this research project to ensure that the best quality of data was obtained from participants so that they were well informed regarding of the purpose of the research study. Anticipated issues, commonly known as field issues of data collected were included and noted in the data collection plan (Creswell et al., 2018). Member checking allows participants to check the accuracy of the data collected after the interview and in some cases approve the researcher to move forward (Iivari, 2018). The notification of member checking was included in the initial notification letter to the population. The participants were asked if they would like to be included in the member checking process. In addition to member checking, follow-up interviews were conducted to see if additional information was needed from the initial interviews. Creswell (2018) suggested informing the interviewee that additional information may be needed to complete the interview at the beginning of the interview. During the interview process, participants were informed that a short follow-up interview would be conducted. The participants agreed to a follow-up interview, so follow-up email questions were sent to each participant. The participants stated that the data collected from the initial interview questions was sufficient to use in the research study.

**Instruments**

Some of the best participant experiences can be explored using qualitative instruments (Scheffelaar et.al, 2018). The data collection instrument used in this research study was the interview question guide. The primary investigator for this research study is the researcher. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative researchers prefer to gather their information with face-to-face interactions by creating an instrument made themselves. Data was collected from interviews conducted with participants. Interview guide questions were created by the researcher for the population. The interview guides were specifically created for leaders and followers of
the organization in connection to the research questions and the problem statement. Questions were asked based on participant experiences as either a leader or follower in their organization. The interview questions address how leadership communication plays an active role with leaders and followers in the financial services industry. The interview questions also address the leaders’ and followers’ thoughts on leadership communication and how leadership communication contributes to ineffective management (See Appendix A & B). There were two interview guides created, one for the leader and one for the follower because some of the interview questions were specific either to the leader or follower (See Appendix A & B). There are no surveys or archive data used for this research study.

**Data Organization Plan**

With extensive use of computers and large databases being used by qualitative researchers, data organization has become very popular (Creswell et al., 2018). To facilitate the management of data collected, scholars suggest there should be proper techniques in place to handle the organization of data (Wang et al., 2020). The data organization plan is one of the first steps of data management. Data organization is when the researcher organizes the data that has been collected and compiles it into files with a file naming system (Creswell et al., 2018).

Scholars believe that there are preferred principles that work well with qualitative research. According to Creswell (2018), researchers should keep backfiles, use advanced technology, maintain a master list of data collected, and secure all participant information. All interviews were transcribed and filed by name and date. Consent was obtained from the participants, and all collected data was retained in a secure file (See Appendix D). All written notes from interviews and observations were placed in a secure file by name and date. The data was organized and maintained in a secure database. This organization plan was appropriate for
this research project so the researcher would be in a good position regarding locating the data quickly when needed (Dastyar et al., 2017). This data organizational plan prevents any data from being lost or deleted in error.

**Summary of Data Collection & Organization**

Qualitative research requires that data collection and organization be part of the research study. According to Creswell (2018), when thinking about qualitative data collection, the focus should be on what types of data will be collected and the techniques for gathering them. This section included a discussion of the data collection plan, instruments, and the data organization plan. Data were collected from eligible participants that were recruited and accepted part of the research study (See Appendix C). Data were collected from interviews, reflected notes, and observations obtained by the researcher. All data were transcribed and filed on a computer by name and date and kept in a secure location to prevent any data from being lost or deleted in error.

**Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis entails organizing and representing the data, transforming, coding themes, and forming an interpretation (Creswell et al., 2018). Scholars have indicated that the size of data has become a topic of conversation due to the growth of data produced and stored by various resources (Al-Khateeb et al., 2021). This is just one of the reasons why data analysis has become so important in research studies. Data analysis plays a significant role in identifying the features of the data in an organized manner (Abukmeil et al., 2021). The data analysis section will include a discussion of emergent ideas, coding themes, interpretations, data representations, and analysis for triangulation. To assist with qualitative data analysis, researchers use computer software programs to help with coding data.
Emergent Ideas

Creswell (2018) highlighted how memoing is important during the data analysis process because memoing formulates the ideas as the researcher discovers the theme. During the data analysis stage, the researcher kept reflective notes about anticipated themes and other information obtained from various resources, such as interviews, observations, and reading materials. This is often referred to as memoing to the researcher so that any new data received will be documented, analyzed, and added to the existing data later. Creswell (2018) suggested making notes while reading and summarizing notes from the field. In this research study, memoing was used during the interview, follow-up and observation process. According to Minas (2018), the process of memoing allow researchers to freely store ideas and register emerging connections during data collection.

Coding Themes

Coding is a part of the qualitative data analysis stage of the research study that entails explaining the data collected (Creswell et al., 2018). Coding themes begins the process of addressing the individual experiences of the participants. To help with understanding the data collected during the interview and observation process with participants, thematic coding is often introduced into the research study. According to Creswell (2018), codes assist with describing, classifying, and interpreting data that lead to comprehensive descriptions seen by the researcher, the application of codes, the development of themes, and an explanation of the findings. The coding process entails gathering the data into small categories of information, finding the evidence for the codes from various databases used in the study, and assigning a label to the code (Creswell et al., 2018). The purpose of the coding process is to improve the quality of the data analysis (Skjott et al., 2019).
The purpose of doing coding is to explore the roles coding plays, the combination of approaches to coding, the phases and cycles of coding, as well as to display data and to explore the relationship between coding and interpretation (Linnebert et al., 2019). The coding process entails classifying codes into themes. According to Creswell (2018), classifying codes entails taking the qualitative information apart and looking for categories or themes of information. The next step in classifying codes is to identify the themes that consist of several codes to form a common idea (Creswell et al., 2018). The goal of classifying codes is to winnow the data to reduce the size so that the themes are manageable to write into a final narrative (Creswell et al., 2018).

**Interpretations**

As data is collected and analyzed, qualitative research requires the data to be interpreted. Developing and assessing interpretations is about making sense of the data collected and going much further than the codes and themes by making judgments of what is important in the themes and categories created by the analysis (Creswell et al., 2018). According to Korolainen (2020), the materials, analysis, and creative work of the researcher may help with assessing and interpreting the data and meeting any challenges that arise. Additionally, qualitative researchers suggest that interpretations made by the researcher can be linked and compared with existing data developed from others to locate patterns seen in the data, so those patterns can be clearly articulated (Creswell et al., 2018).

**Data Representation**

After developing and assessing interpretations, the data is represented by the researcher by creating a package or visual image of the information (Creswell et al., 2018). This information can be presented via a table, matrix, or hierarchical tree diagram that can compare or
cross-reference categories or show various levels of abstraction for useful data displays (Creswells et al., 2018). The data analysis process is completed and organized in the researcher’s reports until the researcher is ready to present the findings and give their results (Theron, 2015).

**Analysis for Triangulation**

Researchers have found that the triangulation method is a good way to establish the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the qualitative data collected, such as interviews and observations (Snowdon et al., 2020). According to Farquhar (2020), triangulation is recommended for qualitative case study research and is known for offering validity through discoveries, sources, or methods. Triangulation relies upon the examination of results from qualitative studies to answer the research questions so that there are several potential results (for example, convergence, and complementarity) (Morgan, 2019). According to Fernandez (2021), quantitative triangulation analysis is more appropriate for survey data to obtain quantitative results or for questions that arose from the analysis of quantitative data. The triangulation used for this case study research is the methodological type. This method was chosen to improve the validity and credibility of the study and because multiple methods of data collection can be combined, such as interviews and observational data. This case study used a triangulation analysis using a combination of interview and observation data obtained during data collection. Creswell (2018) suggested that using this method can clear up any misunderstandings of themes or perspectives. Since member checking and triangulation can be associated with trustworthiness, the interview and observation data would be a good source for triangulating information. If the researcher finds any evidence in the interview and observation data during this process in the case study, this would be considered triangulating information and validity would be provided for the findings (Creswell et al., 2018). Successful triangulation results may
produce new ways of looking at problems and uncover additional creditable findings from the interview and observation data.

**Summary of Data Analysis**

In addition to data collection, qualitative research requires the data collected to be analyzed. According to Creswell (2018), there should be a data analysis process that is followed to achieve successful results. This section started by including a discussion of emergent ideas that explained when memoing should be used. The process of coding themes was recognized for improving the quality of the data analysis (Skjott et al., 2019). The data analysis process included a discussion of developing and assessing interpretations along with variations of how the researcher can present the data. The plan for analysis of triangulation for this case study was provided and determined that the interview and observation data was an appropriate source for triangulating information. Successful triangulation results may produce new ways of identifying creditable findings from the interview and observation data.

**Reliability and Validity**

Reliability and validity are important in qualitative research because of the quality they add to research studies. According to Yin (2018), reliability can be defined as demonstrating the operations of a study; for example, duplicating the data collection procedures to arrive at the same findings or conclusions. According to Nascimento (2018), the goal of adopting validation consists of an integrative perspective and protecting studies from taking the incorrect route and results. Reliability and validity techniques can lead to trustworthiness in analysis and the representation of findings (Rose et al., 2020). This research study will discuss the reliability, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of data analysis. The research study
will also discuss validity, which focus on the accuracy and objectivity of the data collected. Bracketing techniques are also explored to address bias during data analysis.

