

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF INTROVERTED LEADERS

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

Society is comprised of individuals with different personality types who are frequently referred to as extraverted or introverted. Research has suggested individuals fall somewhere along the continuum of extraversion to introversion. Based on statistics, introverts are thought to comprise between 33% to 50% of the greater population, but introverts only comprise 4% of the management teams leading companies. The literature has vast amounts of information about leadership and extraversion but limited information about introversion and leadership. From the literature, what is not clear is how the introspective tendencies of introverted leaders may influence the strategic planning, decision making, or other associated business practices of companies. Knowing how to study the impact introverted leaders may have on business practices begins with understanding how the introverted leaders experience the workplace. This phenomenological study was conducted to describe the experiences introverted leaders have of their work environments. The study involved recorded interviews with introverted leaders of companies. The transcribed interview videos were coded which led to the identification of four themes, which are *received positive feedback, were quality focused, understood the importance of relationships, and had knowledge of others' different expectations*. Introverted leaders can use the findings from this study to initiate discussions about their experiences with their colleagues. Businesses and organizations can use the findings from this study to evaluate the range of potential characteristics that actual leaders possess regardless of the leaders' personality type.

*Keywords:* introvert, leader, leadership, phenomenological, study, extraversion

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### **Introduction**

Studies have shown introverts make up 33% to 50% of the population, but extraverted individuals hold 96% of company management positions with the remaining 4% being held by introverted individuals (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015). According to many researchers, the representation of extraverts on company management teams is likely related to the perceptions individuals have about leaders and leadership (Figgins et al., 2019; Low & Ayoko, 2020; Reis & Grady, 2019; Rudolph et al., 2021). Researchers have also suggested the beliefs individuals have about what makes someone a good leader, or about leadership in general, could be related to the representation of extraverts in company management positions (Adewale, 2020; Reis & Grady, 2019; Shafique & Loo-See, 2018). In addition, behaviors associated with effective leadership could be another explanation for the representation of extraverts in company management positions (Adewale, 2020; Brandert & Matkin, 2019; Xie, 2019; Zaar et al., 2020).

In the literature available for introversion and leadership, there is no information available about the influence introverted leaders in top management positions have on business practices. Information is available about introverts acting more extraverted to emerge as leaders (Spark & O'Connor, 2021), and introverts wanting to be more extraverted based on their perception of the cultural preference toward extraversion (Lawn et al., 2019). There is also information available about whether successful leaders have extraverted or introverted characteristics (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015). Having information about the experiences of introverted leaders in company management positions may help shape research related to how introverted leaders influence business

practices and outcomes. To describe the workplace experiences of introverted leaders, a phenomenology study of introverted individuals on management teams of companies was conducted.

### **Background**

Based on introverted leaders being the group examined in this proposed study, the research shaping the study will be focused on introversion. In addition, any topics directly or indirectly related to introversion, top management, and leadership will also be included. In consideration of the proportion of society identifying as introverted, and the extremely small proportion of introverts who are represented in company management positions, any research regarding both leadership and introversion will be highlighted.

Blevins et al. (2022) conducted a review of the extant literature from 2009 to 2019 specifically focusing on articles that covered extraversion and introversion in the workplace context. Their sample included 320 articles of which only 21 articles specifically mentioned introversion, while 299 articles directly mentioned extraversion. Only five of the 21 articles included at least a partial introversion hypothesis. According to Blevins et al., the hypothesis from four of the articles examined the negative impact introverts have on extraverts when they interact. The remaining article examined the use of a conceptual approach to understand whether introversion could predict positive workplace outcomes.

In their study, Spark and O'Connor (2021) hypothesized acting introverted would decrease the chances of emerging as a leader. The results of the study supported the hypothesis. Acting introverted caused a decrease in peer-rated and self-rated emergent leadership measures. The study results show a larger reduction for the self-rated measure

of emergent leadership than the peer-rated measure of emergent leadership. Furthermore, the results show the effect of acting introverted was larger on self-rated emergent leadership when compared to acting extraverted.

Lawn et al. (2019) conducted a study examining extraversion deficit beliefs. Lawn et al. defined extraversion deficit beliefs as individuals expressing the desire to be more extraverted. The study results show introverts expressed desire to be more extraverted. In addition, the results show 96% of study participants believed extraverted characteristics are valued more than introverted characteristics.

Finally, in the qualitative study conducted by Stephens-Craig et al. (2015), department heads with at least two direct reports were interviewed. The department heads represented a wide variety of business fields and the participants shared whether they identify as an introvert or extravert, why they identify as they do, how they view introverted and extraverted characteristics of peer leaders, and whether successful leaders have introverted or extraverted characteristics. The study results show 84% of the participants stated successful leaders can be introverted or extraverted but these results do not align with reality.

### **Problem Statement**

The available introversion and leadership literature covers the perceptions individuals have of introverted people, the behaviors of introverted people, and the potential for introverted people to lead. Lebin et al. (2019) noted introverts may not perceive themselves as leaders and others may not see their potential to lead. Spark et al. (2018) conducted a study where it was assumed introverts must exhibit extraverted behaviors to emerge as leaders. In addition, Spark and O'Connor (2021) noted the results

of their study showed acting introverted in a public context would inhibit others' perceptions of the person being capable of emerging as a leader. Information regarding how aspects of introversion may influence business practices or outcomes was not noted in the available literature.

Specifically, the strengths introverted leaders contribute are not highlighted in the empirical literature. In a literature review, Farrell (2017) noted the strengths of introverted leaders are often misunderstood. Farrell suggested a variety of skills are useful when contributing to organizational processes. One such skill is the deliberate thinking associated with introverted individuals may be useful when companies are in the planning phase of a project (Farrell, 2017).

Taylor (2020) conducted a study of the available literature to generate a list of actions organizations could take to successfully utilize employees with a variety of personalities. Taylor noted the positive qualities of introverted leaders are often overlooked and underappreciated. According to the findings from Taylor's research, introverted leaders work well with proactive employees, help teams think critically, validate subordinate's initiative, and do not micromanage. With the results of Taylor's study, companies without introverted leaders may be seen as missing important components of leadership and decision-making.

Examining the experiences of introverted leaders would be a starting point in understanding how introverted leaders can influence business practices. The examination of their experiences can help businesses understand how to leverage the perspectives of introverted leaders. To understand the experiences of introverted leaders, this study

examined introverted leaders in company management positions who had at least two direct reports.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to describe the lived workplace experiences of introverted leaders who are members of the company management team.

### **Research Question**

RQ1: What are the lived workplace experiences of introverted leaders who are members of the management team of companies?

### **Assumptions and Limitations of the Study**

It was assumed recruiting an adequate number of introverted leaders might require posting the flyer on various social media sites and jobsites. As a back-up recruitment strategy, it was also assumed approaching a high number of companies to recruit enough leaders who identify as introverts would be necessary. In addition, it was also assumed the human resources department of companies would allow the researcher to distribute the study flyer to members of the company management team because the study would not be seen as an unnecessary distraction. Furthermore, it was assumed participants would be willing to commit a minimum of 1 hour of their personal time to describe their lived experiences to the researcher. Additionally, because introverts tend to be analytical and introspective (Farrell, 2017), an assumption I had was introverted leaders may need more time to organize their thoughts and responses to ensure an adequate amount of information is collected to perform thematic analysis.

One limitation was related to the generalizability of the research findings due to the small sample sizes in qualitative studies (Bartholomew et al., 2021). Another limitation was a single researcher will conduct the proposed study. Prosek and Gibson (2020) explained multiple researchers are important for establishing credibility in qualitative research.

### **Theoretical Foundations of the Study**

The research theory used to guide this study was the Jungian theory of personality type. Jung described two psychological types labeled as introversion and extraversion (Jung, 1915). Subsequent scholars expounded on Jung's theory including Conklin (1923) who suggested there are three psychological types with the third being ambiversion. Downey (1926) added to the literature by evaluating a dextrality questionnaire designed to classify individuals as an extravert or an introvert. McDougall (1929) added to the literature by examining biochemical influences on the expression of introversion and extraversion by individuals.

The biblical foundations used to guide the study did not cover introversion or extraversion, or introvert and extravert, as those terms are not mentioned in the Bible. However, references to individuals in the Bible who display introverted or extraverted tendencies were made. The biblical foundations used to guide this study covered leadership based on individuals who were characterized as leaders. Leaders in the Bible held various positions including king, advisor, judge, prophet, judge, apostle, overseer, and disciple.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following is a list of definitions of terms that are used in this study.

**Ambiversion** – Term one refers to attention being controlled by either objective or subjective conditions (Conklin, 1923).

**Ambivert** – Term two refers to a type of individual who applies energy to the external or internal world (Conklin, 1923).

**Company Management Team Member** – Term three refers to an individual who works with other team members to make decisions for the entire company where in some cases the individual is pictured on the company website, is the CEO or President, reports directly to the CEO or President, or holds an Officer, Vice President, or equivalent title.

**Extraversion** – Term four refers to attention being given to the objective rather than the subjective (Conklin, 1923).

**Extravert** – Term five refers to a type of individual who applies energy to the external world or to an object (Jung, 1915).

**Introversion** – Term six refers to attention being given to the subjective rather than the objective (Conklin, 1923).

**Introvert** – Term seven refers to a type of individual who applies energy to the internal world or to the ego (Jung, 1915).

**Leader** – Term eight is defined as an individual who influences other individuals by providing motivation, direction, and support to help the individuals achieve their goals (Spark et al., 2018).

**Leadership** – Term nine is defined as the ability an individual has to motivate others to contribute their abilities toward helping an organization be effective and successful (Olley, 2021).

### **Significance of the Study**

Companies and introverted employees could use the findings from this study in the following ways. The introverted leaders could share the findings of the study with their peer leaders to initiate open discussion about their experiences and this may lead to greater interpersonal relationships. In addition, human resources departments could use the findings from the study to incorporate leader selection practices that may bring about a more effective management team to lead the organization.

This study will add to the existing research in two ways. First, limited data is currently available on the workplace experiences of leaders who are introverted. From this study, I produced a report of the experiences of leaders who are introverted in company management positions. Next, the findings may be used to shed light on how leaders who are introverted perceive leaders and leadership, how they perceive themselves as leaders, how they describe leader behavior, how they describe their own behaviors, and how they describe their beliefs associated with being a leader and leadership. In addition, the results from the data about the reported workplace experiences of the introverted leaders may be used to draw comparisons to the reported experiences of extraverted leaders available in the literature.

### **Summary**

A review of the literature on leaders in top management positions revealed people who are introverted only hold 4% of management positions (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015). When reviewing the literature to understand why people who are introverted hold a low percentage of top management positions, one will find different amounts of research available for leadership, top management, extraversion, and introversion. A few researchers have suggested the limited representation of people who are introverted in top

management leadership positions could be based on misunderstanding what people who are introverted contribute (Farrell, 2017; Taylor, 2020). Understanding the experiences of introverted leaders in top management introverts would be helpful.

The experiences of top management leaders who are introverted was probed in this phenomenological study. Given the statistics regarding the number of introverts who are leaders, one of the key assumptions was the recruitment strategies and techniques would be important. One key limitation was related to the study sample potentially being homogenous, because the target population is top management leaders. The findings from the study provide the essence of the lived experiences of the participants which can be used to help businesses consider what introverted leaders contribute.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Overview**

Introverts make up a large enough part of the population to suggest a need to understand what introverts experience in the world from their perspective. As it pertains to the workplace, understand the experience introverted leaders have when working with others would be helpful. In addition, understanding the experiences of introverted who hold company management positions would be help companies consider how to leverage the perspectives and skills of the introverted leaders. To understand what has been currently studied regarding the experiences of introverts in leadership, a detailed search of the literature and a study of the Bible were performed. The literature search covered leadership, introversion, extraversion, the Bible, and other related constructs. The study of the Bible included a review of leaders with sufficient information available to examine the elements of their leadership approach and experience as captured throughout the Bible.

### **Description of Search Strategy**

To examine the existing information regarding introversion and leadership, searches of various databases were performed to locate peer-reviewed journal articles. Google Scholar and ESBCO were the two primary databases used to conduct the literature search. The initial keywords used for the searches were leadership, leader, introversion, introvert, and introverted. The information available on leadership was vast, but the available information on introversion, as the specific topic of interest, was minimal. Several combinations of the key words were used to locate articles specifically regarding introversion and leadership with the results being like those for introversion.

To increase the amount of information to examine, the search was broadened to include extraversion, extroversion, extraverted, extroverted, extravert, and extrovert to account for the different spellings of the terms. This search returned a high volume of information. It should be noted the large amount of information on extraversion also included details pertinent to introversion and ambiversion. As such, ambiversion and ambivert were added to the keyword search. Some of the available articles include ambiversion and ambivert with limited articles available when combining ambiversion and ambivert with leadership. Finally, combinations of personality, leadership, introversion, ambiversion, extraversion, and Christian keywords were searched. Religion, Bible, church, and believers were added to the search criteria as well.

Once the searches were exhausted, only peer reviewed articles available in full text were included. Most articles are within the last five years of 2023, which is the anticipated completion date of the planned research. After articles were collected, the references list of the article was reviewed to identify other potential articles to include. Articles were selected based on how they could be related to the experiences of introverted leaders. Leadership, extraversion, and introversion articles were selected, and the articles include multiple quantitative studies, qualitative studies, and literature reviews.

In addition to searching for articles associated with leadership, introversion, and the biblical worldview, the biblical research was conducted by studying several leaders of the Bible. Individuals in the Old Testament were selected based on the titles they were given or positions they held. The titles and positions in the Old Testament were judge, advisor, prophet, or king. Individuals in the New Testament were selected based on titles

such as apostle, church leader, or overseer. Any principles of leadership mentioned in the Bible were used to guide the keywords used in the search of the research databases.

### **Review of Literature**

Within the literature there is vast information available on leadership. Additionally, there is an extensive amount of information available about extraversion with less information available about introversion, and introversion is a key topic of this study. Common topics for the articles included in this literature review are related to the perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs leaders and followers have about the constructs being studied. An additional topic covered in the articles in this literature review is bias. For some cases, bias was framed as favoritism toward extraverts. In addition to perceptions, behaviors, beliefs, bias, and favoritism, the topics of stereotyping and mistreatment are also covered in the introversion and leadership articles included in this review.

To start broadly, and narrow to the topic of study for the proposed study, the relevant literature on leadership will be reviewed first. Next, the relevant literature on leaders who comprise the top management teams of companies will be reviewed. In addition, relevant literature on extraversion and introversion, along with the information on bias, favoritism, and mistreatment will be reviewed. Furthermore, information regarding the selected theory of introversion will be reviewed along with information specific to introverted leaders. Finally, information related to leaders in the Bible and links to the leader's characteristics and introversion will be reviewed.

### **Leadership**

The leadership literature is vast, but when the literature is limited to extraversion and leadership, or introversion and leadership, the elements guiding the research become

narrower. Out of the articles located, the majority covered leader traits. A few of the articles examined the leadership construct based on leader actions, leader abilities, leader and follower beliefs, or leader and follower principles. One common theme that emerged from the leadership research reviewed is related to leader and follower perceptions.

### *Perceptions*

The perceptions employees have regarding leaders and leadership were studied by researchers. How employees perceive leadership and leaders was addressed by Adewale (2020) from the perspective of virtuous leadership. Specifically, the study examined how employees perceived the leaders and the leadership culture within the company they studied along with how the employees perceived the company prior to joining and after joining. Xie (2019) noted employees' perceptions of the learning culture within the organization were attributed to the influence of leadership, while Shafique and Loo-See (2018) noted employees are psychologically influenced by their perceptions of leaders.

