

Liberty University

School of Music

**Servant Leader Choral Conductor: The Effect of Servant Leadership in
Community Choirs and Community Partnerships**

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Music Education

by

Zachary Debois Cooke

Lynchburg, VA

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Abstract

Despite servant leadership primarily establishing itself as an appropriate leadership style, there is little research on how servant leadership affects community choirs in music education.

Community choirs are prevalent in music education due to the number of individuals seeking choral experiences and community gatherings to sing and express their musicality. This hermeneutic qualitative phenomenological study explores the leadership styles of community choir choral conductors and their perspectives on servant leadership. By surveying current choral conductors of community choirs and community partnerships, this qualitative study identifies the overarching leadership styles and servant leadership qualities that are consciously considered or not implemented by community choir choral conductors. Perspectives on choral music literacy and community partnerships are leading themes in how a choral conductor as a servant leader influences community choirs. Through surveying and comparing the data from multiple choral conductors, community choir members, and community partners, discovering the effectiveness of servant leadership will aid in depicting the effects of servant leadership in music literacy and community partnerships. This study could showcase the advantageous benefits of servant leadership in community choirs. With a dependable leadership alternative to traditional top-down leadership styles in conducting, not only can the musicianship elevate amongst the community members, but the effects of building partnerships and sustainable relationships with the community can flourish and reflect the commitment of the choral conductor as a servant leader.

Keywords: Servant leadership, community choir, music literacy, community partnership

Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral thesis to my family: George Sr., Ined, George Jr., Rasheen, and Chris, you all know how I feel about you. To only say “I love you” would be an exponential understatement. Without you all, I would not be here today. Thank you.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Community choirs are significant resources for amateur choristers beyond formal public school and collegiate settings. Though definitions vary amongst different organizations, community choirs allow singers to continue singing and promote musicality throughout their lives.¹ Most community choirs consist of volunteer singers who do not benefit monetarily and volunteer strictly from their desire.² Because of this volunteerism, the leadership of the choral conductor presiding over the community choir is pivotal to understanding how community choirs continue to exist and engage in their respective communities. Understanding how community choir conductors serve to uplift musicality through volunteer singers, how community choirs engage in their communities towards building and promoting partnerships, and the specific traits the choral conductors possess that foster positive music literacy are all core elements that permeate community choirs. With this vantage point, this study sought to comprehend the influence of the choral conductor's role as a servant leader.

Servant leadership emphasizes the need to serve and uplift other individuals.³ The potential benefits for choral conductors as servant leaders may be conducive to achieving these outcomes. There is little research on servant leadership as an effective leadership style for developing music literacy in community choir members and establishing ongoing community

¹ Cindy L. Bell, "Toward a definition of a community choir," *International Journal of Community Music* 1, no. 2 (2008): 231.

² Krystal R. McCoy, "The Diverse Communities of a Community Choir: Fostering a Sustainable System," *Choral Journal* 53, no. 11 (June 2013): 22.
<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=97624682&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

³ Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*, Paulist Press, 2002, 27.

partnerships. However, in community choirs, where individuals bring diverse backgrounds to express their musicality, servant leadership may offer the correct level of acceptance and empathy toward continued engagement.⁴ This study provides insight into how servant leadership affects community choir music literacy and community partnerships.

Background

The background of this study addresses the ongoing question of how servant leadership affects community choirs, consisting primarily of volunteers, to promote music literacy and community partnerships.⁵ There are community choirs worldwide, so understanding the commonalities of what inspires singers to remain involved and what leadership traits the choral conductor possesses are leading focal points in this study. Additionally, because academic institutions or federal and state education departments do not fund community choirs, the legitimate question of what promotes continual engagement needs research.

Community choirs are essential due to their inherent foundation of socialization through music-making.⁶ This socialization is crucial due to the scarcity of choral musical outlets outside formal academic institutions and public schools. Socialization allows singers and musicians to join community choirs to engage in their ambitions of music-making, as well as seek social experiences that are meaningful to them.⁷ With the various reasons that may encourage people to join community choirs, the choral conductor for the group must be aware of the different needs

⁴ Greenleaf, *Servant leadership*, 33.

⁵ McCoy, "The Diverse Communities of a Community Choir," 22.

⁶ Kevin McBeth and William Southerland, "Community Chorus Values: Artistry, Education, and Family," *Choral Journal* 60, no. 4 (November 2019): 64, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=138904406&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

⁷ Ibid.

and passions. This awareness may allow for greater connection and opportunities for community choir, opening doors for musical literacy and community partnerships this study aims to find. This connection, however, will become more potent through love, trust, and service, the foundational elements of servant leadership. Music-making solely produced through choral conductors' decision-making will only belong to the conductor, but music-making that combines the hearts and passions of the singers through servant leadership will emulate the meaningful experiences that initially attracted community singers.⁸

Servant leadership depicts leaders who lead with compassion by empowering others, resembling authenticity in their personalities.⁹ The authenticity in the leader's personality is internal and thus affects the direct leadership style. Love, trust, and service are the foundational principles distinguishing servant leadership from other leadership styles.¹⁰ Contrary to leadership styles that value traditional hierarchy, servant leadership stresses the importance of connecting with others to fully understand their needs and the overall needs of the objective. In the field of conducting, where servant leadership is not a standard leadership style between conductors, conductors are frequently authoritarian in their leadership and direction.¹¹ This authoritarian leadership is paradoxical to the foundational principles of servant leadership with love, trust, and service. Authoritarian leadership reflects managerial ethics due to their desire to maintain their

⁸ Ramona M. Wis, "The conductor as servant-leader," *Music Educators Journal* 89, no. 2 (2002): 18.

⁹ Daniel W. Wheeler, *Servant leadership for higher education: Principles and practices*, John Wiley & Sons, 2012, 15.

¹⁰ Michiel Frederick Coetzer, Mark Bussin, and Madelyn Geldenhuys, "The functions of a servant leader," *Administrative Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2017): 6.

¹¹ Helland, Martha. "MAESTRO: EXPLORING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SERVANT-LEADER." *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership* 2, no. 1 (2006): 356, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/maestro-exploring-development-servant-leader/docview/2221762643/se-2>.

specific vision without outside reform.¹² Because of the limits of authoritarian leadership, researching the effects of servant leadership in community choirs may be highly beneficial to documenting the benefits of this study and utilizing further research focusing on improving a conductor's default leadership styles.

With an understanding of servant leadership and community choirs, community partnerships are vital to the sustainability and longevity of community choirs. Due to the nature of community choirs consisting of volunteer individuals with no academic or institutional affiliation, their outreach and social platforms are critical to maintaining longevity.¹³ To better equip community choirs for these challenges, fostering community partnerships through collaboration and community engagement is paramount. To effectively carry out fruitful partnerships, personal relationships combined with authentic communication amongst organizations must occur to develop healthy cooperation worthy of extended partnering.¹⁴ Partnerships involve sacrifice from all parties involved; this may come from financial, physical limitations, or time sacrifice.¹⁵ Reflection, however, will help alleviate the uncertainty that comes from sacrifice.

Reflection is an effective professional development strategy that helps analyze, decipher, and actualize a situation holistically from different perspectives.¹⁶ This reflection type is essential

¹² Wis, "The conductor as servant-leader," 18.

¹³ McBeth, "Community Chorus Values," 63.

¹⁴ David W. Langley and Emily W. Burch, "Nurturing Musical Collaborations into Long-Term Partnerships," *Choral Journal* 60, no. 2 (September 2019): 36, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=138035683&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁶ Amy Cox-Petersen, *Educational partnerships: Connecting schools, families, and the community*, Sage Publications, 2010, 270.

for cultivating collaborations and encouraging musicianship throughout multiple organizations and platforms.¹⁷ With the heart of a servant leader, choral conductors can confidently participate in this reflection to address the common pitfalls that may derail building fruitful partnerships through clear communication and authentic approaches.¹⁸

Theoretical Framework

Due to the nature of this study, which discovers how a leadership style affects external outcomes, Martin Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological approach is the foundational element in this theoretical framework. His hermeneutic phenomenology interprets how an observer attaches meaning to phenomena.¹⁹ The meaning of this study, through interviews and text deciphering, allows for a natural utilization of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological approach. With all the prior research surrounding servant leadership and community choirs, an appropriate fore-conception of understanding aids in developing a comprehensive literature base in conducting this study.²⁰ Due to the plethora of individuals included in this study, having a hermeneutic phenomenology allows for practical usage of the hermeneutic circle, allowing for continual interpretation and more effective data analysis.²¹

¹⁷ Colleen Conway and Thomas M. Hodgman, "College and Community Choir Member Experiences in a Collaborative Intergenerational Performance Project," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 56, no. 3 (10, 2008): 235–236, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/college-community-choir-member-experiences/docview/214474056/se-2>.

¹⁸ Miguel A. Guajardo, Francisco Guajardo, Christopher Janson, and Matthew Militello, *Reframing Community Partnerships in Education: Uniting the Power of Place and Wisdom of People*, Routledge, 2015.

¹⁹ Art Sloan and Brian Bowe, "Phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology: The philosophy, the methodologies, and using hermeneutic phenomenology to investigate lecturers' experiences of curriculum design," *Quality & Quantity* 48 (2014): 1293.

²⁰ Mariano D. Gillo, "Fundamentals of hermeneutics as a qualitative research theoretical framework," *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 2, no. 3 (2021): 44.

²¹ Ibid.

Servant leadership, via Heidegger's hermeneutics, is the focal point of this study. In music education, where pressures and external timelines are constant, servant leadership offers the ability to demonstrate systematic neglect in prioritizing important from non-important tasks.²² Robert Greenleaf describes this by highlighting the importance of balance in the workplace: “The prime force for achievement through service in any large institution is a senior administrative group with optimal balance between operators and conceptualizers.”²³ Systematic neglect when dealing with community choirs, where the needs and wants of the members are just as critical as the needs and wants of the choir, offers the choral conductor constructive tools to understanding how serving the needs of the people can lead towards more influences towards fostering the music literacy and community partnerships.²⁴ The servant leadership perspective is necessary for effectively assessing the benefits of a choral conductor as a servant leader.²⁵

Alongside servant leadership, transformational leadership is prevalent in this framework. Transformational leaders emphasize individual considerations that allow them to develop and inspire positive change.²⁶ Contrary to systemic neglect of servant leadership, transformational leadership strives to encourage unique strengths, thus allowing them to stay energized and mentally stimulated throughout challenges.²⁷ This leadership style seeks a personalized, specific, and distinctive transformation for groups and organizations. Transformational leaders inspire this

²² Greenleaf, *Servant leadership*, 33.

²³ *Ibid.*, 79.

²⁴ Ramona M. Wis, "The conductor as servant-leader," *Music Educators Journal* 89, no. 2 (2002): 18.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Arnold B. Bakker, Jørn Hetland, Olav Kjellevoid Olsen, and Roar Espevik, "Daily transformational leadership: A source of inspiration for follower performance," *European Management Journal* 41, no. 5 (2023): 700.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 707.

distinctive change by encouraging followers' self-worth, being consistent in organizational leadership, and displaying wholehearted commitment to the organizational goals.²⁸

Hermeneutic phenomenology influences both leadership styles. Without hermeneutics, there would not be a precise framework to examine and disseminate data accurately.

Hermeneutic phenomenology gives the appropriate theoretical framework to explore dialogue,²⁹ thus allowing servant leadership to offer its meaning entirely.

Problem Statement

Currently, literature does not fully address servant leadership and music education. Though there is research on servant leadership, the issue lies in the lack of understanding of its influence on community choir choral conductors' leadership styles and how they forge partnerships. Servant leaders prioritize listening to other people's thoughts and feelings.³⁰ In music education, conductors must be able to not only listen musically but also listen to the temperament of the ensemble to rehearse and lead efficiently. Here, choral conductors can foster choirs where singers are encouraged to learn and achieve musicality from the other members and conductor.³¹ To this problem, the study of servant leadership provides the needed research to address this gap in community choir literature, where promoting musicianship and creating an environment of positivity are imperative.³² Through interviews and surveys aimed at gathering individual perspectives and personal accounts, servant leadership guided through a hermeneutic

²⁸ Bernard M. Bass, "The future of leadership in learning organizations," *Journal of leadership studies* 7, no. 3 (2000): 24.

²⁹ Gillo, "Fundamentals of hermeneutics," 44.

³⁰ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 18.

³¹ Jackie Wiggins, *Teaching For Musical Understanding*, (New York: Oxford, 2015), 49.

³² Conway, "College and Community Choir," 235-236.

phenomenological approach is the best course of action for exploring and uncovering these issues. Understanding and sharing the lived experiences of choral conductors, choristers, and community partners could add valuable research beneficial for future choral conductors and community choirs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this hermeneutic qualitative phenomenological study is to understand how the choral conductor as a servant leader enhances music literacy in community choirs and how they cultivate fruitful community partnerships. Through a hermeneutic qualitative phenomenological approach, the choral conductor's role as servant leader detailed many positive outcomes that effectively enhanced music literacy and cultivated community partnerships. This study featured choral conductors, choristers, and community partners across the United States and their perspectives on servant leadership. This population enabled a wide net to fully encompass servant leadership's general effects across a diverse geographical community. This study's positive outcomes may significantly improve how choral conductors promote and facilitate their community choirs toward achieving more favorable results conducive to musical and community development. With servant leadership's principles in listening, empathy, foresight, and healing,³³ disseminating results that reveal this study's outcome and give future pathways for further research are all imperative.

³³ George Gotsis and Katerina Grimani, "The role of servant leadership in fostering inclusive organizations," *Journal of Management Development* 35, no. 8 (2016): 991.

Significance of the Study

The significance of servant leadership effects on community choirs is paramount due to their abundance in music education. Musical excellence, the benefits of socialization, and a sense of purpose are critical elements for maintaining a solid foundation in community choirs due to volunteers not having a direct obligation to retain attendance.³⁴ Because of the limited research on servant leadership in music education, this study will provide a practical guide for future choral conductors looking to implement servant leadership in their choral ensembles. Through this, understanding how servant leadership may affect community choirs is vital to learning more about servant leadership's overarching role. Community choir conductors, community organizations, and various ensemble conductors may all find this study helpful due to the underlying principle of improving music literacy and building fruitful partnerships. Community choir conductors must be able to suppress personal advancements and promote selfless musicality; this mentality could offer a blueprint to many ensemble directors looking to promote advantageous partnerships and practical music literacy.³⁵

The theoretical significance of this study demonstrates the trust between the servant leader choral conductor and its choirs and collaborative partners. Organizational trust is a critical element that showcases followers' trust in leaders and the organization.³⁶ The overwhelming trust that reflects through the ongoing commitment of choristers reflects the engaging benefits of

³⁴ Shea Adalene Clay, "Motivation among Older Adults in Three Community Choirs," Order No. 29170002, Boston University, 2022, In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global 132, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations/theses/motivation-among-older-adults-three-community/docview/2659196023/se-2>.

³⁵ McCoy, "The Diverse Communities of a Community Choir," 24.

³⁶ Khalid Dahleez and Mohammed Aboramadan, "Servant leadership and job satisfaction in higher education: the mediating roles of organizational justice and organizational trust," *International Journal of Leadership in Education* (2022): 6.

servant leadership. Leadership styles all reflect trust and the ability to galvanize individuals to rise for a particular goal or objective. With servant leadership illustrating its capacity to build trust, this philosophical foundation earns more credence towards a practical leadership style amongst other community choir directors.

Another critical element in this theoretical significance is the influence of the relationship leadership theory, transformational leadership. Contrary to servant leadership, where serving and prioritizing individual needs are foundational for leading, transformational leadership aims to demonstrate change through the end values of the organization's goals and objectives.³⁷ For transformational leadership to be truly transformative, the end-values must resemble a transformative change in equity, inclusion, or social justice.³⁸ Equitable and inclusive elements are easily identifiable characteristics of both organizations and employees. In community choirs, where choristers come from all sorts of backgrounds, transformational leadership may offer a precise angle towards gathering a valuable perspective of understanding how choristers gain comfortability in engaging and staying committed to their choirs. Another distinctive element of transformational leadership is empowerment. In transformational leadership, empowerment is the ability of the transformational leader to raise followers' self-efficacy and motivation.³⁹ Transformational leadership empowerment is vital to this theoretical significance to discover how choristers are motivated to become empowered enough to sacrifice their time for servant leader choral directors.

³⁷ Carolyn M. Shields, "Transformative Leadership: An Introduction," *Counterpoints* 409 (2011): 5, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42981292>.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Mary Miller, "Transformational Leadership Behaviours and Empathy with Action," *Transformation* 26, no. 1 (2009): 48, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43052756>.

The empirical significance of this study offers a platform for various community choir directors to emulate and further transform. Most servant leadership research is purely philosophical and limited to hypothetical contexts.⁴⁰ Because of the limited research surrounding servant leadership, this study addresses the gap between servant leadership and community choirs, allowing for a more direct relationship with this empirical data. Plentiful music education ensemble avenues could benefit from servant leadership. Therefore, this study also enables a pathway of advantageous data toward fulfilling future gaps in this field.

The practical significance of this study is that it gives music education a model to address future community choir objectives and plans. Community choirs exist throughout educational, private, and community-funded settings. Throughout all these settings, engaging the choristers and community partners to invest in its success is vital to longevity and public visibility. Servant leadership stems from an individual's character, such as integrity, humility, and courage.⁴¹ These character traits are always public and are vital to influencing positive optics conducive to growth and commitment to community choirs. By the choral conductor exhibiting these traits as a public figure, music education gains another researched approach towards a continual upgrowth of choral music for non-traditional singers and other individuals who seek musical experiences through community choirs.

⁴⁰ Denise Linda Parris and Jon Welty Peachey, "A systematic literature review of servant leadership theory in organizational contexts," *Journal of business ethics* 113 (2013): 389.

⁴¹ Melinda Bier, "Servant leadership for schools," *Journal of Character Education* 17, no. 2 (2021): 29.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: In what ways can the choral director's role as servant leader enhance music literacy in community choir members?

RQ2: In what ways can the choral director as servant leader cultivate fruitful community partnerships?

Definition of Terms

1. *Servant Leadership* - Coined by Robert Greenleaf in 1970, this leadership theory evokes a leadership style where leaders serve first, promoting other individuals' priorities.⁴² Leaders who manifest servant leadership focus on elevating and bolstering the confidence, leadership, and well-being of other individuals and the community they serve.⁴³
2. *Community Choir* - A community choir is a choral ensemble outside educational or professional music organizations.⁴⁴ Community choirs may also be partnerships between academic and community organizations to serve the wider community or audience.⁴⁵ Educational organizations include public schools, private schools, and universities. Professional organizations include professional choruses that employ singers who perform for monetary gains, such as the Metropolitan Opera Chorus and the Memphis Symphony Chorus.

⁴² "What Is Servant Leadership," Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, n.d.
<https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/>.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ McBeth, "Community Chorus," 63.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

3. *Music Literacy* - Many scholars and music education pedagogues have studied music literacy. From the Kodály-inspired definition, music literacy is the ability to comprehend musical notation without reliance upon other auditory stimulants.⁴⁶ Comprehending music, which entails reading and writing music, combined with the appreciation for a vast scope of music, all compiles to the heart of music literacy.⁴⁷

Chapter Summary

Insufficient pedagogical literature or research addresses servant leadership's effect on music education. Because of that reality, this study significantly adds concrete qualitative data to improve and enhance choral conductors directing community choirs. It is not enough to rely on virtuoso technique as a choral conductor in community choirs. Though the virtuosic choral technique may increase clarity and rehearsal pacing,⁴⁸ it does not answer the questions regarding stimulating music literacy and external partnerships. Building music literacy requires adequate time and space to carry out musical thoughts and processes successfully.⁴⁹ Through its philosophical framework of serving others first, servant leadership allows for a suitable pace for sustainable music literacy development. Servant leadership additionally allows for fostering community partnerships through its core elements grounded in service towards the community and others.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ "Musical Literacy," Home, n.d., <https://www.iks.hu/zoltan-kodalys-life-and-work/education/musical-literacy.html>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth A.H. Green, and Nicolai Malko, "The modern conductor: A college text on conducting based on the technical principles of Nicolai Malko as set forth in his *The conductor and his baton*," (1997), 161.

⁴⁹ Wiggins, *Teaching For Musical Understanding*, 41.

⁵⁰ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 28.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Hermeneutic phenomenology provides a practical foundation for understanding how the preexisting literature leads toward this study's research questions. Hermeneutical phenomenology gives critical structural and textual analysis of phenomena lived through a person's experiences.⁵¹ In this study, where the effects of servant leadership are the primary research aims, researching through the lens of hermeneutical phenomenology offers credible tools for addressing and understanding contemporary issues and problems.⁵² Deriving meaning from personal accounts that all connect to a singular phenomenon, in this case, servant leadership, all work toward transforming lived experiences into understanding actual reality.⁵³

Understanding phenomenology and hermeneutics must occur to derive meaning from studying servant leadership's effect on community choirs. Though they share a common origin, the differences lie in their interpretation and outcomes. Phenomenology starts with emphasizing phenomena before deducing a description or meaning.⁵⁴ This approach allows for phenomenology to provide meaning and context within the world.⁵⁵ Hermeneutics, however,

⁵¹ Megh Dangal and Rupendra Joshi, "Hermeneutic phenomenology: Essence in educational research," *Open Journal for Studies in Philosophy* 4, no. 1 (2020), 38.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Vargas Pérez, John Jairo, Johan Andrés Nieto Bravo, and Juan Esteban Santamaría Rodríguez "Hermeneutics and phenomenology in human and social sciences research," *Civilizar Ciencias Sociales y Humanas* 20, no. 38 (2020): 144.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

encompasses interpretation based on a phenomenon, overall meaning, and holistic context.⁵⁶ With this priority placed on interpretation, hermeneutics takes the phenomenology and makes sense of it so that others can gain further meaning and a more precise understanding.⁵⁷ Though similar, discerning the distinctions between phenomenology and hermeneutics is vital in the progression of this research study.

This hermeneutic phenomenology approach allows servant leadership to grasp authentic, unique insights. In this study of servant leaders in community choirs, phenomenology allows room to study human phenomena that open more profound levels of learning through their experiences.⁵⁸ However, the intrinsic weight of retrieving quality data is on the researcher. The researcher's expertise and intent are critical in formulating the research tools to allow for the most substantial honesty regarding their experience and experience with the studied phenomenon.⁵⁹ Because of this intensified responsibility on the researcher, this hermeneutic phenomenological approach allows servant leadership to fully grasp the lived experiences of its participants towards depicting its legitimate essence.⁶⁰

Servant Leadership

The core foundational principle in this study is servant leadership. Coined by Robert Greenleaf, a servant leader is a leader whose natural inclination is to serve others first, then

⁵⁶ Pérez, "Hermeneutics and phenomenology," 144.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi, "Phenomenology: A philosophy and method of inquiry," *Journal of Education and Educational Development* 5, no. 1 (2018): 220.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Dangal, "Hermeneutic phenomenology," 38.

consciously decides to lead, thus inspiring others.⁶¹ One considerable distinction between servant leadership and other leadership styles is its focus on ensuring other persons' highest priority needs are met and served before the servant leader's needs.⁶² Servant leaders meet others' priorities by cultivating relationships with them, empowering them, and providing excellent stewardship through their organizational vision.⁶³ Furthermore, servant leaders instill and reinforce positive culture, advance organizational service, and create substantial individual and collective responsibilities, all of which meet the highest priority needs of others.⁶⁴

This study focuses on the effects of servant leadership, so understanding its fundamental principles is paramount to this theoretical framework. There are ten principles of servant leadership: service to others, facilitating the needs of others, encouraging problem-solving, advocating emotional healing, understanding that the means are just as necessary as the ends, thinking present and future, embracing paradoxes, passing on legacy, continual modeling of servant leadership, and building other servant leaders.⁶⁵

The first principle, service to others, is the main prerequisite to servant leadership. This principle is essential: it allows a service-first mentality, which freely intrinsically motivates the servant leader and influences all the other principles.⁶⁶ The second principle, facilitating the needs of others, is crucial to keeping others motivated and engaged. This principle focuses on the servant leader creating fruitful relationships, learning new ideas, and leading others to be most

⁶¹ Greenleaf, *Servant leadership*, 27.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Coetzer, "The functions of a servant leader," 19.

⁶⁴ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 14.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 28–32.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

effective at their positions and roles.⁶⁷ The third principle, encouraging problem-solving, allows the servant leader to cultivate empowerment amongst others that efficaciously aids in problem-solving throughout the organization.⁶⁸ Principle four, advocating emotional healing, is uniquely attributed to servant leadership; this principle thrives on helping others with emotional healing, thus preventing long-term unresolved issues that are not conducive to organizational prosperity.⁶⁹ Servant leadership principle five, the means are just as necessary as the ends, delivers a powerful message through its care and attention through situations, rather than simply achieving goals.⁷⁰ Caring about how people handle processes is just as important as reaching the end goal holistically through this principle.⁷¹

The sixth principle of servant leadership is thinking about the present and the future. Rather than simply planning a structure that overly addresses present or future goals, servant leadership finds the balance in present and future operations.⁷² The seventh principle, embracing paradoxes, allows servant leaders to seek out multiple perspectives and viewpoints on situations.⁷³ This further quest for knowledge allows the servant leader to understand all the perspectives that may positively influence decision-making, thus enabling a culture of intellectual diversity and conducive deliberation.⁷⁴ Principle eight, passing on a legacy, ensures

⁶⁷ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 28.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

that organizations engage in public acts of service that show communities and society their service and commitment to the greater good.⁷⁵ The ninth principle, modeling servant leadership, demonstrates the need for servant leaders to model their leadership through the values of human worth, respect, and growth.⁷⁶ The final tenth servant leadership principle, developing more servant leaders, demonstrates the fruit of servant leaders whose culture and environment reflect continual service to others.⁷⁷ When a servant leader embodies all the above principles, their influence will enable and inspire others to live through service, thus creating more servant leaders to meet the highest priority needs of even more people.⁷⁸

Transformational Leadership

Including transformational leadership in this theoretical framework provides a beneficial contrast to understanding central elements that do not apply to servant leadership. Contrary to servant leadership, transformational leadership is a theory that encourages followers' strength and personal initiative.⁷⁹ For followers to feel free to enact their initiatives conducive to organizational growth, transformational leaders show individual consideration, lead through intellectual stimulation, and motivate followers to perform at their very best.⁸⁰ Including transformational leadership in this theoretical framework may benefit accurate data collection from this emphasis on individual consideration.

⁷⁵ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 31.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Bakker, "Daily transformational leadership," 707.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Individual considerations are foundational elements of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders recognize their abilities, skills, and intelligence to gauge followers' individual considerations.⁸¹ These characteristics feed into the overarching awareness of individual consideration. By acknowledging these critical traits, transformational leaders can encourage followers to utilize their unique skill sets to always be at their best.⁸² With transformational leaders working towards actively learning and relearning old and new individual considerations, pushing for high expectations organizationally and individually is more accessible.⁸³

Individual considerations are an ongoing process within transformational leadership, so the opportunities to galvanize followers toward success are endless. To aim for this success, transformational leaders can promote growth beyond standard expectations by leading with individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and motivation.⁸⁴ With this leadership emphasis, personal and organizational change are plausible outcomes through galvanizing performance beyond standard expectations.⁸⁵ Alongside exceeding expectations, organizational change occurs through four stages: disseminating a compelling case for change, inspiring a shared vision, elaborating that change needs a leader, and planting a systematic environment of change.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Bakker, "Daily transformational leadership," 702.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Iain Hay, "Transformational leadership: Characteristics and criticisms," *E-journal of Organizational Learning and Leadership* 5, no. 2 (2006), 15.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 9–10.

In the first stage of organizational change, disseminating a case for change starts with a transformational leader understanding the climate and conditions of the change needed.⁸⁷ Learning the culture, understanding who the case is meant for, and speaking to the appropriate representatives all contribute to a successful, compelling case for change.⁸⁸ In the second stage, inspiring a shared vision is not solely the leader's responsibility but requires thoughtful input from those who will benefit from the proposed change.⁸⁹ The transformational leader can more easily encourage reimagining change and a shared vision by seeking input that effectively represents others' thoughts and considerations.⁹⁰ In the third stage, elaborating that change needs a leader involves the transformational leader increasing the urgency of change throughout their followers, thus creating healthy collaboration and confidence.⁹¹ In this stage, transformational leaders may have to emphasize individual considerations due to the emotional resistance that presides with change.⁹² For the fourth stage, embedding change requires consistently reevaluating organizational operations and instilling that collaborative individuals are plentiful throughout the process.⁹³ Because systematic change takes time, engaging in a routine level of assessment ensures that collaboration occurs, empowering followers to uphold the change and stay mentally stimulated toward new ways of thinking for future growth.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Hay, "Transformational leadership," 9.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 9–10.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Other Leadership Styles

This theoretical framework includes other leadership styles, such as authentic and transactional leadership. Though this study's focal point is servant leadership, examining authentic and transactional leadership may provide different data sources that may not directly correspond to servant leadership. Providing context for these other leadership styles will create a clearer picture of servant leadership's direct effects and aid in correctly interpreting the participants' leadership styles.

Authentic leadership resembles leaders who help others find connection through self-awareness, lead through building confidence and hope, create environments for communication transparency, and cultivate positive and inclusive work environments.⁹⁵ The term “authentic” in authentic leadership comes from the willingness of the authentic leader to strive for authentic followership through clear, transparent relationships and instilling positive organizational climates.⁹⁶ In this study, incorporating authentic leadership may help clarify primary servant leadership principles and authentic leadership characteristics. Opposite to servant leadership, authentic leadership has a higher focus on organizational well-being that manifests itself through keeping followers ethically accountable.⁹⁷

Branding and promoting authenticity are essential highlights of authentic leadership to uphold positive organizational well-being. This leadership style's “authentic” nature comes from the organizational value placed upon the individual leader and their effectiveness.⁹⁸ The

⁹⁵ Bruce J. Avolio and William L. Gardner, "Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership," *The leadership quarterly* 16, no. 3 (2005): 331.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 332.

⁹⁷ William H. Bishop, "Defining the authenticity in authentic leadership," *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership* 6, no. 1 (2013): 7.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

perception followers gain from an authentic leader directly gives value to whether their leadership style is authentic.⁹⁹ However, without incorporating the traits of an authentic leader, authentic leadership will succumb to more generic leadership, lacking a vital distinguisher from other leadership styles.¹⁰⁰

Transactional leadership resembles leaders who lead through mitigating adverse scenarios through strict obligations, primarily contractual.¹⁰¹ Transactional leaders follow a contingent reward system that emphasizes duties, job descriptions, and specific tasks before they receive psychological or materialistic awards.¹⁰² Because of contingent rewards, transactional leaders prioritize the organization's bottom line, thus trumping all other individual needs and considerations.¹⁰³ Through these rewards, followers are motivated to complete a task that leads towards their rewards and receive praise from transactional leaders.¹⁰⁴ Transactional leaders can ingrain these significant motivations in their followers by appealing to their self-interest and using the contingent reward system to inspire unrealized performance.¹⁰⁵

Leaders in this leadership style are vigilant in creating an organizational culture conducive to meeting critical obligations and deadlines.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, contingent rewards are very effective in meeting deadlines, completing projects, and making positive success within

⁹⁹ Bishop, "Defining the authenticity," 6

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Deribe Assefa Aga, "Transactional leadership and project success: the moderating role of goal clarity," *Procedia Computer Science* 100 (2016): 518.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

organizational punctuality.¹⁰⁷ This study focuses on servant leadership. Understanding transactional leadership may help with accurate organizational results for leaders who emphasize specific events and deadlines over more servant-leader characteristics of service to others.