**Reliability.**

Evaluating the reliability of the research results is very important to qualitative research because reliability gives details about the soundness of the research related to the results (Sevilmis et al., 2021). According to Yin (2018), the most common way to approach reliability is to make procedures as clear as possible and to conduct the research as if someone is watching every step that is made. Rose (2020) agreed that the soundness of the research is important in qualitative research especially concerning which methods are chosen, applied, and implemented. According to Egan (2019), the evaluation of the concepts and ensuring the reliability of those concepts through saturation where continuous analysis and no new data or themes are identified ensures the credibility and confirmability of the research. Reliability aims to minimize the errors and biases in a research study (Yin, 2018).

The plan for the researcher to ensure reliability is to make sure consistency and clarity of the research are being addressed so other researchers can undertake the same research methods (Rose et al., 2020). Reliability will be controlled by using the data that was collected, applying data organization, and implementing data analysis. The selection of participants in the research study will be consistent in relating to qualifications. A credible research study uses various research methods. For example, in this research, methods such as interview guides and observations will be used. The processes and the findings will be reported and documented in detail so that future researchers can duplicate the work to obtain dependability. The researcher will ask questions to ensure reliability, such as could another researcher conduct similar research using the same description provided, can the research project be replicated, and can the same
results be produced if the research is conducted again (Rose et al., 2020)? By asking these questions, the researcher ensure that reliability in this research study is credible, transferable, and dependable. To obtain confirmability, measures will be taken in the research study to ensure that conclusions from the qualitative research come directly from the experiences of the participants and not from the experiences of the researcher (Abdalla et al., 2018).

Validity.

According to Hayashi (2019), the validity of research and its results are required to provide evidence of qualitative research. Validity is an important element of qualitative research in many disciplines, which is why trustworthiness is often associated with validity (Rose et al., 2020). Scholars see validity as an evolving construct that provides an understanding of traditional and contemporary perspectives which is of great importance to qualitative researchers during the research process (Creswell et al., 2018). Validity in qualitative research ensures that operational measures for the concepts are being studied such as tools, processes, and data (Yin, 2018). According to Creswell (2018), validation is known as a process that researchers use to adopt certain strategies to document the accuracy of their research study. Member checking is often associated with the validity process because of the participant verification and accuracy of data collected (Naidu et al., 2018). Hayashi identified several types of validity for qualitative studies, but the most widely used are descriptive, interpretative, and theoretical. Descriptive research is described as providing accuracy and objectivity of the data collected, interpretative focus on ensuring that the researcher is accurately understanding the participant’s experiences, and theoretically ensures that results from the study fit with the data collected (Yin, 2018). This research study shows how a validation strategy through the researcher’s lens corroborate evidence through triangulation (Creswell et al., 2018). The research study will explain how the
researcher may use the various types of validity during the study. To increase the trustworthiness through validation, internal and external validity was explored.

In this research study, the responses from the interview guide and notes from the observations will be used as corroborating evidence to further explain anticipated themes. If evidence is found in various sources and documented as a theme, the researcher will consider this triangulating information and the findings will be considered validated (Creswell et al., 2018). To increase the trustworthiness through validation, the interview guide responses and observation notes will be used to establish internal validity. This is where member checking plays a vital role in the validity process. Taking the results back to the participant may constitute and explore the credibility and validity of practice (Naidu et al., 2018). This will determine if the analyses represent reality or external validity, which will indicate if the analyses compare to other populations (Rose et al., 2020). For this research study, this researcher intends to focus on descriptive validity by using the interview guide to help with answering what, where, and when questions of the study. Interpretive validity will be a significant part of the research study as the researcher interprets all responses made by the participants from the interview data while maintaining objectivity and bracketing, which will set aside any personal perspectives of the researcher. During the research study, there will be a determination whether the results from the interview data and observations will be enough to demonstrate validity in reaching data saturation.

**Bracketing.**

One of the avenues where researchers must exercise caution is bracketing. Bracketing is an approach that is commonly used in qualitative research and is often seen in research studies between the researcher and the participant (Esmene et al., 2021). According to Creswell (2018),
bracketing occurs when the researcher keeps their personal experiences and viewpoints out of the study. For example, if the researcher introduces one of their personal experiences in the study, this may be considered bracketing because the researcher has mentioned their personal experience, which can be misinterpreted or can influence the results. The bracketing approach was made to design a framework around certain subjects, in addition to recommending that the researcher avoid uncovering and/or acting on their own biases (Esmene et al., 2021). When bracketing is involved, the researcher’s biases have the possibility of affecting the result of the study, which interferes with the researcher’s observations in being unbiased and impartial.

To prevent bracketing from being questioned in the study, the researcher documents their thoughts and personal experiences under separate cover. Transparency is used throughout the research process so that the researcher can easily evaluate the facts in the research (Orsini et al., 2020). There were no judgments made about the data collected in this research study. Even though the researcher will keep their experiences separate, Creswell (2018) suggested finding various ways to introduce and approach personal understanding into the study, so nothing is misinterpreted.

**Summary of Reliability and Validity.**

This part of the research study explored the key aspects of reliability and validity in qualitative research. The reason for including reliability was to provide a discussion on finding credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in the data collected. Trustworthiness was identified as a key element in reliability and validity analysis in qualitative research (Rose et al., 2020). The purpose of including validity was to explain the concept of objectivity and the accuracy of the data collected. Several types of validity were described to ensure validity in the research. Triangulation information can be validated if the evidence is
found in data analysis. During the research study, there will be a determination if enough data was collected to reach data saturation. Creswell (2018) suggested finding other ways to approach individual experiences within the study to prevent bracketing.

**Summary of Section 2 and Transition**

This is the second section of the research case study that summarized the research project. Qualitative researchers engage in several processes of collecting data for the research case study (Creswell et al., 2018). The research project identified several important factors that were significant to the research study (Durmic, 2020). This section gets closer to addressing the research problem of why the lack of communication in leadership exists. The research project began with a purpose statement that provided the intent or the need for the study. The purpose of this qualitative case study research is to understand and evaluate the factors regarding why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry.

This section was more concerned with the data collection process and organization of the research case study. The role of the researcher was introduced to explain the actions that would be taken to conduct the study, which included a discussion of how bracketing will prevent personal bias. The research methodology chosen for this project was the qualitative method. The qualitative method was the best choice for explaining and presenting the data collected (Varela et al., 2021). The flexible design was chosen as the preferred design because of the flexibility in collecting the data and the ability to adjust the research at any time during the research period (Vitee et al., 2020). There was a discussion on how triangulation will contribute to the research project and this method would establish the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the qualitative data collected (Snowdon et al., 2020). A discussion of how the participants were chosen along
with the appropriateness of the sampling and the population, was included. The data collection and analysis part of the research project included the data collection and organization, data analysis, and reliability and validity of the data collected. This section concluded with an overview of how the data collection plan, instruments, data organization plan, emergent ideas, coding themes, interpretations, data representations, and bracketing played a role in the research project. The goal of this section was to detail each step process of the data collection process.

The next section of the research study will be called the presentation of findings. The purpose of section three is to present the data that was collected. The presentation of findings will include the discovered themes, an interpretation of these themes, representation and visualization of the data, and a discussion of the relationship of the findings that will highlight important areas from the research proposal. The key areas will include the research questions, conceptual framework, anticipated themes, the literature, and the problem. The presentation of findings will demonstrate and provide support for the research case study (Li et al., 2019) and makes the entire study cohesive (Creswell et al., 2018). Section three of the research case study will conclude with a summary of the findings that will support the problem and purpose statement, research questions, and important conclusions obtained from the findings.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

This section will present an overview of the application to professional practice and implications for change. This section will consist of a discussion of the findings from the research study, as well as how those findings relate to the problem of the lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry within the federal government in the southeastern region of the U.S. The presentation of findings will be addressed with an emphasis on the research questions, collection of data, and the data analysis used in the research study. A
discussion of the application to professional practice, recommendations for further study, and reflections will be presented based on the results of the findings. This section will conclude with the researchers’ results and the study’s conclusions.

**Overview of the Study**

The researcher conducted this study to gain an understanding of why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry within the southeastern region of the United States. The data collected for the research study was in the form of interview questions that were emailed to 12 individual participants. There were 11 open-ended questions for the leaders and six open-ended questions for the followers. The follow-up interview consisted of four questions that required a response of yes or no. NVivo was used to transcribe the interview responses verbatim. Once the researcher analyzed the interview responses, the follow-up interview questions were sent to the participants to allow them to make changes if needed. The researcher also took notes while reviewing the interview responses and documented the findings under the reflective notes found in the observational protocol Table 4.