Frieder et al. (2018) noted the role leaders play in providing cues to employees that will shape the employees' perceptions of their jobs. Verawati and Hartono (2020) noted leaders must employ leadership styles that are effective in influencing subordinates' perceptions toward goal achievement. Similarly, Ferrari (2017) noted congregation leaders also inspire followers' perceptions toward common pro-social goals. In their study of leaders in faith-based organizations, Zigan et al. (2021) identified 15 leadership attributes by analyzing the perceptions of leaders and followers related to ideal leader attributes and actual leader attributes.

Additional topics associated with employee perceptions of leadership were examined in a few articles. In their literature review, Rudolph et al. (2021) noted

employee perceptions of the respect their leaders have for them is directly related to employees having respect and exhibiting respect toward their leaders. Low and Ayoko (2020) studied spiritual leadership from the perspective of how spiritual leadership is perceived by individuals rather than the definition of the spiritual leadership known by the individuals. Figgins et al. (2019) sought to understand how individuals perceived inspirational leadership specifically noting changing employees' or leaders' perceptions of their capabilities can improve their capabilities.

From a different perspective of perception, Reis and Grady (2019) specifically examined perceptions of effective leadership calling out the visibility of men in leadership roles. The authors noted this visibility leads to an organizational structure that is masculine in nature. Reis and Grady suggested a masculine structure leads to leadership expectations aligning with a masculine leadership style. In this case perception of effective leadership is directly influenced by those in leadership rather than objective attributes of effective leadership. As a result, the findings from the study conducted by Reis and Grady show followers will perceive anyone exhibiting more masculine behaviors, such as authoritative leadership, to be effective. Reis and Grady suggested the perception that women exhibit less authoritative behavior may lead to them being overlooked for leadership positions.

Examining the perception of leadership from a different perspective, Booher et al. (2020) focused on leadership self-perception and how it impacts the clinical nurse's patient care and outcomes. From their analysis of the qualitative study findings, the authors noted people who are not aware of their leadership capabilities are also unaware of how this oversight would influence others. Booher et al. suggested lack of awareness

results in people missing opportunities to positively influence outcomes within their control. Zaar et al. (2020) noted a similar perspective by suggesting leader identity is based on whether people perceive themselves as leaders or followers. The authors suggested cognitive schemas are developed by individuals resulting in them determining what represents leadership. In addition, Dwyer (2019) noted research has shown leadership self-efficacy perceptions positively impact work performance and peers, subordinates, and superior ratings of leadership effectiveness are positively related to perceptions of leadership self-efficacy.

### ***Behaviors***

Another topic covered in most of the selected articles on leadership was leader behavior. Brandert and Matkin (2019) noted the leaders they interviewed confirmed they relied on certain behaviors to make it through a crisis. Adewale (2020) noted the moral character of employees was positively influenced by the virtuous behaviors exhibited by their leaders. A key point related to the Adewale study is virtuous leadership was suitable because virtues are highly valued in Africa and expected in the African leadership context. This suggests it is important to understand the context when determining the impact leadership behaviors will have on the followers. Abbas (2018) noted leader effectiveness includes the impact of leader behavior on the leader's direct reports as well as how the behaviors of direct reports impact leaders, which explains the importance of the leader-follower relationship. Bertsch et al. (2017) noted the behaviors of effective leaders enable followers to attain their desires, which results in effective performance.

Figgins et al. (2019) reported athletes were positively influenced by the example their coaches exhibited along with the leaders giving individualized attention to the

players. Low and Ayoko (2020) provided additional support for leaders influencing followers based on their behaviors, by noting followers are inspired by their spiritual leaders and will attempt to emulate the leaders. Rudolph et al. (2021) suggested leaders exhibiting respectful behaviors like holding followers in high esteem, giving followers special attention, expressing congratulations, and other related behaviors highly influence followers. Dwyer (2019) conducted a study, and the results show a positive correlation between how direct reports rated their leaders and the leaders' transformational leadership behaviors

The relationship between leader identity and leader behavior was examined by a few researchers. Zaar et al. (2020) explained leader identity plays a key role in how individuals will exhibit leadership behaviors. According to Zaar et al., showing charisma, being team oriented, encouraging participation, and being humane toward others were specific behaviors attributed to effective leadership. In the literature review, Xie (2019) described findings relating to leaders being role models for followers, and leaders exhibiting the transformational leadership, or the trust leadership behavior, style significantly impact employees' pursuit of learning. Interestingly, for women leaders in a masculine structure, followers reported being negatively influenced by any masculine behavior exhibited by women leaders, because the followers see the behavior as aggressive rather than authoritative (Reis & Grady, 2019). This suggests followers make subjective, rather than objective, assessments of certain behaviors, and such assessments would make it hard for leaders to know what is expected or acceptable in the eyes of the followers.

### ***Beliefs***

Leader and employee or follower beliefs regarding leadership were also examined by some researchers. Adewale (2020) commented on the role commonly held beliefs employees acquire from their leaders have on the employees' reactions to their leaders. This suggests beliefs are established between leaders and their followers, based on how the leader exhibits leadership. Such beliefs, even if unspoken, influence followers provided the leaders' behaviors align with the employee's beliefs.

Reis and Grady (2019) also referenced shared beliefs, but the reference was from the perspective of the social order constructed by the organization. This suggests the leader is only partially responsible for the constructed beliefs. According to Reis and Grady, all members of the system, leaders and followers or employees, will become believers in the system and will be influenced by their belief in the system. Shafique and Loo-See (2018) added to this concept by noting corporate beliefs play a vital role in explaining the role of leaders. The findings suggest the culture of a given organization will drive how the members of the organization will understand and relate to the organization's leadership.

A few other topics related to leader and follower beliefs were examined by researchers. Verawati and Hartono (2020) noted the behavior theory of leadership is based on the belief leaders are made or can be made, and it is the leaders' actions that matter rather than the leaders' mental qualities. Huszczo and Endres (2017) noted leader self-beliefs are critical in determining a leader's self-efficacy. Langford et al. (2017) noted employee attitudes may influence their perspectives of leader behaviors. Wille et al. (2018) noted beliefs regarding male and female leaders are fundamentally different, but the results of their study showed male and female executives are fundamentally

similar. The key concepts in the leadership information reviewed are related to how leaders are perceived, how leader behaviors are judged, and how beliefs or attitudes related to leaders and leadership influence how leaders and followers understand leadership.

### **Top Management Leaders**

There are many levels of leadership for leaders and followers to understand. Understanding leadership from the top level may provide insight into the other levels of leadership. The proposed study will focus on leaders who are part of the management team of their companies. The topics covered in the articles included in this literature review are related to top management team composition, perceptions associated with top management's bottom-line mentality, extraversion and leadership styles of company executives, and the relationship between CEO extraversion and CEO pay.

In their study, Iseke and Pull (2019) examined the relationship between the presence of female executives and the attractiveness of the employer to prospective female employees. How the attractiveness changes, based on the type of executive position the female executive holds, was also examined. The study results show perceived organizational justice is mediated by the presence of female executives. Additionally, the results show females in non-stereotypical positions was positively related to perceived organizational justice, and one female holding a stereotypical position may harm the perceived attractiveness of the employer.

In their study, Jauhar and Lau (2018) examined the relationship between women's advancement to top management and how women's advancement is moderated by social support. The Jauhar and Lau study was included in the literature review because women,

like introverts, hold fewer positions on company management teams when compared to men. The study results show organizational culture, organizational networking, and organizational practices significantly impact the career advancement of women. Regarding personality, the study results show personality does not have a significant impact towards the career advancement of women.

Employee behaviors and perceptions associated with top management's bottom-line mentality were also studied. Babalola et al. (2020) examined the impact top management's emphasis on bottom-line results had on employee customer service behaviors. The results of the study show employees may exhibit more incivility toward customers when the employee's thoughts are preoccupied with meeting the bottom-line expectations. In their study, Greenbaum et al. (2021) examined how supervisors' ethical leadership practices are impacted based on how supervisors with high levels of mindfulness perceive top management's bottom line mentality. The study results show supervisors with high levels of mindfulness are less likely to be impacted by the negative effects of perceptions of top management's high bottom-line mentality.

In their survey study, Saad et al. (2018) examined the influence of personality types, with extraversion as one of the measures, on employee engagement. The influence of transactional leadership and transformational leadership on employee engagement was also examined. The Saad et al. study results show a significant relationship between extraversion and employee engagement. In addition, the study results show a significant relationship between both leadership styles and employee engagement. If leaders of organizations think having leaders with lower levels of extraversion would negatively influence employee engagement their leader selection practices could be influenced.

Malhotra et al. (2021) studied the relationship between the CEO's extraversion and organizational performance, market performance, and the CEO's pay. The results of the study show the CEO's level of extraversion is positively related to the CEO's pay. In addition, there is a relationship between the CEO's level of extraversion and market performance. Regarding operating performance, the results show there is no relationship between the CEO's level of extraversion and the operating performance of the company. Thinking CEOs with lower levels of extraversion may be paid less is an interesting consideration.

### **Extraversion**

When considering the levels of extraversion can lead to positive economical outcomes, understanding how extraversion is defined in the literature is important. Researchers have characterized extraverts as individuals who are enthusiastic, energetic, warm, gregarious, assertive, and seekers of excitement (Abbas, 2018; Conard, 2020; Hu et al., 2019; Mitchell et al., 2021). Extraverts have also been characterized as outgoing, bold, aggressive, and happy (Cullen-Lester et al., 2016; Dust et al., 2021; Jacques-Hamilton et al., 2019; Seger-Guttman & Medler-Iiraz, 2016). Researchers have defined extraversion as representing being socially active, talkative, and optimistic (Bailey et al., 2018; Bertsch et al., 2017; Shahzad et al., 2020; Sumra, 2019). Extraversion has also been defined as individuals consistently displaying dominating behaviors, or experiencing positive emotions (Dai et al., 2019; Karlsen & Langvik, 2021; Lanaj et al., 2016; Le Sante et al., 2021). Other descriptors associated with people who are extraverted are they take charge or seek to gain power, openly expresses ideas and opinions, voice emotions, comfortable in the spotlight, proactively contribute to discussions or activities,

they are healthy, and they attract social attention (Frieder et al., 2018; Karlsen & Langvik, 2021; Lawn et al., 2019; Wilson et al., 2021). To summarize extraversion in a concise sentence, Cullen-Lester et al. (2016) noted extraversion involves individuals contributing and deriving energy from social interactions. Dust et al. (2021) had a similar summary description noting extraversion involves relationship building where the extravert is energized through interacting with others.

Jacques-Hamilton et al. (2019) noted extraversion levels are a predictor of happiness levels. The research showed people feel happier when they are acting extraverted regardless of their personality type. Along the same lines, the expression of positive emotions was discussed by Dust et al. (2021), while multiple authors commented on extraversion being associated with positive emotions (Dunaetz & Lanum, 2020; Le Sante et al., 2021; McCord & Joseph, 2020; McKee et al., 2018). Lanaj et al. (2016) noted extraverts experience more positive life events thereby resulting in the experience of more positive emotions. In addition, Wilson et al. (2021) noted extraverts engage in the expression of positive emotions.

One key element across the extraversion articles reviewed was related to extraverts being social. Taylor (2020) noted extraversion is a direct reference to an individual's social abilities. Conard (2020) shared extraversion is characterized by individuals having the preference for socializing specifically calling out large group settings. Similarly, Cullen-Lester et al. (2016) noted original views of extraverts were related to them being social, and Bailey et al. (2018) referred to extraversion signifying engagement in social activities. Dunaetz and Lanum (2020) shared extraversion measures a person's tendency to interact socially. Farrell (2017) discussed how extraversion is

related to individuals drawing energy and ideas from their social connections, which results in the development of ideas and inspiration.

Various authors noted extraverts seek out opportunities to be social, desire to be the center of attention and choose behaviors that will place them in the middle of social interactions (Dust et al., 2021; Hu et al., 2019; Mitchell et al., 2021). Similarly, Lanaj et al. (2016) noted extraverts actively behave in ways to attract social attention so they can engage in social activities. Jacques-Hamilton et al. (2019) noted extraverted behaviors are socially desirable in Western cultures. Karlsen and Langvik (2021) reported the social aspect of being extraverted is negatively associated with social dysfunction and pathology. Seger-Guttman and Medler-Iiraz (2016) noted extraverts play a social game that relates to the emotions they display. Finally, Wilson et al. (2021) noted social and dominant individuals are more likely to assert themselves.

## **Extraversion and Leadership**

### ***Perceptions***

Connecting extraversion to leadership, information regarding leader and follower perceptions was available in the literature. Taylor (2020) noted there is a common perception of an effective leader as someone who has extraverted traits while Mitchell et al. (2021) stated scholars have concluded extraversion consistently predicts leadership perceptions. Lee (2022) explained it is the specific extraversion facets of sociability and dominance that are strongly related to leadership perceptions. Dust et al. (2021) examined the leader member exchange (LMX) relationship to determine whether followers' perceptions were influenced when both the leader and follower were extraverts. Le Sante

et al. (2021) examined the connection between personality perceptions, using extraversion as the construct, and how leadership opportunities are affected.

Jacques-Hamilton et al. (2019) studied whether acting extraverted would result in others perceiving the actor to be inauthentic. Shahzad et al. (2020) suggested the good communication skills extraverts display enhance the perception of authenticity, and the study results show extraversion and authentic leadership were positively related. Zigan et al. (2021) reported the perceptions individuals have of ideal leader behavior are based on social attributes like being charismatic, enthusiastic, and inspiring. Karlsen and Langvik (2021) reported lay perceptions of leadership performance continue to be influenced by the level of extraversion associated with the leader. Wilson et al. (2021) reported perceptions of leadership are influenced by the amount of participation, and extraverts are known to have a high level of participation.

Landis et al. (2022) examined the relationship between extraversion and followers' perceptions of informal leader emergence. Specifically, how the follower group, referred to as the initial leadership network size, changed over time was examined. The results of the Landis et al. study show extraversion is positively related to the number of individuals who will perceive another individual as an informal leader. The results also show informal leaders will gain new leadership ties over time, but the followers' perceptions of the informal leader will change. When the perceptions change, Landis et al. noted the associated ties to seeing the individual as an informal leader will be lost.

### ***Behaviors***

Different leader or leadership behaviors were discussed in a few of the extraversion and leadership articles. Karlsen and Langvik (2021) specifically called out

the relationship between extraversion and transformational leadership confirming the two constructs have the strongest and clearest correlation. Jacques-Hamilton et al. (2019) noted transformational leadership is associated with behaviors that express enthusiasm, confidence, and charisma and such behaviors are closely related to extraversion. Williams et al. (2018) noted the importance of leaders exhibiting charisma as well as ethical, moral, and caring behaviors, which the researchers associated with extraverted behaviors. Spark et al. (2018) emphasized the need for introverts to exhibit extraverted behaviors to emerge as leaders.

Different behaviors between leaders and followers were also discussed in a few of the extraversion and leadership articles. Dust et al. (2021) noted extraverted followers, in a leader-follower relationship, may feel comfortable approaching leaders who are also extraverted. Cullen-Lester et al. (2016) reported a leader's extraverted behaviors influence team members proactive behaviors. Lanaj et al. (2016) examined the influence transformational leadership behaviors have on the leaders daily affective states, because the daily affect of leaders influences others.