Community Choirs

Introduction to Community Choirs

This study is vital to understanding community choirs and their purpose in music education. In 2024, there is still no clear definition explicitly defining community choirs. According to David Elliot, community choirs consist of individuals who rehearse music outside traditional educational settings or partner with organizations or the surrounding community to provide a choral music outlet.¹⁰⁸ The American Choral Directors Association also defines a community choir as a singing group comprised of adults outside a university setting.¹⁰⁹ These definitions are nebulous in their practicality due to the plethora of community choirs that exist through existing private organizations or university partnerships. Three examples of active community choirs are below to help accurately define community choirs, however, these groups are not active participants in this study.

The Mississippi Chorus

The Mississippi Chorus is a nonprofit organization located in Jackson, Mississippi.¹¹⁰ The Mississippi Chorus has two community choirs: The Grande Chorus and the Master Chorale. The

¹⁰⁷ Aga, "Transactional leadership," 524.

¹⁰⁸ McBeth, "Community Chorus Values," 63.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ "About," The Mississippi Chorus, <https://www.mschorus.org/about>.

Grande Chorus is a non-auditioned choir led by artistic director Beth Everett, while the Master Chorale is an auditioned group led by executive director Rachel Landrum.¹¹¹ The Mississippi Chorus performs regularly at various locations between August and May. Because they do not affiliate with academic or governmental institutions, their persistence in pursuing and fostering community partnerships allows for performing venues and rehearsal spaces. These partnerships include Pearl High School in Pearl, MS, and St. Columb's Episcopal Church in Ridgeland, MS. This community choir does not pay or compensate singers. Instead, it requires dues and fees to support the mission of impacting lives through the transformative power of choral music through performances, community outreach, and education.¹¹²

Central Virginia Masterworks Chorale

The Central Virginia Chorus is a nonprofit organization located in Richmond, Virginia.¹¹³ The Central Virginia Chorus serves the Central Virginia area and rehearses at Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church in Ashland, VA. Though this community choir has an audition, it is simple and primarily gauges musical engagement and assesses prior musical experiences.¹¹⁴ Led by artistic director Ryan Tibbetts, the Central Virginia Chorus performs twice a year, with their upcoming performances located at Grace Baptist Church in Richmond, VA, and Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church in Ashland, VA. Similarly to the Mississippi Chorus, this

¹¹¹ "About," The Mississippi Chorus.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ "Join Us," Central Virginia Masterworks Chorale, n.d., <https://cvamc.org/join-rehearse/#>.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

chorus strives to impact the Central Virginia communities through community participation, education, and inspiration.¹¹⁵

Missouri State University- Choral Union

The Choral Union of Missouri State University, led by Director of Choral Studies Cameron LaBarr, is a community chorus involving Missouri State students and Springfield, Missouri community members.¹¹⁶ Contrary to the previous community choirs, this community choir rehearses at a university, however, it is not financially accountable to them. For example, though students may receive credit for enrolling in the Choral Union class, Missouri State does not provide monetary assistance to fund the Choral Union entirely because of the community members and non-students. Furthermore, this class may not go on a standard music tour because the college is not liable for community members. Nevertheless, the Choral Union still aims to bolster community partnerships by offering students and community members unique musical experiences through more extensive performances due to the sheer size of the ensemble. The Choral Union often performs with the Springfield Symphonic Orchestra, performs at the Kauffman Center in Kansas City, MO, and seeks other community partnerships that promote mutual benefits between community members, Missouri State, and the partners.¹¹⁷

The above descriptions offer diverse community choirs, thus buffering Elliotts and ACDA's definition. Without a definitive list of community choirs, like university choirs, they are not cataloged because they consist of private organizations and university-funded groups.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ "About," The Mississippi Chorus.

¹¹⁶ "Choral," Choral - Music Department - School of the Arts - Reynolds College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities - Missouri State, n.d., <https://www.missouristate.edu/Music/choral.htm>.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ McBeth, "Community Chorus Values," 63.

These groups, however, aim to represent choristers who desire a choral music outlet and collaborative events within the surrounding communities.

Benefits of Community Choirs

Community choirs benefit individuals significantly. One significant benefit is the opportunities for individuals to engage in choral music outside academic institutions.¹¹⁹ Because of this, finding a choral music outlet is imperative to enhancing the quality of life of music-seeking individuals.¹²⁰ Individuals who sing in community choirs have shown increased motivation, social support, and musical opportunities.¹²¹ The increased motivation stems from the weekly structure of rehearsals and music learning, the social support derives from the plentiful opportunities for socialization amongst other community choristers and community members, and the musical opportunities come from the scheduled musical events and activities in which the community choir frequently engages.¹²² These positive outcomes evolve through the community choir foundation of being a music-making activity rooted in socialization.¹²³

Another benefit of community choirs is the diversity of musical aesthetics. Community choirs are essential for community members because they provide a suitable environment to seek their personalized musical aesthetic through performances and music-making opportunities.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Cindy L. Bell, "Update on community choirs and singing in the United States," *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing* 2, no. 1 (2004): 48.

¹²⁰ Julene K. Johnson, Jukka Louhivuori, Anita L. Stewart, Asko Tolvanen, Leslie Ross, and Pertti Era, "Quality of life (QOL) of older adult community choral singers in Finland," *International psychogeriatrics* 25, no. 7 (2013): 1055.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 1061.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ McBeth, "Community Chorus Values," 64.

¹²⁴ Bell, "Update on community choirs," 48.

Aesthetics are significant motivators in community choir participation.¹²⁵ Some individuals are motivated to join community choirs to sing masterworks with orchestras, while others join to sing choral works by newer composers.¹²⁶ These prior reasons for joining depict the variety of aesthetic appeals community choirs offer. The desire for community choirs to provide diversity in musical repertoire adheres to the appeal to reach a wider audience of participants and audience members.¹²⁷ Aesthetics are pertinent to prospective members, the audience, and surrounding communities. Community choirs that program musical repertoire representing their communities and communities' interests have increased musical participation.¹²⁸ This increased participation further encourages community choir repertoire to meet a broad musical taste that can recruit new members and draw a reliable, supportive audience from the community.¹²⁹

Community choirs are only beneficial if they are easily accessible to prospective individuals and the community. Accessibility is critical to sustaining community involvement in community choirs.¹³⁰ Two things that help with accessibility are affordability and cultural participation.¹³¹ Affordable rates, whether for individual dues or organizational utilities, are more likely to allow the organization to spend less on internal affairs and more on community

¹²⁵ David J. Redman and Jennifer A. Bugos "Motivational factors in adult, auditioned community choirs: The power of aesthetic experiences" *Psychology of Music* 47, no. 5 (2019): 704.

¹²⁶ Cynthia S. Selph, and Jennifer A. Bugos, "Adult perceptions of community choir participation," *Research Perspectives in Music Education* 16, no. 2 (2014): 42.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 42–43.

¹³⁰ Julene K. Johnson, Anita L. Stewart, Michael Acree, Anna M. Nápoles, Jason D. Flatt, Wendy B. Max, and Steven E. Gregorich, "A community choir intervention to promote well-being among diverse older adults: Results from the community of voices trial," *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B* 75, no. 3 (2020): 556.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

expenses.¹³² Additionally, this helps prioritize funds toward staying culturally involved in community events and other community cultural needs.¹³³ Embracing community events helps with accessibility due to the heightened awareness community members will experience with little financial public relations cost on the community choir.¹³⁴ As a result, community choirs that engage in long-term community events prosper from sustainable longevity and continued community ventures.¹³⁵

Challenges of Community Choirs

The challenges of community choirs exist in how success is accurately measured and portrayed. Though research shows that individuals who participate in community choir rehearsals benefit from increased social, emotional, and psychological health, little research shows the financial or societal benefits of community choirs.¹³⁶ Financial and societal benefits are vital due to the monetary weight of the community choir funding the operations. Many community choirs consist of volunteers, so they constantly investigate new ways to fundraise and stay operational, yet little research shows the financial stability that helps community choir organizations remain intact through a volatile market.¹³⁷ The lack of documented financial

¹³² Johnson, "A community choir intervention," 556.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Julia T. Shaw, "Toward socially inclusive music organizations: Promoting socioeconomic diversity in choral ensembles," *The Choral Journal* 58, no. 4 (2017): 33.

¹³⁵ Alexandra Lamont, Michael Murray, Rebecca Hale, and Katie Wright-Bevans, "Singing in later life: The anatomy of a community choir," *Psychology of Music* 46, no. 3 (2018): 435.

¹³⁶ Julie Lynch and Charlotte E. Wilson, "Exploring the impact of choral singing on mindfulness," *Psychology of Music* 46, no. 6 (2018): 859.

¹³⁷ Michael W. Kramer, "A study of voluntary organizational membership: The assimilation process in a community choir," *Western Journal of Communication* 75, no. 1 (2011): 68.

operations combined with community choirs' lack of a readily available catalog creates a unique challenge in ultimately defining their successful nature.

Diversification in racial demographics is another challenge for community choirs. According to Cindy Bell's 2004 update on community choirs, surveying data from some of the United States major metropolitan areas, community choirs consist of 61% white and 30% black singers; the other 10% were a mixture of Hispanic and Latin ethnicities that did not populate enough to make a significant contribution.¹³⁸ These statistics are troublesome, considering the vast racial diversity in the United States. With a drastic racial gap in community choirs, these numbers reflect the lack of awareness and social education of community choirs.¹³⁹ However, this study has limitations. The limitations of this report are the limited demographic area surveyed and the definition of a community choir. According to the earlier prescribed definition of community choirs, it is very likely that the report did not survey a large group of singers and was ultimately not included in the study. It is also plausible to assume that limiting the number of community choirs to major metropolitan areas severely strained the number of community choirs, which could have presented more accurate data about the existence of medium cities and smaller rural locations. Including more cities and regional populations may show more data representative of the population living in the United States.

¹³⁸ Bell, "Update on community choirs," 43.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.

Leadership Styles in Community Choirs

Servant Leadership in Community Choirs

Community choir directors may greatly benefit from servant leadership. Organizations with servant leaders have increased customer satisfaction and structural culture.¹⁴⁰ Servant leadership is also advantageous for organizations that seek long-term growth through relationships with external parties and stakeholders.¹⁴¹ These benefits derive from the servant leader's willingness to listen to and accept internal feedback with grace and admiration.¹⁴² Investing in their employees, building relationships, and listening to organizational needs are all servant-leader qualities that could have a practical application in community choir directors.¹⁴³

Community choir directors could implement a servant leader's focus on enhancing community and developing personal growth in others.¹⁴⁴ Servant leaders must develop fruitful communities that entice followers to feel a sense of belonging and comfort.¹⁴⁵ Once this step transpires, micro-communities can expand and flourish with macro-communities.¹⁴⁶ Ingratiating into these macro-communities coincides with community choirs because one of their main goals

¹⁴⁰ Nathan Eva, Mulyadi Robin, Sen Sendjaya, Dirk Van Dierendonck, and Robert C. Liden, "Servant leadership: A systematic review and call for future research," *The leadership quarterly* 30, no. 1 (2019): 128.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Marlene S. Neill and Juan Meng, "Examining the characteristics and virtues associated with servant leadership in public relations," *Public Relations Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2023): 202.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Dirk Van Dierendonck, and Kathleen Patterson. "Compassionate love as a cornerstone of servant leadership: An integration of previous theorizing and research," *Journal of Business Ethics* 128 (2015): 127.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

is to reach and invest themselves in the surrounding communities they serve.¹⁴⁷ With these goals, a servant-leader community choir conductor may implement a leadership style conducive to their specific organizational goals and positively benefit their members.

Servant leaders who develop employees' personal growth enable them not only to worry about job performance but also job engagement.¹⁴⁸ Servant leaders emphasize community stewardship, self-motivation, and leading their employees to their fullest potential to facilitate job engagement.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, servant leaders value building meaningful relationships with their employees to learn more about their needs, skills, and desires.¹⁵⁰ These traits coincide with the overarching mission for community choir directors to appropriately recruit and assimilate new members.¹⁵¹ Community choirs that display successful assimilation of prospective and new members aid in spreading positive messages regarding their hospitality and attitudes to the surrounding communities.¹⁵² Consequently, servant leadership may provide tactful and deliberate strategies for establishing a community choir culture representing community stewardship and meaningful relationships.

Servant leadership may offer community choir conductors tools for better member retention. Organizations that practice servant leadership and have continual employee job

¹⁴⁷ Marcia James, Karen Mihalyi, and Andra Leimanis, "The Syracuse Community Choir: Where Every Voice Matters," *The Choral Journal* 59, no. 3 (2018): 73, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26600233>.

¹⁴⁸ Dierendonck, "Compassionate love as a cornerstone of servant leadership," 127.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Kramer, "A study of voluntary organizational membership," 70.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

engagement have increased employee retention.¹⁵³ The sought-out employee retention starts with the servant leader's role in implementing positive organizational values that promote sustainable performance amongst other employees.¹⁵⁴ Employee empowerment, team-oriented goals, and socially responsive work activities are all things servant leaders implement to instill positive organizational values.¹⁵⁵ These servant-leader characteristics fortify the previously addressed servant-leadership principle of emotional healing, which enriches positive leader-follower relationships.^{156, 157} In community choirs, where directors are responsible for leading musically and organizationally, this servant-leader approach to employment empowerment could provide a blueprint for enriching members towards holistic fulfillment with positive organizational values.

A community choral conductor who demonstrates servant leadership could benefit from servant leadership characteristics that impact community choir values and culture. Community choirs that understand their local community's historical background and musical preferences demonstrate more appropriate learning environments for the choristers.¹⁵⁸ Servant leadership characteristics that may help conductors prioritize this information are agape, humility, altruism, vision, and trust.¹⁵⁹ Agape is a type of love that considers followers' emotional, socioeconomic,

¹⁵³ Nhat Tan Pham, Tran Hoang Tuan, Tri Dinh Le, Phuong Ngoc Duy Nguyen, Muhammad Usman, and Gleriani Torres Carbone Ferreira, "Socially responsible human resources management and employee retention: The roles of shared value, relationship satisfaction, and servant leadership," *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2023): 10.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 28.

¹⁵⁷ Neill, "Examining the characteristics," 202.

¹⁵⁸ Selph, "Adult perceptions of community choir participation," 43.

¹⁵⁹ Godfried Asamoah, "Understanding servant leadership," *Interdisciplinary Research Journal of Theology, Apologetics, Natural & Social Sciences* 1, no. 2 (2018): 106.

material, and psychological needs.¹⁶⁰ Displaying humility allows the servant leader to listen to others' advice and not abuse leadership authority.¹⁶¹ Altruism gives credence to the servant leadership principle of service to others, enabling servant leaders to take actions that benefit others, not accounting for personal wants or wishes.^{162, 163} Vision relates to the servant leader always holding the organizational and individual goals above selfish wants or desires.¹⁶⁴ Trust speaks to servant leaders cultivating an organizational culture that enables individuals to feel comfortable talking and sharing their ideas, thus engaging in a collaborative work environment.¹⁶⁵ These servant leadership characteristics may offer community choir directors a practical way to connect with their communities, leading to better community choir values and culture.

One area that community choirs need help with is retention. Frequently, members who leave community choirs do so due to the difficulty of the repertoire and lack of preparation between musical performances.¹⁶⁶ Servant leadership may provide a beneficial approach to adhering to rigorous standards while leaving room for newcomers to feel equally successful as musicians. Servant leaders may improve retention through their approach to help fight dehumanization through an outgrowth of love.¹⁶⁷ Dehumanization is not simply an apparent event

¹⁶⁰ Asamoah, "Understanding servant leadership," 106.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 28.

¹⁶³ Asamoah, "Understanding servant leadership," 106.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Kramer, "A study of voluntary organizational membership," 70.

¹⁶⁷ Tom Buck, "Love and servant-leadership," *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership* 13, no. 1 (2019): 308.

of the mistreatment of individuals, but it deals with the ill-advised weight of attention, not to individuals, such as materialism and avariciousness.¹⁶⁸ Servant leaders who display love for their followers discourage dehumanization through listening and depicting authentic empathy.¹⁶⁹ In community choirs, if newcomers do not feel adequately prepared, conductors could adopt this servant leader approach to not welcoming dehumanization and program musical repertoire that prioritizes the individuals in the room first.¹⁷⁰ Implementing this servant leadership approach into community choirs can create a positive community between the conductor and members, improving the organizational climate.¹⁷¹

Servant leaders exhibit behaviors that align with their desire to serve others.¹⁷² Contrary to other leadership styles, this desire manifests through the servant leader's distinctive and unique characteristics.¹⁷³ Listening, empathy, stewardship, relationships, and building community are all specific characteristics of servant leaders that personify what it means to be a servant leader.¹⁷⁴ Because servant leadership is a viable leadership theory that contrasts more commonly capitalist approaches and traditional leadership theories, it may possess applicable solutions to empowering community choirs to fulfill their organizational goals and fully invest in their

¹⁶⁸ Buck, "Love and servant-leadership," 308.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Dioni Pablo Ruiz-Palomino Elche, and Jorge Linuesa-Langreo, "Servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior: The mediating effect of empathy and service climate," *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 32, no. 6 (2020): 2048.

¹⁷² Jeffrey L. McClellan, "The levels of leadership and transcendent servant leadership development," *Journal of Leadership Education* 8, no. 2 (2009): 93.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

communities.¹⁷⁵ It is not sufficient for community choir conductors to adopt servant leadership principles: fully implementing them can create a supportive work environment that benefits organizational and community enrichment.¹⁷⁶

Transformational Leadership in Community Choirs

Transformational leadership may influence the development of community choirs in many ways. Transformational leaders enact change by influencing their followers through a challenging and innovative vision.¹⁷⁷ To gain the confidence of their followers, transformational leaders stress interpersonal relationships among supervisors and subordinates to create greater job satisfaction.¹⁷⁸ Once followers gain confidence in their leader, having the courage to follow their vision becomes more straightforward, thus allowing for more excellent job performance.¹⁷⁹ Due to the innovative vision, transformational leaders prioritize motivating their followers to achieve beyond standard expectations.¹⁸⁰ Performing beyond expectations builds employee empowerment and positive work environments, ultimately aiding in continually pursuing the vision.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁵ Parris, "A systematic literature review," 390.

¹⁷⁶ Jana Gašková, "Servant leadership and its relation to work performance," *Central European Business Review* 9, no. 3 (2020): 34.

¹⁷⁷ Manjurul Hossain Reza, "Components of transformational leadership behavior," *EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 5, no. 3 (2019): 123.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Taylan Budur, "Effectiveness of transformational leadership among different cultures," *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies* 7, no. 3 (2020): 126.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

Community choir conductors who enlist transformational leadership behaviors could inspire and cultivate a culture of hard work and dedication. Transformational leaders who implement team-centered behaviors in the workplace, such as encouraging team building, group visions, and group identity, experience enhanced innovation and learning.¹⁸² These transformational leadership behaviors could benefit community choirs by helping them achieve their organizational milestones and creating a healthy choral environment for current and prospective members. A community choir that applies transformational leadership behaviors of valuing innovation and learning aligns with its purpose of creating aesthetic musical experiences and opportunities for all musicians.¹⁸³

Transformational leadership highlights the importance of employee creativity. Leaders who instill a culture of sharing knowledge amongst leadership and subordinates can foster employee creativity.¹⁸⁴ Employee creativity is beneficial for solving intricate organizational problems and producing effective outcomes through employee deliberation and knowledge sharing.¹⁸⁵ Cultivating a culture of employee creativity is another way to build confidence and positive employee relationships, and it aspires to the vision of the transformational leader.¹⁸⁶ For community choir conductors, integrating this transformational leadership characteristic of

¹⁸² Masduki Asbari, "Is transformational leadership suitable for future organizational needs," *International Journal of Social, Policy and Law* 1, no. 1 (2020): 52.

¹⁸³ Bell, "Update on community choirs," 48.

¹⁸⁴ Swati Mittal and Rajib Lochan Dhar, "Transformational leadership and employee creativity: mediating role of creative self-efficacy and moderating role of knowledge sharing," *Management Decision* 53, no. 5 (2015): 906.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

encouraging employee creativity through encouraging chorister ideas and knowledge sharing could benefit networking and a positive perception of the community choir in the community.

Transformational leaders ingrain positive, practical workplace initiatives that improve employee opportunities.¹⁸⁷ These initiatives manifest through transformational leaders' focus on intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation.¹⁸⁸ These employee-centric initiatives improve employee performance and positive communication between leaders and subordinates.¹⁸⁹ Community choir directors who are transformational leaders may improve their choir morale by incorporating individualized organizational initiatives. Transformational leaders encourage employees individually and organizationally; community choirs adopting this leadership style may improve positive performance, thus allowing for a more significant overall impact within their communities.¹⁹⁰

With this study researching servant leadership's effects on community choirs, it is imperative to compare servant and transformational leadership. While both share many similarities, such as valuing the importance of individual consideration and empowering followers, servant leaders focus more on their followers. In contrast, transformational leaders focus more on organizational objectives.¹⁹¹ Servant leadership does not have a direct link to organizational outcomes, compared to transformational leadership, where their initiatives are

¹⁸⁷ Connie Deng, Duygu Gulseren, Carlo Isola, Kyra Grocutt, and Nick Turner, "Transformational leadership effectiveness: an evidence-based primer," *Human Resource Development International* 26, no. 5 (2023): 637.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Cemil Top, Bryar Mohammad Sharif Abdullah, and Akar Hemn Mahmood Faraj, "Transformational leadership impact on employees performance," *Eurasian Journal of Management & Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2020): 56.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ A. Gregory Stone, Robert F. Russell, and Kathleen Patterson, "Transformational versus servant leadership: A difference in leader focus," *Leadership & organization development journal* 25, no. 4 (2004): 359.

aligned with organizational goals, thus having a much more practical use in leading organizations.¹⁹² Servant leadership, however, encourages bosses and managers to exhibit more people-centric attitudes, stimulating employees' innovative behavior.¹⁹³ Here are the foremost vital differences: organizations that seek innovative behavior that aligns with organizational goals should adopt transformational leadership, while organizations that seek innovative behavior that encourages individual consideration should adopt servant leadership.¹⁹⁴

One critical element in these comparisons is the breadth of recent literature, which confuses servant and transformational leadership theories. Servant leadership has evolved tremendously since Robert Greenleaf's theory's initial definitions in 1970.¹⁹⁵ The same is true for transformational leadership, with James Burns and Bernard Bass giving definitions in 1978 and 1985.¹⁹⁶ Because of the relevant literature supporting servant and transformational leadership, concise, clear definitions must accurately present themselves to distinguish the differences between servant and transformational leadership.¹⁹⁷ With all the similarities between these two leadership theories, these two leadership theories are not necessarily opposites but complementary theories with different outcomes.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹² Lei Xie, "The impact of servant leadership and transformational leadership on learning organization: a comparative analysis," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 41, no. 2 (2020): 230.

¹⁹³ Amjad Iqbal, Muhammad Shakil Ahmad, and Tahira Nazir, "Does servant leadership predict innovative behavior above and beyond transformational leadership? Examining the role of affective commitment and creative self-efficacy," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 44, no. 1 (2023): 46.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁹⁵ Jon Aarum Andersen, "Servant leadership and transformational leadership: From comparisons to farewells," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 39, no. 6 (2018): 769-770.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 770-771.

¹⁹⁸ Stone, "Transformational versus servant leadership," 359.

Other Leadership Styles in Community Choirs

Authentic Leadership

Discussing authentic leadership is vital to correctly categorize community choir conductors' leadership styles that do not represent servant or transformational leadership. Authentic leadership embodies more than simply staying true to one's natural self: it consists of ethical behavior aligning with the organization and leading to prosperous results.¹⁹⁹ Being authentic to oneself is the first step, but leading followers towards the collective good for individuals and the organization are critical authentic leadership principles.²⁰⁰ In community choirs, authentic leadership could provide a value system that holds others ethically accountable and improves leader-to-follower relationships.²⁰¹

Improving leader-to-follower relationships starts with implementing desirable workplace outcomes.²⁰² Authentic leader's workplace outcomes highlight organizational performance, individual performance, employee job satisfaction, employee creativity, and leadership trust.²⁰³ These outcomes give employees and followers the platform to provide honest feedback to the leader, thus cultivating an environment where employee voices matter.²⁰⁴ Authentic leaders can strategically instill goals that positively impact employee commitment and creativity through this

¹⁹⁹ Bishop, "Defining the authenticity," 7.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Chao Miao, Ronald H. Humphrey, and Shanshan Qian, "Emotional intelligence and authentic leadership: A meta-analysis," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 39, no. 5 (2018): 687.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Neuza Ribeiro, Ana Patrícia Duarte, Rita Filipe, and Rui Torres de Oliveira, "How authentic leadership promotes individual creativity: The mediating role of affective commitment," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 27, no. 2 (2020): 197.

employee-friendly culture.²⁰⁵ This authentic leader approach to improving relationships between leaders and subordinates may positively influence community choirs' organizational culture in recruitment and community engagement.

Unlike servant and transformational leadership theories, authentic leadership faces challenges showing apparent distinctiveness.²⁰⁶ Leadership theories need to have a clear, practical trajectory.²⁰⁷ While servant leadership's practical trajectory is serving others, and transformational leadership is visionary organizational change,²⁰⁸ authentic leadership does not have an objective trait that separates it from other leadership theories.²⁰⁹ Authenticity cannot be the defining element of authentic leadership,²¹⁰ yet defining “authenticity” creates confusion and blurriness when accurately defining authentic leaders, persons, and followers.²¹¹ By examining authentic leadership theory, community choir directors who lack a foundational concept yet show similarities to authentic leadership may have a researched leadership style that most closely matches theirs.

²⁰⁵ Ribeiro, "How authentic leadership promotes individual creativity," 197.

²⁰⁶ Joseph A. Crawford, Sarah Dawkins, Angela Martin, and Gemma Lewis, "Putting the leader back into authentic leadership: Reconceptualising and rethinking leaders," *Australian Journal of Management* 45, no. 1 (2020): 127.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Julia E. Hoch, William H. Bommer, James H. Dulebohn, and Dongyuan Wu, "Do ethical, authentic, and servant leadership explain variance above and beyond transformational leadership? A meta-analysis," *Journal of management* 44, no. 2 (2018): 523.

²⁰⁹ Crawford, "Putting the leader back into authentic leadership," 127.

²¹⁰ William L. Gardner, Elizabeth P. Karam, Mats Alvesson, and Katja Einola, "Authentic leadership theory: The case for and against," *The Leadership Quarterly* 32, no. 6 (2021): 22.

²¹¹ Crawford, "Putting the leader back into authentic leadership," 127.

Transactional Leadership

Community choir directors could utilize transactional leadership through contingent rewards and highlighting project success.²¹² Transactional leaders with clear project goals benefit from successful contingent rewards and positive employee outcomes.²¹³ Contingent rewards in community choirs may come from reaching recruiting goals or community event milestones. To emphasize these project goals through contingent rewards, transactional leaders must motivate followers.²¹⁴ Motivating followers through increasing self-confidence, creating employee opportunities, and valuing employee opinions are all ways transactional leaders increase employee motivation and prioritize contingent rewards.²¹⁵ Contrary to prior leadership theories, transactional leaders focus on mutual prosperity between employees and the organization.²¹⁶ By motivating and stimulating employees through rewards and clear goals, community choir directors may improve member motivation, thus increasing positive networking and more consistent intervention with external parties and community leaders.²¹⁷

Examining transactional leadership is vital to differentiate transactional from transformational leadership precisely. Drawing this distinction is critical to identifying community choir directors who are not transformational leaders or cataloging leaders who use rewards primarily to increase organizational performance. The most significant difference

²¹² Aga, "Transactional leadership and project success," 523.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ni Putu Diah Wahyuni, Dian Alfia Purwandari, and Tantri Yanuar Rahmat Syah, "Transactional leadership, motivation and employee performance," *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic* 3, no. 5 (2020): 160.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Aga, "Transactional leadership and project success," 523.

between transactional and transformational leadership is their bottom-line goals. Transactional leaders negotiate and give things for specific outcomes, while transformational leaders inspire and stimulate situations to gain extra non-agreed-upon performance.²¹⁸ Transactional leaders emphasize motivating employees and implementing goals beneficial for employees and employers.²¹⁹ Transformational leaders, on the other hand, utilize knowledge and expertise to inspire a vision that helps promote individual considerations and needs.²²⁰

Accurately separating transactional and transformational leadership theories is vital to negate the spread of incorrect literature that combines these two theories.²²¹ Though they share similarities through valuing organizational goals and motivating followers to increase performance, pivotal differences lie in the leader's values and end goals.²²² Transformational leadership is beneficial if organizational projects require innovation and change.²²³ Transactional leadership, however, is beneficial if organizational projects require strict performances driven by deadlines and routines.²²⁴ Understanding these central differences helps to alleviate confusion and create necessary separations between these leadership theories. For that reason, community

²¹⁸ Moses JB. Kabeyi, "Transformational vs transactional leadership with examples," *The International Journal of Business & Management* (2018), 191–192.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 191.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 192.

²²¹ Ulrich Thy Jensen, Lotte Bøgh Andersen, Louise Ladegaard Bro, Anne Bøllingtoft, Tine Louise Mundbjerg Eriksen, Ann-Louise Holten, Christian Bøtcher Jacobsen, et al., "Conceptualizing and measuring transformational and transactional leadership," *Administration & Society* 51, no. 1 (2019): 4–5.

²²² Izhak Berkovich and Ori Eyal, "Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and moral reasoning," *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 20, no. 2 (2021): 144.

²²³ Muhammad Abbas, and Raza Ali, "Transformational versus transactional leadership styles and project success: A meta-analytic review," *European Management Journal* 41, no. 1 (2023): 137.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

choir directors may implement a leadership style that more closely aligns with their individual and external organizational goals.

Music Literacy in Community Choirs

Defining Music Literacy

Providing a concrete definition for music literacy is pivotal before examining literature relevant to this study. Music literacy is more than simply reading note names and understanding note duration.²²⁵ True music literacy is the ability to silently read or write music while comprehending the sound without aural reinforcement.²²⁶ Music comprehension and audiation are core fundamentals in music literacy.²²⁷ Because this study examines servant-leader community choir conductors' effect on community choirs' music literacy, having a concrete definition will aid the exact measure of music literacy.