Participants were chosen using the purposeful sampling method. Data collected in the study included participants who have experience working in the financial services industry in federal government agencies. Participants consisted of eight followers and four leaders that shared individual experiences and examples of communication issues they encountered while working in this industry as supporting evidence to their interview responses. The researcher asked the participants about member checking during the follow-up email interview questions. Some participants agreed to participate in the member checking process while others chose not to participate. One of the questions states that the researcher had read their interview responses and
was requesting permission to move forward with the data collected from the participant. All participants gave the researcher permission to move forward with their interview responses. The data collected were transcribed in NVivo for coding, where themes were discovered and documented.

**Presentation of the Findings**

This portion of the research study provides the findings of the data collected for the research study. The presentation of the findings includes interviews that were conducted with 12 participants. The plan for the research study was to get participants that were either in a leadership role or a follower position. This research study consists of four participants in the leadership role and eight participants in follower positions. Although gender was not a requirement, both males and females were included in the sample of the study. Participants were current and previous employees that currently work or previously worked in the financial services industry in the southeastern region of the United States. Several themes were discovered during the collection of data and will be presented in this research study. Themes were discovered and analyzed as they were related to the detailed discussion of the literature review. The participants’ human behavior and interview guide responses were noted by the researcher. Like previous studies, this study will show similarities and differences in the findings that relate to the literature. The presentation of findings will include the themes discovered, an interpretation of the themes, representation and visualization of the data, the relationship of the findings, and will conclude with a summary of the findings. The interview guide questions used can be found in Appendix A and B.
**Themes Discovered**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to understand and evaluate the factors of why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry. The findings in the research study were based on the results from data collected and new themes found from coding that was established from participant interviews. The purpose of themes is to gather broad units of information that include a series of codes gathered to form common ideas to use in a study (Creswell et al., 2018). Participants in this study frequently used terms such as “clear directions and processes” as major issues within their organizations. The researcher used participants’ lived experiences as accurate data for analysis. After the data was collected, the researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim to capture the participants’ own words for the preparation of data analysis. There was a total of two themes that emerged during data analysis. The themes discovered during data analysis were clear direction and organizational processes.

Table 1

*Themes Discovered from the Research Findings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme One</th>
<th>Clear Direction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme Two</td>
<td>Organizational Processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theme One: Clear Direction. Establishing communication within an organization is key and is emphasized as a priority for effective leadership (Jacobsen et al., 2021). The theme of clear direction was discovered from participant interview responses. According to Verweire (2019), when the direction is set, clear boundaries are first set for the organization and then for the departments. Transformational leadership was associated with internal communication
because of the awareness that is shown between leaders and their followers (Jacobsen et al., 2021). There is a close association between human behavior and communication, with an emphasis on increasing awareness of developing a vision and then translating it to clear organizational goals (Jacobsen et al., 2021). Therefore, this theme was important to address in the current study because of the contributing factor and impediments related to the lack of communication in leadership.

Although explanations from participants varied, the responses regarding needing clear direction were consistent among both leaders and followers. Many of the participants claimed not receiving clear direction from leadership as one of the factors that frequently caused a lack of communication. Participant followers indicated that not receiving clear directions or instructions interfered with getting their work done. Govgirl65 indicated that different directives were given to team members at different times. Follower A explained that not communicating the correct protocol caused errors and rework. Follower C shared his experience that when assignments were given, there was no clear direction on how to complete the assignment. There were similar responses from leader participants as well. Participant leader Alice B Nice also indicated that clear direction is not filtered down the chain of command. Kim Jones explained that in her workplace, leadership rarely defined what direction they wanted to take on assignments, which led to a lack of communication between the team and leadership. The chart below represents the percentage of participant leaders and followers who said that clear direction is an ongoing problem that causes a lack of communication within their organization.
Theme Two: Organizational Processes. Organizational processes were another theme that discovered during the data collection part the research study. Organizations are trying to refine their management structure by improving their processes to create a flexible and better work environment as requested by employees (Kopina, 2019). Trust and organizational processes are those that uphold an organization while communication provides a sense of security for the organization (Gara et al., 2020).

Communication has been identified as a strategic element in organizational processes (Gara et al., 2020). Participants commented several times throughout their interviews about how the organization’s processes affected communication between followers and leadership. Participants indicated the importance of communicating the correct information in the financial services industry because of the large sums of funding that are being handled. Followers and leaders consistently stated how processes continuously change. They also added how those
processes were not communicated well or sometimes not communicated at all. For example, participant follower Lola Bunny noted a scenario where staff completed a large part of a project that had to be submitted to another department for approval. The new process was not communicated to staff well, which caused the submissions to be returned, and some parts duplicated. Participant follower E explained that one process was explained to one part of the organization and another process was explained to another part of the organization, which caused a delay in work internally and externally. The lack of communication regarding clear direction and organizational processes caused confusion between the leader and follower. Participant leaders in this study have acknowledged deficiencies in communicating organizational processes in the federal government and have provided several examples of these issues. Participant leader Anna indicated that she has taken the time to research, learn, and apply the tools that are necessary to improve an organization. According to Abad-Segura (2021), the training of organizational processes can lead to changes in individuals and provide collective energies to create a more efficient state. The chart below represents how many of the leaders and followers in this research study indicated that ineffective and unproductive organizational processes caused a lack of communication within their organization.
Based on participant feedback from the collection of data, the researcher gained a better understanding of how clear direction and organizational processes play a significant role in communication within the workplace. The researcher also found that transformational leadership could be a significant role in the financial services industry if leaders would like to improve internal communication between and among their leaders and followers (Jacobsen et al., 2021). This research study provided insight into the problem of clear direction within the organizations and how this problem has failed both leaders and followers. Exploring the aspects of clear direction and organizational processes may be important to consider for future research.

**Interpretation of the Themes**

The themes anticipated from this research study consisted of the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective management within the organization, lack of communication from leadership in the financial services industry, and leadership in federal agencies. Discovered themes were
found during the coding process. These themes were identified using NVivo, based on comparisons linked to existing data to locate patterns. NVivo consolidated the interview responses so that the researcher could interpret the data easier. This allowed the researcher to analyze the themes using the grouping process developed by NVivo. Based on similarities in the interview responses, the themes discovered were clear direction and organizational processes. The interpretation of the themes was that to improve a lack of communication in leadership in the federal government, leadership should work on providing more clear direction and do a better job at communicating organizational processes to their followers. Making these changes in the organization has the probability of showing followers that communication issues within their organization can improve and that they have leadership support.

**Representation and Visualization of the Data**

The representation and visualization of data represent some or all the data found in the research study by creating a visual image of information (Creswell et al., 2018). The researcher was able to use the interview responses and NVivo to confirm and support the anticipated and discovered themes. The researcher presented a hierarchical tree diagram to provide a visual of the raw data, beginning with the leaders, followed by the followers, and ending with anticipated and discovered themes. Most importantly, all data should be properly aligned to show the relationship between the leader and followers, as well as between the anticipated and discovered themes (de Rooi et al., 2018).
Figure 4. Example of a Hierarchical Tree Diagram

The chart below is a diagram showing the 12 participants that provided interview responses for the presentation of findings. The chart represents a visual of how many participant leaders and followers were a part of the study. These leaders and followers have provided explanations and lived experiences documented in the study. The researcher used a cluster analysis to show the group of participants that shared similar experiences.
Figure 5. Diagram of Participants and Collection Method

Relationship of the Findings

Each participant provided interview responses to support why there is a lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry in the federal government. The
responses included each participant’s perspective regarding the interview questions. The leadership interview guide portion consisted of 11 open-ended questions, while the follower interview guide portion consisted of six open-ended questions. The interview questions that guided this research study can be found in Appendices A and B. The relationship of findings will include a detailed discussion of how the findings relate to the research questions, conceptual framework, anticipated themes, literature, and problem.

The researcher used the purposeful sampling method to select the best individuals for the study. Participants for research studies are used to collect data usually in the form of interviews (Yin, 2018). This research study utilized participants that work or previously worked in the financial services industry in the federal government. There was no age requirement, and as such participants’ ages ranged between 18 and 65 years. Participants consisted of both males and females. All participants have at least two years of experience and were qualified to participate in this research study. Research study participants were primarily in the role of followers due to there being significantly more followers than leaders in the organization. Each participant gave their consent to be a part of the study before the interview questions were provided to them. The researcher received enough data to get what was needed for the research study. Interview responses were then analyzed and reviewed for the study. Tables 2 and 3 describe participant leaders and followers. Each table includes the pseudonym, gender, position, and role of each participant included in the research study.
Table 2

*Participants in a Leader Role*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kim Jones</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First Line Supervisor</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice B Nice</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First Line Supervisor</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Second Line Supervisor</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

*Participants in a Follower Role*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Govgirl65</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Financial Management Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Financial Management Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Financial Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Financial Management Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower D</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Financial Management Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookie Baker</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Financial Management Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower E</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Financial Management Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lola Bunny</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Financial Analyst</td>
<td>Follower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This qualitative research study will include research questions that will assist in finding answers to the problem of a lack of communication in leadership within the financial services industry in federal agencies. The research questions are related to the problem because the questions focus on leaders’ lack of communication in the federal government. The research questions consist of three open-ended questions that are associated with the interview guide responses and the general problem of lack of communication in leadership. The researcher tried to fill in some of the existing gaps in the literature by using interview responses to add value to the development of the study (Hargreaves et al., 2020). The findings will be discussed and used to address each of the research questions.