### ***Beliefs***

Researchers also examined the beliefs leaders and followers hold related to extraversion and leadership. Jacques-Hamilton et al. (2019) discussed the impact beliefs have on retrospective reporting. The authors noted it is possible individuals will rely on their beliefs rather than share an objective account based on their memory. According to Jacques-Hamilton et al., relying on belief could be related to individuals wanting to align with the traits they identify with because sharing anything else may appear inauthentic. Wilson et al. (2021) noted individuals' beliefs remain comparatively fixed, which means

it is likely known patterns will persist. This suggests individuals are predisposed to hold to a belief even if new information, such as a new or revised definition, becomes available that challenges the veracity of the belief.

### **Introversion**

Noting what researchers have found about introverts starts with understanding how introvert and introversion are defined in the literature. Researchers have characterized introverts as reserved, reflective, quiet, and contemplative (Bertsch et al., 2017; Colley, 2019; Dust et al., 2021; Lebin et al., 2019). Researchers have also characterized introverts as aloof, shy, calm, passive, thoughtful, and less sociable (Farrell, 2017; McKee et al., 2018; Seger-Guttmann & Medler-Iiraz, 2016; Verawati & Hartono, 2020). Other descriptors associated with people who are introverted are they demonstrate humility, prefer solitude, are drained by interacting with others (Lebin et al., 2019), they are good listeners, detail oriented (Colley, 2019); amenable to the needs of others (Dust et al., 2021), less sociable or well socialized, and they take pleasure in introspection (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015). Additionally, some negative descriptors of introverts are introverts are conceited, timid, odd, pessimistic, annoying, rude, haughty, arrogant, and bored, and Taylor (2020) noted these descriptors should be classified as misconceptions.

Lebin et al. (2019) specifically called out the misconception regarding introverts being shy or neurotic. The authors stated shyness connotes introverts are afraid of social humiliation or disapproval, which is not the case. In addition, an introvert's tendency to be more reserved and prefer solitary activities, does not mean the introvert is unfriendly. As it relates to neuroticism, Lebin et al noted society often conflates introversion with neuroticism but clarified neuroticism relates to a pattern of negative responses to

impending threat, frustration, or loss. Furthermore, Lebin et al. noted all introverts do not experience the chronic negative emotional states attributed to neuroticism.

According to Colley (2019), education is an area where there seem to be misconceptions regarding introversion. The findings from the phenomenological study reveal nursing students experienced impaired learning in the classroom setting. The nursing students noted needing time to be silent while processing, and the instructors adapting the classroom environment to allow for these differences would be helpful. In addition, the nursing students noted instructors recognizing their strengths would help them grow as a leader.

Colley (2019) shared if educators appreciated the tendency of introverts to think before speaking, synthesize information, and listen before engaging this may help the educators evaluate introverts objectively. Colley further suggested if educators look for these behaviors the educators may discover the students' responses were more developed when they were allowed to provide the response in their timing. Similarly, Lebin et al. (2019) cited themes from a medical student focus group. The themes from the medical students included feeling like misfits, struggling to add to the conversation, questioning whether they should change their identity to be successful, and being judged as underperformers. These themes represented how the introverted students experienced their environment.

### **Theory of Introversion**

The experiences shared by the nursing and medical students could be explained by examining the theory of introversion. According to Jung (1915), there are two psychological types, and both psychological types are based on an energetic conception.

The energetic conception is based on mental phenomena. Jung assumed a hypothetical energy and designated the energy as an expression of psychological values. Jung characterized the introverted psychological type as representing energy an individual applies to self. The extraverted type was characterized as representing energy an individual applies to the external world. Jung noted introverted and extraverted psychology are as different as opposites. Jung also noted the difficulty introverts and extraverts have understanding one another because of the differences.

Subsequent scholars have referenced Jung's theory and have represented the theory differently. Conklin (1923) noted finding references to introversion as abnormal and extraversion as normal being credited to Jung's theory. Conklin suggested the confusion with scholars noting introversion as abnormal was related to how people understood Jung's initial description of introversion and extraversion. Jung (1915) specifically explained the difficulty with using words that could be interpreted differently depending on the language one speaks. Conklin mentioned several works written by Jung that clearly state both extraversion and introversion are normal, but the confusion persisted.

Conklin (1923) also discussed individuals who seem to be a combination of introversion and extraversion. Conklin described the individuals as not falling into either category and used the term ambiversion as their label. Conklin proposed the ambivert be considered normal and the starting point for identifying where an individual falls along the introversion and extraversion continuum. Conklin suggested only individuals with extreme introversion or extraversion be considered abnormal.

To understand how psychologists viewed the distinction between extraverts and introverts, Downey (1926) conducted a questionnaire study. Downey sought to collect data that would provide information regarding the understanding of the terms and estimate any uncertainties and discrepancies. The questionnaire did not include definitions for introvert or extravert, but participants were asked to classify themselves as either. Approximately 23% of the invited psychologists declined to complete the questionnaire noting issues with the terms. Downey applied the definitions Conklin (1923) used when summarizing the results of the study. The study results show the participating psychologists identified as introverted, extraverted, and ambiverted. Although Conklin referenced confusion, confusion was not one of the findings Downey discussed.

McDougall (1929) associated the confusion with the understanding of introversion and extraversion with the approach Jung used in defining the two psychological types. McDougall noted he found the distinction between introversion and extraversion useful but disagrees with how Jung arrived at his classifications. McDougall suggested Jung's theory was based on the temperament trait and suggested the trait is measured on a singular linear scale. He suggested the scale has introversion on one end, extraversion on the other end, and a moderate version of both in the middle of the scale.

McDougall (1929) added to his perspective of Jung's theory by noting the temperamental trait is influenced by a chemical substance produced by the body. He suggested the chemical substance exerts influence on the nervous system based on the amount secreted and absorbed into the blood stream. McDougall noted the relationship between the chemical factor and the associated point on the linear introversion-

extraversion scale cannot be clearly confirmed. Despite noting the relationship cannot be confirmed, McDougall noted extraversion as a positive state and introversion as a negative state.

Although some of Jung's contemporaries challenged his two-type theory, aspects of their works support the theory. Conklin (1923) suggested most individuals would be considered ambiverts, but to be an ambiverts means the individuals needs to be a combination of introverted and extraverted. Some of the psychologists who participated in Downey's (1926) study identified themselves as being a mix of extravert and introvert, which further supports agreement with Jung's introvert and extravert types. It is not possible to be a mix or combination of two things if both are not represented. Lastly, McDougall (1929) posited a linear scale, and reference to a linear scale suggests the middle of the scale is a mix of the items at the extreme ends of the scale.

### **One Continuum**

Given the burgeoning acknowledgement of ambiverts in the literature, it is necessary to discuss extraversion and introversion from the perspective of a single continuum rather than a dichotomous typology of opposites or distinct categories (Davidson, 2017). One item to highlight is the five factor and three-dimensional personality models are based on a continuum, while the psychological type theory examined by some researchers is based on the binary typologies of extraversion and introversion (Francis & Ross, 2018; Francis et al., 2019; Francis et al., 2021). According to Girelli and Stake (1993), bipolarity was the way introversion and extraversion was defined but the data from their study showed the bipolarity was weak. This suggests dichotomous typology should be replaced by a continuum perspective, which tracks with

how extraversion and introversion are currently studied. The positive end of the continuum would be identified as extraversion, which conveys the negative end of the continuum would be introversion (Spark & O'Connor, 2021).

Davidson (2017) suggested the focus has been on the extremes of the continuum, extraversion and introversion, but such focus does not allow for any degree of fluidity. This focus on the extremes could be an explanation for the balanced numbers of introverts and extraverts in the general population as presented in the literature. Lebin et al. (2019) noted introversion and extraversion exist on a continuum and most people fall between the two extremes of the continuum. The authors also noted in different contexts the same people may fall at different points along the continuum. Stephens-Craig et al. (2015) suggested the preferences people have place them somewhere along the continuum, specifically noting there are no pure introverts or extraverts. Stephens-Craig et al. also suggested leaders are capable of compensating for the characteristics, extraverted or introverted, they are lacking.

Karlsen and Langvik (2021) stated people score along the continuum of extraversion-introversion noting most people would be considered an ambivert. In addition, Karlsen and Langvik suggested people are ambiverts because they fall somewhere in the middle of the continuum. Davidson (2017) reported extraversion is a trait existing on a quantitative continuum, and each person possesses a degree of extraversion with ambiverts being those individuals who fall in the middle of the continuum.

### **Favoritism, Bias, and Mistreatment**

If it is true most people are ambiverts, it would be good to understand how extraversion came to be historically celebrated in some societies (Lawn et al., 2019; Taylor, 2020). Although it is not acceptable to draw conclusions based on the frequency a topic is covered in the literature, when considering extraversion and leadership drawing such conclusions would be easy without a thorough review. Farrell (2017) noted the skills associated with effective leaders, like motivating and inspiring others, are also associated with extraverts in the form of charisma. Lebin et al. (2019) shared charisma and gregariousness are associated with extraverted leaders. Finally, Kuofie et al. (2015) added charm and attraction as impactful characteristics. Colley (2019) and Lebin et al. connected evaluation tools to favoritism noting the characteristics captured in the tools are representative of extraverted characteristics. The authors suggested the way the tools are developed does not account for other characteristics that are also associated with success criteria and such criteria could be more favorable for introverts.

The potential favoritism toward extraverts in the workplace and in leadership could stem from the need to develop and sustain relationships, which is deemed to be a strong characteristic of extraversion (Blevins et al., 2022; Dust et al., 2021). This makes sense on the surface, but not every position within a company requires individuals to engage in continuous relationship building. Taylor (2020) sought to address this by examining the steps organizations should take to match individuals to roles based on the context of the role rather than a blanket approach. McCord and Joseph (2020) suggested a strong need for organizations to assess person-environment fit during the selection process and throughout the individual's tenure with the organization. The goal should be to understand the individual's strengths, and this would require assessment of the

individual's approach to various scenarios before ruling the individual out based on perceived preferences.

If perceptions prevail, it is likely extraversion could continue to be the celebrated norm (Taylor, 2020). This is possible because the individuals who make selection decisions may not even realize where their favoritism originates, or how an unconscious bias may be keeping them from seeing the capabilities of an introvert. Biases could show up in various contexts, including in the designs of research studies that have explored extraversion as the positive personality trait associated with effective leadership (Spark & O'Connor, 2021). What is not as evident is the studies themselves could be influenced by the unconscious biases of those involved as researchers and participants.

When considering the origins of the bias against introverts, it is possible early researchers may have unintentionally created the bias by referring to introversion as abnormal (McDougall, 1929). Lebin et al. (2019) reported introverts are faced with strong cultural bias against them becoming leaders. According to Lebin et al. the strong cultural bias is based on a 2006 survey that showed 65% of senior corporate executives viewed being introverted as a barrier to leadership. Regarding behaviors, Colley (2019) stated there is bias in evaluation tools toward extraverted behaviors like initiating discussions, taking the lead in groups, and actively participating in activities. Lebin et al. confirmed the same regarding the interpersonal behavior scores of introverted medical students. Bias may not be evident because extraversion is interwoven in many aspects of society from healthcare, education, and the work sector.

As it relates to mistreatment, McCord (2021) developed and validated an introversion mistreatment scale, which is based on perceptions. The results show anyone

exhibiting introverted behaviors, whether they were an introvert or not, reported levels of mistreatment. Although additional studies are needed, and validation will continue, this data could be used in the interim for directional purposes. Additionally, McCord and Joseph (2020) produced a framework to examine negative responses to introversion in the workplace including evaluating norms favoring extraverted behavior leading to stereotypes, introverted behaviors activating stereotypical thinking and the associated treatment, when treatment of introverts would be legitimized or not, how introversion leads to mistreatment, how targets of mistreatment cope, and how mistreatment spirals.

## **Introversion and Leadership**

### *Perceptions*

Connecting what the authors noted about leadership to introversion and leadership, the common topics in the articles related to introversion and leadership included themes of perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs, although not all articles covered every theme. Colley (2019) discussed the perceptions educational institutions have of introverts noting the institutions screen introverts out from their graduate programs. If introverted students are not accepted into the graduate program, it would make it difficult for them to go on and become a leader in the field. In addition, Colley noted when introverted students are allowed into the programs educators often perceive them as less intelligent or uninterested in learning. Educators perceive the introverted students in this manner because the introverted students are not speaking or raising their hands to participate. Lebin et al. (2019) noted introverts may not perceive themselves as leaders and others may not see their potential either. Spark and O'Connor (2021) noted their

results showed acting introverted in a public context would inhibit others' perceptions of the person being capable of emerging as a leader.

### ***Behaviors***

Researchers evaluated the impact of exhibiting introverted behaviors in the educational setting. Colley (2019) stated evaluation tools used in education include behaviors like initiating discussions, taking the lead in groups, and actively participating in activities and these behaviors are not associated with introversion. If more introverted behaviors are not captured on the evaluation tools, it is unlikely introverted individuals would be able to score well. Lebin et al. (2019) noted introverted medical students tend to have lower scores on their interpersonal behavior ratings during their clerkship rotations.

Researchers also evaluated the impact of exhibiting introverted behaviors in the workplace setting. Spark and O'Connor (2021) conducted their study to examine whether introverts could obtain an advantage in leadership emergence by exhibiting extraverted behaviors, which suggests introverted behaviors are not enough. Similarly, Taylor (2020) suggested when individuals cannot change their preference toward introversion, they can change their behavior patterns. Blevins et al. (2022) suggested the lack of self-promoting behaviors displayed by introverts could lead to better goal alignment among introverted leaders, teams, and individuals within the organization.

### ***Beliefs***

Beliefs regarding introversion were studied by two teams of researchers. Spark et al. (2018) conducted a study related to introverts exhibiting extraverted behaviors, but the focus of the study was on the introverts' beliefs about exhibiting the extraverted behaviors. The authors hypothesized introverts would be less likely to emerge as a leader

due to the introverts' belief that the experience of exhibiting the extraverted behaviors would be unpleasant. The study results show introverts were less likely to emerge as leaders because of their higher levels of forecasted negative affect. This means the introverts overestimated the negative emotions they would experience, and this overestimation led to the inhibited behavior by the introverts. What is interesting about the study is the guiding assumption was introverts must exhibit extraverted behaviors to emerge as leaders. In their qualitative study, Stephens-Craig et al. (2015) found most of the participants, 26 of 31, believed introverts and extraverts could be successful leaders who make a difference. The participants in the study self-identified as an ambivert ( $n=3$ ), introverted ( $n=14$ ), and extraverted ( $n=14$ ).

### **Leaders Who Are Introverted**

Out of the empirical articles located, two articles were about qualitative studies and were related to introversion and leadership. Colley (2019) conducted a study with introverted nursing students and the questions she posed to them were related to their preparedness for leadership positions in the nursing profession, their educational experiences as nursing students, and the educational experiences the nursing students deem as most beneficial to them. The findings of the study revealed nursing students suffer emotionally and physically while in school. Students reported a high level of stress because they were subjected to teaching approaches were incongruent with their introverted learning styles. Implications suggested were related to adjusting classroom behaviors to allow time for the pensive and reflective introverts to process their thoughts and respond. Future directions suggested were for longitudinal comparative studies to

examine any differences between introverted nursing leaders who participated in supportive educational environments and those who did not.