Music literacy may be defined as specific as music comprehension and audiation proficiency or as broad as the ability to interact with and perform music compositions.²²⁸ Giving music literacy a wide range of definitions allows it to coincide with specific goals and outcomes.²²⁹ In community choirs, where individuals join to improve musical skills or engage in continual music appreciation, the flexibility in crafting music literacy specifically for individual community choirs is vital to achieving clear objectives. Music comprehension, audiation, and musical text are critical to building community choir music literacy. Music literacy highlights the

²²⁵ Peter Gouzouasis, "A developmental model of music literacy," In *Research Forum*, vol. 12, (1994): 21.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Paul Broomhead, *What is music literacy*, Routledge, 2018, 16.

²²⁹ Ibid., 9–11.

ability to audiate and comprehend music; the musical text is the teaching medium for conductors.²³⁰ Musical texts are instructional tools used to teach music, such as musical literature, physical conducting, and other methods that aid in teaching music literacy.²³¹

Another way to think about this version of music literacy is to understand the outcomes. The underlying premise of this definition is meaning-making through musical interactions.²³² While the purely structural music literacy components of audiation and music comprehension are necessary, emphasizing the musical text allows for a holistic approach to music literacy that encompasses the teaching tools and sounds occurring.²³³ This definition of music literacy may benefit community choir directors by enabling them to effectively implement musical text that aligns with their organizational values and coincides with the progress of fruitful music literacy.

Building music literacy starts with directors providing opportunities for individuals to make meaningful connections between aural and written notation.²³⁴ Because individuals become more musically literate through listening to and engaging in music, providing these opportunities will create a more fluid pathway to building music literacy in community choirs.²³⁵ Community choir singers benefit from activities that ensure music-making experiences.²³⁶ Furthermore,

²³⁰ Paul Broomhead, "A new definition of music literacy: What, why, and how," *Music Educators Journal* 107, no. 3 (2021): 18-19.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

²³² Broomhead, "A new definition of music literacy," 16.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 17.

²³⁴ Kyle D. Brown, "An alternative approach to developing music literacy skills in a transient society," *Music Educators Journal* 90, no. 2 (2003): 47.

²³⁵ Chris Philpott, Musical literacy: Music as language, *The Child as Musician: A handbook of musical development*, (2015): 199.

²³⁶ Aoife Hiney, "Using a shared research practices paradigm with adult choral singers for the teaching and learning musical literacy skills," *International Journal of Music Education* 41, no. 4 (2023): 526.

community choir directors who incorporate musical opportunities that strengthen music literacy fundamentals can still engage singers through creative, artistic activities.²³⁷

Music Literacy in Community Choir Rehearsal

Directors must employ aural, visual, and physical transmissions to build music literacy in community choirs.²³⁸ Aural transmission is a teaching approach in which directors use aural tools to help build aural connections between sound and sight.²³⁹ By contrast, visual transmissions incorporate conducting gestures to aid in displaying musical notation.²⁴⁰ There are also physical transmissions: strategies or techniques that engage singers in physical, bodily movements that correlate to musical understanding.²⁴¹

Implementing aural transmissions into community choir rehearsals gives directors the autonomy to effectively implement strategies that are most appropriate for their groups.²⁴² Singing different parts, giving small vocal cues, and reinforcing rehearsals with piano are all practical uses of aural transmissions.²⁴³ Directors who utilize aural transmission may also give clear directions free of dense musical terminology.²⁴⁴ Freeing directions of purely musical terms and phrases helps alleviate confusion for the choir's vast array of musicians and allows for

²³⁷ Hiney, "Using a shared research practices paradigm," 526.

²³⁸ Naomi Cooper, "Techniques and tools for music learning in Australian community choirs," *Community Music in Oceania: Many Voices, One Horizon* (2018): 266-274.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 262.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 264.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 265.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 267.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 269.

imaginary and innovative instruction.²⁴⁵ The effective use of aural transmissions helps directors determine which methods and information are most vital.²⁴⁶ Determining the importance of which concepts to teach in teaching music literacy is essential to delivering the most productive rehearsal and negating information overload for musicians.²⁴⁷

Implementing visual transmissions in community choirs is more than directors conducting standard beat patterns: it is the ability to incorporate gestures that depict and showcase the music that aids the teaching process.²⁴⁸ This visual depiction allows directors to communicate prominent musical instructions without verbal instructions.²⁴⁹ Conductors channel any musical knowledge, emotion, or other musical characteristics through their conducting.²⁵⁰ The director's musical mastery and conducting techniques are meaningless if the conductor is not adapting and connecting with the singers.²⁵¹ Because of this, conducting is the most visual manifestation that connects musical literature to the choir.²⁵² The choir's level and age affect which conducting gestures are most effective.²⁵³ Younger choirs may benefit from simplified gestures that signify one musical concept, while older, more skilled choirs may require gestures

²⁴⁵ Cooper, "Techniques and tools," 269.

²⁴⁶ Kathleen Diane Frasher, "Music and literacy: Strategies using comprehension connections by Tanny McGregor," *General Music Today* 27, no. 3 (2014): 8.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Cooper, "Techniques and tools," 270-271.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 271.

²⁵⁰ Dag Jansson, and Anne Haugland Balsnes, "Choral conducting education: The lifelong entanglement of competence, identity and meaning," *Research Studies in Music Education* 43, no. 3 (2021): 359.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Dag Jansson, Beate Elstad, and Erik Døving, "Choral conducting competences: Perceptions and priorities," *Research Studies in Music Education* 43, no. 1 (2021): 15.

that show multiple musical concepts.²⁵⁴ Despite the different choir ages, implementing conducting gestures that visually demonstrate articulate musical concepts is beneficial for building music literacy in community choirs.²⁵⁵

Implementing physical transmissions may include teaching vocal pedagogy to translate physical sensations to vocal resonances and engaging in physical movements to internalize syncopated rhythms.²⁵⁶ Including breath support exercises that highlight bodily processes that occur are other ways to include physical transmissions.²⁵⁷ All of these physical transmission instructions aim toward increasing musical comprehension. Including non-technical musical imagery that provides clarity in instruction is also effective physical transmission.²⁵⁸ Explaining musical concepts using imagery ensures that music instruction remains relevant to the real world and that musical activities are not limited to musical concept definitions.²⁵⁹ As a result, directors who incorporate creative physical transmissions encourage music literacy by emphasizing the entire learning process and the individual.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁴ Jansson, "Choral conducting competences," 15.

²⁵⁵ Jansson, "Choral conducting education," 359.

²⁵⁶ Cooper, "Techniques and tools," 273.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Naomi Cooper, "Design-based research as an informal learning model for choral conductors," *London Review of Education* (2017), 366.

²⁵⁹ James L. Reifinger Jr, "Teaching pitch notation–reading skills," *General Music Today* 33, no. 3 (2020): 26.

²⁶⁰ Maravillas Corbalán, M. Puy Pérez–Echeverría, and J. Ignacio Pozo, "Promoting learning and interaction during choir rehearsal: A comparison of two conduction profiles," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 121 (2023): 7–8.

Choral conductors who treat choir members as active participants in rehearsals benefit from greater music literacy.²⁶¹ Treating them as active participants involves the conductor having a clear goal for their choir to learn music.²⁶² Conductors who use the body to show musical concepts, apply interpretive activities, and teach music literacy that coincides with concert repertoire aim to foster music literacy for community choir members.²⁶³ This mentality towards increasing music literacy allows for a deeper understanding of musical concepts in repertoire and performance.²⁶⁴ By understanding the community choirs' current music literacy level and investigating core principles of importance, community choir conductors can prepare and present successful instruction conducive to building music literacy in rehearsals.²⁶⁵

Social Capital Theory and Community Partnerships

Social Capital Theory

It is essential to discover the importance and relevance of social capital theory to effectively examine servant leadership's effects on community partnerships. According to Robert Putnam, social capital theory reflects how social organizations facilitate coordination and

²⁶¹ Mara Corbalán, M. Puy Pérez-Echeverría, Juan-Ignacio Pozo, and Amalia Casas-Mas, "Choral conductors to stage! What kind of learning do they claim to promote during choir rehearsal," *International Journal of Music Education* 37, no. 1 (2019): 101.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Cindy L. Bell, "Critical listening in the ensemble rehearsal: A Community of learners," *Music Educators Journal* 104, no. 3 (2018): 20.

²⁶⁵ James Bowyer, "More than solfège and hand signs: Philosophy, tools, and lesson planning in the authentic Kodály classroom," *Music Educators Journal* 102, no. 2 (2015): 74.

collaboration toward mutual benefit.²⁶⁶ Networking, trusting, and understanding social norms are all crucial fundamentals in social capital theory.²⁶⁷ Organizations that exhibit these actions benefit from continual information sharing, collaborative activities, and collective decisions.²⁶⁸

Organizations that do not honor the principles of social capital theory will not benefit from sharing information. Sharing information requires relaying accurate information, which requires trust and collaboration to create mutual benefits.²⁶⁹ Utilizing group-based decision-making, which values both parties equally, will help share information and alleviate organizational concerns: this will allow for a more honest and open flow of ideas pertinent to mutual benefits.²⁷⁰ Organizations that value internal knowledge sharing, however, will have an inherent advantage in successfully sharing knowledge with others due to their priority of valuing and respecting their employees.²⁷¹ Because of the wide differentials of organizational values, organizations must be open initially in their intents, values, and wants to develop and cultivate a consistent knowledge-sharing environment that is mutually beneficial.²⁷²

Social capital is critical for building reciprocal collaborative activities. Because social capital relates to human sociability, it can manifest in organizations or social structures that seek

²⁶⁶ Robert D. Putnam, "The prosperous community," *The american prospect* 4, no. 13 (1993): 1–2.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁶⁸ Ismail Serageldin, and Christiaan Grootaert, "Defining social capital: an integrating view," In *Evaluation and Development*, Routledge, (2017): 209.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ Eric Swanson, Sally Kim, Sae-Mi Lee, Jae-Jang Yang, and Yong-Ki Lee, "The effect of leader competencies on knowledge sharing and job performance: Social capital theory," *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 42 (2020): 94.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 95.

these collaborative moments.²⁷³ Social participation is the primary measurement of the likelihood of collaboration and is the total contact between one person in an organization and another over a specific time frame.²⁷⁴ There are two types of social participation: formal and informal.²⁷⁵ Formal social participation occurs when individuals meet others out of organizational obligations, while informal social participation occurs when they meet voluntarily for social or helpful reasons.²⁷⁶ Because creating collaboration starts from trust and mutual goals, formal and informal social participation is beneficial to creating collaborative opportunities due to the trust, commitment, and mutual bonds forged.²⁷⁷ Understanding how social participation occurs in community choirs may help outline researched methods to encourage active outreach during and out of choral performance seasons.

Organizations that value the critical social capital principles of trust, networking, and valuing social norms benefit from collective decision-making. These choices are the fruits of healthy social relations and collaboration.²⁷⁸ Organizations cannot reach collective decisions without understanding social networks, shared social norms, and behaviors that positively impact social relationships and cooperating organizations.²⁷⁹ Because of these beneficial impacts on

²⁷³ Tristan Claridge, "Criticisms of social capital theory: and lessons for improving practice," *Social capital research* 4, no. 2 (2018): 3.

²⁷⁴ Laura Guillen, Lluís Coromina, and Willem E. Saris, "Measurement of social participation and its place in social capital theory," *Social Indicators Research* 100 (2011): 333.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 334.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ Humnath Bhandari, and Kumi Yasunobu. "What is social capital? A comprehensive review of the concept," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 37, no. 3 (2009): 504.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

organizations, community choir directors may consider social capital and how it may positively improve community relationships and their impact on forging community partnerships.

Community Partnerships

Understanding the vitality of community partnerships' purpose in community choirs is pivotal to efficiently answering this study's second research question. Music directors who strive for musical collaboration through building relationships can create a sustainable, healthy culture.²⁸⁰ A culture such as this favors collaborative opportunities and continuous growth through shared values and outcomes.²⁸¹ Community partnerships will likely form if the culture is conducive to mutual benefit and further idea expansion.²⁸² Idea expansion, knowledge sharing, and positive public visibility are essential to creating and sustaining community partnerships.²⁸³

The roots of social capital's social participation, formal and informal participation, aid in developing community partnerships. Because of the uncapped limits on contacting individuals formally or informally, prospective partners can strategically engage with other organizations to build solid foundational relationships.²⁸⁴ These meaningful relationships are the building blocks for further development and vision sharing. Learning opportunities, future engagements, and collaborative tips are all beginning formulations that occur through incorporating social

²⁸⁰ Sharyn L. Battersby, "Reimagining music teacher collaboration: The culture of professional learning communities as professional development within schools and districts," *General Music Today* 33, no. 1 (2019): 20.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Rona J. Karasik, "Community partners' perspectives and the faculty role in community-based learning," *Journal of Experiential Education* 43, no. 2 (2020): 129.

²⁸³ Ibid., 132.

²⁸⁴ Kristine Hoover and Maggie Douglas, "Learning servant leadership and identifying community-based strategies in times of divide: A student, faculty, community partner interfaith collaboration," *Journal of Leadership Education* 17, no. 2 (2018): 88.

participation into progressing community partnerships.²⁸⁵ Additionally, implementing social participation while building community partnerships gives critical foresight and understanding toward future endeavors.²⁸⁶ This foresight manifests through meaningful knowledge-sharing and brainstorming decisions that require openness from the mutual parties.²⁸⁷

Leadership is essential in strengthening relationships and establishing community partnerships.²⁸⁸ To effectively lead, fulfilling the following five core components demonstrates that community partnerships maintain their purpose and fairness: purpose, process, ethics, inclusiveness, and empowerment.²⁸⁹ Purposeful leaders ensure that the partnership's mission and vision stay intact.²⁹⁰ Process-driven leaders, on the other hand, implement procedures that align with the purpose and goals.²⁹¹ Ethical leaders are those who value social responsibility and ensure communication pathways are available for further deliberation and growth on socially responsive issues.²⁹² Inclusive leaders welcome involvement from all partners, not discriminating against organizational status or another leadership role.²⁹³ Finally, empowering leaders promote self-

²⁸⁵ Hoover, "Learning servant leadership," 88–89.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ Nisse Goldberg, and Laura C. Atkins, "Community partners as service-learning co-leaders," *Collab. J. Community-Based Res. Pract* 3 (2020): 2.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

empowerment for others to cultivate a genuinely collaborative environment that invokes creativity and freedom of thought.²⁹⁴

Examining how servant leaders carry out these core components is relevant to a holistic understanding of the research question. Servant leaders increase structural empowerment by expanding the availability of information to followers, facilitating learning and growth opportunities, and providing supportive feedback for followers' organizational development.²⁹⁵ This approach to structural empowerment comes from servant-leadership principles, which involve serving others by considering their perceptions and aiding their self-determination.²⁹⁶ Servant leaders foster community partnerships by ensuring internal organizational commitment and service to other prospective partners.²⁹⁷ Furthermore, servant leaders cultivate an environment that serves followers' needs first, which translates to healthy social participation worthy of community partnership advancement.²⁹⁸

These servant leadership characteristics align with the core components of leading towards community partnerships. Servant leaders lead to serve others. Collaboration, sharing, cooperation, and service are all servant leadership characteristics that correspond with strengthening relationships and building partnerships.²⁹⁹ In facilitating community partnerships,

²⁹⁴ Goldberg, "Community partners," 2.

²⁹⁵ Stuart Allen, Bruce E. Winston, Gia R. Tatone, and Howard M. Crowson, "Exploring a model of servant leadership, empowerment, and commitment in nonprofit organizations," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 29, no. 1 (2018): 136.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 137.

²⁹⁸ Janice P. Tanno, and David K. Banner, "Servant leaders as change agents," *Journal of Sustainable Social Change* 10, no. 1 (2018): 17.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

servant leadership is beneficial due to its emphasis on trust and building a sustainable culture.³⁰⁰ This trust and team-serving culture align with social capital theory to bring positive attention to engaging organizations.³⁰¹ Because of this, servant leadership may provide great use for community choir directors seeking a proven pathway to increase and sustain their community partners. Rather than leading from personal instincts and intuition, community choir directors could implement servant leadership by nurturing supportive relationships and promoting collaborative behaviors among the choir and members.³⁰² Moreover, this nurturing could encourage choir members to engage in positive social participation, providing healthy, welcomed, positive attention for the entire community choir.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Amanda Christensen-Salem, Marco Tulio F. Zanini, Fred O. Walumbwa, Ronaldo Parente, Daniel M. Peat, and Jaelyn Perrmann-Graham, "Communal solidarity in extreme environments: The role of servant leadership and social resources in building serving culture and service performance," *Journal of Business Research* 135 (2021): 837.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Shazia Nauman, Sabeen Hussain Bhatti, Hassan Imam, and Mohammad Saud Khan, "How servant leadership drives project team performance through collaborative culture and knowledge sharing," *Project Management Journal* 53, no. 1 (2022): 25.

³⁰³ Guillen, "Measurement of social participation," 333.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter three examines this study's research design and methodological approach. It follows this order: research design, participants and setting, data collection plan, procedures, and data analysis.

Research Design

This study followed a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is most appropriate for this study because it utilizes questions and specialized inquiries to test the researcher's interpretations of its meaning.³⁰⁴ Servant leadership's effects on community choirs are the target phenomena under investigation: servant leadership's effects on community choir music literacy and cultivating external community partnerships. With this study utilizing a qualitative approach, hermeneutical phenomenology is the specific design type of this study. Hermeneutical phenomenology best suits this study by enabling the most beneficial course of action of transferring specific human phenomena to appropriate scientific language.³⁰⁵ A hermeneutical phenomenological design type best allows this study to maintain absolute effectiveness by discerning existing literature to understand the phenomenon's history and delineating themes from interviews and surveys.³⁰⁶

Previous studies have utilized hermeneutical phenomenology in music education. Joseph and Southcott's study, "Older People in a Community Gospel Choir," implemented a

³⁰⁴ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, Sage Publications, 2023, 5.

³⁰⁵ Doris Elida Fuster Guillen, "Qualitative research: Hermeneutical phenomenological method," *Journal of Educational Psychology-Propositos y Representaciones* 7, no. 1 (2019): 227.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

hermeneutical design type to understand choir members' perceptions of choir membership.³⁰⁷ This study included interviews and focus groups, which revealed choir members' desire for continual social connection to external communities and increasing diversity and frequency in musical performance.³⁰⁸ Hendry et al. "Singing for Wellbeing" incorporated a hermeneutical design to discover people's experiences and their effects on singing group well-being; this study, utilizing interviews, revealed that individuals benefit from positive emotions and increased self-efficacy while participating in a singing group.³⁰⁹ Bøtker, Christensen, and Jacobsen implemented a hermeneutical design in their study, "Music professionals' experiences of authenticity," to define authenticity more closely in music education.³¹⁰ By examining the literature on musical authenticity and conducting interviews, this hermeneutical study revealed that authenticity encompasses musical professionals engaging others creatively, emoting the genuine self, and embracing the structure of future teaching moments.³¹¹

Sample size and potential bias are two main limitations of hermeneutical phenomenological qualitative research.³¹² Because this research design type normalizes a smaller sample size to understand specific phenomena, the findings are not generalizable across a larger

³⁰⁷ Dawn Joseph and Jane Southcott, "Older people in a community gospel choir: Musical engagement and social connection," *The Qualitative Report* 22, no. 12 (2017): 3211.

³⁰⁸ Joseph, "Older people in a community gospel choir," 3215–3216.

³⁰⁹ Natasha Hendry, Dr. Siobhan Lynam, and Caroline Lafarge, "Singing for wellbeing: Formulating a model for community group singing interventions," *Qualitative Health Research* 32, no. 8-9 (2022): 1401, 1405–1406.

³¹⁰ Julie Ørnholt Bøtker, Turid Nørlund Christensen, and Stine Lindahl Jacobsen, "That's what makes me authentic, because what we do makes sense"—Music professionals' experiences of authenticity: A phenomenological, hermeneutical interview study," *Approaches: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Music Therapy* (2024), 7.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

³¹² Edward John Noon, "Interpretive phenomenological analysis: An appropriate methodology for educational research," *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice* 6, no. 1 (2018): 81.

population.³¹³ Furthermore, existing research highly advises researchers to implement genuine random participant selection to negate significant response bias from individuals with external personal relationships or biased responses through connections within the specific field of research.³¹⁴

Participants and Setting

This study's population comprises three groups: community choir directors, community choir members, and organizations. The community choir directors are active and retired individuals; the choir members consist of active choristers singing in a community choir, and the organizations consist of active organizations with existing partnerships with community choirs.

Surveys and interviews are this study's primary research tools. Because of that, this study implemented purposeful sampling through random and selective sampling. Introducing purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to find participants more effectively and gain new, meaningful insight into understanding the research questions.³¹⁵ There are many community choirs in the United States, so random sampling made this study most visible to participants. Utilizing selective sampling through selecting participants, however, allowed the study to reach people most closely aligned with the research questions. Selective sampling was highly influential in enabling partner organizations to be included in the study. By researching community choirs and their partner organizations, the researcher employed selective sampling to represent all three parties successfully in this study.

³¹³ Joseph, "Older people in a community gospel choir," 3219.

³¹⁴ Hendry, "Singing for wellbeing," 1409.

³¹⁵ Creswell *Research design*, 198.

Purposeful sampling was instrumental in this study's recruitment plan. The recruitment plan to reach participants in the three groups consisted of a Facebook post and direct contact. The Facebook post was on a specific choir director page, giving this study an extensive platform for prospective participants. The direct contact with directors, choristers, and organizations helped attract attention to this study and bridge this study to organizations and other prospective participants lacking a social media presence.

The setting for this study involves a wide range of smaller to medium-sized community choirs and community partnerships. All the participants are in the United States, with participants spanning multiple states and time zones. The community choir directors have extensive musical experience alongside the choristers who have been in choir most of their lives. The community partner participants are well-respected organizations within their respective towns and amongst their partnered community choirs. Because the setting involves various groups and experiences, having this diverse information helps bring servant leadership to a core focal point in music education.

Researcher Positionality

I have conducted community choirs for much of my career. Through this experience, I have always been fascinated by how volunteer choristers learn music and offer their time in an unpaid volunteer position. Community choristers' passion and commitment to learning music and performing are actions that I have wanted to understand for a long time. My desire to know how community choirs learn music while engaging within their communities, led by choral conductors exhibiting servant leadership, inspired me to invest in and research this topic.

The interpretive framework I will be applying is social constructivism. Social constructivism best suits this framework because of the implementation of open-ended questions

in the surveys and interviews and proceeding participant data interpretation.³¹⁶ Social constructivism allows the data to gain helpful meaning that reinforces my intellectual constructions and provides practical knowledge for others pursuing future research in this field.³¹⁷ Because this study researched servant leadership and its effects on other individuals, a social constructivist framework enabled beneficial steps towards understanding and engaging in active social interaction among the participants, leading to socially constructed valuable knowledge.³¹⁸

Ontological Assumptions

My ontological assumptions for this study start with the premise that truth evolves as individuals interpret meaning daily, thus creating multiple viable realities.³¹⁹ There is no singular objective truth: there lies a socially constructed truth intersubjective through different contexts and situations.³²⁰ This ontological assumption is prevalent throughout the participant responses in sharing their viewpoints and perspectives on servant leadership within their specific role. Each of the different roles, community choir conductor, community chorister, and community partner, has different subjective truths on servant leadership, thus creating multiple realities regarding what and how servant leadership depicts itself through community choirs.

³¹⁶ Mi Song Kim, "Doing social constructivist research means making empathic and aesthetic connections with participants," *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* 22, no. 4 (2014): 539.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 550–551.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 550.

³¹⁹ Takako Moroi, "Quantitative and qualitative research and philosophical assumptions," *Journal of Bunkyo Gakuin University, Department of Foreign Languages*, (20) (2021): 128.

³²⁰ Karin Klenke, "Philosophical foundations: Qualitative research as paradigm," In *Qualitative Research in the Study of Leadership*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2016, 15.

Epistemological Assumptions

My epistemological assumptions begin with my own experience with servant leadership. I have experienced servant leadership as a chorister and as a community partner. The validity of servant leadership's existence is prevalent throughout these occurrences and in leadership in general organizations. Because of this, the knowledge of servant leadership is valid through my accounts of it and the various literature presented describing its effects as seen in the literature review. These epistemological assumptions influenced this study by incorporating research tools employing interaction with participants through learning their meanings and constructs of servant leadership.³²¹

Axiological Assumptions

My axiological assumptions showcase my previous experiences, values, and desire to pursue this study. Leadership theories are inherently value-based.³²² My values of respecting individual leadership traits led me to exhibit the importance of servant leadership through conducting this study. Through my social constructivist interpretive framework, acknowledging my values helped me build meaningful connections with the participants to undertake and provide substantial input and new value to servant leadership.³²³ These axiological assumptions permeated throughout the study, thus crafting a solid foundation for which I executed the sampling process and efficiently interpreted the data.

These philosophical assumptions gave purpose to my role as the human instrument. Although the interviews and survey questions were instruments in this study, my role as the

³²¹ Moroi, "Quantitative and qualitative," 129.

³²² Klenke, "Philosophical foundations," 18.

³²³ Ibid., 17.

human instrument through designing the participant criteria, questions, and interviews all played a substantial role in the direction and interpretation of this study.³²⁴ My values and biases stem from my experience in music education and community choirs. This experience enabled this study to gain a pertinent foundation and gave me traction in crafting the participant criteria that are most fitting for this study.³²⁵ This bias of valuing leadership theories and community choirs did not sway my participant group or sampling procedures. I still implemented random sampling in gathering participants, none of whom I know or have sustainable prior relationships with. Because of the lack of relationships with the participants, my survey and interview questions consisted of open-ended questions that allowed the participants to answer honestly and truthfully, with no consequence to them or their perspectives.

Data Collection Plan

Surveys

The researcher implemented surveys as the first data collection method. Individual perspectives, ideas, and assumptions have historically been cataloged through surveys to understand phenomena.³²⁶ The researcher surveyed three groups to understand servant leadership in community choirs: choir directors, community choir members, and community partners. Each group had a separate survey with distinct questions to uncover their perspectives and understanding of servant leadership's effects within their specific context. All the surveys had

³²⁴ Safary Wa-Mbaleka, "The researcher as an instrument," In *Computer Supported Qualitative Research: New Trends on Qualitative Research (WCQR2019) 4*, Springer International Publishing, 2020, 34.

³²⁵ Creswell *Research design*, 219.

³²⁶ Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, and Debra Gray, "Innovations in qualitative methods," *The Palgrave handbook of critical social psychology* (2017): 251.

open-ended questions with an uncapped answer count. Providing open-ended questions allowed participants to share their individualized experiences, thus allowing these surveys to support this qualitative approach.³²⁷

Interviews

The researcher's second data collection method was interviews. The researcher included interviews to gather participant perspectives and opinions on the phenomenon.³²⁸ With the researcher's literature review mapping out paramount theoretical and foundational elements of servant leadership, music literacy, and community partnerships, the researcher implemented semi-structured interview questions to provide non-biased questions addressing the research gap and providing a platform for further participant elaboration.³²⁹ The researcher distributed three lists of interview questions to the interviewees, incorporating the same groups mentioned above. Each group had semi-structured interview questions highlighting the main themes and allowing the researcher to rephrase a question if the participant experienced trouble understanding or needed clarification.³³⁰

While the surveys were transcribed verbatim through the completed online Google form, the interviews utilized a two-pass transcription process.³³¹ In a two-part transcription process, the first pass consisted of the researcher listening to the interview recording, checking for any

³²⁷ Braun, "Innovations in qualitative methods," 252.

³²⁸ Creswell *Research design*, 199.

³²⁹ Hanna Kallio, Anna-Maija Pietilä, Martin Johnson, and Mari Kangasniemi, "Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide," *Journal of advanced nursing* 72, no. 12 (2016): 2961.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2960.

³³¹ Lauren Clark, Ana Sanchez Birkhead, Cecilia Fernandez, and Marlene J. Egger, "A transcription and translation protocol for sensitive cross-cultural team research," *Qualitative health research* 27, no. 12 (2017): 1755.

inaccuracies in the written transcription, and identifying words that could reveal the participant's confidentiality.³³² In the second pass, the researcher applied pseudonyms to transcribe personal participant identifiers to maintain confidentiality.³³³ The researcher incorporated Microsoft Teams to transcribe interviews via videoconferencing. The researcher stored the survey and interview participant data on their password-encrypted computer.

The researcher ensured that this study had sufficient saturation through nine interviews across the three groups. By having three interviews per group, saturation was successful due to the newer research and limited previous literature surrounding servant leadership in music education.³³⁴ The different groups represent different elements in the study, which aided in future thematic analysis and interpretation.³³⁵ The researcher also reinforced saturation through the anonymous survey submissions by the participants, who offered open, honest answers.

Procedures

The researcher obtained permission to conduct this study before disseminating any study materials. The researcher achieved the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval by submitting the appropriate survey questions, interview questions, consent forms, and documents outlining the purpose and aim of this study (see Appendix X). Once IRB approved the study, the researcher then sent scripted IRB-approved emails to participants inviting them to study participation (see Appendix X). Alongside emails, the researcher posted scripted IRB-approved social media posts on Facebook for further recruitment for the study (see Appendix X). With the

³³² Clark, "A transcription and translation," 1755-1756.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 1756.

³³⁴ Greg Guest, Emily Namey, and Mario Chen, "A simple method to assess and report thematic saturation in qualitative research," *PloS one* 15, no. 5 (2020): 14.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

surveys being anonymous, an informed consent form was included within the link, allowing participants to read, understand, and volunteer their consent before completing the survey (see Appendix X). Regarding the interviews, the researcher emailed interviewees a consent form to be signed and completed a week before individual interviews occurred (see Appendix X).

Via Google Forms, the researcher created three separate surveys. Each survey comprised five questions: five for conductors, five for community choir members, and five for community partners (see Appendix X). The questions specifically targeted the study and its research questions, thus excluding any demographic or geographical identifiers that could have harmed anonymity.

The researcher recorded and transcribed nine interviews via Microsoft Teams for audio and video. The researcher divided the nine interviews into three groups: three for the conductors, three for the community choir members, and three for community partners (see Appendix X). The community choir conductor interview consisted of ten questions, the community choir member interview consisted of twelve questions, and the community partner interview consisted of eight questions. Each interview lasted between thirty-five and forty-five minutes, and the researcher conducted it in a private location separate from any external personnel or noise to maintain confidentiality.

Data Analysis

The researcher implemented a three-phase coding process for the interview and survey transcripts.³³⁶ In the first phase, the researcher read through all the transcripts and assigned short

³³⁶ Jessica Nina Lester, Yonjoo Cho, and Chad R. Lochmiller, "Learning to do qualitative data analysis: A starting point," *Human resource development review* 19, no. 1 (2020): 100.

descriptive words to unique phrases and sentences.³³⁷ The researcher read and reread all the transcripts numerous times to align all short descriptive words and to gain a surface-level understanding of the data.³³⁸ In the second phase, the researcher assigned more codes based on the newly learned knowledge from the initial read.³³⁹ This phase additionally focused on creating a deeper understanding of the data and bridging the codes to the research questions and aims.³⁴⁰ In the final third phase, the researcher directly connected the code words and the study's theoretical framework.³⁴¹ This phase allowed the researcher to shift from surface-level knowledge to critical thinking amongst the data while setting the stage for future qualitative data analysis.³⁴² This three-part coding process was beneficial to developing a solid foundation for thematic analysis due to the limited research on servant leadership effects in music education and community choirs.