**RQ1:** In what ways does leadership communication play an important role with employees in the organization? As part of the research study, the researcher wanted to include what followers expected regarding leadership communication, as well as their perspective on
how leadership communication plays a key role with employee satisfaction within an organization.

The findings from the interview guide question responses were similar regarding expectations from their leader. Out of the eight participants, half of them stated that they expect clear and concise communication and direction. Participants Govgirl65, Follower A, and Cookie Baker indicated that they do not have any communication issues with their current leaders. The researcher noted that all three of these participants have the same leadership, which may be helpful information later in the research study. The remaining follower participants clearly stated that there were issues with leadership communicating direction and they would like to be well informed of expectations and directions, as well as receive open communication regarding projects and informational material. Each participant answered yes to communication being very important in an organization. Three out of the eight participants indicated that communication is important, especially when you work in an environment where changes regularly occur. They also added that leadership communication is needed daily for clear direction on assignments. The interpretation of the interview responses to this research question was that each participant expected many of the same things from their leader, but most of them have not addressed the issue with their leadership regarding the present a lack of communication.

Participants were consistent in believing that their role as a leader is essential to their followers in the organization and that communication is a significant part of that role. They also agreed that communication is important to the success of the organization. Many acknowledged that their role as leader depends on providing clarity, understanding, motivation, and team building. Participant Anna explained that she must understand the situation before communicating with others. Participant Leader A thought that the crucial factors of
communication in leadership included engaging, listening, and guiding, while participant Kim Jones believes that her role as a leader affects not only her followers but all levels of the organization. Kim Jones also stated that communication is needed daily to effectively manage. Although participant Alice B Nice did not pinpoint any specific responsibility in her responses regarding communication, she was clear that communication is vital to her followers’ successes and failures. All participants mentioned how communication played a key role in their followers’ success. The researcher found that leaders believed that building trust was necessary for followers to accomplish the goals of the organization. Based on the interview responses, each participant had similar responses regarding the importance of communication in the organization. The researcher found that leadership communication is important and is regularly needed for a healthy work environment. Leaders believed that communication and their role as leaders are essential to the organization. The researcher was able to associate the interview responses to this research question.

**RQ2**: What does a lack of communication in leadership mean in an organization? The results from the findings showed that all responses to the interview questions regarding this question were consistent. Every participant had encountered a communication issue within the organization. Participant Anna indicated that she needs to do her part to address the issue by getting to the source of the problem, while Kim Jones believed that changing her leadership approach is a solution. Although Anna and Kim Jones’s responses were short and phrased differently, the interpretation was that the follower’s well-being was taken into consideration in the decision-making process. Each participant leader commented on their leadership style and explained that the needs of the follower were important enough to incorporate into their
leadership style. The responses from all participant leaders led the researcher to believe that a lack of communication in leadership had great meaning to their role as a leader.

**RQ2a.** How does a lack of communication in leadership contribute to ineffective management in the organization? The results from the research study showed that all participant leaders agreed that a lack of communication in leadership can lead to ineffective management. Responses from leaders explained that a lack of communication can lead to confusion, stress, errors, conflict, rework, poor morale, and a negative environment. All of these factors can result in the organization being unproductive. In addition to the participants being on the same page, an interview question was asked of the leaders to give the researcher an idea of the perceived character of leaders in the federal government. Each leader expressed how they felt about their role as a leader. Participant Anna described herself as being confident and striving to make a positive difference in the organization. Participant leader Alice B Nice thought of herself as a leader, supporter, and trainer without flaws. Participant Leader A described herself as a goal setter and visionary, as well as a positive role model. Participant Kim Jones described herself as a leader that helped people accomplish goals. Out of the four participant leaders interviewed, each leader expressed how they had a responsibility to influence, mentor, guide, and develop a group of people. Participants Anna, Leader A, and Kim Jones used the term “influence” about their following, while Alice B Nice chose to use the term “development” in describing her responsibility to others. Not only did they express their responsibilities as leaders, but based on their responses, the interpretation was that they felt that they were given the opportunity and privilege to encourage others to mirror excellence through inspiration and motivation. Even though the findings showed a lack of communication resulted in ineffective management within the organization, these participant leaders knew what is required to achieve effective leadership.
The results from the findings also showed that leaders agreed that a lack of communication can lead to ineffective management, but they know that they have a responsibility to their followers to make sure that does not happen.

The study also showed results for this question from the follower’s perspective. All but one participant follower answered yes to a lack of communication in leadership having the potential to lead to ineffective management. The overall interpretation of the participants’ responses was that problems would occur between the leader and their followers if a lack of communication were present. Participant Follower C stated that if there were a lack of communication in leadership, ineffective management would not occur, but based on his response, the interpretation led the researcher to believe that he meant to answer that ineffective management would occur. Participant Follower C indicated that management only cared about themselves at any given expense. If this was his experience, the interpretation from his response showed that he believed this was an ineffective management style.

**RQ3**: What are some of the reasons for a lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry? The research findings indicated many reasons for the lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry. The point of this question was to determine if leaders believed that stress, a face-paced environment, or other factors in the financial services industry led to a lack of communication in leadership.

Participant leaders agreed that the financial services industry can be stressful, fast-paced, or both. Participant leader Anna believed that stress or a fast-paced environment was not the cause of a lack of communication in leadership. She believed that individuals being placed in the incorrect position missed opportunities to communicate effectively. Participant leaders Alice B Nice and Kim Jones both agreed that stress and a face-paced environment can cause a lack of
communication due to leadership being pulled in multiple directions. Participant Leader A acknowledged that the financial services industry is face-paced, but an environment that is fast paced should not affect the way we communicate.

Most of the participant follower responses were consistent as to their views regarding the reasons that contribute to a lack of communication in the financial services industry. The majority indicated that the financial services industry is stressful, fast-paced, or both. Two of the participants had different opinions regarding the financial services industry. Participant Follower C answered “no” to this question, but indicated that all financial services industries are not stressful, which led the investigator to believe that he had encountered some financial services industries that were stressful. Participant Follower C also mentioned about working in places where peak seasons or year-end periods are not stressful, so that was interpreted that he had worked in financial services industries that were stressful. Participant Follower D mentioned that she did not consider the financial services industry stressful or fast-paced compared to other positions. She indicated that any workplace can be stressful no matter what position one fills.

The results from the study were found to be satisfactory in addressing this research question.

Some of the leaders indicated that their superior was a reason for the lack of communication. Participants Anna, Alice B Nice, and Kim Jones quickly identified that there was a communication issue with their superior and addressed the situation by scheduling a meeting with their superior to address the problem. Participant Leader A acknowledged that the lack of communication with a superior was rare in their agency, but the researcher interpreted her response as though there was an issue at some point. This study aimed to determine if there was a lack of communication in leadership and how leaders addressed the lack of communication problem with their superiors.
Out of the eight participants in the study, all except one indicated that they had encountered a lack of communication with a superior. Govgirl65 did not indicate that she had ever encountered a lack of communication, but the interpretation of her response indicated that she had experienced it because she explained how she addressed the issue in her example. All participants gave examples of issues they had experienced with their superiors. Participants Follower A, Follower B, Follower D, Follower E, Cookie Baker, and Lola Bunny all indicated that the communication issue was never addressed. Participants Follower C and Govgirl65 acknowledged that they addressed the issue. Based on the responses and examples each participant gave, the leaders and followers identified that they are aware that there is a communication problem, within their organization, and some have moved to resolve the issue with their superiors. The researcher found that a lack of communication in leadership still exists in this industry.

The researcher related the findings of the research study to the elements in the conceptual framework demonstrated in Figure 1 of Section 1. The conceptual framework was used during the presentation of findings to illustrate patterns, connections, interactions of factors, and to assist in avenues for research (Payne et al., 2020). As indicated in the framework, the major features of the problem combined with the concepts connected the findings to the research study (Salehi et al., 2019). The elements in the conceptual framework included conflict, job performance, transformational and behavioral theories, level five executive leaders, lower-level management, transformational leadership, and communication. The elements were explored to determine their effect on followers and leaders in the organization.

The researcher set out to use a qualitative approach to inquire in combination with data collection and data analysis to establish patterns (Creswell et al., 2018). Participant followers’
and leaders’ interview guide responses were compared to the elements in the framework of the research study. As previously indicated in the study, transformational leadership theory focuses on the leader identifying the needs of the follower (Northouse, 2019). Participant leaders acknowledged their roles as leaders who inspire and influence their followers, as well as those that lead, guide, and mentor them. As Adeniji (2020) indicated previously, followers’ job performance is influenced by a manager’s ability to communicate the organization’s goals and objectives. This is when behavioral theory plays a role in leadership communication. Behavioral theory explores cognitive processes and investigates what individuals do daily (de Graff, 2019).