Moving from education to the workplace, Stephens-Craig et al. (2015) stated they conducted an exploratory qualitative study to bring attention to the issue of introverted leaders. The importance of the study was presented on the basis that workplaces are structured for those who are extraverted. While the goal was to shine a light on introverted leaders, Stephens-Craig et al. did not restrict the sample to introverts, nor did they restrict the questions to the topics of introversion or introverts. The questions posed to participants included a question about how they identified from a personality trait perspective, a question about how leaders view the characteristics of other introverted and extraverted leaders, and a question about whether successful leaders are those who have introverted or extraverted characteristics. This study probed how individuals thought about others but did not probe details about how introverts experience leadership themselves.

Although it was not probed, participants did mention they compensated for their perceived weaknesses so they could obtain leadership positions. The decision to compensate for some of their behaviors is not surprising, as the concept of compensating was seen in two of the quantitative studies reviewed. Jacques-Hamilton et al. (2019) examined compensating with a focus on the costs and benefits of acting extraverted. In addition, Lanaj et al. (2016) examined compensating with a focus on the benefits of transformational leadership behaviors. Stephens-Craig et al. (2015) suggested future studies be conducted to continue to bring attention to the experiences of introverted leaders. To provide insight into the leadership capabilities of introverts, the samples for

these studies could be limited to introverted leaders and include introverts in company management level leadership positions.

### **Biblical Foundations of the Study**

Per information available in the literature, ethical leadership was studied based on an example from the Bible. Cavins (2018) suggested 1 Timothy 6 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) could be used to frame ethical leadership. Specifically, Cavins noted the importance of honor, respect, contentment, knowing the things to avoid, and knowing the things to pursue as covered in this passage of Scripture. The passage includes instructions on what to focus on, how to use resources to do good, and how to control oneself. Overall, the purpose of the passage was to explain to others how to effectively pursue ethical leadership.

Another type of leadership studied based on examples from the Bible is shared leadership. According to Robinson (2018), the earliest reference to shared leadership is present in the first chapter of Genesis. God is referred to as Elohim, a plural noun, and throughout the chapter plural pronouns were used when referencing God. In addition, Robinson noted God shared leadership with Adam when God made Adam the caretaker of the garden. Another example of shared leadership is found in Exodus 18:24-26 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) where Moses delegated dispute resolution responsibilities to other capable men as recommended by his father-in-law Jethro.

After examining the literature available on leadership and the Bible, a study of the Bible was conducted to identify any information that could be used to shape the proposed study. Depending on the Bible translation being read it is possible to find very few, if not zero, references to leadership but more than 200 references to leader or leaders are

available. References to introversion, introvert, introverted, or any other related term will also not be found in the various translations. Acknowledging the combination of introversion and leadership will not be found in the Bible, how to think about the concepts of leadership and apply the concepts to individuals within the Bible was necessary. Moses, Joshua, Joseph, David, Solomon, Samuel, Saul, Daniel, and Peter were the leaders selected to study in detail. In this proposal, to comprehensively understand introversion, extraversion has been examined as well. This approach led to selecting leaders from the Bible who represent the extraversion-introversion continuum.

Presenting the leaders in the order they appear in the Bible, Joseph's relevant story begins in Genesis 37 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) where he starts off by giving his father an unfavorable report regarding his brothers. Joseph follows this up by openly sharing the dream he had with his father and brothers. Joseph's outgoing and talkative tendencies (Bertsch et al., 2017) reflect extraverted behaviors. Later in Genesis 39 Joseph received favorable treatment and it is clear the treatment was related to the favor God bestowed on Joseph. Others saw Joseph in a specific light because of God's influence on those people.

Moving to Moses, Exodus 2 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) is where Moses' leadership story begins where he killed an Egyptian who was beating a fellow Hebrew man. This led Moses to flee Egypt and land in Midian in Exodus 3 where he began speaking to the Lord through the burning bush. While Moses was selected by the Lord to lead his people out of Egypt, he was less certain of his speaking skills and asked the Lord to send someone else Exodus 4:10-13. Moses comments about his speech suggests he was quiet, and his request to send someone else suggest he was passive,

which are both characteristics of introverts (Seger-Guttmann & Medler-Iiraz, 2016).

Regarding leadership, from Exodus 4- 40, Moses was typically obedient to the commands of the Lord and provided instruction, guidance, and correction to the Israelites when needed.

Moses' successor, Joshua is introduced in Exodus 17:9 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) and it is clear Joshua is a leader under Moses although Joshua is referred to as an aide in latter chapters of Exodus. One of the few references to leadership is in Numbers 27:18 where the Lord mentioned Joshua having a spirit of leadership. The various mentions of Joshua throughout the books of Numbers and Joshua do not provide sufficient details to classify Joshua as extraverted, introverted, or ambiverted.

Samuel's calling starts in 1 Samuel 3 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) where it was time to relieve Eli of his priestly duties and the Lord shared with Samuel what was to come. Based on the nature of the work Samuel was learning, and what Samuel was being prepared to do, he could be classified as an introvert. Humility, a descriptor associated with introverts (Lebin et al., 2019), was an essential characteristic of prophets, as sharing the Lord's words must be the focus. The evidence of Samuel's leadership can be seen in his 1 Samuel 7:15-16 where it states he led all others throughout his lifetime and one of his responsibilities was also to serve as a judge.

As it relates to Saul, 1 Samuel 9:1 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) specifically calls out Saul's handsomeness and how he was a foot taller than others, which is associated with the great man theory of leadership (Olley, 2021). The concept of being tall was thought to be an early characteristic associated with leaders and it is interesting a link to this can be seen in the Bible. Other than being tall, Saul was decisive

and quick to act as noted in 1 Samuel 11:7 when he responded to news in anger, cut a pair of oxen in pieces, sent the pieces throughout Israel, and the message that accompanied the oxen pieces was a threat for the same to be done to any dissenters. Saul bold acts are characteristic of extraverted behavior (Jacques-Hamilton et al., 2019).

David's leadership story begins in 1 Samuel 16 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) after the Lord rejected Saul as king. Although the Lord chose David, Saul's attendants were the ones who described David as a brave man, warrior, one who speaks well, and is fine looking. In addition, David could be described as dominant based on his display of bravery and his willingness to take on the Philistines more than once, which is detailed in 1 Samuel 17 and 1 Samuel 18. Being dominant is another characteristic associated with extraversion (Blevins et al., 2022).

Solomon stepped into leadership when he was made king by David in 1 Kings 1 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) with his rule being established in 1 Kings 2:12. As described in 1 Kings 4, Solomon was responsible for a substantial number of people and the number of daily provisions was substantial. Solomon did not lead a quiet or reserved life and spent many days sharing his knowledge with people from many nations. Solomon's exhibited gregarious behaviors, which are associated with extraversion (Dust et al., 2021).

Daniel, who was also called Belteshazzar, was selected into leadership by Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon as noted in Daniel 1 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984). Daniel's leadership capabilities were clear in his ability to influence the chief official to allow them to eat vegetables and drink water rather than partaking of the royal food. The Lord gave Daniel the ability to interpret dreams and visions and Daniel

boldly asked the king for time to do so in Daniel 2:16. Daniel's boldness is a characteristic attributed to extraversion (Jacques-Hamilton et al., 2019).

Finally, Peter's leadership can be seen in Matthew 14:28 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984) where Peter asked Jesus to call him out on the water. Peter's question was quite bold as no human had ever walked on water, yet Peter was willing to try. On many occasions Peter boldly spoke up most notably when he declared he would never fall away from Jesus in Matthew 26:33 or disown Jesus in Matthew 26:35. Peter also addressed a crowd in Acts 2 using the words of the prophet Joel. Peter's boldness and assertiveness are characteristics attributed to extraverts (Jacques-Hamilton et al., 2019).

### **Summary**

To understand what is currently known about introversion and leadership an extensive search of the literature was performed. Keywords such as extraversion, introversion, leadership, and their derivatives were used to search for peer-reviewed, empirical, theoretical, and literature review articles in the Google Scholar and EBSCO databases. A variety of leadership articles on topics like leader traits, leadership theories, and leaders in top management were examined. In addition, articles on the constructs of extraversion and introversion were also examined, along with information regarding the continuum of extraversion-introversion, which includes information regarding ambiverts.

The recurring themes of perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs were found in the literature regarding leadership, extraversion, and introversion. When studying the leaders in the Bible from the perspective of the extraversion-introversion continuum it was revealed that some historical leadership perspectives, remaining prevalent today, could

have been influenced by the Bible. Finally, there seems to be more information available for extraversion and leadership than introversion and leadership and understanding leadership from the distinct perspective of introversion may provide useful insight.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

### **Overview**

This qualitative study was grounded in phenomenology. Phenomenology is an inquiry into the nature of a phenomenon based on constructing the phenomenon from the lived experiences of individuals (Pham, 2021). Phenomenology was used to understand the lived experiences of introverts who are members of the management team of companies in the United States. This study involved researcher bracketing activities, participant recruitment activities, video recorded and transcribed interviews, and thematic analysis using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software. Following thematic analysis activities, I generated a report detailing the results of the study.

### **Research Question**

RQ1: What are the lived workplace experiences of introverted leaders who are members of the management team of companies?

### **Research Design**

Qualitative research is an inquiry process that includes a variety of theoretical paradigms, methods, and research strategies such as interviews (Lanka et al, 2021). Specifically, qualitative research methodology is flexible, exploratory, and provides an opportunity for participants to discuss their experiences without a pre-defined hypothesis (Prosek & Gibson, 2020). Although qualitative research is not guided by a hypothesis, researchers still adhere to scientific philosophies when designing studies (Prosek & Gibson, 2020). In qualitative studies, research questions address the how, what, or why, people have their experiences, and the questions serve as the guide for the research (Prosek & Gibson, 2020).

Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research focused on studying a phenomenon based on individuals' lived experiences of the phenomenon (Neubauer et al., 2019). In this study, a specific type of phenomenology was used. Transcendental phenomenology focuses on how individuals describe their experience of the phenomenon being studied (Miller et al., 2018; Prosek & Gibson, 2020). In addition, the researcher analyzes the data to identify and report the common themes associated with the phenomenon as described by the participants (Prosek & Gibson, 2020). The phenomenon examined in this study was the workplace experiences of introverted leaders. The focus of this study was on what the participants experience in the workplace related to being an introverted leader who is a member of the company management team. The data collected were analyzed to identify the common themes emerging from a study of the phenomenon.

### **Participants**

To examine the relationship between sample size and quality of the research findings, Bartholomew et al. (2021) conducted a study by reviewing the articles of 200 phenomenological studies. The findings of their studies show the sample size of 5-10 produced high quality data while sample sizes with less than five participants produce quality data. The sample size for this study was 18 introverted leaders which enabled the collection of high quality data.

In addition to considering the appropriate sample size, the appropriate sampling method was considered. Bartholomew et al. (2021) noted the utility of purposive sampling of individuals who have a shared experience. Prosek and Gibson (2020) noted the sampling should be purposive and based on the phenomenon being studied. In the

phenomenology study conducted by Colley (2019), purposive criterion sampling was used to ensure participants were nursing students and self-proclaimed introverts. In this study, purposive criterion sampling was used to ensure participants met two key criteria.

To be included in the study, participants had to be introverted, and have been a member of a company management team within the last 3 years. To qualify as a member of the company management team, the individual must have held a position on the team of individuals responsible for making decisions for the entire company, been the CEO or President, reported directly to the CEO, President, or top leader of the company, or have held an Officer, Vice President, or equivalent title. In addition, the participants must have had a minimum of two employees who reported directly to them and must have been a member of a company management team for a minimum of 1 year. Finally, the participants must have been at least 18 years old and able to understand and speak English.

### **Study Procedures**

Prior to initiating the participant recruiting activities, I completed the bracketing procedure. According to Dorfler and Stierand (2020), bracketing is a research tool researchers should use to raise their awareness of their own subjective components associated with the phenomenon. I documented my experiences of my work environment as a member of the top management team and an introvert. I documented my experiences in a video recording via Microsoft Teams. The video recording included my personal beliefs, values, and knowledge of the phenomenon, which are the topics Miller et al. (2018) included in their summary of the bracketing associated with transcendental phenomenology. My video recording was transcribed in real time by Microsoft Teams

and saved in a Microsoft OneDrive file folder, which will be maintained for a period of 3 years. After 3 years the double delete feature will be used to destroy the data. The Microsoft OneDrive file folder has been accessible to me only and will be until the files are destroyed.

To recruit participants, I posted the Liberty University Institutional Review Board approved version of the study flyer (see Appendix A) to LinkedIn and Facebook. The information about the study was also distributed within Liberty University via Doctoral Commons. Before conducting the study, a back-up recruitment strategy of contacting companies directly to obtain permission to approach their staff members was planned. A permission request email (see Appendix B) was created but was not used, because all participants came from the various social media posts.

Interested individuals contacted me via email and I responded to the questions they asked. Once each participant's interest was confirmed, a link to the electronic consent document, provided via the Adobe Sign, was emailed to the participant. The consent document included language inviting the participant to participate, what the study is about and why it was being done, the study procedures, how the participant's information would be protected, any benefits to the participant, and any potential risks. Instructions were included with the link to the consent document.

The participant was instructed to read the consent document and to proceed with signing the document only if there were no questions. If the participant had questions, the instructions requested the participant email the questions or email and request a call with me. Once all questions were answered, if the potential participant did not agree to participate, the participant was thanked for the time spent. If the participant agreed to

participate, the participant was asked to sign the document. After the participant signed a copy of the fully signed consent document was downloaded and filed in a Microsoft OneDrive folder created to store the respective participant's consent document. In addition, the signed consent document was emailed to the participant via Adobe Sign.

Once the consent was signed by the introverted leader, the leader was assigned a participant code to be utilized throughout the remainder of the study. The codes were documented in an encrypted Microsoft Excel file and the file was stored in a Microsoft One Drive folder and will remain so for 3 years. After 3 years the double delete feature will be used to destroy the data. The Microsoft OneDrive file folder was only accessible to me and will be until the files are destroyed.

After the consent document was signed, the demographics questionnaire (see Appendix C) and the extraversion scale derived from Goldberg's (1992) Big-Five Factor Markers (see Appendix D) were shared with the participants via Google Forms. After I received notification of the completion of questionnaire and scale, I downloaded the questionnaire and scale and filed them in a Microsoft OneDrive folder. The results of the questionnaire provided the identification of the individual as an introvert but in some cases indicated the person was not an introvert. If any participant did not meet all of the inclusion criteria, meaning the participant was not 18 years or older, was not a member of the company management team for at least a year, was not a member of the company management team within the last 3 years, did not have two direct reports, or was not an introvert, the participant was excluded from the study. Once the inclusion criteria were confirmed for a participant, email was used to schedule a Microsoft Teams meeting.

Microsoft Teams was used to conduct, record, and transcribe the interview with the participant.

The day of the interview the Microsoft Teams meeting was launched approximately 5 minutes before the start time to begin the recording. Upon joining the meeting, the participant was asked to acknowledge the recording feature was enabled, which is a Microsoft Teams requirement and an ethical requirement in research. After greeting the participant and discussing the purpose of the study, the interview questions (see Appendix E) were asked. While the participant was responding to the questions, I used a notepad to capture any clarifying questions which I asked during the interview. The interview was concluded once all interview questions were asked. In all cases the interview was concluded within the allotted 1-hour timeframe. Upon completion of the video recording, the file was uploaded to a Microsoft OneDrive file. Next, to document the video recording transcription, the file automatically generated by Microsoft Teams was uploaded to a Microsoft OneDrive file. In addition, the pages from the notepad were shredded. All files uploaded to the Microsoft OneDrive folder will be retained for a period of 3 years. After 3 years, the double delete feature will be used to destroy the data. The Microsoft OneDrive file folder has only been accessible to me and will continue to be until the files are destroyed.