Following the data coding, the researcher analyzed the data thematically. In this hermeneutic phenomenological study, thematic analysis encompassed the researcher reading the data to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena towards creating themes and distinctions.³⁴³ Through the coding phase and continual immersion of the data, thematic analysis advanced the researcher from initial reads and guessing of the themes to valid themes,

³³⁷ Lester, "Learning to do qualitative data analysis," 100.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Debra A. Morgan, "Analysing complexity: developing a modified phenomenological hermeneutical method of data analysis for multiple contexts," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 24, no. 6 (2021): 666.

ultimately preserving the participant's voices and unique perspectives of servant leadership.³⁴⁴ The researcher applied the previously assigned codes to keep themes accurate to the study's purpose, thus ensuring that the participants' ideas manifested as intended.³⁴⁵ Following all the reading and theme creation, the researcher continued to revisit the transcripts and data relating newly acquired themes to the overarching data and research questions.³⁴⁶ Relating themes individually and holistically in this fashion exhibits the hermeneutic circle toward developing the meaning of the phenomenon.³⁴⁷

The researcher divided the thematic analysis into four sections: initialization, construction, reification, and finalization. During initialization, the researcher read through all the data numerous times to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.³⁴⁸ Rereading the data allowed the researcher to distinguish primary from secondary, less essential concepts, accurately depicting participant viewpoints and perspectives.³⁴⁹ In the construction section of the thematic analysis, the researcher assigned initial codes and labels to developing themes and reoccurring ideas.³⁵⁰ The construction section's purpose is not to initially assign direct

³⁴⁴ Morgan, "Analysing complexity," 666.

³⁴⁵ Rasha Alsaigh and Imelda Coyne, "Doing a hermeneutic phenomenology research underpinned by Gadamer's philosophy: A framework to facilitate data analysis," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 20 (2021): 6.

³⁴⁶ Alsaigh, "Doing a hermeneutic phenomenology," 6.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Mojtaba Vaismoradi, Jacqueline Jones, Hannele Turunen, and Sherrill Snelgrove, "Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis," (2016): 103.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 105.

themes but to organize data groups utilizing codes and labels to create more explicit patterns, producing a more coherent future thematic process.³⁵¹

During the reification section, the researcher participated in a paradoxical approach to theme development by total immersion and complete distancing of the data.³⁵² This paradox between fully immersing and distancing from the data allowed the researcher to maintain objectivity by approaching the data analysis consistently with a fresh perspective.³⁵³ Alongside this approach, the researcher further bolstered themes and related them to preexisting knowledge to provide verified context and uniqueness in the analysis.³⁵⁴ In the finalization section of the thematic analysis, the researcher aligned the created themes with the research questions, gaps, and aims.³⁵⁵ This alignment process involved the researcher developing a storyline that connects all the raw data to the main research topics and preexisting literature to explain the meaning of the phenomenon.³⁵⁶

Trustworthiness

Qualitative research does not share set equations or predictable data outcomes like quantitative research.³⁵⁷ This contrast explicitly manifests when researchers replicate qualitative

³⁵¹ Vaismoradi, "Theme development," 105.

³⁵² Ibid., 106.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Norman A. Stahl and James R. King, "Expanding Approaches for Research: Understanding and Using Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research," *Journal of Developmental Education* 44, no. 1 (2020): 26. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45381095>.

methodologies, as evidenced by the vast difference in findings.³⁵⁸ Because the results do not mirror traditional validity through comparable results like quantitative research, qualitative research gains its validity through the researcher displaying trustworthiness through their procedure, interpretation, and breadth of literature in the field.³⁵⁹ Credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical considerations are all elements that show trustworthiness.

Credibility

The researcher established credibility by implementing literature from multiple journals from different disciplines.³⁶⁰ This study focused on servant leadership; the researcher thus examined literature on leadership theories, quantitative data on servant leaders, and theoretical frameworks. The researcher also triangulated preexisting literature and understood empirically driven themes about servant leadership before conducting the experimental procedures.³⁶¹ The researcher then sought to establish credibility by inviting other researchers and scholars to examine and critique the study. Inviting these individuals allowed detailed verification to ensure that the researcher's interpretation derived from a place of understanding or lacks objectivity, thus skewing it too subjectively.³⁶²

Researcher credibility consists of seven main elements: utilization of research methods, familiarity with participant culture, triangulation, honesty with participants, frequent debriefing

³⁵⁸ Stahl, "Expanding Approaches for Research," 26.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid., 27.

with superiors, peer scrutiny, and member checking.³⁶³ First, the researcher included well-established qualitative research methods implemented in past studies, thus creating comparable results.³⁶⁴ Second, the researcher gained familiarity with the participant culture by researching their direct organizations and understanding servant leadership in organizational contexts.³⁶⁵ Third, triangulation occurred through the researcher, incorporating two methods of data collection: surveys and interviews.³⁶⁶ The triangulation for this study, which included interviews, allowed participants' strengths and pivotal characteristics to arise alongside the surveys, which aided in further description and elaboration on servant leadership in the three groups.³⁶⁷

The fourth element of credibility for the researcher was honesty with the participants. The researcher ensured clarity in the consent forms and presented the study in its totality to prospective participants.³⁶⁸ Prospective participants were presented with all study aspects, including duration, data collection types, and time commitments, to ensure they understood their minimal risk. The researcher also created an environment for participants to be true to themselves, thus creating open, honest answers in both the surveys and interview questions.³⁶⁹ Frequent debriefing with superiors was the fifth element of researcher credibility. The researcher engaged in frequent sessions with their study supervisor to become more attentive to incorporating more efficient practices and altering any vital flaws that could cause adverse

³⁶³ Andrew K. Shenton, "Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects," *Education for information* 22, no. 2 (2004): 64–69.

³⁶⁴ Shenton, "Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness," 64.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 65.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 66.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 67

reactions to the study.³⁷⁰ The sixth element was peer scrutiny: the researcher ensured to include this element by allowing other academic scholars and experts to weigh their opinions and offer fresh takes and constructive criticism towards future improvement and better study efficiency.³⁷¹ The researcher welcomed any external observation or question that could produce better future pathways for expanding on the study phenomenon or better structure for future similar studies. The seventh final element of researcher credibility was member checking. The researcher maintained accurate member checking by not falsifying any transcript or interview data and only reporting what was enlisted by the participants.³⁷² The appropriate appendix contains all transcripts and survey responses, which readers can verify to ensure the data matches the findings chapter and overall theme analysis.

Transferability

The researcher established transferability by correctly following procedures and allowing the data to hold priority over their interest.³⁷³ Though qualitative methodologies may create different outcomes for researchers replicating studies, the primary themes and knowledge should be similar.³⁷⁴ The researcher implemented proper thematic analysis to uphold the participants' ideas and values and ensure the study was transferable. This emphasis on discovering and learning meaning through the phenomena develops themes and new knowledge. The researcher

³⁷⁰ Shenton, "Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness," 67.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

defined a transparent methodological approach and utilized precise coding and thematic analysis to enable a study that upholds transferability.

Dependability

The researcher established dependability by acknowledging their values and passions and stating their values within the study.³⁷⁵ The researcher understands that to uncover new knowledge through a hermeneutic phenomenological study, understanding their values and biases helps navigate overly subjective research tools and data collection. The researcher has experience as a community choir member and conductor. This experience gives positive credibility to their engagement with seeking out proper research participants and allowing the audience to gain trust. By monitoring their value and passion influence, the researcher maintained dependable practices that kept research decisions on par with the study's goal.³⁷⁶

Confirmability

The researcher achieved confirmability by showing the objective truths of servant leadership through the explicit theoretical framework.³⁷⁷ Servant leadership exists outside of music education as a leadership theory utilized by various disciplines. Providing the theoretical framework of servant leadership and its individual effects provides objectivity towards delineating it from the newly acquired knowledge of servant leadership in community choirs. More objectivity is through the premise of community choirs and community partnerships. Both

³⁷⁵ Stahl, "Expanding Approaches for Research," 28.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

groups exist outside of this study, thus enabling an objective contrast between those who have servant-leader conductors and those who do not.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher maintained proper ethical consideration of the participants. The ethical consideration was demonstrated by providing explicit instructions on what was being asked and done in the study and by receiving proper consent before participation.³⁷⁸ The researcher also maintained adequate anonymity for the participants by not including names or distinguishing identities in the research and data.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁸ Siti Roshaidai Mohd Arifin, "Ethical considerations in qualitative study," *International journal of care scholars* 1, no. 2 (2018): 30.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

Chapter Four: Findings

Overview

Chapter four examines the findings of the data analysis for this study. This hermeneutic qualitative phenomenological study aims to understand how the choral conductor, as a servant leader, enhances music literacy in community choirs and cultivates fruitful community partnerships. This chapter starts with the results section, which is further sectioned into the appropriate participant groups, thus examining the findings for each group. There were eighteen anonymous survey participants and nine confidential interview participants.

Results

The results section consists of findings that utilized thematic analysis for the surveys and interviews. Through thematic analysis, themes developed from the anonymous participant survey transcripts and confidential participant interview transcripts. The three participant groups were the conductor, community choir members, and community partners. The following findings proceed with survey themes for the three participant groups, followed by interview findings from those three participant groups. Below are three tables illustrating the overarching themes, keywords, and phrases culminating from thematic analysis.

Table 4.1 Conductor Themes and Keywords or Phrases

Themes	Keywords or Phrases
Building Community within the Choir	<p data-bbox="831 331 1409 401">Building relationships with community choir members</p> <p data-bbox="883 443 1357 512">Prioritizing a sense of belonging and community within the choir</p> <p data-bbox="831 554 1409 659">Implementing strategies within the choir that involved community members feeling free to express themselves openly</p> <p data-bbox="831 701 1409 732">Promoting individual well-being in the choir</p>
Needs-Based Assessments	<p data-bbox="883 770 1357 802">Routine check-ins with the choristers</p> <p data-bbox="951 844 1289 875">Fostering ongoing growth</p> <p data-bbox="854 917 1386 984">Cultivating a supportive and encouraging learning environment for improvement</p> <p data-bbox="844 1026 1399 1094">Addressing the direct needs of choristers in rehearsals</p> <p data-bbox="935 1136 1308 1167">Individual coaching sessions</p>
Supporting and Serving the Organizational Mission	<p data-bbox="844 1209 1393 1276">Supporting organizational mission through programming</p> <p data-bbox="850 1318 1386 1463">Bridging the gap between serving the immediate clients of the community choir while continuing to provide an excellent product to the external community</p> <p data-bbox="863 1505 1373 1572">Give a performance space for musicians regardless of abilities and talent levels</p>
Community Outreach	<p data-bbox="844 1606 1396 1751">Reaching the external community through song and fellowship, whether it be through popular music selection or invitation to the audience to sing along</p> <p data-bbox="828 1793 1412 1860">Allowing audience members to share positive messages and experiences</p>

Table 4.2 Community Choir Member Themes and Keywords or Phrases

Themes	Keywords or Phrases
Qualities and Characteristics of Servant-Leader Choral Conductor	<p data-bbox="850 331 1390 401">Exhibits compassion and drive to produce meaningful performances</p> <p data-bbox="831 443 1409 548">Depicts clear communication, humility, encouraging leadership, support, and person-first orientation</p> <p data-bbox="837 590 1403 695">Natural collaborators in the choir while also displaying clear decisiveness needed of the music director</p>
Music Literacy	<p data-bbox="857 735 1380 840">Innovative methods to incorporate music literacy growth and teaching into choir rehearsals</p> <p data-bbox="844 882 1393 951">Individual sessions to ensure correct notes, rhythms, and tempi</p> <p data-bbox="831 993 1406 1098">Help in editing original musical creation to make it more widely reachable for musicians of different levels</p> <p data-bbox="987 1140 1250 1171">Repertoire selection</p>
Needs-Based Assessments	<p data-bbox="824 1218 1416 1287">Specialized teaching catered to specific choral ensembles</p> <p data-bbox="837 1329 1403 1434">Commitment to valuing the opinions, needs, and concerns of choristers within a community choir</p>
Building Community within the Choir	<p data-bbox="997 1470 1243 1501">Sense of belonging</p> <p data-bbox="837 1543 1403 1612">A safe and supportive atmosphere that helps members feel free to express themselves</p> <p data-bbox="824 1654 1416 1791">Willingness to encourage and provide enthusiasm and create an environment where all choristers felt supported and wanted within the ensemble</p> <p data-bbox="841 1801 1399 1896">Having a genuine relationship with the conductor individually and as a community choir</p>

Table 4.3 Community Partner Member Themes and Keywords or Phrases

Themes	Keywords or Phrases
Community Outreach	<p data-bbox="829 331 1409 436">Communication to create collaborations to bring positive attention to choir and partnered organization</p> <p data-bbox="829 478 1409 510">Discovering ways to invest in the community</p> <p data-bbox="846 552 1393 657">Mutual goals and expectations between the community choir and the organization for fruitful collaborations and events</p> <p data-bbox="870 699 1369 804">Aligning goals strictly toward bringing awareness and positive attention to the community, partner, and choir</p>
Needs-Based Assessments	<p data-bbox="829 846 1409 993">Identifying the current state of the project and planning accordingly towards implementing strategies to achieve mutual goals of partnership and better serve the community</p> <p data-bbox="862 1035 1377 1098">Compromising towards mutual parties aligning their goals with the community</p> <p data-bbox="935 1140 1304 1171">Realignment and adjustment</p>
Building Community	<p data-bbox="829 1213 1409 1318">Having clear, shared expectations and a sense of authenticity in both the planning phase and actual collaboration</p> <p data-bbox="911 1360 1328 1465">Communication, openness, and responsiveness towards planning collaborative events</p> <p data-bbox="878 1507 1360 1570">Individuals being active and aware of multiple events</p> <p data-bbox="829 1612 1409 1717">Program-centric, purpose-driven, emotionally intelligent, trustworthy, people-valuing, and community-connected</p> <p data-bbox="837 1759 1401 1791">Depicting traits of selflessness and empathy</p>

Conductor Survey Themes

Table 4.4 Building Community within the Choir

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Conductor Survey	Building Community within the Choir	How do you define servant leadership as a community choir director?	<p>“Being a part-time social worker, counselor, and psychologist”</p> <p>“Giving the opportunity to your community to participate in a choral group or experience.”</p> <p>“Creating an environment where all are accepted and supported.”</p>
		What specific instances can you provide where servant leadership principles have enhanced the music literacy of your choir members?	<p>“We all build each other sharing our unique package of individual gifts and experiences, and are able to accomplish much together as a result.”</p> <p>“Our commitment to keep our membership criteria as broad as possible and keep our members singing as long as possible, even if certain sacrifices must be made in the process.”</p>
		How do you perceive the impact of servant leadership on fostering collaborative partnerships within the community choir?	<p>“...placing an inexperienced singer near the seasoned singers.”</p> <p>“Again, it’s all about building relationships. When you build relationships with those collaborative partnerships, they are willing to come and work with you again.”</p>

The first emerging theme from the conductor surveys was building community within the choir. Several conductor participants highlighted servant leadership's importance in building relationships with community choir members. Conductor Survey Participant 5 (CSP5) referred to

servant leadership in community choirs as “being a part-time social worker, counselor, and psychologist.” This servant leadership mentality embellishing a multidimensional job occupation develops more through the CSP6 statement, “We all build each other up through sharing our unique package of individual gifts and experiences and can accomplish much together as a result.” All participants shared a mutual philosophy that building relationships is crucial to community within the choir.

Table 4.5 Needs-Based Assessments

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Conductor Survey	Needs-Based Assessments	How do you define servant leadership as a community choir director?	<p>“Being aware of the group’s needs and checking in with members often.”</p> <p>“Musically, I need to read them so to speak, and during the rehearsal, I need to be intuitive to what their needs are and adjust my expectations and rehearsal plans accordingly.”</p>
		What specific instances can you provide where servant leadership principles have enhanced the music literacy of your choir members?	<p>“We also make a point in rehearsals of educating our membership about a wide variety of musical and extra-musical elements that relate both to performance and life outside of music...”</p> <p>“...We also try to cultivate an environment in which individual members feel comfortable engaging directly with the director...”</p>
		In what ways do you see servant leadership contrasting with transformational leadership in your choral setting?	<p>“Music should not be made in the old top-down fashion. All participants are artists.”</p> <p>“Servant leadership is about meeting the group where they’re at whereas transformational leadership is about pushing the group to be better.”</p> <p>“...willing to slow down, retrace steps, and help to bear the burdens of the individual they are seeking to help...”</p>

The second emerging theme from the conductor surveys was developing community choir growth through needs-based assessments. CSP4 believed that to build community choir

music literacy, the conductor must create an environment where routinely checking with the choristers resembles active needs assessments. CSP4 stated the following:

We also make a point in rehearsals of educating our membership about various musical and extra-musical elements related to performance and life outside of music. This is a challenging balancing act, as naturally, there is good energy in the momentum of a tightly run rehearsal. However, it is important for people to feel comfortable in the rehearsal environment, and many of our members have expressed appreciation for the time we take to explain difficult concepts. We also try to cultivate an environment in which individual members feel comfortable engaging directly with the director (comments, suggestions, constructive criticism, etc., both via email and during the rehearsal process), which I feel encourages personal ownership of the ensemble experience and greater alertness and willingness to learn new skills.

Establishing a needs-based assessment culture allows community choir members to “grow more deeply into their experience” (CSP1). Cultivating growth in this theme is further grounded through the CPS6 statement, “fostering ongoing growth and celebration of one another.”

Academic rigor and music literacy are only some growth components through needs assessments, however, creating a culture where community choir members feel supported and are encouraged to improve supports an actual needs-based assessment of the community choir.

Table 4.6 Supporting and Serving the Organizational Mission

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Conductor Survey	Supporting and Serving the Organizational Mission	How do you define servant leadership as a community choir director?	<p>“...the musical leader must primarily support the organization’s mission through programming...”</p> <p>“I feel that it is my calling to serve my singers in whatever capacity that means.”</p>
		What challenges or benefits have you observed when comparing servant leadership to other leadership styles in your choir?	<p>“One can’t be ‘all things to all people,’ and yet one must strive to do so...”</p> <p>“Challenges in a community group is commitment and ability. Building a program based on the individuals that are in it is essential to the success of the choir.”</p> <p>“I often had my executive director, wanting me to be more demanding and demonstrative and authoritative.”</p>
		How do you perceive the impact of servant leadership on fostering collaborative partnerships within the community choir?	<p>“Internally, I suppose this could be good on small-group projects. I usually think of collaborations as being between the choir and another outside organization or ensemble.”</p> <p>“Being able to work with a group of community members can always open doors to other opportunities in the community...”</p>

The third emerging theme from the conductor surveys was supporting and serving the organizational mission. CSP1 stated that “servant leaders, as the music conductor, must primarily support the organization's mission through programming.” Several participants felt that servant-

leader conductors must bridge the gap between serving the immediate clients of the community choir members and providing an excellent product to the external community. CSP6 stated the following:

One can't be "all things to all people," and yet one must strive to do so, though always with an intentional and rhythmic return to a reflection on and possible revision of one's own personal goals and goals for the organization as it grows. Because of some of my past experiences as a chorister and certain personality traits I possess, I constantly struggle with a tendency to lead out of more of a "benevolent dictator" mentality, which in certain situations can be effective, but not (I feel) as the central or defining approach one takes, if the highest goal is the growth of the individuals over even the advancement of the organization (artistic reputation, defense of territory, etc.). Nevertheless, I will say the even bigger challenge for me is, while endeavoring to lead with a servant-mindset, I often overlook opportunities for delegation, thus (and ironically) hampering both the growth of the organization (due to personal limitations of time, energy, etc.) and of individuals therein who need more opportunities to serve and lead in order to grow to their own potential. This is something with which I am actively wrestling and on which I am working with our Board of Directors to put structures in place to help me strike a better balance here.

This quote from CSP6 depicts the paradox of servant leadership, building individual chorister musicality, and meeting expectations from the board of directors overseeing the community choir. All these elements, however, point towards the overall mission of the community choir: to give a performing space for musicians regardless of abilities and talent levels. CSP3 stated that "programming music centralized around individuals in the choir is essential to their success." Serving the organizational mission requires community choir members to feel comfortable and confident in their musical success.

Community Choir Member Survey Themes

Table 4.7 Qualities and Characteristics of a Servant-Leader Choral Conductor

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Survey	Qualities and Characteristics of a Servant-Leader Choral Conductor	Share an experience where the choral director's servant leadership positively influenced your musical skills or literacy compared to other leadership styles.	<p>“...When needed, he frequently took time to work with me separately to make sure notes, rhythms, and tempi were correct, thus exhibiting his compassion and drive to make a meaningful performance.”</p> <p>“We enjoyed working hard and going to extra practices because he was so enthusiastic and assured us we could do it!”</p>
		What are the noticeable differences between servant leadership's supportive nature and other leadership styles in the choir?	<p>“Caring about others while still keeping to the goal.”</p> <p>“Other choir directors single out singers who are having difficulty. Often, other choir directors are demanding and harsh in meting out criticism.”</p> <p>“The largest difference I have noticed between the servant-leader choral director and other choral directors is the level of compassion and willingness to change something if it is not working. By being person-first oriented, the servant-leader answers all questions in a timely manner and makes the music abundantly clear to the choristers, allowing us to reach new levels of musicality.”</p>
		How would you describe the leadership style of your choral director?	<p>“Very organized, efficient, and knows every part.”</p> <p>“He was person-first oriented... By efficient and clear use of rehearsal time, all planned music was taught, learned well, and made clear.”</p> <p>“Active, involved, enthusiastic.”</p> <p>“Collaborative, supportive, willing to listen to ideas, and then decisive. With humor!”</p> <p>“Knowledgeable, encouraging, and enthusiastic.”</p>

The first emerging theme from the community choir member surveys was the qualities and characteristics of a servant-leader choral conductor. Community Member Survey Participant 3 (CMSP3) refers to the conductor “exhibiting his compassion and drive to produce meaningful performances” for the community choir members. CMSP3 also stated the following in this respect:

The largest difference I have noticed between the servant leader choral director and other choral directors is the level of compassion and willingness to change something if it is not working. By being person-first oriented, the servant leader answers all questions in a timely manner and makes the music abundantly clear to the choristers, allowing us to reach new levels of musicality.

Several participants pointed out the key characteristics of servant-leader conductors, which depict clear communication, compassion, and humility, encouraging leadership, support, and person-first orientation. CMSP7 stated that servant-leader conductors are natural collaborators in the choir while also displaying the clear decisiveness needed of a musical director. Servant-leader conductors demonstrate this collaboration through good communication with choristers, and CMSP5's description “has always been very kind towards those struggling.” All participants mutually stated the glaringly evident, encouraging, and compassionate nature that distinguishes servant leadership from other leadership styles.

Table 4.8 Music Literacy

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Survey	Music Literacy	Share an experience where the choral director's servant leadership positively influenced your musical skills or literacy compared to other leadership styles.	<p>“The director often worked with me to make it as beautiful and expressive as possible...”</p> <p>“The director helped edit some music I had written so the musicians could better understand it...”</p> <p>“...rehearsed the section until I felt firm in singing the passage... I left wanting to practice at home and improve my ability to sing even better.”</p>
		In what ways do you feel your choral director embodies servant leadership principles?	<p>“...he has made strides in creating a continuously growing choral program and improved us significantly as musicians.”</p> <p>“He helps and encourages choir members to improve their skills.”</p>
		How does your choral director's servant leadership approach influence your motivation and engagement in music literacy?	<p>“...my motivation to become a better musician for myself as a singer seeking and pursuing opportunities and the success of the choir has increased exponentially...”</p> <p>“...I was always looking for ways to improve.”</p> <p>“I was in the practice rooms much more than I would have been otherwise...”</p>

The second emerging theme from the community choir member surveys was music literacy. Several participants talked about their appreciation for the director finding innovative

ways to incorporate music literacy growth and teaching into the choir rehearsals. CMSPs stated, “The director often worked with me to make it as beautiful and expressive as possible. He frequently worked with me separately when needed to ensure notes, rhythms, and tempo were correct.” CMSP5 stated, “The director helped edit some music I had written so the musicians could better understand it. He also gave me credit for what I had created originally.” These participant statements show different realms of how music literacy manifests throughout the community choir. Other participants mention their appreciation of the director for valuing every chorister’s voice and motivating them to achieve more fantastic foundations in music literacy through continued encouragement and musical growth.

Table 4.9 Needs-Based Assessments

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Survey	Needs-Based Assessments	<p>In what ways do you feel your choral director embodies servant leadership principles?</p>	<p>“The choral director is unapologetically himself at all times, by being authentic, caring in nature, communicative and responsive, receptive to new ideas, and maintaining his integrity while continuing to be compassionate to the choir’s needs.”</p> <p>“They were always available if we needed anything, picked great music, always asked for feedback and was just super personable...”</p> <p>“By caring about other’s opinions, needs and concerns and providing help and guidance as needed.”</p>
		<p>What are the noticeable differences between servant leadership’s supportive nature and other leadership styles in the choir?</p>	<p>“That a servant leader will be with you no matter what you do, they won’t abandon you... And the servant leader will take responsibility of trying to correct the mistake.”</p> <p>“By being person-first oriented, the servant leader answers all questions in a timely manner and makes the music abundantly clear to the choristers, allowing us to reach new levels of musicality.”</p>
		<p>Share an experience where the choral director’s servant leadership positively influenced your musical skills or literacy compared to other leadership styles.</p>	<p>“I wanted to come in outside of rehearsal to learn a specific part in a song, and they made time in their schedule to help me.”</p> <p>“Many times, the professor sat me down and told me how great I was and how he would help me get anywhere I wanted to go on this career path.”</p>

The third emerging theme from the community choir member surveys was needs-based assessments. Multiple participants mentioned that the director specialized their teaching around the specific choral ensembles they had. The servant-leader conductor's ability to strategically cater their teaching to each specific chorister enables needs-based assessments to have vital functionality in the community choir. CMSP3's description, "authentic, caring in nature, communicative and responsive, receptive to new ideas," illustrates the servant-leader mindset of nurturing an environment where needs-based assessments thrive. CMSP4 and CMSP7 characterize this theme by highlighting the conductor's commitment to valuing the opinions, needs, and concerns of the choristers in the community choir.

Table 4.10 Building Community within the Choir

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Survey	Building Community within the Choir	<p>What are the noticeable differences between servant leadership's supportive nature and other leadership styles in the choir?</p>	<p>"I've had leaders who just wanted to get in and get stuff done. But I like the supportive nature because everyone buys into that system and wants to do well because they feel supported."</p> <p>"...While in our community choir, there were more people to deal with, and they would need to be uplifted and encouraged more as a group..."</p>
		<p>Share an experience where the choral director's servant leadership positively influenced your musical skills or literacy compared to other leadership styles.</p>	<p>"...When the choir or soloists messed up, he consistently made efforts to get them back on track through eye contact and intentional conducting gestures that allowed for a clear reset. Furthermore, he is always reassuring and encouraging to the choir, helping us to become confident musicians."</p> <p>"...The encouragement he gave me really made me believe it and want to improve more and more. I felt as though I was reaching new heights..."</p> <p>"...We enjoyed working hard and going to extra practices because he was so enthusiastic and assured us we could do it! We all still talk about how exciting it was learning and performing the piece!"</p>
		<p>In what ways do you feel your choral director embodies servant leadership principles?</p>	<p>"I feel like the director embodies the true feeling of the music and wants to express that feeling throughout the choir."</p> <p>"Through empowering and encouraging us to learn difficult repertoire, he has made strides in creating a continuously growing choral program and improved us significantly as musicians."</p> <p>"...has always been very kind towards those struggling. Always pushes his students to improve in all things, not just music..."</p>

The fourth theme emerging from the community member surveys was building community within the choir. Building community within the choir starts with community choir members feeling a sense of belonging. CMSP2 stated, "I've had leaders who just wanted to get in and get stuff done. However, I like the supportive nature because everyone buys into that system and wants to do well because they feel supported." The servant leader conductor provided a supportive atmosphere for the choir, which helped members feel safe and free to express themselves. CMSP3 stated:

By being allowed to perform solos in the community choir, the director often worked with me to make it as beautiful and expressive as possible. When needed, he frequently took time to work with me separately to make sure notes, rhythms, and tempo was correct, thus exhibiting his compassion and drive to make a meaningful performance. When the choir or soloists messed up, he consistently made efforts to get them back on track through eye contact and intentional conducting gestures that allowed for a clear reset. Furthermore, he is always reassuring and encouraging to the choir, helping us to become confident musicians.

Other participants stated the servant-leaders willingness to encourage and deliver enthusiasm, not solely because of their love for the music but because of their passion for serving every community member and uplifting the choir's musicality. Several participants felt that the conductor's primary goal was to include everyone and ensure that all choristers felt supported and wanted within the ensemble.

Community Partner Survey Themes

Table 4.11 Community Outreach

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Partner Survey	Community Outreach	<p>What instances can you provide of servant leadership facilitating better communication and collaboration between your organization and community choirs than other leadership styles?</p>	<p>“The director of the community choir frequently emailed and met with the grant director in efforts to plan and make events more exciting for students and community members...By using consistent communication and being open to different ideas between directors of high school choirs, the grant director, and the servant leader choral director, these planned events came to fruition and were largely successful...”</p>
		<p>How has the servant leadership style of community choir choral directors influenced the success of collaborative projects or initiatives?</p>	<p>“By fostering meaningful collaborative projects with community partnerships, the success of the director and their choir is advanced because ultimately their voices, ideas, and performances are being heard and talked about frequently in a most positive way.”</p>
		<p>What qualities or practices do you value most in a community choir choral director when engaging in collaborative efforts, especially when considering servant leadership?</p>	<p>“I was frequently permitted to attend the high school choir performance events with communication between the grant director and the servant leader choir director as a chaperone.”</p> <p>“With communication between me and the choral director, I was able to help students often in their studies in music, whether it was coaching diction, music theory, aural theory, or singing healthfully.”</p>

The first emerging theme from the community partner surveys was community outreach. All Community Partner Survey Participants (CPSP) felt that community outreach was the most essential element of forging and continuing partnerships. CPSP1 stated:

The community choir director frequently emailed and met with my grant organization director to plan and make events more exciting for students and community members. For example, my organization offered the servant leader choral director the opportunity to bring in guest artists and speakers for his choir. Furthermore, the choir director planned trips with his chamber singers group to rural high schools that fell under the grant to perform for their choirs frequently. The community choir and these rural high schools made collaborative efforts for joint concerts. By using consistent communication and being open to different ideas between directors of high school choirs, the grant director, and the servant leader choral director, these planned events came to fruition and were largely successful, leading to more opportunities for the director himself and the choir.