Participant followers shared that due to the lack of communication within their organization, numerous problems have occurred, such as conflicts that affected the performance of the team. Participant follower Govgirl65 indicated that poor communication contributes to many errors, turnover rates, and low morale. Follower A stated that incorrect information from management causes the team to do rework, which in turn affects job performance. Ineffective management often causes conflict and confusion, as indicated by participant leaders Anna and Leader A.

The researcher found that the leaders who participated in the study indicated that at some point in their federal government careers, there was a lack of communication among level five executive leaders and higher management, as described in this study as well as higher management. Based on the responses from the participant followers and leaders, the impact of communication affected both lower-level management and their followers.

The data collected in this research study was instrumental in the reflective notes part of the study. The study used the interview questions as instruments to collect data and investigate the evaluation of problem-solving strategies (Ntatamala et al., 2019). Observations are one of the most effective tools used in collecting data because the researcher can observe participants’
interactions, conversations, activities, and behaviors (Creswell et al., 2018). Since observations are usually conducted by observing participant actions face-to-face, the researcher used the observation process as a guide for documenting the notes from the collection of data. The researcher chose to use the term reflective notes instead of observation to infer the participants’ responses.

This part of the research study focused more on the participant leaders and followers in the federal government. The researcher had a good rapport with each of the participants before and during the interview process. Due to the past and current COVID-19 conditions, the best method for the interview process was sending the interview questions via email. Notes were taken from the participant interview responses for later use. According to Creswell (2018), the researcher should describe what happened, as well as present ideas, hunches, interpretations, and personal reflections. The researcher used Creswell’s suggestion to infer participant interview responses.

This section will present reflective note results from the interview question responses. Reflective notes can include notes of processes, reflections on activities, and conclusions from collected data (Creswell et al., 2018). An observational protocol table was used to record information from the study. According to Creswell (2018), the observational protocol logs information obtained from field notes, interview write-ups, or other various forms of data from the study. The researcher made sure to fully engage with the participants who participated in the study (Creswell et al., 2018). Each participant was emailed the interview questions after receiving the research study consent. The researcher quickly noticed during the collection of data that only a few participants returned the interview responses quickly, while others took an exceptionally long time. There appeared to be a good connection between the participant and the
interview questions. Each participant was fully engaged with the questions, as they provided examples along with their responses.

While reviewing the interview responses, the researcher sensed frustration among participants regarding the problem of a lack of communication in leadership. Based on the responses from the participants, they felt they were not supported by leadership. For example, Follower C used an example of his leadership saying, “Do as I told you because I am your supervisor.” This was inferred as a communication issue between the leader and follower. Some participants kept an open mind about the problem. For example, some participant followers and leaders criticized the problem of poor communication but were also interested in helping to improve the problem by offering patience and addressing the issue with leadership. The researcher found that the leaders were going through many of the same difficulties as their followers. However, the leaders were more vocal than their followers about the problem with their superiors. The overall perception of the interview question responses based on the notes was that many of the followers and leaders believed that if they were given the correct tools, a lack of communication in leadership could improve.

This section will present the results of the follow-up interview questions. The participants were given follow-up email questions to complete the interview process. The purpose of the follow-up email questions was to allow participants to make changes to their initial interview responses. The researcher also wanted to make note of the responses to the question that asked if participants thought this lack of communication was a problem that could be fixed. All 12 participants chose not to add any additional information to their interview responses. The researcher found that nine participants believed that a lack of communication in leadership was something that could be fixed. Three of the participants believed that this problem could not be
fixed. The researcher noted that the three participants that believed that the problem could not be fixed were participants Alice B Nice, Cookie Baker, and Follower C, which was one leader and two followers. The researcher also noted that these three participants previously worked at the same federal agency.

During the follow-up interview process, the researcher allowed the participants to participate in the member checking process. Out of the 12 participants, nine chose to participate and three chose not to participate. Even though nine of the participants chose to participate in the member checking process, the participants did not want to add any additional information to their responses to the follow-up questions. The participants were extremely comfortable with their responses to the interview and follow-up questions. As the researcher reflected on the notes, many participants believed that the problem of a lack of communication in leadership could be fixed. The researcher used Creswell’s (2018) observational procedures to thank each person for their participation. Each participant was thanked and acknowledged for participating in the research study. The researcher used the observational protocol table to document the reflective notes. Table 4 shows the reflective notes taken by the researcher.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observational Protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good connection between the participant and the interview questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many of the participants were fully engaged. Many participants provided several long examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few of the participants gave short answers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several participants appeared to be frustrated as they responded to the questions. The researcher could sense the frustration.

Some participants felt that they were not supported by leadership.

The researcher noted that the participants were not engaged with the follow-up questions. The researcher came to this conclusion because none of the participants wanted to make any changes to their initial questions.

Nine of the participants believed that the lack of communication could be fixed.

Three participants believed that the lack of communication could not be fixed (one leader and two followers).

All the participants that said it could be fixed worked at the same federal agency.

The researcher noted that the participants were confident about their interview responses.

The researcher thanked the participants for their participation.

As previously mentioned, many anticipated themes could have been included in this research study that contributes to the findings related to the lack of communication in leadership. According to Creswell (2018), the researcher analyzes the data collected to locate details to support the themes. The investigator anticipated that the participant leaders and followers in the financial services industry in the federal government would provide data to support the anticipated themes. The anticipated themes documented in the research study were the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective management in the organization, lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry, and leadership in federal agencies.

Theme 1: The roles of organizational leaders. The study found that the roles of organizational leaders played a significant role in communication within the organization. The
data collected in the study found that leaders acknowledged one of their roles as communicating effectively to their followers to accomplish the goals and objectives of the organization. Many of the same responses were made regarding leader roles. Each participant leader stated that communication is important in their role as a leader. Participant leader Kim Jones went as far as to say that organizational leaders should create an environment where they can inspire and communicate well to all levels to accomplish the overall mission of the organization.

Theme 2: Ineffective management in the organization. The second anticipated theme was ineffective management. The data collected from participant leader and follower interviews found they agreed on many aspects regarding a lack of communication. Evidence was found that a lack of communication can lead to other problems and unanticipated themes in the organization, errors, rework, and a negative environment. The researcher previously mentioned in the anticipated themes section that the behavior of leadership harms the followers (Raja, 2019). When participants were asked about their experiences regarding ineffective management, participants had some of the same responses. Follower A shared experiences of management not knowing the proper protocol for assignments, which required the team to unnecessarily rework parts of their project. Follower D added that if leaders fail to communicate expectations to their subordinates adequately, they fail to achieve the mission of effective communication. As participant followers continued to explain their experiences of ineffective management, similar responses included needing clear communication and direction to succeed. There was a common trend among participant leaders, who indicated that ineffective management leads to confusion, conflict, errors, and rework, as described by participant followers.

The investigator found that the interview responses from participant leaders and followers regarding ineffective management in the organization supported the anticipated themes
described, but also found some differences that added to the themes discovered. The investigator found that participant leaders and followers had many of the same responses regarding what leads to effective management. The findings from this study support the literature that indicated that management communication has a strong impact on employees and followers alike (Siket Ujvarine et al., 2020).

Theme 3: Lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry. For this anticipated theme, the researcher previously found that the financial services industry has gone through several changes concerning lack of communication (Ng et al., 2018). The researcher documented that the leading factors in this industry suggest that the financial services industry presents high levels of stress and is fast paced. The data collected from interview responses indicated that the nature of the financial services business can create a lack of communication. Both participant leaders and followers acknowledged that the fast-paced environment takes a toll on the staff. Followers criticized the industry as a contributing factor to the lack of communication. Participant Govgirl65 indicated that because of the rapid movement, information either gets lost in translation or direction given the day before is obsolete the following day.

Theme 4: Leadership in federal agencies. This anticipated theme focused on leadership in the federal government. The data collected in the study included leaders and followers who work in federal agencies within the federal government. Although a specific question about leadership in federal agencies was not a part of this study, the investigator associated question four for the followers and question six for the leaders, which asked, “Have you ever encountered a lack of communication with your superior?” The researcher will describe the interview responses for this theme from participant interviews below.
All the participant followers indicated that they have had issues with leaders in the federal government. Their responses were consistent. Follower A, Follower B, and Follower C indicated that there was a lack of communication in providing clear directions to complete tasks. Participant Cookie Baker explained what she and others thought of her leadership in the federal government. In addition to not receiving clear instructions, a lack of communication caused several team members to leave because there were no growth opportunities under their current leadership. Lola Bunny stated that information was not communicated to followers on time, which meant there was a lack of communication somewhere along the way. Out of the four leaders that participated in the study, all acknowledged having some issues regarding a lack of communication with their superiors. Some of the issues they used in their examples pertained to the followers. These issues were documented as not giving clear direction or not fully understanding the requirements to clearly communicate to subordinates. These were just a few examples of the issues followers and leaders had with leadership in the federal government.