### **Instrumentation and Measurement**

To facilitate the informed consent process, Adobe Sign, an electronic software developed for obtaining electronic signatures, was used. To maintain the confidentiality of study participants, names and other identifying information were not used during, after, or in any report of this study. To secure the participants' names and emails, a

separate Microsoft OneDrive file was created for the consent documents and questionnaires. The demographics questionnaire was administered to the potential participants using Google Forms. The demographic data was converted from the Google Form to Microsoft Excel for processing and was stored in a Microsoft OneDrive file only accessible by me.

The 10-item extraversion scale derived from Goldberg's (1992) Big-Five Factor Markers was administered to potential participants using Google Forms. Reliability and validity of the 10-item extraversion subscale were confirmed in a study conducted by Gow et al. (2005). The results of the study show Cronbach's alpha for the extraversion subscale was .90, and the concurrent validity of the Big-Five Factor Markers was confirmed based on the high correlations to the extraversion scales of the NEO-FFI and EPQ-R Short Form. The responses from each participant's completed scale were downloaded from Google Forms to Microsoft Excel for scoring. Once scored, the results were used to confirm the participant was introverted. The downloaded results and scoring were stored in a Microsoft OneDrive file only accessible by me.

The interviews were conducted and recorded using Microsoft Teams and consent to record was reconfirmed at the start of the meeting. The interview recordings were uploaded to a Microsoft OneDrive file separate from the file with the consent documents and questionnaires. Back-up copies of the interview recordings were stored in a separate OneDrive File. Other materials I used included the Microsoft Outlook calendar to manage the interview schedules, and my school email address to communicate with participants. Additionally, Microsoft Excel was used to house the demographics data,

participant code list, introversion scale scores, and NVivo qualitative analysis software was used to conduct significant statement identification, coding, and thematic analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Computer assistance qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) was used in this study. According to Vignato et al. (2021), use of CAQDAS should help the researcher conduct qualitative analysis by making data management more efficient and data analysis more transparent. In their study, Vignato et al. used Colaizzi's method of data analysis. Colaizzi's method includes reading the text, identifying significant statements, associating a meaning or code with each statement, organizing the codes into groups of themes, combining the results into a comprehensive description of the phenomenon, requesting the participant review the findings to validate the results, and include relevant new data into the final research product (Vignato et al., 2021). In addition to enabling the eight analysis steps used by Colaizzi, Vignato et al. highlighted the utility of the word lists, word count, word cloud, tree maps, and file comparison features of the CAQDAS, which enable technology triangulation.

NVivo was selected as the CAQDAS for three reasons. First, the speech-to-text transcription functionality enables automated text transcription of video recordings. I thought the automated text transcription feature would save me time from listening to the recordings and typing the text into a document. This was not needed because Microsoft Teams automatically transcribes the interview in real-time. Second, NVivo produces files that can be used to conduct the thematic analysis step. Pham (2021) described thematic analysis as the approach to identifying statements present in transcripts that may be considered the structures of the experience. Third, NVivo includes features related to

word identification that can enable technology triangulation. I conducted technology triangulation as described by Vignato et al. (2021) by using the file comparison feature of NVivo to compare my manual themes identification file with the automated themes identification file.

Prior to conducting analysis of the first interviewees transcript, I reviewed the NVivo file of my bracketing interview and coded my significant statements to document my beliefs, values, and knowledge statements. Next, I used the autocode feature for the first interviewees transcript. I subsequently manually coded the file by reading the file to identify significant statements, highlighting the statements, and creating a new code for the statements. As I continued through the file, I assigned the statements to an already created code when applicable. I repeated these steps after each interview. Prior to conducting the post-data collection analysis of the interviewees' transcripts, the NVivo transcripts from the individual introverted leader interviews were combined into one file using the export feature. The file was exported to Microsoft Excel. The combined file was read to further classify the significant statements, codes, and themes where applicable.

The significant statements were read to determine the applicable codes and themes, and the codes and themes were documented within the Microsoft Excel file for ease of reference. Once no new codes, or themes were identified from the manual review, I declared saturation was reached. Saturation is defined as the exhaustion of newly identified data (Bartholomew et al., 2021) or the acknowledgement of information redundancy (Vignato et al., 2021). I ran the automatic analysis features available within the NVivo software. The significant statements identification step, coding steps, and

theme identification step, were repeated using the automatically generated outputs from NVivo. The steps were conducted using the automatically generated outputs until saturation was reached. Once saturation was reached using the technology triangulation process, no more interviews were held. After the triangulation process, an additional validation step was conducted.

To validate the study findings, Neubauer et al. (2019) noted the utility of incorporating a member checking step, because member checking involves having participants review the findings to determine whether the findings resonate with the participants. The summary of the themes from this study was shared with the participants to obtain their feedback and the feedback from the participants was incorporated in a final report. To correlate the themes identified from this study with existing leader research, I compared the themes identified in this study to information available about extraverted leaders in top management positions.

### **Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations**

The population for this study was delimited to company management team members who are introverted. The focus was on this population because only 4% of leaders on company management teams are introverted, and between 33% to 50% of the general population is introverted (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015). Another delimitation for this study was allotting 1 hour maximum to interview each participant. One hour was selected because I thought potential participants may be reluctant to commit more time based on the typical schedule a company management team members maintains.

One assumption regarding data collection was the introverted participants would all score similarly on the scale derived from Goldberg's (1992) Big-Five Factor Markers.

The assumption was anyone scoring within the introversion range would have similar experiences of their workplace. Another assumption was introverted leaders will answer questions truthfully. In addition, it was assumed participants would share enough information to enable thematic analysis.

One limitation is this study was conducted by a single researcher. Prosek and Gibson (2020) noted multiple researchers are a key element for establishing credibility in qualitative research. Another limitation of this study is the study findings are not generalizable. One reason the findings are not generalizable is related to the sample size. Bartholomew et al. (2021) noted phenomenological sample sizes are too small for generalizability. In addition, the study findings are not generalizable to any specific demographic group, because thematic analysis activities were conducted based on the content of each transcription rather than on transcriptions categorized by a demographic characteristic. In general, the study is limited to providing the essence of the lived experiences of a group of introverted leaders.

### **Summary**

Eighteen introverted leaders from company management teams were recruited to participate in this phenomenological study. The introverted leaders provided demographic data. In addition, video recorded interviews were conducted with the 18 introverted leaders to enable an understanding of the experiences they have of their work environment. The interviews were recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Teams. Significant statements were identified and coded, and thematic analysis was performed using the NVivo software.

The participants and procedures for this study resulted in findings that describe the lived experiences of introverted leaders in company management positions. It was assumed the participants would respond truthfully and provide detailed information within the 1 hour allotted for the interviews. A key limitation associated with this data relates to the lack of generalizability. While the data are not generalizable, nor generate the cause of why introverts represent 4% of company management teams (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015), the data revealed details regarding what the introverted leaders experience in their work environments.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Overview

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to describe the lived workplace experiences of introverted leaders who are members of the company management team. The guiding research question was what are the lived workplace experiences of introverted leaders who are members of the management team of companies. Participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent describing the study, complete a demographics questionnaire, complete an extraversion-introversion scale, and participate in a 1 hour video recorded interview. The six planned interview questions participants were asked are outlined in Appendix E. The interview questions were designed to solicit descriptions of the treatment participants have experienced from others, the participants' descriptions of their leadership and management approach, and the feedback participants have received from others. During the interviews two additional questions were added, based on responses from the participants, and the additional questions are labeled as such in Appendix E. The additional interview questions emerged from the early interviewees mentioning mentoring in their responses and were designed to describe advice the participants would give someone replacing them if the replacement was an introvert or extravert.

### Descriptive Results

Eighteen participants, who are identified by a participant number (P001 – P018), were interviewed via Microsoft Teams using the recording and automatic transcription feature. The participants have held various top management positions for companies in several different industries and the participants held top management positions for a

range of 1 to 25 years. The participants also had a minimum of two direct reports during their top management tenure. The age range of the participants was 25 to 65 years old, and the participants' scores on the extraversion-introversion scale ranged from 2 to 16 out of 40 (see Appendix F/Table 1).

### **Study Findings**

Prior to analyzing the data from each interview, I reviewed the transcript from the video recording of my bracketing exercise. In my recording I answered the interview questions and provided my overall assumptions and beliefs about being an introverted leader based on my personal experiences in the workplace. I completed the significant statement identification step to determine my descriptions of my experiences. My descriptions of my experiences were categorized as *perceived as different by others* and *be more social in my approach to interpersonal relationships at work*. Prior to beginning data analysis of the participant interviews, I set my descriptions of my experiences as an introverted leader in top management aside.

To analyze the data from each participant interview, I uploaded the video recording and associated transcript to NVivo and used the autocoding feature. I saved the autocoding results without reading or reviewing the results. I did not review the results because I wanted to ensure my manual coding activities were not influenced in any way. After saving the autocoding results, I created a separate file within NVivo with the participant's video recording and associated transcript. I proceeded to read through each transcript and identified significant statements by highlighting the text, selecting the code feature, creating a name for the code, and entering the brief description. This process was repeated for any text that could not fit into an existing code. When any subsequent

significant statements fit into a code already entered, the text was associated with the existing code. The participant interviews were coded separately but one code list was used throughout the manual coding process. Once manual coding of each interview was completed 84 codes were associated with the significant statements identified. I proceeded to review the data within each code to further narrow the number of codes. After several rounds of review the list of codes was significantly reduced.

Prior to selecting the final list of manual codes, the NVivo software autocode results for the participant interview files were read in detail. The autocode results produced between 22 and 197 codes from the 18 participants transcripts. To narrow the autocoded results I applied the autocode feature to the compilation of the 18 participant interview files and 27 to 49 codes were automatically identified by the software. I compared the codes from the autocode results to the codes from the manual results and confirmed the autocode results did not contain any unique codes. After completing the comparison, the final list of codes was reduced and four themes and 13 sub-themes emerged (see Table 2/Appendix G).

### **Summary of Themes**

The four themes that emerged from the introverted leader interviews are *received positive feedback*, *were quality focused*, *understood the importance of relationships*, and *had knowledge of others' different expectations*. The three subthemes of *received positive feedback* are:

- encouraged to be more vocal
- described treatment as fair
- received promotion opportunities

The four subthemes of *were quality focused* are:

- focused on work ethic
- did things correctly
- detailed in thinking
- were conscientious about work

The four subthemes of *understood the importance of relationships* are:

- had empathy toward others
- collaborated with others
- built trust and rapport with others
- empowered others

Lastly, the two subthemes of *had knowledge of others' different expectations* are:

- subscribed to contradictory concepts
- reacted differently than others

**Table 2***Number of Participants Reporting Themes and Sub-themes*

Theme	Number of Participants
Received positive feedback	
Encouraged to be more vocal	11
Described treatment as fair	10
Received promotion opportunities	5
Were quality focused	
Focused on work ethic	8
Did things correctly	5
Detailed in thinking	9
Were conscientious about work	8
Understood the importance of relationships	
Had empathy toward others	12
Collaborated with others	12
Built trust and rapport with others	4
Empowered others	5
Had knowledge of others' different expectations	
Subscribed to contradictory concepts	9
Reacted differently than others	12

**Theme 1: Received Positive Feedback**

When describing how they were treated by others, the introverted leaders reported

experiences of being supported by supervisors, colleagues, and direct reports. In addition, the introverted leaders reported being well received and respected by others along with not having issues with others. Five participants gave descriptions of their positive feedback experiences. P003 stated, “one of my manager’s said I was a natural leader.” P010 said, “I haven’t received any negative feedback, it’s all been very positive.” P011 stated “my reviews have been positive” and “all feedback’s been positive.” P004 provided the following description related to positive feedback:

Feedback I've got throughout the years as a as I've gone through in different leadership positions, starting from the first leadership with, you know, up until the last one was over a whole department, my leadership, I've honestly gotten great response, great feedback.

P015 gave the following description of the positive feedback experience:

She tried to reassure me that she didn't feel like that was the case, that like, in both cases we were kind of having some performance challenges with these individuals. So she I think was trying to reassure me that she didn't feel like it was anything that I could have done better or differently. But I also like again, I still doubt that because it's like you're not with me and all of these meetings and all of these interactions. And I'm sure there's something that I could have done differently or better. But she didn't think that there was anything. I guess so I mean, I continue to get really positive feedback.

Examples of support from others were provided by two participants. P010 reported that a mentor was expecting the best or better and gave the following example of the support received:

So when I would reflect to him, he would ask me at the end of every presentation, at the end of every brief, because I have to walk in and talk to people seven floors higher than I've ever been experienced to do a general or a director. And at the end of it. While walking away, he would put a hand on my shoulder and would say so. How do you feel about what you did? How do you feel about your presentation and I would instantly go into hone on that 1% that was sub-optimal and he would say, well, how do you feel about the 99%? Because that seemed to be effective.

P012 recalled the following exchange:

You know, it's one of those standard things. They ask what's your greatest strength? What's your greatest weakness? So when she asked for the greatest weakness, I said, well, I'm an I'm an introvert. Like I'm not. I'm not a people person. And she said, well, you know what? Sometimes that can be a good thing because, you know, we have a couple people around here that like to do more water cooler talking than they do working. So that's sort of encouragement, you know, right off the bat in the interview really went a long way towards giving me the confidence to not have to put on.

One final description of support was provided by P018 who stated, “my boss like he supports whatever I do”.

Eleven of the introverted leaders described experiences related to the first subtheme *encouraged to be more vocal*. The feedback the introverted leaders received was related to sharing their thoughts and contributing to the discussion in group settings. P004 stated the feedback received was to “work on speaking up,” while P003 stated,

“speak up.” P005 reported, “I have always been encouraged to speak up,” and P016 commented by stating, “do your best to give input.” One participant, P002, provided a more detailed description and stated:

Hmm, some feedback you know, maybe I could. Use my voice more. Right. Because if I do have something to offer, something to say. Umm. I can speak up often or more often than sitting back. Umm. I think that's probably the biggest. Umm. Piece of constructive criticism that I have received. Umm to be more vocal. Because I do have you know, ideas. Thoughts. I, you know, just things to offer, and if I'm sitting back waiting to be called upon, that opportunity might not never come. You know what I'm saying? So just to speak up and speak often to use my voice to, you know express myself.

Although the feedback received from others was related to being more vocal, some participants described their experiences around not speaking. P002 stated, “I’m not the loudest person in the room” or “the one that may have spoken up first.” P003 stated “I would say I am quiet and shy and the person who doesn’t talk a lot.” P004 stated “If I’m not speaking right in the meeting and they are not asking my opinion, then I don’t speak.” P005 stated “I will only speak when I know that I have the data.” P008 stated “I think I was well accepted because I didn’t stir the pot or cause any issues.” P009 stated “I can be outspoken when I absolutely have to be.” P013 stated “If I don’t have anything to say, I just don’t have anything to say.” Finally, P007 stated:

I have that mindset that you speak when spoken to and or when you're asked a question and you don't just talk to, the way I perceive it, hear yourself talk. Ok. Because a lot of stuff is just kind of useless to me and I don't normally speak up

unless I feel like what I'm saying should be said and needs to be said then and that it makes sense. And I think that does come into play because I'm an introvert.