Several CPSP participants shared this sentiment, and all valued the servant leader conductor reaching out to create collaborations to bring positive attention to their choir and the partnered organization. The foundation of community outreach starts with finding ways to invest in the community, thus enabling communication and conversation towards manifesting events featuring the community choir and community partner.

Table 4.12 Needs-Based Assessments

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Partner Survey	Needs-Based Assessments	<p>In what ways do you believe servant leadership principles are beneficial in fostering strong community partnerships compared to other leadership styles?</p>	<p>“When the servant-leader mindset is directed toward the community, and thus the community is better served, the community recognizes this...”</p> <p>“Servant leadership is more personal than programmatic; it is able to see the needs of each community individually and then meet them there. It also has the versatility to coach people up in a personal way rather than programmatic.”</p> <p>“...Helping others explore their musical talents and aspirations develops community and fosters a sense of wellbeing in the entire group.”</p>
		<p>How has the servant leadership style of community choir choral directors influenced the success of collaborative projects or initiatives?</p>	<p>“There is often more flexibility and willingness to compromise in these situations. This can help greatly in collaborative projects because everyone will need to bend a little in order to make the project work.”</p> <p>“In my experience, the most successful community choir projects were those in which the choral director specifically sought to satisfy an artistic need of the community.”</p>
		<p>How would you describe your experience working with community choirs and their choral directors?</p>	<p>“I was able to communicate clearly with the choral director in the planning of events and concerts and reach students who needed help with singing, diction, music theory, aural theory, etc. throughout the timeline of the experience.”</p>

The second emerging theme from the community partner surveys was implementing needs-based assessments. CPSP4 stated, “When the servant-leader mindset directs toward the community, leading towards a better-served community, the community recognizes this.” This statement represents needs-based assessments through the community partnership, identifying the current state of their project and then planning accordingly towards implementing strategies to achieve the mutual goals of the partnership and better serve the community. CSPP3 shares their perspective that compromise is a pivotal component towards mutual parties aligning their goals with the community. Compromising in a collaborative function indicates needs-based assessments by acknowledging that what favors one party may not benefit all parties or the community receiving service.

Table 4.13 Building Community

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Partner Survey	Building Community	<p>What instances can you provide of servant leadership facilitating better communication and collaboration between your organization and community choirs than other leadership styles?</p>	<p>“Creating choral music requires working together, rehearsing parts over and over again. That type of work ethic is important in many other aspects of community life, i.e., planning and implementing town work projects and festivals.”</p> <p>“...the choral director wanted to engage the very youngest members of the community and created an extremely popular show in which songs from Disney movies were performed...”</p>
		<p>How would you describe your experience working with community choirs and their choral directors?</p>	<p>“From the perspective of a community partnership, the relationship maintained in my experience was phenomenal. I was able to communicate clearly with the choral director in the planning of events and concerts...”</p> <p>“Very positive. Effective choral directors can have an outsized impact on small communities.”</p>
		<p>In what ways do you believe servant leadership principles are beneficial in fostering strong community partnerships compared to other leadership styles?</p>	<p>“...The director was consistent, responsive, and open to several ideas while maintaining the choir and partnership’s best interest for performance.”</p> <p>“Servant leadership endeavors to raise everyone up, not just benefit the leadership or the group. Helping others explore their musical talents and aspirations develops community and fosters a sense of wellbeing in the entire group.”</p> <p>“When the servant leader mindset is directed toward the community, and thus the community is better served, the community recognizes this...”</p>

The third emerging theme from the community partner surveys was building community.

Several participants felt that building community through community partnerships occurs

through having clear, shared expectations and a sense of authenticity in both the planning phase

and actual collaboration. CSPS3 highlights their experience working with servant-leader choral conductors: the conductor wants to help grow the collaborative organization and thrive toward accomplishing their organizational goals. CPSP4 stated the following:

The choral Director wanted to engage the very youngest members of the community, so he created an extremely popular show in which songs from Disney movies were performed. This may not sound like a big deal, but there was nothing in it for the choral Director—his musical interests lay elsewhere, he was unlikely to be a direct beneficiary of such a long-term project, and it was an enormous amount of work. However, he felt that this project best served the musical interests of the community's youngest members.

By being authentic in their approach, the community choir conductor works to provide authentic choral music that aids in the community partnership goals rather than using the collaboration to uplift personal, selfish motives. CPSP1 adds to this notion by stressing the importance of communication, openness, and responsiveness towards planning collaborative events.

Conductor Interview Themes

Table 4.14 Building Community within the Choir

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Conductor Interview	Building Community within the Choir	<p>To what extent does your servant leadership style encourage collaborative learning among choir members, especially in music literacy?</p>	<p>“...we’ve established this community where we are safe to make mistakes...”</p> <p>“And that, I think, is one of the great byproducts of having people work together.”</p>
		<p>How do these principles influence your interactions with ensemble members?</p>	<p>“Ok, kids... are always surprised when I say, ‘What do you want to do?’ instead of ‘This is what we are going to do.’”</p> <p>“I’m a very bubbly person, so when I’m doing warm-ups, I’m always joking around. We’re making silly sounds, like just helping them feel comfortable...”</p> <p>“I just kind of go with the flow and try to get the most music I can out of them because they’re doing it for fun...”</p>
		<p>To what extent do you consider your leadership style to depict servant leadership?</p>	<p>“I think that for me to be successful, the kids need to feel successful. So, making sure that our overall goals align with things that make the kids feel like they are doing well makes me feel like I’ve taught them something...”</p> <p>“...my community choir at the end of the season would meet, talk about how the concert went, do a little after-action review, and I would have them write down something that they felt was successful and something that they felt could have been better...”</p> <p>“I see servant leadership as a way of bringing everybody together, and if you’re the leader, then you bring them along the way you want them to go...to get them to understand what the music is saying...”</p>

The first emerging theme from the conductor interviews was building community within the choir. All three Conductor Interview Participants (CIP) said that prioritizing a sense of belonging and community within the choir is critical to representing servant leadership. CIP3 stated, “We've established this community where we are safe to make mistakes.” All participants implemented strategies within their respective community choirs that involved the community members feeling free to express themselves and exhibit authentic musicality. CIP3 illustrated their implementation through this statement:

I see servant leadership as a way of bringing everybody together, and if you're the leader, then you bring them along the way you want them to go, and that's what I try to do with my directing, to get them to understand what the music is saying, you know. You've got to be carefully taught. Yesterday, they were just kind of singing along at certain musical sections. And I said, “Look at this point in the musical. This is when John Cable realizes that everything, he's been told his whole life has been about other people has been a lie. So, sing it that way.” And man, it came out right. I'm going, “Yes, that's what I wanted.” You know, it was just like you got to understand what's behind it when, when you're doing musical theater, you got to understand what the story and what's behind it and where the turning points are and sing in that way. And the audience will come along with you, even if there's no show going on around you. You're just singing it.

CIP2 incorporates traditional musical teaching utilizing standard music theory notes and rhythms, alongside rote-teaching to teach those community members who may not read music.

CIP3 rewrites vocal parts that are either too difficult for the singers or allow multiple parts to support a section, thus allowing the community to bond and support one another. The participants shared mutual ideologies that servant leadership must promote individual well-being in the chorus, enabling a supportive community of singers and inviting direction from the conductor.

Table 4.15 Needs-Based Assessments

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Conductor Interview	Needs-Based Assessments	How would you describe your own leadership style as a conductor?	<p>“...making sure that my conducting and my teaching go with the level of students I have that I’m not over their heads...”</p> <p>“...but I am consistently checking in, either directly or indirectly, with my choir to see if what I’m doing is working for them and then adjusting accordingly just to make sure that their needs are being met... I’ll leave an offer of individual coaching for that person if they really need it...”</p>
		To what extent do you consider your leadership style to depict servant leadership?	<p>“...It was important this year for my students to go on a trip and perform for that festival.... To do that, we also needed to sound really good. So, we may have done some music that they wanted to do, but we relied on our training in our theory to make sure those were good...”</p> <p>“I’m constantly aware if the choir is getting what they need from me...”</p>
		What examples of instances can you provide where you believe your leadership positively influenced the music literacy of the ensemble?	<p>“...As the group is successful, students want to try out for all-state and be part of the contest, and you can’t really do that unless you can sight read and read music...”</p> <p>“So, I’ve had a lot of retired members who are ‘aging voices,’ as we label them. A lot of them think they can’t use their voice anymore... I make sure that the warm-ups are the kind of warm-ups that stretch them a little bit... Our group is as strong as the weakest link, so if I know that there is someone who does not read notation at all, I will take those five or ten minutes after warm-up to say, ‘Hey, let’s look at how this works in context.’”</p>

The second emerging theme from the conductor interviews was growth through needs-based assessments. CIP2 stated the following in this respect:

I'll leave an offer of individual coaching for that person if they really need it, or I'll address what common issue is happening prior for everyone. We'll take a moment and rehearse and just talk about what a quarter note is so that we are more familiar with this in rehearsal. Indirectly, when we're rehearsing, and I see a lot of confused faces, I will change that right away, or I'll make a joke to make light of the situation. If I've been pressing them too hard, I'll make a joke to diffuse, talk about something else, or go to something we feel we can achieve successfully.

CIP2 utilized needs-based assessment by addressing the direct needs of the choristers at that particular time. In the example CIP2 mentioned, the conductor took time from the rehearsal to teach music theory fundamentals, such as a quarter note. The director offered individualized coaching and evaded rehearsal frustration by implementing jokes and human elements into the rehearsal. These types of instructional delivery represent needs-based assessment by clearly providing strategies to uplift and promote individuals that benefit the overarching goal of the community choir. Additionally, CIP1 utilized needs-based assessments to help achieve greater music literacy in their choir. By implementing pop songs with intricate rhythms that the singers are already familiar with, the conductor could attach sound-to-sight, thus enabling more excellent musicianship to learn unfamiliar and newer repertoire.

Table 4.16 Community Outreach

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Conductor Interview	Community Outreach	How have these successes contributed to the overall growth and well-being of the ensemble?	“...We just found out about two days ago we got selected to sing at the State Fair next year...doing those things where we get that success definitely builds because then kids would come and say, ‘Well, what are we going to do this year?’ It’s not just singing in class...”
		How do you actively engage the community through the community choir?	“...bringing back Alumni is important. A couple of years ago, I did a whole Alumni choir...” “I guess the with the concerts. My prior community choir was at a retirement place; they could invite their family members, but it was mainly for the other residents in that community that these concerts would get so filled...”
		How has your servant leadership style influenced the choir’s relationships with external community partners?	“...Let’s actually sing along, or I would even conduct the audience... Let me connect with the audience like it was that kind of involvement...”

The third emerging theme from the conductor interviews was community outreach. All three participants shared mutual visions that reaching the external community through song and fellowship is essential. Participants felt that inviting the community to witness and participate in whatever musical event the choir is hosting is paramount to the choir's success and longevity. During concerts, CIP3 purposefully programs one popular song that invites the audience to sing along and fully participate in the concerts. Similarly, CIP1 closes out their concerts with a famous song and invites anyone from the audience to join on stage and close the concert with the

community choir. These examples of community outreach allow the conductors to establish a tradition reflecting their vision of being a community choir, thus enabling audience members to share positive messages and experiences.

Community Choir Member Interview Themes

Table 4.17 Music Literacy

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Interview	Music Literacy	<p>How does the conductor support individual choir members in improving their music reading skills?</p>	<p>“...If members had questions regarding the music or were struggling at any point, he would take time from rehearsals to work with individual sections to make sure they felt secure in their parts and music reading abilities...”</p> <p>“I did not learn how to read music until I was in high school, and even then, it wasn’t to its full capabilities... So, in college, my professors, knowing this, have been able to understand that part and aspect of my life and work with me on that specifically...”</p>
		<p>How does the conductor’s servant leadership style impact the effectiveness of music rehearsals in teaching and building music literacy?</p>	<p>“He would schedule meetings apart from normal rehearsal times with members to help them work on and effectively learn the music. Furthermore, the director commanded our undivided attention at all times during rehearsal and encouraged members to look away from the music, which I think required at least a certain level of memory. At any given time during rehearsals, if he was not working with a particular section, he asked those sections to audiate their parts...”</p>
		<p>What examples can you provide where the conductor demonstrated servant leadership?</p>	<p>“...when you’re a servant leader, I feel like you’ve taken accountability for having people of all different levels of musicianship...”</p> <p>“...His stellar musicianship inspired and motivated others to become more musically inclined and willing to practice and perform more challenging choral repertoire. One of the conductor’s strengths and self-awarenesses was his ability to gain volume and sound from a relatively small choir while still maintaining the integrity of the music at hand...”</p>

The first emerging theme from the community choir member interviews was music literacy. All three Community Choir Member Interview Participants (CMIP) highlighted the importance of a servant-leader choral conductor embedding music literacy instruction into their rehearsal practices and repertoire selections. CMIP2 stated:

If members had questions regarding the music or were struggling, he would take time from rehearsals to work with individual sections to ensure they felt secure in their parts and music reading abilities. Furthermore, he frequently encouraged choir members to look away from the music at him for the clearest direction, helping us never to doubt what was playing at any given time. On several occasions, the director also took time from his personal schedule to meet with individual choir members to solidify parts and solos, ultimately helping those individuals to become better musicians and readers.

CMIP2's above statement highlights how music literacy is a focal point of servant-leader conductors' rehearsals. CIMP1 further illustrates this point by stating that their director understands that choristers of all abilities are within a community choir, so the conductor's dedication to fully delivering beneficial instruction for all musicians helps them continue to learn to read music. All of the participants shared appreciation for their conductors selecting repertoire that helps towards building music literacy skills amongst all community choir members, thus aiding with more frequent performances and choral successes.

Table 4.18 Needs-Based Assessments

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Interview	Needs-Based Assessments	What examples can you provide where the conductor demonstrated servant leadership?	<p>“I know that part of servant leadership, and this isn’t just with conducting but just in general, is that you not only need to figure out what the people say about the project or how you feel about the project, but you also need to figure out other things that are going on in your students’ or participants’ lives just so you can understand them, work with them, and get them to be the best that they could be...”</p> <p>“...When members had any questions moving forward in rehearsals, the conductor demonstrated compassion by clearly communicating those answers and further motivating us toward continuous improvement.”</p>
		In what specific ways do you perceive the conductor as a servant leader?	<p>“Servant leadership is obviously something where you listen more to what the people have to say than just doing your own thing and making them do whatever you want them to...”</p> <p>“...our director was communicative and clear and always met our needs with the utmost compassion and understanding...”</p> <p>“...Because they show their own way of being a leader, even though it may be the choir’s fault, that conductor will take the blame and use their own experience to bring them back on track...”</p>
		In what ways does the conductor demonstrate empathy towards choir members?	<p>“I would say choosing your repertoire is a huge thing. Being able to push your community, but also being able to do the music at the same time...”</p> <p>“...communicating with us during performance through his eye contact and conducting to pull us out of any mistakes that may be made, and being understanding, while still maintaining a clear and communicative expectation of the choir...”</p>

The second emerging theme from the community choir member interviews was incorporating needs-based assessments. CMIP3 stated the following:

I know that part of servant leadership, and this isn't just with conducting but in general, is that you not only need to figure out what the people say about the project or how you feel about the project, but you also need to figure out other things that are going on in your students' or participants' lives just so you can understand them, work with them, and help them be the best that they can be.

CMIP3 continued to share, “servant leadership is something where you listen more to what the people have to say than just doing your own thing and making them do whatever you want them to.” CMIP3 further elaborates and shares that the conductor always asks questions and allows community members to express their needs and struggles within the rehearsal. This type of teaching, inviting individualized thought and responses, points towards the servant-leader choral conductor prioritizing the needs of the community choir. CIMP2 stated that their conductor helped musicians of all skill levels achieve their individual and community choir goals by being open and empathetic to challenges and musically tricky passages. All participants mutually stated that empathetic and invitational rehearsal practices help the conductor provide instructional strategies to their members.

Table 4.19 Building Community within the Choir

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Choir Member Interview	Building Community within the Choir	In your opinion, how has the conductor's servant leadership style impacted the overall atmosphere and success of the community choir?	<p>“I think it impacts the atmosphere dramatically. I think whenever you have a servant leader conductor, you can just tell that the community or the students just want to be there...”</p> <p>“The professor was very empathetic towards these things and cared a lot, believed in us anyway, and pushed us to our limits to make us go further... we were able to bring that to the community choir and share it with everyone else around us...”</p>
		How does the conductor support individual choir members in improving their music reading skills?	<p>“...Getting to know the person itself is a huge part of that because if the conductor doesn't know where you came from or how you are, then they won't be able to grasp your knowledge and musicality and will not have a working relationship to help improve the choir itself.”</p> <p>“During the first read-throughs of music selections, the director almost always said something along the lines of ‘Just do your best, since this is the first read. I just want to hear you and we will fix everything moving forward.’ Following those read-throughs, the director encouraged the choir members by often saying that they went well...”</p>
		How does the conductor's servant leadership style impact the effectiveness of music rehearsals in teaching and building music literacy?	<p>“I think that because the conductor was always so authentic, showcasing his own musicality and skills, but also combining that with a great sense of humor and energetic and youthful playfulness, he taught community members that it was okay to make mistakes and also be authentic...”</p> <p>“...It gives you the confidence as a student or a participant to also gain those qualities from your professor and help the people around you...”</p>

The third emerging theme from the community choir member interviews is building community within the choir. CMIP1 stated:

I think servant leadership impacts the atmosphere dramatically. I think whenever you have a servant leader conductor, you can just tell that the community or the students just want to be there. You know, it's not a class or a group that they're like, "Ohh, we're just here to sing, you know." No, you're here to have a good time while singing and growing as a musician, just enjoying the music and building that music around other people.

CMIP1 further said that for servant-leader conductors to instill an environment of community and belonging, "Getting to know the person itself is a huge part of that because if the conductor doesn't know where you came from or how you are, then they won't be able to grasp your knowledge and musicality and will not have a working relationship to help improve the choir itself." All participants felt that having a genuine relationship with the conductor was vital before any musicality or performance goals could exist. Participants said that having that relationship with the director, individually and as a community choir, assisted in reinforcing their decision to join and stay in a community choir.

Community Partner Interview Themes

Table 4.20 Community Outreach

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Partner Interview	Community Outreach	How would you rate the effectiveness of communication between your organization and the choir?	<p>“We’ve been working on expanding the outreach of the chorale...we’re working on getting our name out more in this piece we’re doing next week. There are going to be interviews on TV with them...it’s generally positive...”</p> <p>“The level of communication between the choir director, the organization and director I work for, and other staff members of that same organization was extremely efficient and professional. The directors both met with one another frequently to discuss musical outreach opportunities for recruiting endeavors... we were able to hold several successful events...”</p>
		How has the conductor’s servant leadership impacted the collaboration between the community choir and your organization?	<p>“The community choir I correspond with was part of a consortium that paid for this new work, and we are the Southern premiere of this work...”</p> <p>“...Because of that frequent and open communication, the servant-leader conductor was able to gain access to communication with rural high school directors and ended up making some highly valuable connections with them and their students...”</p>
		How has the choir actively engaged with your community or organization?	<p>“We are given tickets to sell...”</p> <p>“Every Christmas, we also sing Christmas carols at the lighting of the town Christmas tree. After we sing there, we then go to the train station and sing Christmas carols. People flock around us when we do that kind of thing...”</p> <p>“The community choir and a local high school were able to collaborate on a joint concert which had an enormously successful attendance...”</p>

The first emerging theme in the community partner interviews was community outreach. All Community Partner Interview Participants (CPIP) felt that community outreach must be the prerogative for community partnerships to offer practical value for both parties and the community. CPIP2 stated the following:

The level of communication between the choir director, the organization and director I work for, and other staff members of that same organization was extremely efficient and professional. The directors both met with one another frequently to discuss musical outreach opportunities for recruiting endeavors at several of the rural high schools that fell under that same grant and together, we were able to hold several successful events like traveling to have both the community singing groups and high school choirs perform for one another, as well as group concerts. As a tutor, many of the students were also graduates of some of those same rural high schools, therefore I was able to communicate with them and the director, who was also teaching several of the music classes at the time, as often as I needed to best help the students academically with several of their courses and assignments in both music and general education courses. I really appreciated that the choir director was open and encouraged the students to feel comfortable with asking for help from me.

All participants shared similar philosophies in that mutual goals and expectations between the community choir and the organization must occur before any logistical planning can manifest itself. With shared expectations and clear goals, fruitful collaborations and events can happen for the community to take part in and continue future prosperous partnerships. CPIP1 shared an upcoming event with their community choir: they are presenting a massive choir concert with paid local guest soloists and commissioned works from local composers. Their concert is at a local church, thus revolving the entire project around the local community, giving the prospective audience opportunities to attend and learn about their local community choir. With the community choir and the partnered organization aligning their goals strictly toward bringing awareness to the community, this type of collaboration promotes the theme of community outreach.

Table 4.21 Needs-Based Assessments

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Partner Interview	Incorporating Needs-Based Assessments	How does the conductor's servant leadership style contribute to the community choir's engagement efforts?	<p>“...he goes back, and he tries to figure out a way to get us there. And that's when I learned a lot about how to do some things to get people where I want them to be because I can't push the chorus that I'm working with like he can push the chorale...”</p> <p>“I believe the conductor's role and leadership offer the community an opportunity to see a program-centric, purpose-driven, emotionally-intelligent, genuine, trustworthy, people-valuing, and community-connected leader.”</p>
		How has the choir actively engaged with your community or organization?	<p>“...the choir director, who was also teaching other music classes at the time, also reached out to me while I was working as a professional tutor on several occasions to help students who were struggling in classes. We were able to successfully collaborate in helping students with music theory, aural theory, foreign language diction, and even some general education classes that they were taking, ultimately helping them to become more stable academically and become better musicians...”</p>
		How would you describe the conductor's role in facilitating and sustaining the collaboration?	<p>“...In planning to help students academically, the director was frequently updating me on which students requested help and connected me with those students to set an appointment for a tutoring session.”</p>

The second emerging theme in the community partner interviews was incorporating needs-based assessments. CPIP2 stated that the community choir conductor they worked with

was super responsive and open to changing and adjusting strategic plans to serve the partnered goals better. This action of realignment and precise adjustments highlights needs-based assessments from an organizational standpoint. CPIP1 also highlighted their director's ability to demonstrate musical realignment and adjustments:

Then he goes back, and he tries to figure out a way to get us there. And that's when I learned a lot about how to do some things to get people where I want them to be because I can't push the chorus that I'm working with like he can push the chorale cause it's a different age group. It's a different feel, and of course, we're doing South Pacific; we're doing lightweight stuff as compared to the chorale's Brahms's Requiem last year. Just the way he works to try to get the sound he wants. He is always interesting.

Additionally, CPIP1 depicts needs-based assessments through working with the community choir to plan appropriate musically sufficient and rigorous repertoire to justify reserving a specific location for an upcoming concert. This discourse between the organization and conductor further shows the needs-based assessment of both parties toward understanding how to achieve mutual goals accurately and efficiently through organized, detailed planning.

Table 4.22 Building Community

Group	Theme	Questions	Responses
Community Partner Interview	Building Community	How does the conductor's servant leadership style contribute to the community choir's community engagement efforts?	<p>“Because the communication from the servant leader is so open, effective, and inviting, he made the community choir members feel comfortable in socializing with one another, making connections within the community with other organizations and frequently made information about other events available... I saw several community members frequently engage in and attend other events. The servant leader conductor was encouraging the choir members to support guest speaker events, career fairs, and other events by my organization, as well as involve themselves in and attend other departments' programs like plays and community musicals.”</p>
		Have there been instances where the conductor's leadership positively influenced the collaboration?	<p>“...I think that because the conductor's leadership style was so open, inviting, and positive, it helped to make a meaningful connection between my organization and the community choir...”</p> <p>“Yes, in promoting the understanding of a common goal and purpose through the organizing, training, and management of a large group.”</p>
		Has the choir's engagement contributed to a sense of community in your organization?	<p>“Well members of my organization all know each other... it's just another chance for them to get together and not be so isolated from the chorale... The director is very careful to call people by name when talking to them. We have folks that drive in, have been able to form carpools and stuff for that...”</p> <p>“...It also helped to make lasting and meaningful connections between several faculty and staff of the rural high schools, members of the community choir, and educational organizational program. Because I was involved in both the community choir and my organization, I was also able to bring awareness and attention to our rapidly expanding grant program and make bonded connections with students...”</p> <p>“Yes, as the choir demonstrates, a common love of music promotes teamwork, strategic bonds, and partnerships in ministry for the common goal of worship for the community or organization.”</p>

The third emerging theme in the community partner interviews was building community.

CPIP2 shares the following in this respect:

Because the communication from the servant leader is so open, effective, and inviting, he made the community choir members feel comfortable socializing with one another, making connections within the community with other organizations, and frequently made information about other events available. During my community choir and job involvement, I saw several community members frequently engage in and attend other events. The servant leader conductor encouraged the choir members to support guest speaker events, career fairs, and other events by my organization, as well as involve themselves in and attend other departments' programs like plays and community musicals.

For community organizations, building community represents itself through individuals being active and aware of the multiple events. CPIP2 shared that their corresponding conductor was instrumental in promoting other events outside of community choir events. In addition, CPIP3 highlights that building community starts with a servant leader who is “program-centric, purpose-driven, emotionally intelligent, trustworthy, people-valuing, and community-connected.” All participants felt that servant leadership depicting traits of selflessness and empathy leads toward a practical action plan for building community.

Summary of Findings

The survey and interview findings explored six themes of how servant leadership manifests in community choirs and community partnerships. Two themes were primarily evident throughout all the participant groups: needs-based assessments and community-building within the choir. Community outreach and music literacy were two less evident themes throughout all the groups. Serving the organizational mission and the qualities of a servant leader conductor were the least evident themes throughout the findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Introduction

This hermeneutic qualitative phenomenological study aimed to understand how the choral conductor as a servant leader enhances music literacy in community choirs and how they cultivate fruitful community partnerships. This study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1: In what ways can the choral director's role as servant leader enhance music literacy in community choir members?

RQ2: In what ways can the choral director as servant leader cultivate fruitful community partnerships?

Chapter Five interprets this study's findings, examines the implications, details the limitations, and concludes by providing recommendations for future research.

Interpretation and Relevance of the Findings

Needs-Based Assessments

Needs-based assessments were a paramount theme of the findings. All participants from the three groups valued the servant-leader choral conductors' willingness to assess and prioritize the needs of the community choir and existing community partnerships. The conductor's deliberate intention of delivering instruction and adapting communication to their specific community choir allowed the participants to possess this perspective. Community partner participants shared this perspective regarding the servant-leader conductor. The conductor's eagerness and passion for cultivating partnerships with responsive and open communication clarity allowed the organization to feel a sense of trust and authenticity. The community partners

felt safe and valued, and the conductor was meeting their needs because they considered the organization's needs and shared mutual goals for the community.

These findings align with those of Asamoah's prior study. In 2018, Asamoah described the servant leadership principle of agape love as necessary to fully consider and invest in the needs of followers and organizations.³⁸⁰ The findings also align with those of McClellan, who stated that servant leaders' "commitment to the growth of people" enables the mentality of developing others through nurturing their needs.³⁸¹ Both studies depict the importance of servant leaders understanding individual needs, which translates toward prosperous growth. The needs assessment abilities of servant leaders are critical components to demonstrating servant leadership.

Needs-based assessments are vital for servant leaders to grasp. Community choirs and community partners first see a leader's outward perception. By showcasing participants' perceptions that leaders met their needs, these findings suggest that servant leadership is only as effective as the external perception of others. In this study, though the conductor participants emphasized serving the needs of their choirs and partnered organizations, reflecting on the community members and organization was the only valid way to determine whether conductors met these needs. The community choir members and community partners are the front lines of the conductor's leadership, so because they felt empowered through the conductor's actions, needs-based assessments are essential for the continued fruition of the choirs and ongoing partnerships.

³⁸⁰ Asamoah, "Understanding servant leadership," 91.

³⁸¹ McClellan, "The levels of leadership," 100.

Building Community Within the Choir

Building community within the choir was the second premiere finding of this study. One conductor participant felt that their role as a servant leader conductor meant building community through instilling an environment of instruction that welcomes choristers' gifts and experiences. Another conductor participant shared this environment and thought that prioritizing a sense of belonging through acknowledging the holistic person is pertinent before musical instruction occurs. Many community choir participants praised their conductors who cultivated an environment where relationships and freedom of expression exist. Community choir member participants frequently described their genuine, positive relationship with the conductor and other choristers as a vital component to an overall sense of community within the choir. The community choir participants described their willingness to join and stay in a community choir because of the sense of belonging and community gathering. This perspective is stated again by the community partner participants, who continued their collaboration through mutual goals, highlighting community attention and valuing the ideas of both parties within the partnership. These environmental characteristics depict the conductor's proclamation of systematically building community throughout the choir and community partners.

Building community in community choirs slightly deviates from previous literature. Prior conductors implemented encouraging social relationships that lead to increased relaxation and emotional expression.³⁸² Implementing servant leadership in the context of community choirs, however, is unique to this study. Additionally, servant leadership aided in promoting community and shared values for boss-employee work satisfaction, but no research depicts its effects on

³⁸² Johnson, "Quality of life," 1061.

building community for community choirs. Because of this deviation from corporate workplaces to community choirs, this is a unique finding supported by the past servant leadership literature.

Deriving meaning from this theme illustrates the nuanced elements of servant leadership. To build community as a servant leader in community choirs, one must establish a well-balanced choral atmosphere inviting individual personalities that transcend outside the rehearsal space. Because community choirs represent choristers who join in expressing themselves musically and socially,³⁸³ These findings suggest that conductors should consider servant leadership as a practical leadership style for cultivating a choir that prides itself on building community. These findings also indicate that implementing servant leadership may produce more longevity in establishing partnerships that stress shared goals for the community.

Community Outreach

Community outreach revealed itself through the practicality of events and functions and the philosophy behind the conductors and community partners. All the community partner participants felt that the conductors' leadership depicted servant leadership through the partnered goals. One community partner participant shared their experience of working very closely with a conductor and eventually gaining participation in other organizational events due to the conductor's commitment to promoting the entire organization rather than only choral events. Another community partner participant embraced the idea of their corresponding conductor wanting to incorporate every resident into their production, thus sharing the spotlight with the community rather than only marketing for a choral concert audience. These intangible leadership attributes spotlight the characteristics of servant leadership in contrast to other leadership styles.

³⁸³ Johnson, "Quality of life," 1061.

Other conductor participants believed that community outreach was the purpose of community choirs. One conductor participant actively programs music that represents the current climate of their community in hopes of projecting a choral ensemble that sings for the people. Another conductor participant takes pride in commissioning local guest artists to bring more awareness to local talent that the community may already know. All community choir members stated that singing for the community in museums, local churches, and other community organizational locations is one of their favorite aspects. These community choir member participants believe community choir concerts at various locations provide the necessary publicity for their community choirs to engage in community outreach effectively.