Table 5

Observation Follower-up Question Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Participant</th>
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<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
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The results from the findings of this study were compared to the literature review. This literature review demonstrates the relationship between the current body of knowledge and the findings from the research study. Literature reviews allow the researcher to identify recent developments in research related to a specific subject (King et al., 2020). This literature review will show the recent developments based on the findings from participant responses. The literature review summarizes the business practices of the organization and explores the roles of leadership between leaders and followers. Elements that were included in the literature review for this study were the problem statement, concepts, theories, constructs, related studies, and anticipated and discovered themes. This research study will show if there are any similarities or differences from the findings.

As previously indicated, the literature reviews allow the researcher to identify recent developments in research (King et al., 2020). The researcher found that the data collected in the research study explained, explored, and described the various aspects of why there was a lack of communication in leadership. Similarities were found as the researcher conducted an extensive analysis of the interview responses received from the 12 participants. The concepts, conflict, and job performance were among the elements that were explored. The literature pointed out that leadership plays an important role in enhancing employee job performance and that job
performance is influenced by the manager’s ability to communicate the organization’s goals and objectives in the organization (Adeniji, 2020). The researcher found that the study supported Adeniji’s (2020) literature and that all the participants agreed that leadership is very important to employee job performance. However, the study showed that leaders did not provide clear direction and workable processes to their followers to accomplish the organization’s goals.

The anticipated themes discussed in the literature were supported by similar findings in the study. The findings from the interview regarding the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective management in the organization, a lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry, and leadership in federal agencies are documented in the research question section. The literature review discussed possible discovered themes of stress, interpersonal compatibility, and transactional leadership. The findings discovered themes of clear direction and organizational process. Although Nvivo did not find any discovered themes mentioned in the literature review, they were a part of the conversation in some of the interview responses. Nvivo found different discovered themes that were more important to the study.

Transformational and behavioral theory were documented in the literature review, as transformational leadership focused on the needs of the follower and behavioral theory explores human behavior. The findings showed that there were similarities to the literature review by confirming that both theories not only have an impact on level five executive leaders and lower-level management, but also affect all levels in the organization. The findings also showed that leaders were vested in open communication with their followers and strived to influence and motivate them. Through the explanations and lived experiences of the participants, the researcher found that many leadership decisions were made based on individual behaviors.
The information in the literature review was very similar to this study’s findings by similarities and differences. Data collected from the study were identified and documented as findings in the above-mentioned literature. Additionally, the researcher found relevant information that can be added to existing knowledge in the research study (Cowhitt et al., 2020). The researcher mostly found similarities in the findings and minimal differences.

The presentation of the findings will include the evidence relating to the research problem. Problem-solving can be thought of as a process of ongoing information in which researchers use what is known to discover what they do not know (Ntatamala et al., 2019). The purpose of the problem statement in qualitative research is to provide a need for the study relating to a specific issue (Creswell et al., 2018). The problem involves overcoming obstacles by generating predictions, arriving at satisfactory solutions by seeking information, generating new knowledge, and making decisions (Ntatamala et al., 2019). The general problem to be addressed is a lack of communication in leadership resulting in ineffective lower-level management. Since research has found that 50% of leaders fail, while 65 to 75% of employees relate their failures to lower-level management, the researcher will determine if the findings suggest otherwise (Trojak et al., 2020). The researcher will relate the data collected in the research study to the problem being studied. As previously indicated, there has been a concern that leaders who have a lack of communication with their followers are destructive (Aravena, 2019).

The researcher found that due to the lack of communication, followers have become frustrated by lack of leadership support, which in some cases has caused followers to leave. Several parts of the research have a bearing on the data collected in the study (Morphew et al., 2020). This study begins with examples of data collected regarding leaders and followers,
followed by a discussion of the findings that relate to the problem. Participant follower Cookie Baker stated that due to ineffective communication, several team members left the group because they felt that they could grow under such leadership. Follower C added that leadership loses the concept or needs of the worker. The purpose of getting leaders involved in the study was to assess if they were having the same issues with their leadership. Their perspective was needed to determine if they identified the same issues as their followers. All participant leaders in the study acknowledged that there is a problem with communication in the organization. The leaders also admitted that they have had communication issues with senior management and higher. Participant leader Anna explained that the communication problem is a bigger issue that goes to higher echelons. These are just a few examples of how leaders have an impact on individual and team performance (Kindarto et al., 2020).

A recent study mentioned that financial workers in the financial services industry are likely to experience high levels of stress due to the lack of organizational support present (Vogazianos et al., 2019). Several followers and leaders confirmed that this industry is face-paced and stressful, which has naturally caused a lack of communication between the leaders and their followers. According to Wang (2019), federal agencies are aware that there is a need for improved interpersonal compatibility between leaders and followers. The findings in this study supported this statement, as participant Follower C wrote that leaders only cared about themselves. Participant Lola Bunny clearly stated that there is not enough communication between the leader and the follower. The data collected from the research study showed that over 50% of the followers believed that their leaders have failed in many areas related to communication, but none of the leaders indicated that lower-level management or followers
failed in any area of communication. The responses provided by the participants showed that there are barriers that contribute to a lack of communication.

**Summary of the Findings.**

The present study examined the present lack of communication in leadership in the federal government. The presentation of findings consisted of the interview responses that related to the research questions and the problem statement documented in section one of the research study. This qualitative research study was guided by the research questions. The researcher anticipated contributing to the existing knowledge concerning a lack of communication in leadership within the federal government. There were two collection methods within this research study. The methods consisted of initial individual interview questions and follow-up interview questions. The summary of findings included the discovered themes, representation and visualization of the data, and the relationship of the findings.

There were 12 participants included in this research study. Those participants consisted of eight followers and four leaders. Purposeful sampling was used as the selection process for this research case study. According to Snow (2020), the selection of the right sampling is important to provide an in-depth study of the research questions. Participants were located in the southeastern part of the United States. There were 11 open-ended questions for the leaders and six open-ended questions for the followers. The follow-up questions consisted of four “yes” or “no” responses. Interview and follow-up questions were emailed to each participant. All interview responses were reviewed by the researcher and documented that participant leaders and followers did not want to add anything additional to their initial interview responses.

The researcher documented that the emailed interview responses were transcribed using Nvivo. This software was used to organize and analyze data collected in the study. The
relationship of the findings addressed each of the research questions, reflective notes, the conceptual framework, anticipated themes, literature, and the problem. All participants clearly defined various areas that led to a lack of communication in leadership that were crucial problems. Leaders and followers documented that there were communication issues present in their organization. The researcher discovered emerging themes during data collection. Participant leaders and followers expressed that the themes of not getting clear direction and organizational processes were among the most crucial areas that caused a lack of communication in leadership. Participants also shared the importance of fixing these areas to improve organizational communication in the future. The presentation of findings showed a contribution to the existing knowledge of the problem.

**Application To Professional Practice**

This research study is important to the professional practice of business. The research study focused on discovering why there is a lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry in the federal government. To solve the problem of a lack of communication in leadership, the organization must acknowledge that there is a problem with ineffective management. The application to professional practice will discuss how the findings from the study improve general business practice and potential application strategies that organizations can use to leverage the findings of this study.

**Improving General Business Practice**

According to Hai (2011), organizational leaders have a significant impact on business practices in the organization. Leaders have the power and authority to provide guidance and key communications to their followers (Lyke-Ho-Gland, 2019). Organizations can improve their business practice if they use multi-channel communication strategies to reach every employee
(Lyke-Ho-Gland, 2019). The presentation of findings hopes to improve employee engagement and add to existing knowledge on improving the leadership abilities of organizational leaders. Organizations can be effective if they can achieve objectives and goals using the resources given (Hussain et al., 2020). The benefit to business practices was discussed earlier in the study, and now the researcher will show how the findings in the study can improve general business practices.

The findings in this study provided a great contribution to improving general business practices by offering methods and strategies that can help with the existing communication problem in the financial services industry in the federal government. The findings showed how leaders and followers interacted with each other. The research questions were a guide in determining why a lack of communication exists in the organization and how the communication issues can improve. According to Bourke (2020), communication can contribute to effective management and can lead to good business practices. The research questions addressed issues such as how leadership communication can play a key role in the organization. The questions further explored discussion on what a lack of communication in leadership means in an organization. Additionally, questions were addressed regarding the reasons for a lack of communication in leadership in the financial services industry. These questions were important to address to gain a general understanding from the participants’ points of view.