For the *described treatment as fair* subtheme, 10 introverted leaders provided similar descriptions when responding to the interview question regarding how the introverted leader was treated in the workplace. P002 stated “I think I was treated fair” and “not mistreated in any way,” while P005 stated, “I have to say quite fairly, actually.” P007 said, “I don’t feel like I’m treated any differently, and P008 stated, “I think I'm still well received.” P014 stated “I was respected,” and P015 stated “I think I am pretty well respected by the team.” P018 stated, I think people respected me that I had made it to that position, especially a lot of the staff that I had worked with in my previous position. I feel like I was respected. P011 stated “there was no negative treatment” and provided the following detailed description:

I haven't had any issues with uh peers or supervisors or anything like that on my way up. That I can recall specifically, you know that that I was aware of anyway. Um. I think I had one situation where I was passed over for management. Upper management position, but the person they got the job, he was more qualified, you know. Therefore it was. It was a good choice. So I had no issues with that and later I ended up getting that position anyhow. So but not much there. No issues that I could recall.

Five introverted leaders described experiences related to the *received promotion opportunities* subtheme. P005 stated, “I had a lot of really good sponsors and mentors who pushed me to get to my maximum potential.” P006 explained, “my CEO and CTO kind of like came up as like, hey, we have something for you. Do you wanna lead on the

US?" In addition, P010 stated, "Those that mentored me to give me the opportunities to move upward." P012 said, "The company I am at now, I started at the very bottom and I worked my way all the way up." In addition, P012 stated, I only have one supervisor at this point and she's always been very supportive." Similarly, P017 stated "I had a mentor and he lifted me up with him".

## **Theme 2: Were Quality Focused**

When describing how they were treated by others, their approach to leadership and management, and feedback they received regarding their leadership and management, the introverted leaders reported descriptions of having the requisite education, knowledge, abilities, and skills to perform their duties well. In addition, experiences around the resources to use and when to use the resources were described. Furthermore, descriptions of their thoughts about work were provided.

Eight participants described experiences associated with the subtheme *focused on work ethic*. P002 stated, "Work habit. Work ethic, work habits, the quality of work produced" were focuses. P004 reported, "and that's not my personality type, I rather let my work show, you know. P004 also reported, "It's not that I'm perfect with it, but I'm very methodical in what I do." P005 shared feedback received from others and stated, "you always know what you're talking about you basically communicate effectively the data." P012 reported, "hard work, you know, being good at what you do." Finally, P006 reported:

So again, I think there are people, my peers I would say were willfully trying to manage their careers, which included, you know, always trying to be in the face of decision makers, right, whereas my view of the world was just do good work

and stay out of their way because one, I didn't want to be around them frankly. And so I think that's a little bit how it played out. Now I think at the end it actually helped me because my career was set up by actual tangible actions and tangible results.

Regarding the subtheme *did things correctly*, five participants provided descriptions of their experiences. P003 reported, "sometimes I go into accuracy and I like sometimes like I still struggle with that like oh this is how it should be done." P004 stated, "but then as my record has shown that I know what I am doing, that I'm competent.

P009 stated:

I was a go to person when it came to needing to know what to do, when to do, or how to do specifically. Meaning like for what I do and we have to follow state regulations. So I have read those inside and out. I know them inside and out, so I've become a go to person when somebody isn't sure about something or sometimes they can be kind of vague. So you have to read in between the lines. And I've just have become that go to person for things in those.

P016 reported:

Until I ended up with some toxic leadership. I was viewed as the subject matter expert. I always tell people I'm not and I'm not an authority. I'm simply referring you to what the book says, what the regulations state. You can always make up your own mind.

Nine participants described experiences related to the subtheme *detailed in thinking*. P010 stated, "I wish I could not think about those, but I would go through an

internal reflection of every presentation." P011 reported, " You know all the decisions I make concerning them to things that have to get done is, you know, well thought out, well planned out." P014 noted, " I wanna understand things and the underlying details of why things occur." P015 reported, "I try to be holistic and detailed and make sure that I am like anticipating things from every angle." P017 stated, "I determined what the best course of action would be through modeling and analysis. That's a very introverted way of solving problems." Finally, there are two detailed descriptions of the subtheme provided by two different participants. P002 stated:

Like because I'm more analytical, I can read an e-mail that has a problem in it and it may take me some time to kind of process through like what the right response is. Or you know doing the necessary steps to come to a resolution. So I think that. Because I overanalyze a lot.

P004 reported:

And I think it's a perception, to be honest, that folks have of introversion. What introversion truly is. You know, it's just introspective. It's a, I think of a process inwardly first, and then when I feel like I'm comfortable with it. Ok, then I can spew it out, right?

For the subtheme *were conscientious about work* eight participants described their experiences of desiring to do their work well. P001 stated, "I have a private tendency to want to like make sure everything I say is like right to the person before I say anything." P003 shared, "kind of like show the way like, hey, this is how this needs to be done." P017 reported, "Because as a scientist if I make a statement, I want this statement to be as truthful as factual with evidence to back up what I'm saying." P018 stated, "if I'm in

control, I know things are safe and done right. So I wanna control it. I wanna make sure it's done well." Two introverted leaders provided verbose descriptions of their conscientiousness. P002 noted:

I don't wanna make the wrong decision, I don't wanna, you know, mess up anything. I don't want to appear that I don't know what I'm doing. So it may take me a little longer to respond to come up with the right approach.

P009 stated:

The education that they need in order to do their jobs, not just the tools, but you know, they need to know, you know, in healthcare, there's such a broad, broad spectrum of what we do here. And then my job encompasses all of that. So I have to make sure that everybody that is working, the levels under me has what they need knowledge wise to complete their duty. And I'm so I'm very, very big on that.

### **Theme 3: Understood the Importance of Relationships**

All study participants discussed relationships when they described how they were treated, their approach to leadership and management, and the feedback they have received from others. The participants discussed their relationships with their managers, direct reports, and their peers. In addition, workplace interactions were also described.

Regarding the subtheme of *had empathy toward others*, 12 participants described their experiences. P004 stated, "If I feel it's wrong, a tendency I'll do because I don't wanna embarrass folks, right. And so I will sometimes wait till afterwards and say, hey, you know, let's have a conversation about this." P005 reported, "And it's more about empathy as well, more than anything else. The understanding of, as a leader, I try to

understand their personal and their professional capabilities as well as what they're fighting to be." P006 reported, "the feedback I usually get is yeah in general people would say that I can come to him with problems and he'll listen."

Similarly, P008 noted, "I would like to think of it as very individualized. I've worked with all different types of people, so as an introvert, I tried to understand them the best that I can." P011 stated, "So. Uh, you know, dog eat dog and all that stuff. It's, I don't run that way. It's just you can't do that to people. You know, you really have to have empathy." P012 reported, "Those things that I sort of mentioned as being the leadership style, right? It's the empathy and the active listening and the validation of feelings upfront." P001 stated:

I think it's hard for people to express themselves. Honestly, about issues, especially at work if they don't feel comfortable and also they don't feel like doing it publicly think a lot of people need different modes of communication to. You know. Express their thoughts and so I think one thing we do specifically that I think is pretty good. Is you know, we maintain a lot of 1 on one direct communication with different folks instead of assuming that every issue will be brought up in a meeting.

P013 reported:

I mean this, this being you know, this very transparent, but I mean I'm not a loud leader. I don't believe in using profanity. I don't believe in belittling or degrading anyone you know, like I said my leadership is pretty much just calm and subtle. And so if I had a problem with the soldier or like another leader, you know, instead of trying to publicly humiliate them, I would actually pull them all to the

side and I would speak to them.

P018 reported:

So they can tell me and then I get to know them as a person and then they know that I actually care about them. And I think that does help cause I've been told previously not to know their personal business, but I honestly think especially from a Christian perspective, if I if they know that I care about them as a person.

Twelve participants provided descriptions related to the subtheme of *collaborated with others*. P003 reported, " I think that's more on the support working with the team," and P004 reported, "I like to hear from other folks. I like them to feel it's inclusive, right? It's not a dictatorship whatsoever." P005 noted, " So again, my approach to leadership is from the back. I like a collaborative approach," and P007 stated, "I lead by example and I don't consider myself any different than everybody else on the team we're all a team we're trying to do the same thing." P009 reported, "my approach is definitely a team approach," P010 noted, " we organize like a team," and P015 stated, " I think I try to be very collaborative and try and help people come to their own solutions." Three participants gave more verbose descriptions of collaboration. P002 reported:

I am not that type of person who will try to do everything right, and so I'm always, you know, seeking out the team members perspective, their thoughts on, you know how things should be, how tasks should be performed and approach to a particular project.

P016 stated:

I always said that there's no job too small for me to do. If it's there, it has to be done. So, if it was cleaning a bathroom, I was the first one to pick up a toilet

brush because it's the last thing anybody wants to do. My approach to leadership has always come. It's been servant leadership. You take care of your people and then expect when the time is there, that that they'll do what's needed to take care of you. But I always told anybody that worked for me. I always put it in writing on their on their first initial counseling when everything goes right. You will get all of the credit, you and the team. If anything, it all goes wrong. I will be the one to take all of the blame. That's how this works. To me, that's how leadership that those were the best leaders I had. And that's what I tried to do.

P015 stated:

They're bringing people together and kind of getting them to talk about their ideas and maybe like, maybe I'll weigh in and say, OK, I heard you say this and you say this, why don't we combine those and like, that's our best outcome, right? Like, I think that's kind of my sweet spot in terms of like leading teams and helping us like find solutions that we can actually work off of. Does that make sense?

For the *built trust and rapport with others* subtheme, four participants described their experiences. P017 discussed the trust of a manager for the direct reports and stated, I trust my people to do what you are hired." P015 stated, "I guess building that rapport with people is really important to me," and "we should all kind of have this space of trust."

P002 stated:

You know, because with the trust I can operate in my area of expertise. And experience and take the lead in certain areas and projects and then you know the same for the other person, so that trust just allows for a healthy collaborative type of working relationship.

P014 reported:

And if I could find out what their vision was rather than, you know, expanding mine, I found that a lot of trust was built there, I think in both directions, you on a parallel. Expression they were able to share things with me and we were able to build trust that way and they were able to build trust because they knew I had. An interest and a passion and completing that and built into that was a core so servant leadership.

Finally, five participants described experiences related to the subtheme *empowered others*. P002 stated, "Because I like to empower people with and to be independent. You know you are empowered to do this task, this role, and aside from what the expectations are." P005 reported, "And my leadership style has always been provided. Guidance and then basically letting the team develop what they think is the right way, but coming up with solutions that bring it to the table." P012 stated:

Sort of analogy. They're kind of sums up my leadership style. It's, you know, making a connection on the personal level and really actively listening to what their what the concern is and then providing some perspective, you know, letting people see the big picture because it doesn't matter if you're on the floor in management, nobody is seeing the whole picture. I'm not seeing the whole picture. So I'm trying to give them as much of it as I can so they understand it and then trying to empower them to make the changes themselves.

#### **Theme 4: Had Knowledge of Others' Different Expectations**

Seventeen participants discussed differences they observed among the expectations of individuals in the workplace. The descriptions of the differences were

discussed when the introverted leaders responded to the interview questions about how they were treated, their approach to leadership and management, and the feedback they have received from others. In some cases, the differences were based on beliefs individuals held while other differences were based on people's actions.

For the subtheme of *subscribed to contradictory concepts*, nine participants described their experiences. P004 stated, "We're not shy. Just, you know, introversion is just a tendency to like to process on your own and to meet that space where you can decompress after you've taken on the energy of other folks."

P013 noted:

A lot of people, they expect you to be, you know, outgoing and witty and funny and everything like that. And you know, with me being this introvert, a lot of people didn't really feel comfortable around me. I just kind of sat there and just looked at everyone like, ok, you know, can we actually get on with this meeting?

In addition, P004 reported:

"Supervisor report, she retired, tell me not to be, you know, it's OK not to be perfect, right? Because, and that was her perception is that I was trying to be perfect in it. But in my view it's just the way to attack it. You know if there's a process and my process is very methodical about everything.

P006 reported:

My path, you know to management, so always kind of started the commercial organization where in large companies where you're kind of the expectation is it's more sales orientation which tend to be very extroverted and tend to be able to shake hands, kiss babies along the way. That's just not me. I mean, so if I walk

into a room with people I don't know, I don't know very well. My natural reaction is to flee versus the expectation amongst their top brass is you're supposed to be the most gregarious person.

P008 noted:

Yeah, definitely. I think with other individuals that I had started with, when there's people who didn't get along or were very. Affected by people not doing their job or doing something that they didn't like. They were very quick to point it out or call it out on meetings and make sure that everyone was aware of an any issue that they saw, no matter how small the issue was. And for me, if I saw an issue such as that, I would probably just move along so that I didn't have to have any confrontation or talk about it.

P016 reported:

Once my health deteriorated and I couldn't do the job of a dozen other people. Which is pretty much what I was doing. It was very easily discarded. So in fact, I had one leader tell me, he said, as long as you're as long as you are willing to come in here every day and throw yourself into the meat grinder, they're going to let you do it. And when you die, they will get another one to replace you, and then they will talk badly about you. Not because you did a bad job, but because you're no longer here doing the job you were doing. So. And it gave me a different perspective on finally having to accept the fact that people really are disposable there.

P017 stated, "I have a divergent mindset." In a separate comment P017 reported, "which is the opposite of what most senior leaders have within the federal government? And so I

would see the obvious, but the obvious was not obvious to my peers and colleagues and leadership. Furthermore, P017 stated:

They recognize I'm not one of them. Because the executives are all, you know, there are extroverted, they. We have a saying you're not a senior leader unless you love to hear the sound of your own voice. I study. I study people, I study the what? What? What's going on? Why can't I interact with you? Well, there's a lot of things. Introvert is only part of it. Divergent mindset. I have the just the weird brain, as people would say so.

Twelve introverted leaders provided descriptions related to the *reacted differently than others* subtheme. P001 stated, "Have a harder time you know, speaking on these topics. So I'm much better if I like write everything out and then send it out as like a memo." P002 noted, "they can make decisions quickly and that can be, you know, form of comparison, right, because my personality style is to in my nature is to kind of process things a little slower. P003 stated, "I don't know what to talk about, right, like ever kind of feel like get the conversation going. Like, say, hey, it's just very direct to the point." P007 noted, "You always feel like the oddball. When you're standing there at a gathering and there's people and you don't do the small talk thing." P009 reported, "but because I like to study and analyze things before I move to a next step. I think sometimes that comes across as me being timid." P011 stated:

I found that most of the technical overall, most of the technical people I worked with are introverted with respect to their thought processes. You know what? Nobody fires from the hip. I think that's just kind of a trait that a thoughtful engineer has.

P010 stated:

Where I have to build up a reserve tank to deal with being around people I don't consider myself wanting to be alone. I just fatigue very quickly from. From being around others, especially the larger the crowd, the faster the level of fatigue, the more the more the auditory din the more the complex topics or the consequence of the interactions, the faster I, when I say fatigue I mean compassion fatigue where I don't read cues as well.

P014 noted:

So I always took that to be a part of my personality, yes, in part my interest, yes. But certainly the introversion was maybe because I was not as extroverted. Is that my mind was doing something different. You know, it was busy doing other things or it might have had opportunity to do a few other things. Umm yeah, while they were being flamboyant and causing so many things to happen.