Previous literature highlights the importance of community outreach. According to Guillen, effective community outreach is a byproduct of intentional social capital theory.³⁸⁴ Community partnerships represent social capital theory through formal participation in planning and hosting events for public consumption.³⁸⁵ Additionally, social capital theory is prevalent through the informal participation of community choir members conversing and utilizing public events to market and advertise their respective community choirs.³⁸⁶ Though this study's findings demonstrate community outreach regarding servant leadership, they align with prior research due to the planning and logistical framework community partnerships possess before choral activities occur. Furthermore, these findings align with Goldberg's study, which showcases the effective

³⁸⁴ Guillen, "Measurement of social participation," 344.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

leadership characteristics for flourishing community partnerships: empowering others, creating a sense of purpose, and carrying out processes.³⁸⁷

Community outreach is a critical component of the success of community choirs.

Community choirs do not have traditional concert schedules like public or higher educational institutions. Because of the nontraditional nature of community choirs, they must have effective community outreach to sustain longevity and connect with the community for continued future events. These findings suggest that community outreach is a significant indicator of individuals joining community choirs; however, these findings also suggest that the weight of community outreach is mainly on the community choir members' wants and the community partnership goals. Little evidence supports the need for community choir conductors to value community outreach compared to community partners or community choir members. This is where servant leadership may need a more prominent role in aligning the body and mind of the conductor to fully embody the ensemble's spirit alongside the passions of the community partnership.

Music Literacy

Music literacy was a prominent theme among the community choir member participants. All participants felt the director purposely implemented music literacy instruction in their rehearsals. This music literacy instruction included music theory fundamentals, musical artistry and expression, and music repertoire that included musical concepts that aided in community choir growth. Two participants admired their conductors for scheduling time for private lessons and extra music literacy instruction. Another participant shared their amazement at the

³⁸⁷ Goldberg, "Community partners as service-learning co-leaders," 7.

development, from not knowing how to read music to understanding notes and rhythms after one season with their conductor.

Compared to prior research, there is not enough data in these findings to accurately state whether they align or refute. According to Cooper, community choir directors teach music literacy in community choirs through aural, visual, and physical transmissions.³⁸⁸ Instructional deliveries such as teaching sound and sight, conducting gestures, and bodily movements all represent aural, visual, and physical transmissions.³⁸⁹ This study's findings do not offer enough precise data to articulate whether the conductor utilizes these instructional techniques explicitly. Furthermore, music literacy incorporates the ability to audiate and comprehend music.³⁹⁰ Though multiple community member participants expressed their abilities to read music greater than before joining the community choir, by needing more conductor or community partner perspectives as outsiders witnessing real-time development, there is no definitive way to state whether these findings align with previous studies.

These findings do not offer enough concrete data to answer whether servant leadership enhances music literacy in community choirs. The present findings give positive data to community choir members learning music, however, by having only one conductor and one community partner participant's perspective supporting music literacy within the community choir, there needs to be more clarity on the actual music literacy instruction occurring. Surprisingly, only community choir participants mentioned music literacy as a pivotal focal point in their learning. It is unclear why more conductor participants did not mention music literacy

³⁸⁸ Cooper, "Techniques and tools," 238.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Broomhead, "A new definition of music literacy," 16.

more prominently in the findings. Nevertheless, the conductor participant responses veered more towards performing music and creating musical experiences, contrary to music literacy and developing music literacy within community choir members.

Serving the Organizational Mission

Serving the organizational mission was a finding primarily of conductor and community partner participants. One conductor participant stated that serving the organizational mission is paramount in their leadership. Another participant described their leadership in building community member musicianship while meeting expectations from the board of directors. This finding is essential due to the external pressures and practicality of leading a community choir. The intricate functionalities of running a community choir organization while understanding that they are more than performing ensembles was an ideology felt by many of the conductor participants.

Community partner participants stated similar perspectives on ensuring that partnerships are mutually beneficial. Without a mutually beneficial partnership, resources and time are wasted, costing the entire organization. Other community partner participants stated that serving the organizational mission meant that they should have some say in ensuring the music selection of the collaboration is appropriate for the outcomes. For example, one community partner described a community event where they preferred to have newer music programmed to attract a newer audience for future retention and growth. This type of collaboration ensures that the community partnership missions get fulfilled while still showcasing the servant-leader mindset of the conductor willing to alter the musical programs to achieve a more significant, mutual goal.

Serving the organizational mission is a common finding that aligns with previous literature. Budur's 2020 study exemplifies the need for leaders to uplift organizational perception

regarding future goals and organizational vision.³⁹¹ In addition, Asbari explains that encouraging team building, group identity, and team-centered behaviors can lead to clearer group visions.³⁹² Both studies depict the significance of organizational missions and their role in continued excellence, however, contrary to servant leadership, these studies approach organizational missions from a transformational leadership perspective. This deviation between servant and transformational leadership may be insignificant because this is the only finding with this parallel. Still, it is relevant to indicate that more than one leadership style values serving organizational missions.

These findings offer pertinent data on who and what values organizational missions. Because the data reflects the conductor and community partner participants, who reflect the most on this finding, the data suggest that there could be more emphasis on sharing the missions and values with the external community. Community choir members should be more aware of the organizational missions beyond understanding concert dates and other musical activities. The immediate communities the conductors and community partnerships serve should also be more knowledgeable of the missions and goals. These findings suggest that there needs to be a more transparent framework that allows more publicity on the ongoing functions of the partnerships. Allowing for more participation in viewership for these organizational goals could bring more attention to the servant leadership aspect of the partnership, contrary to the public only benefiting from the events and outreach of the missions.

³⁹¹ Budur, "Effectiveness of transformational leadership," 126.

³⁹² Asbari, "Is transformational leadership," 52.

Servant Leader Conductor Qualities

The qualities of a servant leader conductor were a principal theme amongst the community choir member participants. One participant described the servant leader conductor as compassionate, loving, empathetic, and a natural collaborator. Another participant described servant leader conductors as kind, clear communicators and thoughtful encouragers. Alongside these characteristics, several community choir participants highlighted their conductor's ability to embody these leadership traits while producing meaningful musical performances. Community choir member participants mutually felt that the servant leader aspect of the conductor is always evident through learning intricate or newer repertoire or through communicating and interacting with the choir as a whole.

These findings illustrate servant leadership qualities in conductors and reflect previous servant leadership studies. Servant leaders focus on building trust and relationships with followers, which may result in more outstanding organizational commitment and performance.³⁹³ By understanding the performance benefit of servant leadership, this finding aligns with this prior servant leadership study. It may also explain why community choir members feel empowered to stay within a community choir. In addition, servant leaders lead with compassion and strive to empower followers.³⁹⁴ This empowerment of followers stimulates follower job performance and fruitful job engagement.³⁹⁵ Again, this previous literature aligns with the findings, reinforcing the participant's perspectives of servant leadership qualities and their experiences with servant leadership.

³⁹³ Neill, "Examining the characteristics," 202.

³⁹⁴ Dierendonck, "Compassionate love as a cornerstone of servant leadership," 127.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

These findings are pivotal to the vitality and authenticity of servant leadership. By aligning with previous literature, servant leadership can gain credence as a valid, practical leadership theory for more organizations. As stated earlier, these findings were evident throughout the community choir member participants. Though the conductor and community partner participants did express their descriptions of servant leadership, having community choir member participants' perspectives was critical to the practical application of servant leadership in community choirs. Because of the community choir members' perspectives, these findings suggest that servant leadership may be a fruitful leadership style for more community choir directors to implement.

Implications

Practical

The practical implication of servant leadership in community choirs is the potential for increased musical experiences. These musical experiences manifest through wholesome, genuine partnerships and a choral atmosphere welcoming freedom of expression. Community choir choral conductors could utilize servant leadership to engage more frequently and effectively within their communities. This servant leadership mentality is geared towards welcoming partnerships and increasing the well-being of other callings with common motivations of those joining community choirs and striving to serve the community.

Servant leadership may also be effective in non-community choral ensembles. Any choral conductor aiming to increase music literacy and forge partnerships may benefit from servant leadership principles. Participants frequently appreciated servant leader conductors cultivating a choral atmosphere of love, compassion, and growth. This type of musical environment may be helpful for conductors wanting to build relationships that could lead toward musical and other

academic growth within their ensembles. With emphasis on needs-based assessments and building community within the choir, choral conductors implementing servant leadership could deliver instruction specialized to their immediate groups, leading to more excellent musical experiences and attitudes within the choir.

Empirical

This study's empirical implications depict servant leadership's ability to extend into music education. Previous literature highlights servant leadership's ability to lead toward supportive work environments and organizational and community enrichment.³⁹⁶ Community choirs and partnerships function as active organizations, and the findings align with previous servant leadership literature, suggesting that servant leadership is applicable in music education. Furthermore, these empirical implications reveal servant leadership's distinct qualities, thus adding more clarity from other leadership styles. Providing findings from servant leadership in community choirs gives music education more precise data detailing servant leadership applicability and functionality, extending the literature on servant leadership.

Theoretical

The theoretical implications of servant leadership in community choirs are the concrete descriptors that represent servant leadership. One essential principle of servant leadership is facilitating the needs of others.³⁹⁷ The needs-based assessment findings give credence to servant leadership, producing outcomes that reflect this principle of facilitating the needs of others.

³⁹⁶ Gašková, "Servant leadership," 34.

³⁹⁷ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 28.

Another leading principle of servant leadership is thinking about the present and future.³⁹⁸ With the findings revealing clear connections between servant leadership and the cultivation of community partnerships, servant leaders who envision the present and future could align their goals with community partners that may lead towards supporting successful partnerships. These theoretical implications could alleviate more confusion regarding servant leadership and its actual theoretical application, thus enabling more individuals and organizations to implement it into their philosophical framework.

Limitations

Theoretical

Servant leadership's definition is the theoretical limitation. Though Robert Greenleaf popularized the more common definition of servant leadership, it may still have nebulous meaning for individuals unfamiliar with it as a leadership theory.³⁹⁹ Frequently, individuals will see the word “servant” and assume some religious or shallow meaning, excluding the fuller context of servant leadership as a legitimate leadership theory. Though this study’s literature review examines servant leadership and offers a descriptive definition, more literature needs to build upon steering servant leadership toward one comprehensible definition.

Methodological

Data collection was the methodological limitation. Ideally, this study would have included rehearsal and community outreach observations to add a greater depth of researcher analysis. Including observations in this study would have also eliminated the need for surveys,

³⁹⁸ Wheeler, *Servant leadership*, 30.

³⁹⁹ Greenleaf, *Servant leadership*, 27.

and instead, the study would have incorporated strictly observations and interviews as the research instruments. Additionally, while conductor and community partner surveys were sufficient, there were fewer community partner surveys. Observations would have alleviated this issue and allowed for a more researcher-involved approach to the data collection. Unfortunately, a study with these methodological criteria would have been arduous due to the researcher's location and researcher resources. With the researcher not living near a central metropolitan area, the resources needed to conduct a study with these additions would have potentially caused a lack of data collection, adversely affecting the entire study.

Empirical

The empirical limitation was community partner participation. Gathering data from community partners was the most challenging due to organizations not fully understanding what a community partner is and the complications of organizations' interviews not all representing the same job occupation. For example, some community partner interviews allowed supervisors to conduct them, while others allowed their secretaries. Future researchers may improve this discrepancy in job occupation by eliminating community partners from the study, only observing community partner events, or requiring community partners to submit surveys only, therefore relinquishing their duties from interviews.

Analytical

Analytical limitations occurred due to the small amount of vagueness within some of the participant results. Some of the participants had a lack of understanding regarding servant leadership. This lack of understanding may be related to an unawareness of servant leadership as a leadership theory or could point towards some of the survey questions being too precise. Future studies may consider vaguer survey questions or confidential pre-assessment surveys to alleviate

this uncertainty. With a pre-assessment study, the researcher could analyze the results and choose which participants should move on to the interview portion, thus enabling analytical results to align more with the overall research design.

Ethical

Ethical limitations appeared through the anonymous and confidential nature of the surveys and interviews. Because the research instruments had these criteria, other academics and scholars may be uncertain about the accuracy of participant findings. Given that the participants' backgrounds and experiences had been nonconfidential in music education, the participant's findings may have had a more profound effect. Given the nature of this study around community choirs, having the participants' identities available for readers and other scholars interested in enhancing community choirs may have been highly beneficial and effective for music education.

Recommendations For Future Research

One leading recommendation is further research on servant leadership theory in music education. Due to the positive findings in community choirs, this study suggests that servant leadership may be conducive to choral music growth and other ensemble leadership roles. Researchers should continue to provide more extensive literature to define servant leadership holistically and produce tangible outcomes within ensembles. Community choir members are very aware of conductor leadership styles; this finding may be reproducible in public school ensembles and other ensembles where musical performances are typical, such as church choirs or higher education institutions.

Future researchers may consider broadening the scope of community choirs when selecting their participants. Community choirs exist across the nation, so researchers must conduct a thorough examination of community choirs when implementing their methodology.

Looking into organizations that already share partnerships with community choirs and discovering the location of community choir rehearsals may aid in diversifying the sample size. Additionally, incorporating observations of community choir rehearsals and community partner outreach events could lead to a more comprehensive overview of servant leadership's effects.

One last recommendation for future researchers is to consider removing confidentiality from the participants. Music education is a small network in which many music educators have relationships and know other music educators. Because of this reality, revealing the participants' identities could improve audience reception and provide a practical perception of the findings. This nonconfidential approach may also improve servant leadership and community choir awareness, which ultimately could progress music education toward future exponential growth.

Summary

This hermeneutic qualitative phenomenological study aimed to understand how the choral conductor, as a servant leader, enhances music literacy in community choirs and cultivates fruitful community partnerships. Though the findings did not necessarily yield results that fully supported music literacy as the primary focal point of servant leader conductors, music literacy and musical growth were evident. Servant leadership was also apparent in supporting the cultivation of community partnerships. Building community, community outreach, needs-based assessments, music literacy, serving the organizational mission, and servant leader conductor qualities were all distinct findings that support servant leadership's role in facilitating music literacy and community partnerships.

Future researchers should continue to enhance methodologies and research questions to focus on specific choral participant groups. The findings suggest that practical servant leadership principles empower choristers to perform and engage in musical experiences, which could be a

helpful starting point for future researchers. Rather than focusing on music literacy and its perplexing definition, understanding what choristers value and how they learn music in a community choir could lead to future beneficial research worthy of continued exploration.

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Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 2, 2024

Zachary Cooke
Nathan Street

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-1590 Servant Leader Choral Conductor: The Effect of Servant Leadership in Community Choirs and Community Partnerships

Dear Zachary Cooke, Nathan Street,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application per the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data-safeguarding methods described in your IRB application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study Details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents, **which you must use to conduct your study**, can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

This exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: Servant Leader Choral Conductor: The Effect of Servant Leadership in Community Choirs and Community Partnerships

Principal Investigator: Zachary Cooke, Doctoral Candidate School of Music, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older and an active or retired community choir director, an active community choir member, or an employee of an organization that has an existing partnership with community choirs. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

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

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

The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of a community choir conductor's role as a servant leader on community choir music literacy and community partnerships.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

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

1. Participate in an online survey that will take no longer than 5 minutes.
2. If selected, participate in an audio-recorded and video-recorded interview through Microsoft Teams that will take no more than 45 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include providing empirical data on how community choirs can continue to strive and serve music education, providing more context, and demonstrating the practicality of servant leadership in music education.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

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

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses to the online survey will be anonymous. Participant responses to the interviews will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then deleted. The researcher will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

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

If you choose to withdraw from the survey portion of the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study. If you choose to withdraw from the interview portion of the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. The survey responses cannot be withdrawn once the survey is completed.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Zachary Cooke. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Nathan Street, at [REDACTED].

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

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

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

Your Consent

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

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

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

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

Appendix C: Survey Questions

Conductor Survey Questions

1. How do you define servant leadership as a community choir director?
2. In what ways do you see servant leadership contrasting with transformational leadership in your choral setting?
3. What specific instances can you provide where servant leadership principles have enhanced the music literacy of your choir members?
4. How do you perceive the impact of servant leadership on fostering collaborative partnerships within the community choir?
5. What challenges or benefits have you observed when comparing servant leadership to other leadership styles in your choir?

Community Choir Member Survey Questions

1. How would you describe the leadership style of your choral director?
2. In what ways do you feel your choral director embodies servant leadership principles?
3. What are the noticeable differences between servant leadership's supportive nature and other leadership styles in the choir?
4. How does your choral director's servant leadership approach influence your motivation and engagement in music literacy?
5. Share an experience where the choral director's servant leadership positively influenced your musical skills or literacy compared to other leadership styles.

Community Partner Survey Questions

1. How would you describe your experience working with community choirs and their choral directors?
2. In what ways do you believe servant leadership principles are beneficial in fostering strong community partnerships compared to other leadership styles?
3. How has the servant leadership style of community choir choral directors influenced the success of collaborative projects or initiatives?
4. What instances can you provide of servant leadership facilitating better communication and collaboration between your organization and community choirs than other leadership styles?
5. What qualities or practices do you value most in a community choir choral director when engaging in collaborative efforts, especially when considering servant leadership?

Appendix D: Conductor Survey Participant Results

1. How do you define servant leadership as a community choir director?

CSP1:

In these types of dues-paying or community-based ensembles, the musical leader must primarily support the organization's mission through programming, and the members' technical and artistic development. It is certainly a place to teach but is not the place for a conductor to run a personal artistic factory.

CSP2:

A conduit between the music and composer and the singers and performers

CSP3:

Giving the opportunity to your community to participate in a choral group or experience.

CSP4:

Creating an environment where all are accepted and supported. Being aware of the group's needs and checking in with members often.

CSP5:

I feel that it is my calling to serve my singers in whatever capacity that means. Musically, I need to read them so to speak, and during the rehearsal, I need to be intuitive to what their needs are and adjust my expectations and rehearsal plans accordingly. Sometimes, they just need to talk and I need to listen. And that is me serving these children as a leader. Being a conductor is part time social worker, part-time counselor, part-time psychologist, and the list goes on.

CSP6:

In short, a lifelong pursuit of humility and generosity. This entails cultivation of an ability to look past the glamour of performance successes, and the inefficiency of certain aspects of performance preparation, to see the hearts of the individuals who are longing to connect. Music just happens to be the medium for initial connections, but is only a launching point (or "portal") to something deeper and more lasting.

2. In what ways do you see servant leadership contrasting with transformational leadership in your choral setting?

CSP1:

I'm not sure what "transformational" leadership means in this context.

CSP2:

Music should not be made in the old top-down fashion. All participants are artists.

CSP3:

I see servant leadership as being in a position that maybe has little to no pay and is done more on a volunteer basis. Transformational is a role that furthers your career.

CSP4:

Servant leadership is about meeting the group where they're at whereas transformational leadership is about pushing the group to be better. I think both are necessary.

CSP5:

I often tell my younger staff that 95% of what I do in this job is building relationships with each of the choristers. I think that's how servant leadership contrasts with transformational leadership in a coral setting. I am more focused on the individual singers, building those relationships with them, so they, then trust me. When they trust me and the relationship has built, then they will

sing and be responsive to me as their conductor. It's not about the end product. It is more about the journey.

CSP6:

I see servant leadership as being willing to go FURTHER than transformational leadership, but also willing to ABSORB the latter as part of its arsenal. These leadership styles share similar objectives, including high valuation of the individual (i.e. convincing said individual of their potential to positively impact the world around them) and motion towards a mutually-agreed-upon positive outcome that general involves growth. However, a servant leader is by definition willing to slow down, retrace steps, and help to bear the burdens of the individual they are seeking to help towards fruitfulness. If goals must be revised, postponed, or replaced, so be it. The primary objective of the servant leader is to create a safe space for individuals to explore the most pressing questions in their lives while working to communicate to them the importance of setting their eyes on something of value outside of themselves. This may overlap considerably with the "casting of vision" central to the transformational leader's approach, but the desirable objective is, in many cases further out and less concrete than a transformational focus might consider practical. The emphasis is on walking together, and less on determining shortest distance to set goal. Goals are acknowledged to be way-points along a journey to touch and release hearts, in which process one's own heart is engaged.

3. What specific instances can you provide where servant leadership principles have enhanced the music literacy of your choir members?

CSP1:

Choosing a piece that will challenge and stretch a choir but that will pay off dividends later in technical ability can be a defined service. (e.g. having chosen a piece in a Balkan language, the next time we did something in that vein, we had a point of reference and a context). One must also consider a church choir to be in some ways a community ensemble. The programming must reflect the needs and requirements of a particular bent, and also help them grow more deeply into their experience. In this situation, it is even more distinctly NOT about the conductor's whims.

CSP2:

Growth of the singers in their music maturity-- generally this takes place when they take musical responsibility for themselves, their section, and the whole ensemble.

CSP3:

Giving people in your community guidance to read music when maybe they have not learned that in the past or have not learned how to learn music well. Learning to read music in a group, such as a community theater, can benefit not only the individual but other community groups as well.

CSP4:

When I check in with members, they tell me their personal struggles with the music. I make time to coach them individually before rehearsal and I spend time in rehearsal reviewing notation. This has helped the singers who don't sing often or have no music background.

CSP5:

That's a hard question. Anytime we do music literacy with the children's choir, it is typically an individual task. Each of them has their own theory book, and they work at their own pace. However, when I go over items as a group, even though I may have several who already know, the answers, I try to inspire them to be leaders and teach the younger ones how they arrived at

the answers that they did. I think that's one way of building up leaders, even within the group itself.

CSP6:

One primary way is in our commitment to keep our membership criteria as broad as possible and keep our members singing as long as possible, even if certain sacrifices (quality, agility, speed, etc.) must be made in the process. There is no "perfect" chorister. We all build each other up through sharing our unique package of individual giftings and experiences, and are able to accomplish much together as a result. We also make a point in rehearsals of educating our membership about a wide variety of musical and extra-musical elements that relate both to performance and to life outside of music. This is a challenging balancing act, as naturally there is good energy to be found in the momentum of a tightly-run rehearsal. But it is important for people to feel comfortable in the rehearsal environment, and many of our members have expressed appreciation for the time we take to explain difficult concepts. We also try to cultivate an environment in which individual members feel comfortable engaging directly with the director (comments, suggestions, constructive criticism, etc., both via email and during rehearsal process), which I feel encourages personal ownership of the ensemble experience and greater alertness and willingness to learn new skills. I would be lying if I said this feedback is not sometimes hard to swallow, but it helps to keep the focus off of the self and more on the "what" and "why" of our interactions together as a community.

4. How do you perceive the impact of servant leadership on fostering collaborative partnerships within the community choir?

CSP1:

Internally, I suppose this could be good on small-group projects. I usually think of collaborations as being between the choir and another outside organization or ensemble.

CSP2:

A better performance with more nuance and understanding. Better art.

CSP3:

Being able to work with a group of community members can always open doors to other opportunities in the community whether that be personal or professional.

CSP4:

If the leader is aware of the group's needs, they can select a partnership that is appropriate for their skill level. This could even mean placing an inexperienced singer near the seasoned singers.

CSP5:

Again, it's all about building relationships. When you build relationships with those collaborative partnerships, they are willing to come back and work with you again. We make sure to cheer them on in every capacity... Social media, in our programs, Etc. When you build relationships, you build community. When you build community, You are essentially serving in a leadership capacity

CSP6:

I am not sure whether commitment to a wide variety of projects, many of which involve collaboration with other arts entities throughout the community, drives the spirit of collaboration amongst our membership (cross-generational, cross-professional, etc.), or vice-versa. Most likely each fosters ongoing growth and celebration of the other. But in general, this would be very unlikely to happen without an artistic director (supported by Board of Directors or equivalent

shared-leadership entity) who embraces the value-added that comes from pursuing partnerships. Rich conversations and bold dreams are born by the simple willingness to send an email or make a phone call.

5. What challenges or benefits have you observed when comparing servant leadership to other leadership styles in your choir?

CSP1:

I get to observe weekly in two different community ensembles musical and life development, partnerships, and most importantly, experiences that these people are having with the messages and art found in their scores and programs.

CSP2:

The conductor leading from top-down had better be exceptional. Most often he/she is a control freak and not a very good musician. They view themselves as Muti-- but they are not-- and all suffer.

CSP3:

Challenges in a community group is commitment and ability. Building a program based open the individuals that are in it is essential to the success of the choir.

CSP4:

The benefit is that the choir feels supported and encouraged to improve. It can be challenging to listen to every opinion and seem like a pushover but I would rather listen than have a “what I say goes” type of energy.

CSP5:

I have noticed that I am overall a more even keel, calm person. I often had my executive Director, wanting me to be more demanding and demonstrative and authoritative. That caused a lot of conflict, because that style does not line up with my beliefs and my own personality. Regarding benefits, I believe that the relationships that I have built with my chorus members will be life long. And I believe that my leadership style has a domino effect with my staff, allowing them to observe how being a servant leader has a great impact and a far Bigger than we could ever imagine.

CSP6:

The music director / artistic director plays a critical role in harnessing the collective knowledge of the choristers (some of whom are current or former music directors, and many have leadership experience in other fields), and also tempering the way in which strong personalities in the group would like to make meaningful contributions both in and outside of rehearsal. One can't be “all things to all people,” and yet one must strive to do so, though always with intentional and rhythmic return to a reflection on, and possible revision of, one's own personal goals and goals for the organization as it grows. Because of some of my past experiences as a chorister, and certain personality traits I possess, I struggle constantly with a tendency to lead out of more of a “benevolent dictator” mentality, which in certain situations can be effective, but not (I feel) as the central or defining approach one takes, if the highest goal is growth of the individuals over even the advancement of the organization (artistic reputation, defense of territory, etc.). But I will say the even bigger challenge for me is, while endeavoring to lead with a servant-mindset, I often overlook opportunities for delegation, thus (and ironically) hampering both the growth of the organization (due to personal limitations of time, energy, etc.) and of individuals therein who simply need more opportunities to serve and lead in order to grow to their own potential. This is

something with which I am actively wrestling and on which I am working with our Board of Directors to put structures in place to help me strike better balance here.

Appendix E: Community Choir Member Survey Participant Results

1. How would you describe the leadership style of your choral director?

CMSP1:

Amazing

CMSP2:

Very organized, efficient, and knows every part.

CMSP3:

My choral director is and was a servant leader at heart. He was person-first oriented by always putting the needs of his choir and community before the music. By efficient and clear use of rehearsal time, all planned music was taught, learned well, and made clear. He empowered and encouraged the members of the choir and was open to all ideas suggested, ultimately leading the group to profound success.

CMSP4:

He is a great leader, and you are always sure of what he wants you to do.

CMSP5:

Pushes you to your very best and outside your comfort zone

CMSP6:

Active, involved, enthusiastic

CMSP7:

Collaborative, supportive, willing to listen to ideas, and then decisive. With humor!

CMSP8:

Knowledgeable, encouraging and enthusiastic

2. In what ways do you feel your choral director embodies servant leadership principles?

CMSP1:

I feel like the director embodies the true feeling of the music and wants to express that feeling throughout the choir

CMSP2:

They were always available if we needed anything, picked great music, always asked for feedback and was just super personable. Those are some qualities of a good leader

CMSP3:

The choral director is unapologetically himself at all times by being authentic, caring in nature, communicative and responsive, receptive to new ideas, and maintaining his integrity while continuing to be compassionate to the choir's needs. Through empowering and encouraging us to learn difficult choral repertoire, he has made strides in creating a continuously growing choral program and improved us significantly as musicians.

CMSP4:

He listens to your suggestions, questions and needs.

CMSP5:

Very good at communicating with all parties involved in any situation. Despite a tough exterior has always been very kind towards those struggling. Always pushes his students to improve in all things not just music. Honestly he is simply unlike any director/professor I have ever met.

CMSP6:

Nebulous question. "servant leadership" is undefined

CMSP7:

By caring about other's opinions, needs and concerns and providing help and guidance as needed.

CMSP8:

He helps and encourages choir members to improve their skills. He is willing to provide extra tutoring when needed. He is always compassionate and quick to praise

3. What are the noticeable differences between servant leadership's supportive nature and other leadership styles in the choir?

CMSP1:

That a servant leader will be with you no matter what you do, they won't abandon you if you fail or you aren't with the leader. And the servant leader will take responsibility of trying to correct the mistake

CMSP2:

I've had leaders who just wanted to get in and get stuff done. But I like the supportive nature because everyone buys into that system and wants to do well because they feel supported.

CMSP3:

The largest difference I have noticed between the servant leader choral director and other choral directors is the level of compassion and willingness to change something if it is not working. By being person-first oriented, the servant leader answers all questions in a timely manner and makes the music abundantly clear to the choristers, allowing us to reach new levels of musicality.

CMSP4:

Many leaders only direct you with their style, not accommodating for your preferences.

CMSP5:

In choral it was more intimate as we were a small class which provided more time for every individual voice to improve. While in our community choir there were more people to deal with and they would need to be uplifted and encouraged more as a group. My director embodies both of these forms of encouragement and leadership.

CMSP6:

Communication style. End goal.

CMSP7:

Caring about others while still keeping to the goal.

CMSP8:

Other choir directors single out singers who are having difficulty. Often, other choir directors are demanding and harsh in meting out criticism.

4. How does your choral director's servant leadership approach influence your motivation and engagement in music literacy?

CMSP1:

The director makes me want to be a better musician to be able to express the emotions of the music to the fullest potential

CMSP2:

It influences me positively because I know they care about me and the music at hand. And it shows through the way they teach the music to the choir.

CMSP3:

By consistently encouraging and empowering us to become better musicians, my motivation to become a better musician for myself as a singer seeking and pursuing opportunities and the success of the choir has increased exponentially. When I watch him be musical, I am inspired to be the best I can be because his success is proven through the many concerts and performances he has directed.

CMSP4:

He is always encouraging and validating your efforts. I was always looking for ways to improve.

CMSP5:

I was in the practice room much more with my director than I would have been otherwise. I would practice in my room with my roommate in hopes of improving and impressing my teacher.

CMSP6:

Exposure to more recent pieces.

CMSP7:

Very much so.

CMSP8:

His style of leadership encourages a love of music and excitement about giving a great performance.

5. Share an experience where the choral director's servant leadership positively influenced your musical skills or literacy compared to other leadership styles?

CMSP1:

Whenever I would have a solo, it didn't matter if I messed up the director would always be with me because we are in the body of music, and we can just feel how it flows throughout the song. Where another director I don't have the feeling that we share the same musical experience with that person so it's to connect.

CMSP2:

I wanted to come in outside of rehearsal to learn a specific part in a song, and they made time in their schedule to help me.

CMSP3:

By being allowed to perform solos in the community choir, the director often worked with me to make it as beautiful and expressive as possible. When needed, he frequently took time to work with me separately to make sure notes, rhythms, and tempo was correct, thus exhibiting his compassion and drive to make a meaningful performance. When the choir or soloists messed up, he consistently made efforts to get them back on track through eye contact and intentional

conducting gestures that allowed for a clear reset. Furthermore, he is always reassuring and encouraging to the choir, helping us to become confident musicians.

CMSP4:

He thanked me for attending, rehearsed the section until I felt firm in singing the passage, and was so joyful about my progress. I left wanting to practice at home and improve my ability to sing even better.