The participants in the study confirmed that there is a lack of communication in leadership in the federal government. The results of the study found that poor communication in leadership creates a difficult work environment for everyone. Leaders were described as not encouraging or discouraging followers’ efforts. Participants expressed what they needed to improve communication issues by providing explanations and examples of the problems that
currently exist. Participants described how their organizations had hindered their efforts to work effectively (Gerber et al., 2020). The review of the academic literature and the interview responses from both leaders and followers supported the anticipated themes, which included the roles of organizational leaders, ineffective management in the organization, and the lack of communication in leadership factors in the financial services industry. The anticipated themes were contributing factors in discovering the new themes of clear direction and organizational processes. The findings identified these new themes as best practices for the organization.

Exploring both themes identified followers’ negative experiences in the workplace. This contributed to getting to the root of the problem of why there is a lack of communication. Getting the issue out in the open is a start to the solution. The findings showed evidence that leaders and followers are aware of the problem of poor communication and shared the same experiences and concerns regarding it. According to Hai (2011), the findings from the study can encourage leaders in the organization to create an environment for followers to ask questions through employee empowerment.

The findings in the study provided transparency on improvement opportunities for the organization regarding communication. The results from the findings can improve general business practices by identifying the problem and increasing leadership’s ability to provide clarity on directions and organizational processes. This will hopefully improve interpersonal compatibility between leaders and followers and increase momentum.

**Potential Application Strategies**

Organizations increasingly need to modify, or re-design their existing strategies to make room for new strategies in response to emerging issues within the organization (Granig et al., 2020). Identifying and understanding the elements that cause the problem is strategically
important for sustaining and inspiring organizations in managing new situations (Granig et al., 2020). The researcher aimed to provide potential application strategies that organizations can use to leverage the findings of this study. The researcher found strategies based on the findings in the research study. Potential application strategies identified were needing more open communication and interpersonal compatibility. Leaders in the federal government should consider using these strategies to address current communication problems in the organization. The results of the study can potentially improve the communication issue and contribute to the development of the organization.

Follower Communication. This study’s findings showed that followers in the financial services industry in the federal government need more communication from leadership in terms of direction and organizational processes. Scholars have suggested that effective communication is essential in an organization and is important for the development of open and quality communication (Stach et al., 2019). Specifically, participants explained that due to unclear or misinformation, followers did not have direction on projects, which sometimes led to duplication of work. Participants shared that the unnecessary time spent on duplication of work and unclear instructions illustrated communication issues within and among leadership. Effective communication flow is particularly important when the character of work requires cooperation between leaders and their followers (Stach et al., 2019).

This study aimed to understand why there is a lack of communication in leadership in the federal government. The participants in the study provided explanations and examples of individual experiences. Their abilities, input, and desires to improve the problem had a significant positive impact on the study. This showed the researcher that they had a genuine concern regarding the communication problem in their organization. The findings from the study
showed that participant leaders understood the importance of communication in their role as leader. This demonstrated that they take their role as a leader seriously and are committed to finding solutions to the problem. Many of the participants already took the initiative to address the issue with their superiors, but breakdown in communication should be addressed among all levels of leadership and followers. The results also showed that the lack of communication in leadership far exceeds level five leadership and should be addressed at the upper management level. Getting upper-level management involved has the potential to fix the problem.

Employee Engagement. This study’s results showed that participants want more engagement with their leaders. Employee engagement is defined as individuals utilizing and communicating their thoughts both intellectually and emotionally during their job (Ewing et al., 2019). Effective communication is associated with the organization’s effectiveness (Nienaber et al., 2020). Participant leaders and followers in the study acknowledged that they do not always receive clear communication from their superiors but indicated that there is a lack of communication in leadership. They further elaborated that there should be more communication between the leader and the follower to prevent rework and missed deadlines, and to achieve organizational goals. According to Nienaber et al. (2020), disengaged employees in the U.S. have led to annual productivity losses. The findings of this study showed that organizations should focus on implementing more employment engagement programs to make communication more visible, which can result in positive organizational improvements (Nienaber et al., 2020).

Summary of Application to Professional Practice

The application to professional practice included improvements to the general business practice of the organization and potential application strategies. The researcher found that getting the communication issue out in the open is a start to improving general business practice.
Encouraging leaders in the organization to create an environment for followers to ask questions through employee empowerment was found to be another improvement. There were two potential application strategies that organizations could use to leverage the findings of the study. The researcher found that follower communication and employee empowerment can be useful strategies in an organization.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

The findings from the study came from individual experiences of leaders and followers within the federal government. Their examples and explanations provided an understanding of the interactions between leaders and followers. A recommendation would be for the organization to provide a volunteer survey asking questions regarding a lack of communication in leadership to get both leaders’ and followers’ perspectives. A second recommendation could be for the federal government to implement the above potential application strategies as a pilot in one or two federal agencies to determine the effectiveness of the strategy. This could be the first step in the right direction in addressing leaders’ and followers’ concerns. This would also be a good approach to further the study by gaining a better understanding of the problem and adding to the existing body of knowledge.

**Reflections**

The purpose of this qualitative case study research is to understand and evaluate the factors regarding why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry. This case study research contributes to the existing knowledge that influences the gap in leadership communication by providing real-life experiences from participant interviews. This was achieved by investigating leadership communication between leaders and followers in the federal government and entailed analyzing
the data collected, which consisted of participant interview responses relating to a lack of communication in leadership and was accomplished by 12 participants who participated in individual interviews. These participants were either current employees or previous employees in the federal government who worked in the financial services industry. The next sections will provide a discussion on the personal and professional growth of the study, as well as the biblical perspective.

**Personal & Professional Growth**

This research study has provided individual and professional growth. This study confirmed that there are still leadership communication issues in the organization at hand. This study was able to provide personal growth in understanding the factors that contribute to the problem like lack of clear direction from leadership. According to Campos-Garcia (2019), characteristics of professional development may have an impact on personal growth, as well as personal development affecting professional growth. There was a wealth of knowledge that was taken away from the literature studied and the real-life experiences that leaders and followers shared. Since conducting the research study, the researcher has been able to relate the findings to “why” this problem exists. The knowledge that was gained in conducting this study can be applied to professional growth. Participants helped explain their true feelings regarding a sensitive subject, but they did an excellent job in presenting examples and explanations that contributed to working more effectively. Participants participated in the study outside of the organization due to the nature of the study. The participants agreed to the member checking process even though the interview responses were transcribed as written by the participants. The notes obtained from the interview responses provided significant support to the study. Overall,
the participants responded positively to the study, and as a result, contributed significantly to the solution of the problem.

The reason the research study on the lack of communication in leadership was selected was that early in my career, I identified communication issues in leadership. The first notice of the issue was when I was working in the private sector. As I continued my career working in the federal government, the issue continued; especially as I worked with various federal agencies. There was a lack of communication in leadership that affected the management of their followers. This was motivation to increase my personal development with the hope of eventually enhancing professional growth in an organization. According to Campos-Garcia (2019), employees are one of the most important strategic resources of an organization. The primary goal of this research study was to gain a better understanding of why there is a lack of communication in level five leadership within the financial services industry in federal government agencies.

**Biblical Perspective**

The Bible consists of books from the Old and New Testaments filled with verses related to leadership. According to Flaniken (2006), the essence of leadership involves guidance, initiates, ideas, and the structure bearing the burden of risk as well as the chance of success. To help individuals develop their leadership abilities, the Lord said, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life and advise you and watch over you” (*New Living Translation*, 2004, Psalm 32:8). Leadership is a process that consists of many components. According to Northouse (2019), those components involve influencing common goals. A good place to learn those goals is the Bible, where those goals are shared and embraced by leaders and followers. This research study will consist of the biblical perspective of business research. The goal is to integrate faith
into business functions while highlighting the biblical principles of the Bible. This research study will also discuss how such business functions relate to and integrate the Christian worldview.

According to Keller (2012), business leaders believe that the financial services industry and business at large could use more external constraints to be ethical. An effective leader often consists of strong personal attributes, and interpersonal, contextual, and contemporary leadership skills, but organizational leaders do not exhibit these traits or the principles God set for them. This research study was conducted with an emphasis on the biblical perspective of leadership and following the principles that God set in place for humanity, such as to “trust in the Lord with all your heart; seek his will in all you do, and he will show you with a path to take” (New Living Translation, 2004, Proverbs 3: 5-6). God provided a biblical foundation as a guide in moving forward with business functions. For example, God said, “I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food” (New Living Translation, 2004, Genesis 1:29). As God created humans, light, land, and fruit as components to complete his plan, he has provided us with all the tools to use in business. Now is the time to lay the groundwork that will enable positive with results. This is a good example of God providing the participants for the research study to obtain a solution for the problem of a lack of communication in leadership.

The business functions of the study were associated with the moral principles of the Bible by showing how organizational leaders conducted business with their followers daily. God’s principles and components were referenced to fulfill the requirements of the research study. This was accomplished by comparing the moral principles to the findings in the study. Based on the responses from the participants, the followers were lacking communication from their leaders. God’s leadership principles were lacking in this business environment. According to Keller
(2012), the individual’s professional ethics have a cumulative effect, for good or ill. The Bible says, “You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain”, meaning do not take advantage of the people who feed you, and pay them what they are due, as a godly leader should be a leader that is fair to his followers (New Living Translation, 2004, 1 Timothy 5:18). God said, “If you are faithful in the little things, you will be faithful in large ones” (New Living Translation, 2004, Luke 16:10).