### **Summary**

For this phenomenological study, video recorded interviews were conducted after participants completed a consent form, demographics questionnaire, and extroversion-introversion scale. The introverted leaders who participated in this study were of different ages, held their top management positions for different lengths of time, had two direct reports, and were part of the top management team within the last three years. The introverted leaders' descriptive responses to the interview questions were analyzed to identify themes. To identify the themes, the interview videos and associated transcripts were uploaded NVivo and autocoding and manual coding was performed. The coding process was repeated to narrow the number of codes, and four themes and 13 subthemes

emerged (see Appendix H/Table 3). Sixteen participants described experiences associated with the *received positive feedback* theme, 15 participants described experiences associated with the *were quality focused* theme, 18 participants described experiences associated with the *understood the importance of relationships* theme, and 17 participants described experiences associated with the *had knowledge of others' different concepts* theme.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### **Overview**

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the workplace experiences of introverted leaders who are members of the company management team. In this chapter, the shared experiences of the 18 introverted leader participants are discussed along with some experiences that were unique to an individual participant. Additionally, the experiences of extraverted leaders, as described in the literature, are compared to the experiences the introverted leaders in this study provided. How the descriptions of the experiences the introverted leaders had of their workplace relate to the Jungian theory of introversion is discussed. Furthermore, elements of leadership described by study participants are compared to the examples of leaders from the Bible. Validation methods implemented during the study, including technology triangulation and member checking, are discussed. Finally, a discussion of my experience as a single researcher, who utilized the bracketing step, is included. In summary, the key findings from the study, practical implications associated with the findings, limitations associated with the study, and recommendations for future research are discussed.

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings from the thematic analysis of the 18 introverted leader interview transcripts include descriptions of the feedback the leaders received, how the leaders' approached their work and relationships, and differences the introverted leaders observed. Regarding descriptions of feedback, the participants noted they were encouraged to speak up, they were treated fairly, and they received promotion opportunities. The introverted leaders' approach to work involved focusing on quality, doing things correctly, detailed

thinking, and being conscientious about work. Relationship descriptions included having empathy toward others, collaborating with others, building trust with others, and empowering others. Finally, participants were aware of others' different expectations which included subscribing to contradictory concepts and reacting differently than others.

The descriptions provided by the introverted leaders relate to Jung's characterizations of introversion, which was the theoretical foundation for this study. In addition, the descriptions of their leadership approach relate to the examples of biblical leaders referenced in this paper. Furthermore, the descriptions provide details that align with aspects of leadership that have been studied by researchers. Lastly, the descriptions can be related to the various elements associated with being a member of top management as captured in the available literature.

### **Discussion of Findings**

In this study, the introverted leaders described their experiences as members of top management and their experiences on the path to top management. The participants did not see being introverted as a barrier to leadership and described experiences of being supported by supervisors, peers, and their direct reports throughout their careers. The introverted leaders also described characteristics associated with introversion and they noted the characteristics to be useful in their leadership and management approaches. In addition, the study participants were aware that other individuals had different expectations but did not see those expectations as limiting them in any way.

According to researchers, the perception individuals have about leaders and leadership (Figgins et al., 2019), the beliefs individuals have about the attributes of a good leader (Reis & Grady, 2019), and the behaviors associated with effective leadership

(Zaar et al., 2020) could be explanations for top management teams being comprised of 96% extraverted and 4% introverted leaders (Stephens-Craig et al., 2015). The introverted leaders in this study described how they were treated on their path to company management and during their tenure in company management. In addition, the introverted leaders described their approach to leadership and management and described the feedback they received about their leadership approach and management approach. The introverted leaders' descriptions of their experiences can be connected to the perceptions of leadership, beliefs about leadership, and behaviors associated with leadership that are represented in the literature.

## **Leadership**

### ***Perceptions***

Regarding perceptions, Lebin et al. (2019) suggested introverts and others may not see any potential in an introvert being a leader. The introverted leaders in this study did not describe such an experience, as the study participants shared descriptions related to the subtheme *described treatment as fair* on their path to company management and during their tenure in company management. Spark and O'Connor (2021) explained how acting introverted in a public setting would inhibit others from perceiving the individual as a leader. In addition, Wilson et al. (2021) noted the amount of participation exhibited influences people's perception of leadership. The introverted leaders in this study shared the feedback they received regarding being more vocal. This suggests the introverted leaders were perceived to be too quiet, or not participating enough, but being perceived as too quiet did not stop the introverted leaders from obtaining a company management position or remaining in the position.

Another connection to perceptions relates to two themes that emerged from this study. First, the theme of *had knowledge of others' different expectations* connects to how the introverted leaders perceived others in the workplace. Reis and Grady (2019) explained how followers of leaders may perceive authoritative leadership to be an effective form of leadership and how someone who does not exhibit authoritative leadership may be overlooked for leadership opportunities. The introverted leaders in this study described their awareness of others subscribing to contradictory concepts, but those differences did not inhibit the introverted study participants from ascending into company management positions. Secondly, Shafique and Loo-See (2018) explained how employees are psychologically influenced by their perceptions of their leaders, and this related to the descriptions associated with the theme *understood the importance of relationships*. P011 noted:

I guess our relationships. It's informal. It's not a formal relationship where people snap to attention when the engineering manager walks out into the, you know, me, walk out into the plant so they know I'm there to help. And, you know, take care of their issues.

In addition, P018 stated:

I asked her to have a meeting with me and we sat and we had a long conversation and in the end, she understood like once she got to know me, and once we had a phone. Couple of phone conversations.

### ***Behaviors***

When considering leadership behaviors, Rudolph et al. (2021) suggested behaviors like giving followers special attention, and holding followers in high esteem,

highly influence the followers. The introverted leaders in this study described behaviors associated with the theme *empowered others* that influence their followers. P002 stated, "I'm always, you know, seeking out the team members perspective, their thoughts on, you know how things should be, how tasks should be performed and approach to a particular project." Regarding giving followers special attention, P006 noted, "for in situations where I I highly trust people and I believe they're doing the right thing. They're doing the right things. I tend to spend more time with people like that." P015 stated, "if she's concerned about that, then I'm concerned about that too, right. I guess building that rapport with people is really important to me."

Zaar et al. (2020) suggested that being team oriented, humane toward others, and encouraging participation are behaviors associated with effective leadership. The introverted leaders in this study described behaviors associated with the subthemes of *collaborated with others, built trust and rapport with others, and empowered others*. Regarding being team oriented and encouraging participation, participants provided various descriptions related such as "seeking out the team members perspective, their thoughts on, you know how things should be, " which was stated by P002. P005 noted, "basically letting the team develop what they think is the right way," and P009 stated, "I wanna make sure that I have buy in from the entire team because otherwise if you don't have buy in, it's less likely to actually work."

Examples of being humane toward others were described by the introverted leaders as stated by P013:

You know, pull you off to the side to speak to you one-on-one because I don't think, well, my approach is I don't think nothing good is really gonna come from

just a whole bunch of yelling and screaming all of the time, you know, I mean, it might work for some people, but you know, that's just, that's not my approach. I believe in just being able to calmly speak to you, you know, like a human being. P008 stated, "I think that I just I'm good at providing feedback in a way that's not overly critical, I guess," and "I'm more private with my feedback. I think a big thing that I've seen is feedback in public settings or group meetings." Finally, P007 noted, "treating people with respect even some self-sacrifice and compassion for the most part."

The final topic associated with behavior and leadership is connected to the study conducted by Stephens-Craig et al. (2015), in which participants discussed compensating for their perceived behavioral weaknesses to obtain leadership positions. Unlike the participants in the Stephens-Craig et al. study, the introverted leaders in this study did not mention compensating for their behaviors in any way. The introverted leaders described experiences associated with the subtheme *described treatment as fair, and received promotion opportunities*. Specifically, P010 stated, "the only resistance that I've ever experienced were internal frictions. There were never, they were never individuals who stood in my way." P005 stated, "I had a lot of really good sponsors and mentors who pushed me to get to my maximum potential."

### ***Beliefs***

For beliefs about leadership, Lawn et al. (2019) studied extraversion deficit beliefs and the participants in their study believed introverted characteristics were less valued and the participants expressed desire to be more extraverted. The beliefs described by the introverted leaders in this study did not reveal any connection to desiring to be more extraverted, but one participant described a relatable experience. P017, noted "later

on in my career I learned how to flip the switch, to play an extrovert. It's emotionally draining, at the end of my day, I would go home and just be completely wiped." The other introverted leaders' descriptions included subscribing to contradictory concepts.

P013 noted:

I guess they just they wanted me to become more aggressive or more assertive and it will be time to have to tell them, sir that, that's not me. I mean, I have my own leadership style and my leadership style is is pretty effective I think because at the same time I didn't get a lot of pushback.

P013 also stated, "I'm not a loud leader. I don't believe in using profanity. I don't believe in belittling or degrading anyone you know, like I said my my leadership is pretty much just calm and subtle." P008 noted, "So pointing out errors or having big discussions about a specific mistake as opposed to recognizing the mistake trying to figure out what to do with it, and then moving on."

In the study conducted by Spark et al. (2018), introverts emerging as leaders was hypothesized to be unlikely because introverts believed acting extraverted would not be pleasant. The participants in this study described experiences associated with the subtheme *received promotion opportunities* and the experiences did not reference exhibiting extraverted behaviors. P017 noted, "Much like myself able to do things people couldn't understand, so he saw that in me. So he lifted me up." P004 stated, understanding that it doesn't mean honestly at the same time that the way I do it has to be the way that you do it." Finally, P006 stated:

So I had to force myself along the way and to do things I don't like. I didn't like to do and how that played out is whether it be, you know, in a meeting of lots of

people or at a dinner or whatever, I would try to find a way to make my early exit as quickly as possible, as efficiently as possible, to check the box that I had gone and been seen but not have to really engage.

### ***Favoritism, Bias, and Mistreatment***

Potential favoritism toward extraverts as leaders stems from the emphasis placed on developing and maintaining relationships (Blevins et al., 2022; Dust et al., 2021). In addition, being charismatic, gregarious (Lebin et al., 2019), charming, and attractive (Kuofie et al., 2015) were leadership characteristics associated with extraversion captured in the available literature. Regarding developing and maintaining relationships, the introverted leaders in this study described experiences related to the theme *understood the importance of relationships*. The experiences associated with the theme suggests that the introverted leaders in this study think relationships are important, and the introverted leaders approach relationships by having empathy toward others, collaborating with others, building trust and rapport with others, and empowering others. When considering extraverted leadership characteristics, the introverted leaders did not describe others requiring them to exhibit such characteristics. P012 stated:

So that's sort of encouragement, you know, right off the bat in the interview really went a long way towards giving me the confidence to not have to put on an extroverted facade, but really go about doing my job the way that seemed seemed right, regardless of my personality characteristics.

Transitioning to bias, Lebin et al. (2019) suggested bias toward extraverts being more suitable for leadership stems from extraversion being interwoven in society. This perspective was voiced by P006 who stated:

Well, I think one is you know everyone has strengths and weaknesses and in leadership there's this bias and in American leadership you have this big gregarious 6 foot five tall, super extraverted leader. I think that's just a load of just it's just not true.

Despite sharing the perspective of there being a bias, P006 described having a professional view related to doing good work and stated, "now I think at the end it actually helped me because my career was set up by actual tangible actions and tangible results."

According to McCord and Joseph (2020) mistreatment is associated with any exhibition of introverted behaviors. The introverted leaders in this study described experiences associated with the subthemes of *subscribed to contradictory concepts* and *reacted differently than others*. The experiences could be classified as mistreatment but the introverted leaders did not label the experiences as such. The experiences associated with *reacted differently than others*, P018 noted, "I think that a lot of people don't take me seriously one because I don't. I have to think before I reply to things." P018 described staff members who would go around the introverted leader to obtain the answer they were seeking. P002 stated:

My slow pace in speaking, responding, being thoughtful and you know my deliberations and my approach to certain situations may not always resonate with someone who is the opposite of me. And in those cases. There may have been times where they may have, you know, went around me. Or not have given me.

Umm, the respect that I was due.

Although P002 stated there was a lack of respect at times, when asked about the

treatment received P002 stated, "I think I was treated fair" and "I never felt like I was mistreated in any way."

### **Contributions to Jung's Theory of Introversion**

According to Jung (1915), introverts apply their energy to the inner world while extraverts apply their energy to the external world. In the literature descriptive terms associated with introverts and introversion are quiet (Lebin et al., 2019), thoughtful (Farrell, 2017), detail oriented (Colley, 2019), and amenable to the needs of others (Dust et al., 2021). The introverted leaders described being detailed in their thinking which aligns with the thoughtful descriptor noted in the literature. The introverted leaders also remarked about receiving feedback encouraging them to be more vocal which connotes they were quiet. Quiet is another description of introverts and introversion from the available literature. Focusing on quality, doing things correctly, and being conscientious about work are descriptions provided by the introverted leaders in this study, and these descriptions align with the detail-oriented descriptor from the available literature. Finally, the introverted leaders described having empathy toward others, which can be associated with the being amenable to the needs of others description from the available literature.

### **Biblical Leadership**

While introversion, as defined by Jung, is not covered in the Bible, there are examples of leadership and leaders in the Bible that parallel the descriptions provided by the introverted leaders in this study. According to the participants in this study empathy toward others included providing guidance, and examples of Moses providing guidance to others are found throughout the book of Exodus. Robinson (2018) examined shared leadership and noted there are examples in the Bible of the concept. The themes from this

study that related to shared leadership are collaborated with others and empowered others. The introverted leaders described being one of the team, working with the team to develop potential solutions, and empowering them to implement the solutions as examples that relate to shared leadership. Cavins (2018) studied ethical leadership from the perspective of the leader described in 1 Timothy 6 (*New International Version*, 1973/1984). The passage of scripture includes using resources to do good which relates to the introverted leaders' descriptions of doing things correctly, being the go-to person, and being the subject matter expert.

### **Implications**

The introverted leaders in this study provided descriptions of their experiences that can be used by introverts and extraverts with leadership aspirations, introverts and extraverts in leadership positions or their introverted or extraverted followers, companies, organizations, and churches in a variety of ways. First, individuals with leadership aspirations can refer to the vast literature on extraversion and leadership for one perspective of leadership characteristics and this study for another perspective of leadership characteristics. One example of this is related to the *understood the importance of relationships* theme from this study. Relationship development and management is captured in the literature regarding extraversion and leadership, but the perspective of relationship development and management is different for extraversion and introversion. According to Kuofie et al. (2015) charm and attraction are relationship related characteristics and according to the introverted leaders in this study having empathy and building trust and rapport are important characteristics. While the approach to relationship development and management is different for extraverts and introverts, the

literature and this study suggest both personality types understand relationships with others are necessary in leadership.

Extraverted or introverted individuals can use the information from this study to initiate discussions with their colleagues. Dust et al. (2021) suggested extraverted followers are more comfortable approaching their extraverted leaders. If comfort is a reason individuals are hesitant to approach those different than themselves, the findings from this study could be used as a conversation starter. If extraverts see the subtheme of *had empathy toward others*, it is possible the extraverts may see an opportunity to initiate a discussion. This discussion could be initiated safely because the introverted leader is likely to engage in the discussion from an empathetic position.