CMSP5:

My director often sat me down and told me how great I was and how he would help me get anywhere I wanted to with this career path. His encouragement really made me believe it and want to improve more and more. I felt as though I was reaching new heights with my vocal talent when other professors made me lose motivation in learning and practicing.

CMSP6:

Can't think of any examples here.

CMSP7:

He helped edit some music I had written so that it could be better understood by the musicians.. He also gave me credit for what I had created originally.

CMSP8:

Our choir learned a very challenging piece. We enjoyed working hard and going to extra practices because he was so enthusiastic and assured us we could do it! We all still talk about how exciting it was learning and performing the piece!

Appendix F: Community Partner Survey Participant Results

1. How would you describe your experience working with community choirs and their choral directors?

CPSP1:

From the perspective of a community partnership, the relationship maintained in my experience was phenomenal. I was able to communicate clearly with the choral director in the planning of events and concerts and reach students who needed help with singing, diction, music theory, aural theory, etc. throughout the timeline of the experience.

CPSP2:

Enjoyable part of my retirement. I direct a community chorus and sing in a masterworks chorale as well as church choir and handbells.

CSPS3:

Not a lot, but some experience

CPSP4:

Very positive. Effective choral directors can have an outsized impact on small communities.

2. In what ways do you believe servant leadership principles are beneficial in fostering strong community partnerships compared to other leadership styles?

CPSP1:

Servant leadership best serves community partnerships because it is person-centered, friendly, communicative, and open. The director was consistent, responsive, and open to several ideas while maintaining the choir and partnership's best interest for performance.

CPSP2:

Servant leadership endeavors to raise everyone up, not just benefit the leadership or the group. Helping others explore their musical talents/aspirations develops community and fosters a sense of wellbeing in the entire group.

CSPS3:

Servant leadership is more personal than programmatic, it is able to see the needs of each community individually and then meet them there. It also has the versatility to coach people up in a personal way rather than programmatic.

CPSP4:

When the serviced mindset is directed toward the community, and thus the community is better served, the community recognizes this. This begins a cycle of support and growth – the servant leader supports the community, the community then supports the leader, the leader then is able to do more because of that support, and so on.

3. How has the servant leadership style of community choir choral directors influenced the success of collaborative projects or initiatives?

CPSP1:

By fostering meaningful collaborative projects with community partnerships, the success of the director and their choir is advanced because, ultimately, their voices, ideas, and performances are being heard and talked about frequently in a most positive way. More performances with positive reviews means more potential connections and opportunities to be made for the choir and its director.

CPSP2:

Working together to create music fosters the possibility of working together in other areas of community life. Robert's Rules are fading from use within community groups.

CSPS3:

There is often more flexibility and willingness to compromise in these situations. This can help greatly in collaborative projects because everyone will need to bend a little in order to make the project work.

CPSP4:

In my experience, the most successful community choir projects were those in which the choral Director specifically sought to satisfy an artistic need of the community.

4. What instances can you provide of servant leadership facilitating better communication and collaboration between your organization and community choirs than other leadership styles?

CPSP1:

The director of the community choir frequently emailed and met with my organization in an effort to plan and make events more exciting for students and community members. For example, the servant leader choral director was offered opportunity to bring in guest artists and speakers for his choir. Furthermore, the choir director planned trips with his chamber singers group to rural high schools that fell under the my organization to perform for their choirs on a frequent basis. Collaborative efforts for joint concerts were made between the community choir in my location and these rural high schools. By using consistent communication and being open to different ideas between directors of high school choirs, the grant director, and the servant leader choral director, these planned events came to fruition and were largely successful, leading to more opportunities for the director himself and the choir.

CPSP2:

Creating choral music requires working together, rehearsing parts over and over again. That type of work ethic is important in many other aspects of community life, ie., planning and implementing town work projects and festivals.

CSPS3:

I haven't had any direct examples within this context, but as mentioned before, there is much better flexibility that often comes with servant leadership.

CPSP4:

One example: the choral Director wanted to engage the very youngest members of the community, and created an extremely popular show in which songs from Disney movies were performed. This may not sound like a big deal, but there was nothing in it for the choral Director

– his musical interests lay elsewhere, he was unlikely to be a direct beneficiary of such a long-term project, and it was an enormous amount of work. However, he felt that this project best served the musical interests of the youngest members of the community.

5. What qualities or practices do you value most in a community choir choral director when engaging in collaborative efforts, especially when considering servant leadership?

CPSP1:

Communication, openness, and responsiveness are particularly important in servant leadership when engaging in collaborative efforts. Without them, collaborative efforts in planning events simply fails. I was frequently permitted to attend the high school choir performance events with communication between the grant director and the servant leader choir director as a chaperone. Additionally, many of the servant leader director's students were graduates from the rural high schools that fell under my organization. With communication between me and the director, I was able to help them often in their studies in music, whether it was coaching diction, music theory, aural theory, or singing healthfully.

CPSP2:

The ability to innovate when one means of conducting is not working during a rehearsal. I learned from directors' skills that I can use in my conducting with choirs and choruses.

CSPS3:

Servant leaders put the needs of others first. This is essential in cooperative efforts. Servant leaders look to help the group win and accomplish their goals rather than pushing their own individual agenda or way of doing things.

CPSP4:

(1) Willingness to think positively. (2) Willingness to proritize the interests of others of your own interest, (3) Energy!

Appendix G: Interview Questions

Conductor Questions

1. How would you describe your own leadership style as a conductor?
2. To what extent do you consider your leadership style to depict servant leadership?
3. What specific servant leadership principles do you intentionally incorporate into your role as a conductor?
4. How do these principles influence your interactions with ensemble members?
5. What examples of instances can you provide where you believe your leadership positively influenced the music literacy of the ensemble?
6. How have these successes contributed to the overall growth and well-being of the ensemble?
7. How do you actively engage the community through the community choir?
8. How has your servant leadership style influenced the choir's relationships with external community partners?
9. Are there any success stories or positive outcomes from applying servant leadership principles in community choir settings?
10. To what extent does your servant leadership style encourage collaborative learning among choir members, especially in music literacy?

Community Partner Questions

1. How would you rate the effectiveness of communication between your organization and the choir?
2. How has the conductor's servant leadership impacted the collaboration between the community choir and your organization?
3. In what ways has the collaboration with the choir positively impacted your organization or community?
4. How has the choir actively engaged with your community or organization?
5. Has the choir's engagement contributed to a sense of community in your organization?
6. How would you describe the conductor's role in facilitating and sustaining the collaboration?
7. Have there been instances where the conductor's leadership positively influenced the collaboration?
8. How does the conductor's servant leadership style contribute to the community choir's community engagement efforts?

Community Choir Member Questions

1. In what specific ways do you perceive the conductor as a servant leader?
2. What examples can you provide where the conductor demonstrated servant leadership?
3. How does the conductor support individual choir members in improving their music reading skills?
4. How does the conductor's servant leadership style impact the effectiveness of music rehearsals in teaching and building music literacy?
5. How does the choir actively engage with the local community?
6. How would you describe the choir's relationships with external community partners?

7. What examples can you mention of a successful collaboration between the choir and a community organization?
8. How would you describe the sense of community and belonging within the choir?
9. In what ways does the conductor demonstrate empathy towards choir members?
10. Have you ever experienced a situation where the conductor's empathy positively impacted the choir dynamic?
11. In your opinion, how has the conductor's servant leadership style impacted the overall atmosphere and success of the community choir?
12. What suggestions do you have for further enhancing the impact of servant leadership within the choir?

Appendix H: Conductor Interview Participant Transcript

1. How would you describe your own leadership style as a conductor?

CIP1:

First, making sure that my conducting and my teaching go with the level of students I have and that I'm not over their heads. I'm not doing things that are too easy; we are doing things that we all understand to reach whatever goal we've decided on as a group and then go from there. And that's like in my classroom. And then I can build from that. Community groups are a little bit different. But it's the same principle; my conducting is at whatever the level of the community group is. Varied, and instead of just getting to the place where we can move forward and move forward as I do in my classroom, it's more of a getting a common understanding of the terms we're using and stuff like that so that we can all be successful.

CIP2:

I present what I do have to offer, but I am consistently checking in, either directly or indirectly, with my choir to see if what I'm doing is working for them and then adjusting accordingly just to make sure that their needs are being met. So directly, I would check in with the individuals of the choir and ask, "Hey, is this music OK for you? Is it accessible? How are you feeling in your voice?" I'll leave an offer of individual coaching for that person if they really need it, or I'll address what common issue is happening in the prior to everyone. We'll take a moment and rehearse and just talk about what a quarter note is. Just so we are more familiar with this in rehearsal. Indirectly, when we're rehearsing, and I see a lot of confused faces, I'll change that right away, or I'll make a joke to defuse the situation. If I've been pressing them too hard, I'll make a joke diffuse. Let's talk about something else, or let's go to something that we feel we can achieve successfully right now.

CIP3:

I've been a benevolent dictator. I'm going for a certain vibe or certain sound or something, and I work them until I get it or get as close to it as I think I am. I'm going to come up with different things. I had to explain to the chorus about a month ago that when I'm practicing for me, like on the piano or the organ, and I hit a spot that I have trouble with, I might spend 1/2 an hour to an hour just working on those few measures to get them right. And so, I said, the fact that I make you go over something five times is, you know, easy to take. And they will do it once they understand what I'm doing. I try to explain why I'm doing what I'm doing, so they'll understand, or at least think. "Well, she's thought this through, and she knows what she's doing," you know, because, I mean, this is a volunteer position for me. After we did the sound music, somebody said, "you're coming back next year?" and I said, "I don't know. Do you want me back?" And they all, in one voice, said yes. It was very affirming and of course, by their presence and their affirmation, that that they like it and that they're having that they're having fun.

2. To what extent do you consider your leadership style to depict servant leadership?

CIP1:

Well, I think that for me to be successful, the kids need to feel successful. So, making sure that our overall goals align with things that make the kids feel like they are doing well makes me feel like I've taught them something. Like for example, you know, kids want to do pop music and tick-tock songs and, you know, stuff like that, so making sure we put a little bit of that in the middle of classical music or music theory is important. It was important this year for my students to go on a trip and perform for that festival. Well, to do that, we also needed to sound really good. So, we may have done some music that they wanted to do, but we relied on our training in our theory to make sure those were good. So, I'm just making sure my curriculum goes along with their ideals to trick them into learning all those basic things while they're having fun with what they want to do. I think is really important for any successful teacher.

CIP2:

I'm constantly aware if the choir is getting what they need from me, and if it gets so much to the point where I'll even ask the choir board or some committee, or I'll check in with them too. Hey, since you're in the choir, do you hear any feedback that could be beneficial to the group? I also, with my community choir at the end of the season would meet, talk about how the concert went, do a little AAR, after-action review, and I would have them write down something that they felt was successful, something that they felt could have been better and that could have been better is direct feedback to me whether they know it or not. "Oh, I wish I had learned my music better," or something that tells me let's take more time to learn this.

CIP3:

I see servant leadership as a way of bringing everybody together, and if you're the leader, then you bring them along the way you want them to go, and that's what I try to do with my directing, to get them to understand what the music is saying, you know. You've got to be carefully taught. Yesterday, they were just kind of singing along at certain musical sections. And I said, "Look at this point in the musical. This is when John Cable realizes that everything he's been told his whole life has been about other people has been a lie. So sing it that way." And man, it came out right. I'm going, "Yes, that's what I wanted." You know, it was just like you got to understand what's behind when, when you're doing musical theater, you got to understand what the story and what's behind it and where the turning points are and sing at that way. And the audience will come along with you, even if there's no show going on around you. You're just singing it.

3. What specific servant leadership principles do you intentionally incorporate into your role as a conductor?

CIP1:

Students don't like doing rhythm reading and sight singing and stuff like that. So if I find maybe a melody that is a Lady Gaga song or something, and then we could sight read that, then that's what I mean by tricking them into doing what I want them to do. Finding things they like and putting them into things that I know we need to be successful. And then I also feel like if I do that, if I do things that they really enjoy and make sure I ask them at the beginning of the year like what they want to do and songs they want to sing, then they're more likely to work harder at those songs that I want to do or those things that I think is important for them to do as well.

CIP2:

Are the members having fun? Are the members learning something, and is this an environment where we are achieving a goal? Do we have something to work towards? So, it's always dependent on them. Yes, I can elevate what they bring to the table, but it's always up to what we have and what we can do with this.

CIP3:

Most of what I do is instinct. You know, working, working in musical groups, I mean, I joined the church choir when I was three, so I've been singing in groups through high school, college, and my adult life. I don't think I give it as much thought now as I probably would have 40 years ago. It's more just instinct. It's just the way I'm going to do it now. Sometimes I have to stop and think, OK, how do I get them from here to there? You know, from singing it blandly to singing it with passion or sadness or whatever. Those are those kinds of things, but most of what I do is just plain instinct. It just comes out; I don't have a magic formula.

4. How do these principles influence your interactions with ensemble members?

CIP1:

OK, kids, especially junior high and high school age kids, are always surprised when I say, hey, what do you want to do instead of this is what we are going to do. And so I think right off the bat, getting that started that way, it builds a relationship between us that maybe is stronger than if I would have just walked in the door and said, look, this is what we're doing. I don't care if you like it, which I would like to do, to be perfectly honest, I would just like to do what I want to do, but that's not how it works all the time. Umm, so just building the relationship with the kid beyond music is really important for everything really.

CIP2:

I'm a very bubbly person, so when I'm doing warm-ups, I'm always joking around. We're making silly sounds, like just helping them feel comfortable that, oh, now we're singing some high notes, but they don't know that they're high notes. We're just making silly sounds and just things like that. Like I'll constantly joke around when it's time to be serious. I'll go take a step back and say, "OK, this is why this is important." I try to keep them as informed as possible; maybe they don't need to know why we're doing everything, but I try to keep them informed just so that they bring the best that they can to the table. If I suggest something and they all look at me like I can't do this, I'll try to encourage them. But if there's visibly frustrated or something like that, then I'll say, "OK, let's do something else completely." It really about helping them feel successful over everything else. Doesn't matter. It's not about me. It's about them.

CIP3:

Most of the time, it's conversational, you know, I'll say, "Sopranos, you need to listen; if you can't hear the basses singing the melody, then you're singing too loudly." It's conversational. However, I did give them a look on Tuesday afternoon because they were acting up. Sometimes I have to put on the school hat on, you know? But most of the time, I just kind of go with the flow and try to get the most music I can out of them because they're doing it for fun. I mean there's no other reason for them to sing except for the fact that they like to sing, and they want something to do, you know? Because if those that aren't driving anymore, I mean they're stuck unless the community group is going somewhere. I mean, they really are stuck there. So this is just something fun for them to enjoy doing.

5. What examples of instances can you provide where you believe your leadership positively influenced the music literacy of the ensemble?

CIP1:

You know, as we as the group is successful, you know, students want to try out for all-state and be part of the contest and stuff, and you can't really do that unless you can sight read and read music. So that is helpful. Also, you know, getting out songs and being able to cite, read it quickly, and sound good quickly is exciting for anybody, and especially my top choir, that really gets that and gets it more this year. Maybe then before that, you know, if I can read these notes and sight read decently then we can get to the fun part of the music, way quicker than if we've got to go plunk out every note.

CIP2:

So, I've had a lot of retired members who are "aging voices" as we label them. A lot of them think they can't use their voice anymore; they can't sing anymore. Their voice is giving out or something like that. I make sure that the warm-ups are the kind of warm-up that stretches them a little bit. I let them know, "Hey, if something feels bad, just stop." I've had retired music teachers who read notation and people who have never sung ever. So, I'll kind of pair them up within the group like this person will support them because that's a retired teacher and knows that, hey, I'm going to tell this person we're on this page on this measure, and I don't have to be so involved and it helps them with the community too. Our group is as strong as the weakest link, so if I know that there is someone who does not read notation at all, I will take those five or 10 minutes after warm-up to say, "Hey, let's look at how this works in context."

CIP3:

I've really had to work with my sopranos. Because they're the stereotypical church-singing sopranos who always sing the melody and are not used to anybody else singing, when the altos get the melody or sing higher than them, they go nuts. "They can't do it," the sopranos said. "We don't want to do this." I go, "Ohh yes, you're going to do this." And so I practice only them. Then I practiced the tenors and then the bases and had them sing through it. And they go, "This sounds horrible," I said, "OK, now altos, you join them," and you know the altos will go up and over them. "Ohh no, that's pretty. Why can't we sing their part?" And I go, "Because it was written for you to go underneath them." So, we get the tenor and the alto voice up above you and so there's a teaching moment there, but it's also not only musical, but about the different voices and the ranges and things I had to do. I don't have many men, of course, cause in retirement homes, you don't have as many men as you have women. I had to tell the tenors I want you to sing out, and this part, I especially need you because the bases we're trying to sing at the top end of their register. And so, I just dropped out the tenor part and put the tenors there, and the melody just

came out beautifully, you know, and to explain that, that's why we're doing it. The basses were doing a great job, but they're just a few of you over against all these women. So, let's put the tenors with you, and they've got the top range, so you don't strain, and you know, and I do all kinds of exercises to try to get them, you know, not to clench up and sort of thing and get a good onset. And so I do a lot of exaggerating of things like I don't want to hear cracked.

6. How have these successes contributed to the overall growth and well-being of the ensemble?

CIP1:

I think that anytime we are successful, anytime we're recognized as more than just, you know, our parents saying, "Oh, that was a good concert," when we go to a competition and we get a one or we have students make state choir or our musicals are recognized for being really good, it's great to get recognition from more than just people in our small town. You know that that's like "Ohh hey, we are doing something good." You know these things are important, and we can do things beyond my local area, and that's exciting. We just found out two days ago we got selected to sing at the State Fair next year. And you know things, things like that. That is easy not to do like; it's easy not to turn in audition tapes after audition tapes for things because we get a lot of rejections too, you know. But doing those things where we get that success definitely builds because then kids would come and say, "Well, what are we going to do this year?" It's not just singing in class. I know we're going to do more stuff than that, so that has helped a lot.

CIP2:

We've been able to do more challenging music. I choose repertoire that is heavy in notation like an actual choral piece, and then we'll also do some lyrics of a song that you grew up singing. We'll also do something that has no lyrics, no notation, and nothing, just by ear. So, I try to make sure there's a little bit of everything just to elevate their musicianship.

CIP3:

Well, because they feel better about what they're doing. They feel more confident and there are a couple of people in the group who are very shy. But when you put a piece of music in front of them, they just blossom out, you know, because they've got confidence in that, whereas the rest of their life, you know, is controlled by somebody else. You know, the nurse comes in and tells them when to take their medicine. The food is served at certain times. I mean, they're very well regulated, so when they can express themselves, it's just really freeing and they just got big smiles on their face. I mean, they looked a little terrified on Tuesday because it was our last rehearsal. I mean, we will meet at 4:00 o'clock Monday afternoon, and I'll run the beginning and the ending of every piece and maybe a little part in the middle. They'll have dinner, change their clothes, and then come back with their Hawaiian shirts. And their white pants on and the front row sits because they're all in on walkers. So they sit in the back row. It's a whole different thing from you working with your college students. And you know, I have to sit him down. I have to stand them up and then you have to wait for those who have trouble getting up because we don't have enough room on the stage to put chairs with arms on them. So I've got two people who are, you know, struggling to get up and down. But they've got to sit because it gives their knees a little chance to recover you, so you got all that kind of stuff going on, but the mere fact, I mean, there was a woman who last week had knee surgery and she was at the rehearsal on Tuesday. She didn't feel very good. She had trouble getting on the stage, even though there was a ramp and stuff, but she got there and she sat in the front row. So she didn't have to get up and down, and she had a ball. So I mean, it really is an, it's an outlet for them and it's also an outlet for the

other residents because they flocked to this thing. I mean, the room is packed. There are about 100 to 150 people who come to see this thing because it's a night out for them. I mean it, sure, they didn't go outside, but it's a night out.

7. How do you actively engage the community through the community choir?

CIP1:

Well, like the community pageant, specifically, the Christmas pageant is something that has been going on forever and ever. And while there are things as an educator, I'd love to change, I know that that's not the place to do it. And I also try to get the community involved in that. You know, it's almost 100 years since the Christmas pageant, so bringing back Alumni to sing is important. A couple of years ago, I did a whole Alumni choir. We had gobs of people. Any person who ever sang in the pageant could come back and sing. And you know, since it is the same music, it was successful. And then also going out in the community and singing for people or inviting people to come, like specifically, we had a community member be at a part in our musical or sing a solo at our concert or stuff like that. Where? Where do I get people? Maybe that aren't parents who aren't necessarily people who are there all the time, but bringing other people in to do things that maybe get more people to watch or take notice is always helpful.

CIP2:

I guess with the concerts. My prior community choir was at a retirement place; they could invite their family members, but it was mainly for the other residents in that community that these concerts would get so filled. It was exciting that there was music in their homes, right? So, everyone would come to the concert from other places, from the assisted living, and from independent living. Everyone would join in the same place; it wasn't just watching the choir sing and leave. I would engage with the audience, too. I will say something about the songs like "Hey, welcome to our concert. I'm so glad you're here." Maybe I'll have the audience sing along. I'll teach them a chorus for one of the songs, and it was really if the rehearsals were so fun for the members, they themselves would go out and talk to the other members of the community and just say, hey, you should join like, it's so fun. It's such a good time. We have a good group of people, and it's just they take care of each other. But I'm also there. I was also there for them, so it was wholesome. It was really wholesome.

CIP3:

Usually, it's through their children, grandchildren, or brothers and sisters. There's a lot of that because I have to meet a lot of children at the end of these performances. "Ohh, I just got to meet you, you know my daughter. You've got to meet my grandchildren." And they're very excited about it. Sometimes, staff members come to the performances. I mean, some of them have to be there, like the director of activities and that sort of thing, but others also come. We also do two of their worship services. They have a vespers at 4:00 o'clock on Sunday afternoons. Every Sunday afternoon they have a chaplain, so we've been doing that. We also did World Communion Sunday last fall, and then we performed Mozart on Palm Sunday. They worked for six months, and they sang it beautifully. They got all four parts in there and just did it, and they felt so good, and I mean, it was just deathly silent when they finished; everybody was like, "Wow," and afterward, they all said we did really good. I had picked it for the fall, and we just did. Two months prior to Palm Sunday was not enough time to get it together, but working on it periodically for six months? Yeah, they had it. No problem.

8. How has your servant leadership style influenced the choir's relationships with external community partners?

CIP1:

Well, I hope that you know in my class, we all have to be successful. You know, if one person doesn't know what they're doing, we're not successful. So I hope you know, as students go out and do other stuff like play on a team or whatever it may be that they are also doing, it's not necessarily just about me in these situations. It's everybody has to rise to the occasion and be a part of that. You know our local community musical is a great example. We saw it crashing and burn last year, but everybody's, everybody's got to be on the same page for it to be not only successful, but fun. You know, I'm concerned this year about people coming back to the community musical because, overall, the experience wasn't great last year. But you know, people do stuff like that, community things, because they're fun and they're good. You know you can't have a really bad choir and people want to come to join it, or a really good choir but the director is not adequate. You got to have both.

CIP2:

So, in concert, it was kind of like we were in church. I would always make this joke; I would say, "Alright, the congregation, I mean the audience," and they just loved that joke so much like I knew what I was saying. But they loved that joke so much that I just have. I milked that as much as I could and I would use that same joke with the audience. "Alright, congregation, I mean audience," they love that. That would get them laughing and engaged, like, they're listening to what I'm saying. But also now I'm going to do the next activity. Let's actually sing along, or I would even conduct the audience like, hey, we are the choir, they got it. Let me connect with the audience like it was that kind of involvement. I would also, while I'm conducting the audience, I'm looking around. Who's singing? Who's singing passionately? Who is excited to be here? And I would go up to those people after the concert and say, "Hey, I noticed you singing. Won't you come to a rehearsal and see what it's like?" Just the invitation, no commitment required, no audition required. Just come take a look and come sing with us one day. See how you feel. And that's it. And we got several members like that. The congregation, I mean the audience. They love that.

CIP3:

I don't know because the pool is so small. I mean, it's not like other bigger community choirs, which, you know, draw from all over the metropolitan area. It's such a small pool that I really don't think that that's applicable in this situation.

9. Are there any success stories or positive outcomes from applying servant leadership principles in community choir settings?

CIP1:

I mean, I think that having students leave and be successful in especially music or those types of community ensemble type things is good. I'm really excited about a former student going out to college and taking the lessons he learned from our community ensembles and groups here.

CIP2:

So, there was a time with my community choir when there were so many people who really just did not understand their singing voice at all, so I decided to host a master class for them. And now this master class, it was all members from that same choir performing for each other. So, I come in, "Hey, I'm going to hold a voice master class so we can learn how to use our voices. Whoever wants to sing a solo in the group, sign up, and I'm going to work with you in real-time in front of everyone else." This gives them the opportunity to perform as individuals, using their own voice, and also improve and have a real-time lesson. It gives everyone else in the audience a chance to see what it's like, what a difference it makes to open a vowel or breathe better or anything like that. And I think that was the most beneficial because I got a lot of comments like "I don't think I'm using my voice right. I don't know if I'm singing well." I had one tenor who only had like 5 notes in his range, and I still was there for him. I really go off of their feedback. Hey, this really worked for me. Hey, I still don't understand this. Hey, I feel like I'm singing better now. Thank you. Whatever it is, I'm always aware of that feedback.

CIP3:

Positively, there is now a core group of like 5 people who help me plan. I'll pick three or four things, and I'll say which one of these would you like to do. You know, and it's always three or four things. Any one of them I would be happy to do I don't put any ringers in there. It's always, you know this, they've already selected a ballad for Christmas for next year. Now I'll choose five or six other anthems to go along with it because we always do a sacred section and then, you know, Jingle Bells and Frosty the Snowman and that sort of thing. So, they've chosen the Jingle Bells stuff, and I will choose, you know, probably 6 Christmas anthems, and they'll choose like 4. And then there's another group called the creaky crooners. Some men's group and the same woman who actually has a master in piano, she's 78, plays for the chorus, and also plays for the creaky crooners. And she plays by ear for the creaky crooners because their director goes "Jingle Bells Jingle Bells, Jingle." That's how he directs. You know, there's no real direction. They would probably do better if their director didn't stand up there and do that. So they are also part and parcel of some of our performances or cause they're doing South Pacific, they're doing Bloody Mary. There is nothing like a Damn dis-moi. They're doing those kinds of songs, all in unison. All you know is his crazy direction. But it makes the program longer, and it gives my folks a chance to sit down, and then they do, and then we do, and you know, but we're all up on the stage at the same time, and I've got some men that do both groups. And so, you know, it's part of that, but it's. It's just good fun for them, you know?

10. To what extent does your servant leadership style encourage collaborative learning among choir members, especially in music literacy?

CIP1:

Well, I think we've established this community where, you know, we are safe to make mistakes. We are safe to ask questions, but at the same time, you know, if you do that extra work on your own, that will be recognized as well. You know, I feel like it's really important to make sure students know they don't have to be the best to be in my class. You know, you don't have to be a great singer. I'll take a tone-deaf kid and try my best, but I also think it's really important to recognize those kids who are exceptional and who do the work and who put in the extra time or that maybe aren't the greatest singer but have worked hard enough to be something really good. And I think, you know, I think kids want to do good, and they will rise to the challenges that you give them. And so, I think that doing that in class helps beyond some of them. You know, sit kids who are struggling by kids who really don't struggle. That's what I would do first. Get kids in for lessons that help as well, and there's not always time for that. But I think putting kids weaker kids next to strong kids helps the most.

CIP2:

As I mentioned before, I'll have retired music teachers next to inexperienced teachers. As boring as it can be to an experienced musician, we will take the time to see what a rhythm tree is, how the rest work, and what dynamics even are like. We'll just take a few minutes to just talk through those things. And since I'm a voice person, I'll take a few minutes to talk about how the breath actually works in the body. What happens in the mouth when you open up for a high note? Things like that. And then like I also mentioned, I'll do more than just notation. We'll sing by rote. We'll sing just with lyrics, lead sheets, and other styles. Just felt like a little bit for everyone, you know? The experienced singers are leaders. They're section leaders. They're on the music committee. They're in charge of something. Some logistic like. Oh, you were going to contact the building manager about reserving the time you're going to make the concert programs for the concert and stuff like that. They have extracurricular activities to focus on. I have also done you different small vocal ensembles for specific musical selections. Let's do a trio for one of our selections in the concert, and it really gives them time to shine. Community choir is the most rewarding, wholesome experience that I've had, and church choirs are also community choirs. So, and I mean in a way, community choirs is kind of a redundant term cause the choir is a community. But anyway, I really enjoy the process of having a group with different skill levels. It's exciting. It's entertaining. It's challenging, like it's all the things in one and I am such a "I love finding solutions to problems" type of person. So, if two people are frustrated and everyone else is happy, I'm still going to find a way to do something. So those frustrated people are more at ease, and it's just, I guess, that's part of the job.

CIP3:

I would like to think it improves the literacy. As far as the chorus members working together, there are some chorus members who have trouble tracking, finding the page, and knowing what's the next song, particularly if they're if they're not right in order. But they can't because when you buy these little booklets of musicals, they've got four or five songs. That's not enough for a program, so you have to buy others and stick them in there. And so I look right before I'm ready to raise my hands to get the back row up, and they're still trying to find, you know, the person next to them their pages, so they're working together, you know, and being helpful because they have to do that every single time. And they are seated next to that person at every rehearsal. And you know, I keep everything the same for them because they don't like change, and so they sit in

a certain order for rehearsal, and they sit in that same row order for the performances, but they have to do things like that they have to help some people up you know and it's and it's not just I don't think it's just kindness I think it's also we have to do this because the group needs you to know we need their voice. Their voice is still fine; It's just their bodies are not human. You know, they talked about Tony Bennett, who lived to be almost 100 years old, and he didn't know any of his family or anything. But you start on a song and he could sing every word, pitch perfect. So there's a lot of that that goes on with the group like this, and once they've got it in there and you do it over and over again, then they've got it, and it's something that they can do and remember where they might not be able to tell you even if they ate breakfast or not. But they can tell you what the chorus is singing and what it's doing. And that, I think, is one of the great byproducts of having people work together. And using everybody, I mean the 70-year-olds are very good at helping the 80-year-olds, and the 80-year-olds are just perfect at helping the 90-year-olds.

Appendix J: Community Choir Member Interview Participant Transcript

1. In what specific ways do you perceive the conductor as a servant leader?

CMIP1:

I can see the conductor as a servant leader. Because they show their own way of being a leader like, even though it may be the choir's fault, that conductor will take the blame and use their own experience to bring him back on track. For example, let's say you're in rehearsal and something goes wrong, either like the basses aren't singing the right notes or sopranos or off pitch or something like that; it won't be the conductor being "OK basses, you're singing the wrong note, just fix your note." Instead, the conductor will say, "OK, let's try it this way, or let's try a new way."

CMIP2:

When considering servant leadership style and philosophy, I think of a leader who prioritizes the growth and well-being of others before themselves. While involved in the community choir, our director was communicative and clear and always met our needs with the utmost compassion and understanding. He also took time from his own personal schedule on several accounts to help those who may have struggled with specific parts of the music to help them gain music literacy and become better musicians overall.