The results from this research study showed that leaders in the federal government had their way of leading their followers in the organization and did not always consider God’s principles of leadership. God said, “Without wise leadership, a nation falls” (New Living Translation, 2004, Proverbs 11:14). The study also showed that followers did not always see the strength of their leaders; however, the participant leaders in this study seemed to have mirrored God’s creative work by creating a culture that conformed to his will and vision for human beings (Kellar, 2012).

**Summary of Reflections**

The reflections part of this research study focused on personal and professional growth, and the biblical perspective of this research study. Personal and professional growth was achieved by exploring participants' individual experiences. The participants addressed issues they encountered and how the lack of communication in leadership affected the individual and professional growth of the followers. A biblical perspective offered the study initial guidance, ideas, and structures God provided those in leadership. The goal of the biblical perspective was to integrate the findings, faith, and business functions with the biblical principles of the Bible. The findings of the study showed that followers need to see the strength in their leaders so that
everyone can benefit from a culture that conformed to God’s will and vision for human beings (Kellar, 2012).

**Summary of Section 3**

This is the third section of the research case study that summarized the research project. The researcher presented a detailed overview of the study and showed how the findings were associated with the research study problem. This section consisted of the presentation of findings and the application to professional practice. The presentation of findings explored the data collected and highlighted the themes discovered, interpretation of the themes, representation and visualization of the data, and the relationship of the findings. Section three showed the connection of the data collected in the study to the research questions presented in the study. Recommendations for further study were addressed to add to the existing literature relating to the lack of communication in leadership. There was a discussion of reflections that highlighted the researcher’s personal and professional growth and the biblical perspective of the study. This section concluded with the results of the presentation of findings.

**Summary and Study Conclusion**

The general problem to be addressed is that there is a lack of communication in leadership, resulting in ineffective lower-level management. The lack of communication in leadership is a communication process that is a determinant of the quality of the organization's management (Kielbasa et al., 2019). Qualitative researchers use a unique qualitative approach to inquire, collect data, and perform data analysis to establish patterns and themes related to the research problem (Creswell et al., 2018). This qualitative case study supported the lack of communication in leadership in federal agencies based on the findings from the research study.
This research study included section one, the foundation of the study, section two, the project, and section 3, application to professional practice. Section one provided a detailed discussion of the nature of the study, the conceptual framework, the definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and a review of the professional and academic literature. Section two provided the roles that the participants and the researcher played and how the presentation of findings was conducted for the study. Section three of the research study showed the connection of the study findings to the research questions presented in the study; as well as provided study results.

This research study addressed the problem of why there is a lack of communication between upper-level and lower-level management and their followers. The research questions focused on the problem and guided the research study. Based on the study findings, the researcher highlighted that leadership communication played an important role in the organization. The conceptual framework contributed to the study by providing a visual of how the problem related to the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs. According to Siket Ujvarine (2020), management communication has an impact on the employee and is the key to solving the problem. After the researcher collected the data and performed data analysis, factors, such as the discovered themes were found to be significant to the study (Durmic, 2020). The researcher provided two recommendations for further study. The first recommended action consisted of organizations providing a volunteer survey asking questions regarding a lack of communication in leadership to get both leaders’ and followers’ perspectives. The second recommendation was for the federal government to implement the above potential application strategies as a pilot in one or two federal agencies to determine the effectiveness of the strategy. If implemented and
monitored effectively, the feedback received from the leaders and followers could be a start in fixing the lack of communication in leadership in the federal government.
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Appendix A: Interview Guide To Leaders

1. What does being a leader mean to you?
2. What is your leadership style?
3. You have been identified as a leader in the organization. In your opinion, in your role as a leader, what is your responsibility regarding communication to your followers?
4. Do you think that communication is important in the organization? If so, how?
5. Do you think that communication is important in your role as a leader? If so, how?
6. Have you ever encountered a lack of communication in leadership with your superior? If so, can you give an example, and explain if and how you addressed the issue.
7. Have you ever encountered communication issues with your followers/employees?
8. Do you think that a lack of communication in leadership can lead to ineffective management? If so, please explain?
9. Do you think that the financial services industry is stressful or fast-paced? If so, do you think that the stressfulness or the fast-paced environment causes a lack of communication leadership?
10. Do you think there is a lack of communication in leadership in your organization? If so, give an example, and have you addressed the issue or tried to change it as a leader?
11. How would you describe yourself as a leader?
Appendix B: Interview Guide To Followers

1. You have been identified as a follower in the organization. In your opinion, what do you expect from your leader regarding communication as a follower?

2. Do you think that communication is important in the organization? If so, how?

3. Have you ever encountered a lack of communication in leadership with your superior? If so, can you give an example, and explain if and how you addressed the issue.

4. Do you think that a lack of communication in leadership can lead to ineffective management? If so, please explain?

5. Do you think that the financial services industry is stressful or fast-paced? If so, do you think that the stressfulness or the fast-paced environment causes a lack of communication leadership?

6. Do you think there is a lack of communication in leadership in your organization? If so, give an example? Have you addressed the issue with your leader?
Appendix C: Recruitment Letter

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to understand and evaluate the factors of why there is a lack of communication in leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry. The research study aims to find solutions to what is causing the lack of communication and how ineffective management can improve. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my research study.

Participants must be a current or previous employee of a federal agency in the financial services division. Participants should currently hold or have previously held either a leadership or non-leadership position and must be or have previously been employed in locations in the southeastern region of the United States. Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete several written interview questions. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the written interview questions. There will be a follow-up verbal or zoom interview to go over the interview questions upon receipt of the completed interview questions. Observations of participant reactions to written interview questions will be documented during the follow-up interview. Participants will be asked during the follow-up interview if they would be a part of the member checking process. The follow-up interview will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the attached consent document and return it to me at wwhicks@liberty.edu. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the research study. Once the consent document is received, the interview questions will be sent to you via email.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hicks
Doctoral Student at Liberty University
Appendix D: Consent

**Title of the Project:** The Lack of Communication in Leadership  
**Principal Investigator:** Wendy Hicks, Doctoral Student, Liberty University

**Invitation to Participate in a Research Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a current or previous employee of a federal agency in the financial services division. Participants should currently hold or have previously held either a leadership or non-leadership position and must be or have previously been employed in locations in the southeastern region of the United States. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

**Purpose:** The purpose of my research is to understand and evaluate the factors of why there is a lack of communication in leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry.

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

1. Complete several written interview questions that can take approximately 30 minutes.
2. Participate in a follow-up verbal or zoom interview to go over interview questions and participate in the member checking process. Observations of participant reactions to written interview questions will be documented during the follow-up interview. This should take approximately 15 to 30 minutes.

**Benefits:** Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participants in this study. However, the findings of this research could result in the discovery of new approaches to leadership communication and the findings could be added to existing knowledge regarding a lack of communication in leadership in federal agencies.

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

**Data Security:** The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential using participant-selected pseudonyms and NVidia codes. Interview questions will be sent by email, and follow-up interviews will be conducted verbally by phone or Zoom in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
• Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and on a flash drive and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
• Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer and on a flash drive for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

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

How to Withdraw: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contact Information: The researcher conducting this study is Wendy Hicks. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at [email protected] or at [phone number]. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Kimberly Anthony, at [email protected].

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

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent: By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

____________________________________
Printed Subject Name
Print Pseudonym (Fictitious name)

Signature & Date
Appendix E: Permission Letter

Dear Department of Defense:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The title of my research project is the lack of communication in leadership and the purpose of my research is to understand and evaluate the factors of why there is a lack of communication in leadership among federal government agencies in the financial services industry.

I am writing to request your permission to contact members of your staff to invite them to participate in my research study and to observe leader and follower interaction processes.

Participants will be asked to complete several written interview questions, participate in a follow-up interview, and be observed. The data will be used to discover new approaches to leadership communication and to add to existing knowledge regarding a lack of communication in leadership. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email to wwhicks@liberty.edu.

A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hicks
Doctoral Student at Liberty University
Appendix F: Recruitment Letter: Follow-up

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. Last week an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to respond if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is (DATE).

Participants must be a current or previous employee of a federal agency in the financial services division. Participants should currently hold or have previously held either a leadership or non-leadership position and must be or have previously been employed in locations in the southeastern region of the United States. Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete several written interview questions. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the written interview questions. There will be a follow-up verbal or zoom interview to go over the interview questions upon receipt of the completed interview questions. Observations of participant reactions to written interview questions will be documented during the follow-up interview. Participants will be asked during the follow-up interview if they would be a part of the member checking process. The follow-up interview will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes.

Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the attached consent document and return it to me at wwhicks@liberty.edu. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the research study. Once the consent document is received, the interview questions will be sent to you via email.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hicks
Doctoral Student at Liberty University