Companies, organizations, and churches can use the findings from this study when identifying potential leaders, selecting leaders, reviewing the performance of existing leaders, and providing feedback to existing leaders. Spark and O'Connor (2021) noted introverts may need to act more extraverted to emerge as leaders, and Lawn et al. (2019) mentioned introverts may act more extraverted because they perceive extraversion as the cultural preference. When identifying potential leaders, companies, organizations, and churches can refer to the characteristics shared in the subthemes of this study. In addition to the standard list of interpersonal skills, the subthemes of *focused on work ethic, did things correctly, detailed in thinking, and were conscientious about work* can be used by the human resources departments to create a list of individuals who meet leadership criteria. In addition, considering the subthemes of *had empathy toward others, collaborated with others, built trust and rapport with others, and empowered others* as additions to the interpersonal skills list could help organizations, companies, and

churches select leaders to balance out their teams.

When reviewing the performance of leaders, companies, organizations, and churches, should consider evaluation criteria associated with the subthemes of *focused on work ethic, did things correctly, detailed in thinking, and were conscientious about work, had empathy toward others, collaborated with others, built trust and rapport with others, and empowered others*. The introverted leaders' descriptions of their experiences suggest that attention is still needed on the technical aspects of the job in addition to the interpersonal aspects of the job. Verifying the performance evaluation criteria include items associated with the subthemes that emerged from this study, can provide a broad range of feedback for leaders who fall anywhere on the introversion-extraversion continuum.

### **Limitations**

There were several limitations in this study. Prior to conducting the study, the limitations were projected to be the generalizability of the findings from the study and related to utilizing the single researcher model. In qualitative research the lack of generalizability of the findings is often associated with the small sample size. Bartholomew et al. (2021) noted that a quality transcendental phenomenological study would have a range of 5-10 participants. This introverted leaders' study included 18 participants, which would be considered more than sufficient based on the findings from the Bartholomew et al. analysis.

Regarding the single researcher model, Prosek and Gibson (2020) noted the utility of multiple researchers disagreeing on themes and the connection to interrater reliability. Prior to the study I did not think multiple researchers were a necessity, but I see why

multiple researchers could make the data analysis more valid. As I was coding the interviews I realized my perspective was influencing the code descriptions. I recall questioning whether another introverted leader may read the same information and code it differently. I also thought a leader who identifies as an extravert or ambivert may read the same information and code it differently.

Before beginning the interviews, I conducted the bracketing activity described by Dorfler and Stierand (2020) as a tool that helps researchers become aware of their own subjective perspective of the phenomenon being studied. I video recorded myself answering the interview questions. Prior to beginning the coding process, I coded my own interview video. I thought I was clear of my own potential biases and actual biases after identifying my own themes, but I realized my perspective was always present in my mind as I was reading through the introverted leaders' interview transcripts. I think being aware of my own thoughts did not help me select objective language when deciding on the code descriptions.

To address this limitation, technology triangulation and the member checking validation methods were employed. Although the NVivo software returned a high volume of codes, I determined the descriptions did not differ from the manual coding descriptions I generated. It is possible another researcher may have reviewed the codes generated by the software and determined the description did differ. When reviewing the member checking feedback, which was based on some participants reviewing the summary of themes and subthemes, the seven participants confirmed the themes and subthemes are representative of their experiences (see Appendix H). One participant, P010, noted initial disagreement with the theme of *had knowledge of others' different expectations*,

specifically commenting on being startled by the subtheme *subscribed to contradictory concepts*. Upon reflection, P010 confirmed the theme and subtheme were representative of the introverted leader's experiences.

After conducting the study, I confirmed the projected limitations were accurate and identified additional limitations. The first new limitation is related to the definition of company management team member. This is a limitation because companies, organizations, and churches are not structured similarly, and the language used in various companies, organizations, and churches is vastly different. In some cases, the introverted leader who participated in this study did not hold one of the titles included in the company management team member definition. Additionally, the titles included in the definition do not apply to government agencies or the military.

Another limitation is related to other demographic characteristics of the participants not being specified in the analysis. The focus of this study was on the experiences introverted leaders have of their workplaces, but their experiences are influenced by more than being introverted. P004 mentioned microaggressions related to race, P018 mentioned not being taken seriously based on gender, and P016 mentioned treatment received based on a health condition. How these other elements influence the descriptions provided by the introverted leader participants is unknown because the other elements were not probed as part of this study.

Another demographic characteristic that could influence the data is related to the professional industry or type of job. One participant, P012 mentioned different experiences of the workplace based on the actual job being performed. At one point P012 was in the sales department where the experience was not favorable, and at another point

P012 was in the technical department where the experiences were favorable. Two participants, P011 and P017, mentioned that introverts may be more frequently found in technical professions based on their experiences. Six participants, P004, P007, P011, P013, P016, and P017 mentioned the influence of having a military background.

One additional limitation in this study is related to how the level of introversion may influence the descriptions provided by a given introverted leader. Each participant in this study completed an extraversion-introversion scale and had to score within the introversion range to be included in the study. Although each leader had a score within the introversion range, the introverted leaders' level of introversion was not considered in the interview questions or the analysis. One participant, P007, noted the level of introversion matters when considering how individuals with different levels of introversion may experience the same event or react to similar circumstances.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This research study provided an initial description of the experiences top management introverted leaders have in their workplace. To build upon this research study, additional qualitative, mixed-methods, and quantitative studies are recommended. The first research activity could be a retrospective analysis of the interview transcripts from this study by a set of independent researchers. Such an exercise would be useful to determine whether a team of researchers will identify a different set of themes.

The next set of studies could involve case studies of the introverted leaders who participated in this initial study to provide a more robust and detailed description of their experiences. An alternative study could involve a focus group with the introverted leaders who participated in this study as several of the leaders shared a similar background

experience associated with time in the military. Another study could include interviewing a new set of introverted leaders along with their peers, supervisors, and direct reports to add to the existing descriptions associated with introverted leaders' experiences of their workplaces. Having descriptions of the introverted leaders as others see them could help individuals understand how to acknowledge and appreciate the differences in others.

Connecting the qualitative descriptions of the introverted leadership experience with the level of introversion of the introverted leaders would be useful. It would be helpful to understand whether the level of introversion influences whether individuals aspire to be leaders, are seen as potential leaders, and are selected for leadership roles. Having participants describe their experiences and relating those experiences to the participants score on validated leadership scales could result in understanding the relationship between introversion and leadership.

In addition, it would be helpful to understand how the demographics of the introverted leaders influence their leadership experience. It may be useful to conduct a study of introverted leaders to determine whether gender, age, race, ethnicity, educational status, socioeconomic status, or any other demographic characteristics also influence the experience of the introverted leaders. The results of the study could be analyzed to determine whether introverted leaders from similar demographic groups share similar experiences of their workplace.

Another mixed-methods study could involve a pre-survey and post-survey regarding leadership perceptions. Participants would complete the pre-survey, participate in a focus group based on their pre-survey responses, and complete a post-survey after the focus group. The pre-survey would be used to identify individuals who have similar

perceptions of what makes a good leader. Those individuals would be assigned to a focus group with individuals who do not meet those perceptions of a leader but are a leader. At the conclusion of the focus group individuals would take the post-survey. This study would combine the quantitative perceptions of leadership from the surveys and reveal any influence a qualitative exercise may have on those perceptions.

Finally, a set of studies that use quantitative measures associated with introversion, leadership identity, leader-follower assessment, and person-environment fit assessment would be useful. Such studies could include introverted leaders, their supervisors, peers, and direct reports who would complete validated scales. One instrument that could be included is the mistreatment framework, which assesses how introversion leads to mistreatment, developed by McCord and Joseph (2020). Another study could include leaders from specific professions to determine whether there is a correlation between profession and the propensity of a particular personality type to serve as a leader. Finally, a study could be conducted to examine whether introverts and extraverts share similar aspirations to lead. The study could examine groups of individuals based on their retrospective assessment of their leadership aspirations, and individuals with current aspirations to lead. The study could also examine whether current leaders have aspirations that would include elevation beyond the level of leadership they have obtained.

### **Summary**

This transcendental phenomenological study was conducted to describe the workplace experiences of introverted leaders who hold top management positions. The 18 study participants described experiences that resulted in the identification of four themes

and 13 subthemes. The themes related to feedback the participants received, relationships the participants described, the participants approach to leadership and management, and the participants observations of different concepts held by others. The experiences the introverted leaders described aligned with the Jungian theory of introversion, and descriptions of introversion and introverts available in the literature. The descriptions provided by the introverted leaders also aligned with the shared and ethical leadership approaches associated with examples of leadership from the Bible. Finally, perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs associated with leadership were found to relate to the introverted leaders' descriptions although the perspectives were slightly different.

Interestingly, descriptions associated with favoritism, bias, and mistreatment did not emerge from the experiences described by the introverted leaders. This suggests the statistics around the composition of top management teams as the 96% extraverted and 4% introverted leader statistics from Stephens-Craig et al. (2015) may no longer reflect 2023 statistics. The experiences of the 18 introverted leader participants, and my own experience as an introverted leader in top management, may be an indication that in 2023, companies, organizations, and churches may have begun to acknowledge the broad perspective of what makes an individual a leader. For individuals who think introverts would not make good leaders, and for any companies that have yet to embrace introverts as potential leaders, this study provides information that can be used to see how introverts experience top management leadership and how introverts may potentially impact those they lead.

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## APPENDIX A: STUDY FLYER

# Research Participants Needed

## A Phenomenological Study of Leaders Who are Introverted

- Are you 18 years of age or older?
- Do you identify as an introvert?
- Have you held a top management position for a company within the last 3 years?
  - Are you fluent in English?

If you answered **yes** to each of the questions listed above, you may be eligible to participate in a research study. The purpose of this research study is to describe the lived experiences introverts have of their work environment.

Participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire to about themselves (10 minutes), complete an extroversion scale (15 minutes) and participate in a video-recorded interview (60 minutes). A follow up interview will be scheduled if there is not enough time to respond to all the questions. Participants will have the opportunity to review the summary of the themes.

If you would like to participate, please contact the researcher at the email below.

A consent document will be given to you one week prior to the interview.

Sherita Hall, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Psychology in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

**Please contact Sherita Hall at [sherita.hall@liberty.edu](#) for more information.**

## APPENDIX B: Permission Request Email

**Permission Request Email**

Dear [Recipient],

As a graduate student in the Psychology department/School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a PhD. The title of my research project is A Phenomenology Study of Introverted Leaders, and the purpose of my research is to describe the lived experiences introverts, who are top management leaders, have of their work environment.

I am writing to request your permission to contact members of your top management team to invite them to participate in my research study.

Participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire, an extroversion scale, participate in a 1-hour video recorded interview conducted via Microsoft Teams, participate in a 1-hour follow-up video recorded interview if additional time is needed to respond to the complete list of questions, and provide feedback on the themes that emerge from the analysis of the study data. 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 reply to this email.

Sincerely,

Sherita Hall  
PhD student, Liberty University

## APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

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# Demographics

\* Required

1. Email \*

---

2. Age \*

---

3. Are you currently in a top management position or were you in top management within the last 36 months? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

4. How many total years have you served in a top management position? \*

---

5. While in the top management position(s) did you have at least 2 direct reports? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

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## APPENDIX D: SCALE

# Scale

For each statement mark how much you agree with on the scale 1-5, where 1=disagree, 2=slightly disagree, 3=neutral, 4=slightly agree and 5=agree

1. I am the life of the party\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

2. I don't talk a lot\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

3. I feel comfortable around people\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

4. I keep in the background.\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

5. I start conversations.\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

6. I have little to say\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

7. I talk to a lot of different people at parties\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

8. I don't like to draw attention to myself.\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

9. I don't mind being the center of attention\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

10. I am quiet around strangers.\*

Mark only one oval.

- 1 = disagree
- 2 = slight disagree
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = slightly agree
- 5 = agree

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## APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences introverted top management leaders have of their work environment. Please respond to the questions by describing your experience as an introvert.

1. How would you describe how you were treated on your path to top management?
2. How would you describe how you have been treated while being a member of the top management team?
3. How would you describe your approach to leadership during your tenure as a member of the top management team?
4. What feedback have you received from your supervisor regarding your leadership approach during your tenure as a member of the top management team?
5. How would you describe your management style during your tenure as a member of the top management team?
6. What feedback have you received from your direct reports regarding your management style during your tenure as a member of the top management team?

### Additional Questions

1. If you were to mentor the person who will replace you in your current role, and the person was an introvert, what advice would you give the person?
2. If you were to mentor the person who will replace you in your current role, and the person was an extravert, what advice would you give the person?

## APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS TABLE

**Table 1***Participant Demographics*

Participant ID	Age	Total Years in Top Management	Extraversion-Introversion Scale Score
P001	28	3	16
P002	52	16	14
P003	37	2.5	14
P004	54	22	12
P005	36	2	8
P006	43	8	15
P007	47	1	7
P008	25	4	2
P009	42	7	14
P010	53	20	10
P011	62	15	12
P012	34	5	8
P013	42	5	11
P014	65	25	11
P015	31	3	10
P016	52	17	11
P017	57	15	9
P018	54	1.5	13

## APPENDIX G: PARTICIPANTS REPORTING THEMES AND SUBTHEMES

**Table 2***Number of Participants Reporting Themes and Sub-themes*

Theme	Number of Participants
Received positive feedback	
Encouraged to be more vocal	11
Described treatment as fair	10
Received promotion opportunities	5
Were quality focused	
Focused on work ethic	8
Did things correctly	5
Detailed in thinking	9
Were conscientious about work	8
Understood the importance of relationships	
Had empathy toward others	12
Collaborated with others	12
Built trust and rapport with others	4
Empowered others	5
Had knowledge of others' different expectations	
Subscribed to contradictory concepts	9
Reacted differently than others	12

## APPENDIX H: MEMBER CHECKING REPORT

The summary of themes was emailed to the study participants and four study participants provided their feedback regarding the themes and subthemes. The introverted leaders' feedback is presented in the order the feedback was received. P017 stated, "I reviewed the attachment and found it resonated with my experiences." P008 noted:

I would say that as a whole these themes accurately depict my experience as an introvert in a leadership role. Specifically, conscientiousness is something that has been pointed out about my management style as well as it being a reason for my promotion. I can say I definitely have been encouraged to be more vocal in meetings and in general and have been able to more easily identify with others by letting them speak more and allowing for a relationship to be built off of understanding and listening rather than always leading conversations myself. Lastly, it also is accurate that I react differently than others in that I process things internally quite a lot before reacting outwardly such as in an employee coming to me with an issue or a mistake they have made.

P010 reported:

The first three primary themes and sub themes all applied to my experience. The fourth theme initially shocked me but on reflection I had to concede. Holding contradictory views startled me due to a lifetime, with greater acceleration in recent years, of striving to deconflict and solidify a cohesive and internally consistent worldview. However, I acknowledge that my ability to hold the tension between two contradictory beliefs also allowed me to succeed in my career when faced by circumstances demanding that I perform in ways for which I was not

prepared. Thrusting myself into these highly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous circumstances despite my unreadiness and unpreparedness advanced my profession, knowledge, insight, and opportunities.

P015 reported, " I read through your attachment, and I would agree that your summary reflects my experiences as an introverted leader in a top management position."

P016 noted, "Your themes and sub-themes accurately reflect my experiences as a leader."

P018 stated, "I read the summary of themes and sub-themes. I agree these themes and sub-themes are representative of experiences as an introverted leader. Understanding quality of relationship and being quality focused."

P011 noted, "Sorry I am so late on responding. It all looks good of course."