CMIP3:

Servant leadership is obviously something where you listen more to what the people have to say than just doing your own thing and making them do whatever you want them to. I think when I was in high school, my choir there was very good about taking suggestions and listening to the students and the members of the choir and just being like, hey, like, is there anything you'd be interested in? or hey, this is a tradition, I know that. But do you want to change it up a little bit? You know, we all sit down and brainstorm, and it was very similar in college as well, where we could speak to the people around us and come up with decisions together. And it wasn't just all about what the professor had to say. My professor wanted me to be a leader for the people around me and listen to them, and I listen to them, and they listen to me, and we all came together with the same intention with similar ideas that we could mix to create one beautiful thing.

2. What examples can you provide where the conductor demonstrated servant leadership?

CMIP1:

I mean, I've had conductors myself show me how to be a good leader just by either biting their own tongue or being the bigger person because they are the group's leader, even in a community choir. When you have people your own age or even older than you, you have opportunities where you have to be the bigger person, and you can't be like, "Ohh, this person's bad." Because of this, I mean when you're a servant leader, I feel like you've taken accountability for having people of all different levels of musicianship. So, you have to be conscious about how I can bring up this group as a whole to be a better choir in itself.

CMIP2:

In rehearsals, the conductor demonstrated servant leadership by always being authentically himself. His stellar musicianship inspired and motivated others to become more musically

inclined and willing to practice and perform more challenging choral repertoire. One of the conductor's strengths and self-awareness was his ability to gain volume and sound from a relatively small choir while still maintaining the integrity of the music at hand. When members had any questions moving forward in rehearsals, the conductor demonstrated compassion by clearly communicating those answers and further motivating us toward continuous improvement.

CMIP3:
I know that part of servant leadership, and this isn't just with conducting but just in general, is that you not only need to figure out what the people say about the project or how you feel about the project, but you also need to figure out other things that are going on in your students' or participants' lives just so you can understand them, work with them, and get them to be the best that they could be. Because I feel like a real leader isn't really here to, again, say this is what you have to do, or else you're gone like they need to understand that these people. And I feel like my professors and teachers have always been very good at paying attention and understanding as long as there's communication from both sides. So, and I mean, I've always had a couple of problems myself where I've been like, "Hey, like, this is what's going on, I'm struggling with this, and I need to work on that so I can get better at the things you need me to do." And I've never once been told stuff like, "Well, you need just to stop doing that. Stop worrying about your personal stuff and only do what I'm doing, you know?" But there was always encouragement. There's never. "Well, don't everything I told you to do." It's still very stern. Like, well, if you want to be a part of this, this is what you're going to need to do, but I'm going to work with you on that, so.

3. How does the conductor support individual choir members in improving their music reading skills?

CMIP1:

I would say it's the conductor. I mean, getting to know the person itself is a huge part of that because if the conductor doesn't know where you came from or how you are, then they won't be able to grasp your knowledge and musicality and will not have a working relationship to help improve the choir itself. Because if you're in a choir with 100 people, you only know five people, maybe ten people in your section. I mean, your choirs are not going to sound the best because you're not connected as a whole. You know you're only connected with maybe your friends, or maybe that one part.

CMIP2:

The conductor's priority was always the needs of the choir members before himself. If members had questions regarding the music or were struggling at any point, he would take time from rehearsals to work with individual sections to make sure they felt secure in their parts and music reading abilities. Furthermore, he frequently encouraged choir members to look away from the music at him for the clearest direction, helping us to never doubt what was being sung at any given time. On several occasions, the director also took time from his personal schedule to meet with individual choir members to solidify parts and/or solos, helping those individuals to ultimately become better musicians and better readers. During the first read-throughs of music selections, the director almost always said something along the lines of "Just do your best, since this is a first read. I just want to hear you and we will fix everything moving forward." Following those read-throughs, the director encouraged the choir members by often saying that they went well given that it was our first time seeing the music and that we could accomplish our common goals of exuding the highest level of musicality possible as a choir in a short amount of time.

CMIP3:

Pretty music, reading libraries, and addressing skits. Personally, I grew up homeschooled, and I did not learn how to read music until I was in high school, and even then, it wasn't to its full capabilities. And I didn't understand it. I still didn't. I just knew that, oh, this is up, and this is down. And that was it. So, in college, my professors knowing this, have been able to understand that part and aspect of my life and work with me on that specifically because they knew that that's what I needed. They weren't going to not listen and just be like, "Well, you should have learned it earlier. So that sucks." That wouldn't have helped me at all, and I probably wouldn't have acquired any more musical knowledge, you know. But my professors were always very kind and very like, "Hey, like I understand this is how you were on that. We're going to work on it specifically for you so you can get better."

4. How does the conductor's servant leadership style impact the effectiveness of music rehearsals in teaching and building music literacy?

CMIP1:

I feel like you as a student, singer, player, and whatever band, choir, or orchestra, whatever you're doing, connecting to that person is a huge deal. I mean, whenever you have a servant leader as a conductor, then you get to know that person on a personal level, I would say. Even if it's not on a great personal level, they make it seem like they're still human and not just this person who's above you and not just this boss you have. You know, you get a leader, not a manager.

CMIP2:

I think that because the conductor was always so authentic, showcasing his own musicality and skills, but also combining that with a great sense of humor and energetic and youthful playfulness, he taught community members that it was okay to make mistakes and also be authentic. He always met those individuals where they were at musically and helped them rise to the occasion of performing the most challenging repertoire possible. Often, he took time to communicate what exactly was going wrong in rehearsals and would work with individual sections to correct issues and bring them to the level of musicianship that was demanded by any particular piece. If that didn't work, he would schedule meetings apart from normal rehearsal times with members to help them work on and effectively learn the music. Furthermore, the director commanded our undivided attention at all times during rehearsal and encouraged members to look away from the music at him, which I think required at least a certain level of memory. At any given time during rehearsals, if he was not working with a particular section, he asked those sections to audiate their parts which ultimately helped the efficacy of valuable rehearsal time. During concerts, if any mistakes were made, he would make eye contact with individuals which sounds like it could be scary and intimidating, but with clear direction, he would meet you with compassion and lead you out of the mistake.

CMIP3:

I think when you have a more servant leadership kind of style, when you're kinder to other people and listen to what they need, you are more receptive to that and more receptive to learning and being in the moment with everyone around you. It gives you the confidence as a student or a participant to also gain those qualities from your professor and help the people around you. And overall, when your choir is working together in a kind, respectful manner with each other, your sound is going to be so much better. And you'll learn so much more if you're

helping each other than just being on yourself. Being on your own and being angry about everything going on, I think in my opinion.

5. How does the choir actively engage with the local community?

CMIP1:

I would say it depends; each community is a little different. I mean, I've never been a part of a city or anything like that, so I can't speak for that, but as a small town community, I can tell that just the people are happy whenever they are with the choir. Like a lot, there are few that participate. But then there's also those that you know you only see on Facebook or on Instagram or anything like that, and they tell you good job because they see you or if you know, I know in high school I went to like nursing homes and stuff like that and saying to them. And they just love that. So being a part of your community just helps your choir that much more, because it works both ways and just having that connection between your community and your choir. I mean, you can do so much more with the support of your community.

CMIP2:

The choir engaged in performing several concerts at local community locations away from their home location, such as churches and museums. They also engaged in planning a joint concert with a rural high school's choir in the same region of the state. Also because the choir is made up of community members, you can often see those members involved in other local events and performances like plays and musicals.

CMIP3:

So, in my experience in my high school choir, I only had maybe 2 concerts, and then the Christmas pageant was our big thing where we interacted with the community the most because we got community members involved as well. But in college, the first professor that I had was, I mean, it wasn't great. I loved that professor, but you know, they were busy, and they couldn't put the time in to interact with the community like that, nor did they have the skills, and the people around them didn't have the skills to set those kinds of things up. But my last professor was always very much like, "We have to get the community involved." Not just because they wanted more voices but so we could make it in for ourselves. More people would know about it. More people would get involved. We would meet more people. You know, when you meet people, "Hey, like I know someone that could do this for you, and everyone can interact better." And I mean that last choir that I was in, we were always trying to be with the people more than just on our own, and we weren't exclusive like, "No, no, no, you can't join us." You know, through my experience, the most fun I had was definitely when we were in the community more than when we weren't.

6. How would you describe the choir's relationships with external community partners?

CMIP1:

I would say it was pretty good. You know, I mean, I was going round. We did joint concerts with the high school in town, and then we went to several different high schools in the local regional area. And I mean just building that connection with those different high school directors, I mean just getting your name out there and getting your school's name out there is important.

CMIP2:

The relationship between the choir, choir director, and external community partners was extremely well established due to a high level of communication, collaboration, and planning between them.

CMIP3:

That kind of depended on what the organization was, and you know who we were interacting with. I think, like when we were interacting with the band, I felt like that was not great. So, because we didn't have a band director for that, you know, there were some problems there in that area, but that didn't necessarily have anything to do with the band players themselves. But I liked it when we would join and do things with them. I thought, this is going to sound weird, because they didn't have a specific professor for the band that was set to direct the band specifically, I felt like we got closer with the band as well and didn't just go off to ourselves to the choir and then each student in the choir wasn't just in the choir, they were always doing something else. I know I personally was in student government, an RA, and all of these other things. I've always enjoyed working with people in the community and meeting people, having more voices and people who could connect with each other through my personal experience; people who choose to be in the choir and aren't forced to be in choir sound so much better with a smaller amount of voices, than people who are forced to perform with more people in it. You can hear the love for it and the passion for it way better than you can for people who don't really want to be there.

7. What examples can you mention of a successful collaboration between the choir and a community organization?

CMIP1:

I mean, fundraising is a huge thing. When I was in high school, we did singing Valentine's Day. So I mean, just having those connections between the school and the community help so much. Or, as I said earlier, going to the nursing home, going to different events, and just being able to sing national anthems. I mean, there are so many things you can do that you don't even realize that you're being part of.

CMIP2:

The joint concert with the local rural high school had a large audience, helping our voices to be heard and interest for potential new members to be peaked. Additional concerts at local church and museum settings, often had a great audience attendance as well, which afforded us more opportunities to perform and collaborate within the community and gain members.

CMIP3:

Honestly, my favorite concert that we ever put together was with the community chorale at a museum. The sound was beautiful. Everyone worked together really well. We worked really hard on those songs, and, we chose a good spot. Even right before the concert started, like everyone

was working together to put more chairs out because we had more people than we expected. And there was no complaint about any of it. There was no complaint about where it was or how we got there or anything. We're just so glad that we're here together to perform and bring everybody.

8. How would you describe the sense of community and belonging within the choir?

CMIP1:

Personal level with just getting to know the people around you. Whenever I do the community choir for one of our Christmas pageants, like I always do, the older people are like, "Oh, hey, how's it going?" You know, like, "Where are you going at and stuff like that." And it's always a good time because, I mean, you're like, I don't remember your name at all, but, you know, they remembered me being there. And I'm like, oh, great. I mean, it's feeling the feeling that being wanted in the choir helps a lot.

CMIP2:

Within the choir, individuals were encouraged to socialize with one another and be themselves which created a familial bond between several members. After performances and at the end of entire performance seasons, the community choir would have celebrations by planning a social gathering at a local establishment or a member's household to eat and have a good time together.

CMIP3:

I would definitely say that, I mean, there was never a person that was like not included in anything, you know. People in the chorale who were in the community choir were obviously closer because we spent more time with each other than everyone else. But I mean, we went over to someone's house after their concert and made brick oven pizzas. That was great. You know, we still got together and did things despite choir, so that way, we could feel more connected to make better music if that makes sense.

9. In what ways does the conductor demonstrate empathy towards choir members?

CMIP1:

I would say choosing your rep is a huge thing. Being able to push your community, but also being able to do the music at the same time. Yeah, it's kind of a fine line of being able to push them to make this song sound great, but not being too over-push and where they don't enjoy singing, and I'd say that's more on a conductor knowing how to choose rep. But then, besides that, you also have to know each person individually. Like if you know this person struggles with this, you can't just be like, "Ohh, you're bad; you need to, you know, get better at this one thing." Instead, the conductor will be like, "OK, let's work on this." You know, let's work as a choir or as a group or as different scenarios.

CMIP2:

The conductor demonstrates unconditional positive regard and empathy towards choir members by being a compassionate individual himself, communicating with us during performances through his eye contact and conducting to pull us out of any mistakes that may be made, and being understanding, while still maintaining a clear and communicative expectation of the choir. Furthermore, he often checks on and supports individuals who may be struggling with anything musically or personally.

CMIP3:

I mean, I know I mentioned this earlier, but just like listening to them and what they have to say about what they need during their life, you know, they might have their own personal problems,

family emergencies, other schedules, and other things going on. Just having empathy towards that person and understanding what they're going through and not just blowing them to the side is always just a great example for everybody to have and receive. So that way, they understand, like, "oh," this is how we're going to be treated here. I am respected. I am valued in this choir, and I enjoy being here.

10. Have you ever experienced a situation where the conductor's empathy positively impacted the choir dynamic?

CMIP1:

Yeah, many times. Whenever you have one of those crazy community members who are just, they do some of the most random things, if it is even just whistling through the solo. I mean, just being able to keep your cool and not stopping the whole rehearsal and being like, "Yeah, you can't do that." Instead, just being able to continue and just act professionally. I mean, that's one of the positive things, or I mean, I just think being patient and understanding with the community is a big thing.

CMIP2:

Yes. Because the director was so motivating to members to become better musicians and willing to take time out of his schedule apart from normal rehearsal times we were able to accomplish singing a major work called "Te Deum" by Michael John Trotta, and ascend to a new and higher level of musicality among every choir member. That experience allowed us to accomplish even more difficult pieces in the next performances.

CMIP3:

I would say yes. I guess it's something that a lot of people don't really think about. I think, "we're not getting this. No, we're messing it up over and over and over again." Instead of flying off the handle of being angry and stomping out, "you suck," saying, "hey, it's OK. Take a break for a second. We're going to come back. We're going to do it again. Don't be discouraged. We are all going to get it. It's OK if you really feel like you can't get it. The person next to you is going to cover that for you." You know nothing harsh. Nothing. We just overall were encouraging and empathetic towards everybody and their skills and range, especially in the community, and a lot of our people in the community choir were much older and really couldn't hit those notes as well. And you know, we did. It was not their fault. It was just, they're just all there. Instead of being angry about it, they're just empathetic. Like, hey, "instead of going that high since no one can really hit it, we're going to take it down a little bit and do this instead." So that way, it fits our voices better, and it'll sound better. And we're really making music here, you know, things like that.

11. In your opinion, how has the conductor's servant leadership style impacted the overall atmosphere and success of the community choir?

CMIP1:

I think it impacts the atmosphere dramatically. I think whenever you have a servant leader conductor I mean you can just tell that the community or the students are they just want to be there. You know, it's not a class or a group that they're like, "Ohh, we're just here to sing, you know." No, like you're here to have a good time while singing and growing in as musicians, just enjoying the music and building that music around other people.

CMIP2:

Through the demonstration of his own musicianship and skills, compassion, communication, and empathy, the director's leadership style motivated choir members to become better musicians themselves which ultimately impacted the choir's success and abilities to perform more frequently and consistently more challenging repertoire.

CMIP3:

I mean, we have a very talented professor, and he believed in all of us, despite our lack of practice and all these other things. But I think we all know who we're talking about anyway. But you know, they were very empathetic towards these things and cared a lot, believed in us anyway, and pushed us to our limits to make us go further and further and further. And sometimes we would get upset about it. But the students as well. But we never wanted to quit. We never wanted to give up, and we were all going through the same thing and working together to continue bettering ourselves and each other. As the chorale learned from our professor to be those things, we were able to bring that to the community choir and share it with everyone else around us. And we're all going through the same thing. We're all going to be successful. We're going to do the best that we can. It's not going to be absolutely 100% perfect, but it's still going to be great, and people are going to feel that. And just overall, I think that kind of aspect of passing it down from the professor to the students and to the community is something that impacted the whole choir in a very good way. I mean, I really enjoyed that aspect of it.

12. What suggestions do you have for further enhancing the impact of servant leadership within the choir?

CMIP1:

I'd say just good people. You can always get good music, but good people are hard to find.

CMIP2:

I think the conductor is fantastic about meeting his choir where they are musically, and each concert, as they get better, selects one or two pieces that challenge them more than the last time. This approach works well for motivating the members of the choir to be better musically and eventually gets them sightreading more effectively and successfully. Additionally, with consistent communication about watching the director, it becomes easier for members to be able to predict what the director will want for the music, such as cut-offs, vowels, and proper diction.

CMIP3:

Honestly, just teaching the choir overall to support each other, you know, not being angry if the person next to you gets the note wrong and just being like, "Hey, like you might have messed that up a little bit, but that's OK we could fix this if you want, I could help you," or enabling the student to talk to the professor about their problem instead of directly talking to other students or community members. Just make sure that not only are you working on music with your students

and your community, but making sure that they are connected; not that you should get involved in any drama, obviously, because we know how that goes. However, the professor is trying to connect with their students as a professor to understand them as a person. And understanding what they need, how they learn, and helping them to the best of your ability to do that, even if that's a, "Hey, like you should pair up with that person over there because they learn the same way you do, and you guys are going to learn from each other better," you know, just understanding what they need and helping them get connected. So they can improve each other.

Appendix I: Community Partner Interview Transcript

1. How would you rate the effectiveness of communication between your organization and the choir?

CPIP1:

Yes, it's almost always positive. We've been working on expanding the outreach of the choral. Because we've kind of that the crowd has not recovered from COVID yet, it's not back up to the 70-80 people it had before. So, we're working on getting our name out more in this piece we're doing next week. There are going to be interviews on TV with them. Composer and that sort of thing to kind of drum up more interest and stuff. But yeah, it's generally positive. People like it particularly the people at a local organization where it started. I mean, they just love the crowd. They come out in droves.

CPIP2:

The level of communication between the choir director, the organization and director I work for, and other staff members of that same organization was extremely efficient and professional. The directors both met with one another frequently to discuss musical outreach opportunities for recruiting endeavors at several of the rural high schools that fell under that same grant and together, we were able to hold several successful events like traveling to have both the community singing groups and high school choirs perform for one another, as well as group concerts. As a tutor, many of the students were also graduates of some of those same rural high schools; therefore I was able to communicate with them and the director, who was also teaching several of the music classes at the time, as often as I needed to best help the students academically with several of their courses and assignments in both music and general education courses. I really appreciated that the choir director was open and encouraged the students to feel comfortable with asking for help from me.

CPIP3:

Rating the effectiveness of communication using a scale model, I would say that it would be a 6 out of 10. We, as an organization, have worked hard to increase effective communication across the organization. We have found that a weekly check-in staff meeting has proven effective and has increased both awareness of strengths and needs and effectiveness.

2. How has the conductor's servant leadership impacted the collaboration between the community choir and your organization?

CPIP1:

Well, we're working together on this piece we're doing next week. The community choir I correspond with was part of a consortium that paid for this new work, and we are the Southern premiere of this work, the first time below the Mason-Dixon line and the composer is somebody our conductor had worked with in the past. And so that was the strong connection, and the conductor has really worked in order to get the local big personality to help with promotion, both TV and radio. The local personality is also a musician himself and plays the clarinet. He is going to be our narrator, and he's well-known in the community. So, putting his name out there as the one who's going to read the poems before we sing them allows this performance to reach more people since I've been in this group for the past two years. Outside of the actual chorale, we're working to get people involved and get them excited about it.

CPIP2:

I think that because the communication between the servant leader conductor, the organization director, and the other staff was so frequent, it really helped to enhance the success of the events we were able to collaborate on. Because of that frequent and open communication, the servant leader conductor was able to also gain access to communication with rural high school choir directors and ended up making some highly valuable connections with them and their students. It was really quite amazing to see and hear the difference in the sound of these choirs after the servant leader had been invited and allowed to come in and teach or work with them, and I do believe that it had an overall positive effect on their music literacy because when you look at the big picture, now they are singing with cleaner diction, pure vowels, and clear cut-offs, watching the conductor more often, and able to collaborate on joint music with community choirs that include highly skilled adult musicians, as well as college-level singers.

CPIP3:

Understanding the important work of a servant leader in any capacity has proven especially impactful as servant leadership emphasizes empathy, humility, and selflessness.

3. In what ways has the collaboration with the choir positively impacted your organization or community?

CPIP1:

Well, for the chorale, this is the most recent published work they've done. For Christmas, they did Elaine Hagenberg's "Illuminare." There was a little pushback within the chorale from some people who think we ought to just do something different, and my thing has always been well there was a time when Handel's Messiah was the latest in, you know the latest thing published. Same thing with the Saint John Passion, which they're going to do next year. People said, well, you know, you're right. Yeah, the work has to start somewhere and, you know, build up. I mean, you know, any group that wants a big crowd is going to do Handel's "Messiah." It's this understanding of we're not just doing old dead white guys stuff, you know, I said that to somebody, and they agreed, "You're right. We're not doing old dead white guy stuff." We actually did a woman this time, you know. And it was, it was kind of eye-opening for some people. To kind of experience a broader base of, no, not that dead old guy. Not all dead white guy music is all bad. But to expand it and bring in these other folks whose works, you know, the only fought with it is that they happen to be born in the 20th century and instead of in the 16th century, you know, the 80s. So that's been a learning curve, not only inside the chorale but also for the community to understand that we are doing new work and the composer, who wrote "Love," which is the name of the 10- 10-movement work the chorale, is doing, will be introduced. Hey, it's really nice work, and you could do just a section or just movements of it. You would have to do the whole thing if you were putting a choir together, but it's, you know, it's got works by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and you know. You know all kinds of love poetry, but that's one of the things that that's been good. Not only inside the chorale to experience new works and from newer composers but also for the community to experience them as well.

CPIP2:

I think that because the choir and its servant leader conductor went out of their way on so many different accounts to reach out and travel to the rural high schools and perform with and for one another, it made a lasting impact on the high schools, causing more students to actually consider and attend the college, thus benefiting the organization's program results because those are also students that we can engage with in several ways. Another way that benefited the my

organization was in collaborating with the choir director is that funds to bring in a guest artist were offered to the director, which allowed for more opportunity for the highest standard of education for the current students, which I think is fantastic. Any time students can hear from someone else outside of an organization that isn't their own is an opportunity to learn something and gain knowledge that they didn't have before or might not have otherwise had the opportunity to gain.

CPIP3:

I have witnessed its impact across entire organizations, helping others achieve their full potential through genuine leadership, approachability, and attentive listening.

4. How has the choir actively engaged with your community or organization?

CPIP1:

Well, we are given tickets to sell. Although at \$15 a ticket, you know, we're not making a whole lot. In fact, we keep it low to help more people be exposed to this. It's not like the Richmond Symphony, whose tickets are, you know, \$25. You can come and see us and now save a few bits. Every Christmas, we also sing Christmas carols at the lighting of the town Christmas tree. After we sing there, we then go to the train station and sing Christmas carols. People flock around us when we do that kind of thing because, you know, they're hearing Christmas carols and four and five-part harmony. You know, acapella, and they just love it, and it gets our name out. You know, people would say, well, you know, who are you? Do you know what church you are with? And we go well; actually, we're in a community chorale. We do rehearse at a local church. We've recruited some newer singers and some younger singers from there. Which has been good cause you don't want to choir filled with just white-haired people like me. You know you want people who still have some breath control. And for the chorus that I direct, even though that's a contained unit, these are people that, I mean, they dress up to come to, to practice. It's exciting. It's part of their one hour a week and they just get all excited. And if I'm not there 1/2 an hour early, they start calling me. "Where are you? You are coming today, aren't you?" You know, they get so excited about it. And so, we sing for two vesper services, one in the fall and one in the spring, and then we do a Christmas program, and then we do a spring program. And we are the only music program there that does not just come and sing however you want. We do four-part harmony and all of that. And they're a fun group too. Even though you have warbles like this, that's why you know 90-year-olds used to hit a high C.

CPIP2:

The community choir and a local high school, which is one of the rural schools my organization served, were able to collaborate on a joint concert which had an enormously successful attendance. Other efforts, like taking the choir to another rural high school served by my organization, to perform for their choir and have their choir perform for us and work with one another, was also another successful event that I was able to attend. Furthermore, the choir director, who was also teaching other music classes at the time, also reached out to me while I was working as a professional tutor on several occasions to help students who were struggling in classes. We were able to successfully collaborate in helping students with music theory, aural theory, foreign language diction, and even some general education classes that they were taking, ultimately helping them to become more stable academically and become better musicians. Finally, the choir director also reached out and traveled to several other rural high schools served by my grant to work with their choirs, make connections, and recruit for the program.

CPIP3:

The choir, in my setting, offers a model of community through one common goal, purpose, networking of resources, and being positive influencers.

5. Has the choir's engagement contributed to a sense of community in your organization?

CPIP1:

Well, members of my organization all know each other. And so, it's just another chance for them to get together and not be so isolated from the chorale. When working with the chorale we partner with, we've started wearing name tags, so we've learned and we're learning everybody's name. The first year I was there, I knew very few people because you'd ask them their name once, and then if you asked them again, they would look at you like you had horns growing out of your head. So now we all wear name tags. Everybody's called by name. The director is very careful to call people by name when talking to them. We have folks that have those that drive in, you know, have been able to form carpools and stuff for that. But because of that, they've been getting to know each other; they've been able to form our pools and get to know each other and become friends. Which helps when you're singing and I think you don't take yourself quite so seriously when you develop those friendships and stuff. And when somebody you know, the Sopranos, was having a real hard time with something Monday night and the director said, "Sopranos. You don't have the melody, and you've got to count, which is what. Everybody else in the in the chorale has to do. You have to do it here;" you know and everybody could laugh, but it was also true, you know? But he said it in a way that, you know could get them going.

CPIP2:

Yes, because in collaborating in joint concerts and making efforts to recruit using performances, the beautifully sounding choir piqued the interest of many parents and students to seek enrollment. It also helped to make lasting and meaningful connections between several faculty and staff of the rural high schools, members of the community choir, and educational organizational program. Because I was involved in both the community choir and my organization, I was also able to bring awareness and attention to our rapidly expanding grant program and make bonded connections with students by tutoring them and chaperoning on trips.

CPIP3:

Yes, as the choir demonstrates, a common love of music promotes teamwork, strategic bonds, and partnerships in ministry for the common goal of worship for the community or organization.

6. How would you describe the conductor's role in facilitating and sustaining the collaboration?

CPIP1:

Well, he is a perfectionist, of course, to a point. Umm, he'll give up on it Monday night at the last rehearsal. Umm, he'll push and push and push, and then he stops pushing and just tries to get people to come in on time, and that sort of which is what every conductor does right before or performance. You can't push right up to the end. He knows his music. He's well respected because he is so knowledgeable, and he's got a fine ear. He's got a good baritone voice, and so, you know, he will sing the solo interludes between when we come in and that sort of thing, which is all very helpful to us. Umm, the pianist is absolutely wonderful. Later this month, he's going to play a Mozart concerto with the Symphony Orchestra downtown. So you know, they're

fine high-caliber folks. And it's that kind of fact that he knows his stuff, and people respect them even with the folks we've got. There are probably six of us who conduct or have conducted other groups. One did the equivalent of the chorale in a nearby city for years, and he's now moved here and is singing in the chorale. He doesn't want to conduct anymore because of his age and that sort of thing, but he enjoys being in the crowd, and he wouldn't have stayed in the crowd if the director didn't know his stuff. And I don't, I wouldn't stay if somebody couldn't teach me something new, you know? So, we learned from him and learned how to how to do things.

CPIP2:

With frequent and open communication between the conductor, the director, and its staff, and the rural high schools' choir directors, the collaboration was naturally sustained. We always knew what events were being planned and where things were in the process of making those events happen because the director never failed to keep us updated, and he was always excited about progress. In planning to help students academically, the director frequently updated me on which students requested help and connected me with those students to set an appointment for a tutoring session.

CPIP3:

As critical. This role serves as both a model for the choir and the whole organization.

7. Have there been instances where the conductor's leadership positively influenced the collaboration?

CPIP1:

For the commissioned work the chorale is premiering, we have a paid baritone soloist, and a paid soprano soloist. And then there's some other solo and other ensemble stuff taking place. He had people audition from the chorale, but he had them audition and placed them with different little solo segments or part of this octet or whatever. He has been working with them to get them ready to perform, and some of them are professional or semiprofessional singers. Uh, a lot of them aren't. And so, he's been really working with them, coming early and meeting with them and getting them ready to sing the parts. And we ran half of the music the other night and they sounded wonderful. I mean, because he had worked with them so that they would succeed. During the performance and all of that, it just makes everybody feel good and more receptive to whatever he wants us to do.

CPIP2:

I think that because the conductor's leadership style was so open, inviting, and positive, it helped to make a meaningful connection between my organization and the community choir. He was often open to ideas from the grant director about events, programming, and suggestions, especially in collaborating with bringing in a guest artist/director to work with the choir for the opportunity to bring the utmost expression, musicality, and education to both its students and community members.

CPIP3:

Yes, in promoting the understanding of a common goal and purpose through the organizing, training, and management of a large group.

8. How does the conductor's servant leadership style contribute to the community choir's community engagement efforts?

CPIP1:

Well, when we are performing, he is absolutely charming with the audience. And he will talk a little bit about the work or be very gracious about what's going on. He's not always charming during the rehearsals, but you know that when you've done it and done it, done it, done it, and there's still not counting and they're still not getting that flat like they're supposed to. You know and all conductors have been there. "This is the note. Think it" Then he goes back, and he tries to figure out a way to get us there. And that's when I learned a lot about how to do some things to get people where I want them to be because I can't push the chorus that I'm working with like he can push the chorale cause it's a, you know, it's a different age group. It's a different feel, and of course, we're doing South Pacific; we're doing lightweight stuff as compared to the chorale's Brahms's Requiem last year. Just the way he works to try to get the sound he wants. He is always interesting. And then to watch him, if you watch any of the stuff that we've got up on the website, the way he conducts is not the way I'd like to work with the conductor. When he's saying you got to count this and stuff, I'd like to have the beat rather than this kind of rolling stuff that he does sometimes. Umm, but that just makes me have to count it better. A nice person overall. He's not the stereotypical musician kind of thing. He's a nice guy who's kind. And that comes across to the community. Uh, with his graciousness and his big smiles when we've done something right. And then we all smile. You know, it's obvious from the congregation or the folks behind him that he's done something that has pleased us all because we all burst out into these big smiles cause yes, that was a hard part, and we did it.

CPIP2:

Because the communication from the servant leader is so open, effective, and inviting, he made the community choir members feel comfortable in socializing with one another, making connections within the community with other organizations, and frequently made information about other events available. During my involvement in both community choir and my job, I saw several community members frequently engage in and attend other events. The servant leader conductor was encouraging the choir members to support guest speaker events, career fairs, and other events by my organization, as well as involve themselves in and attend other departments' programs like plays and community musicals. This definitely made it easy to communicate and connect with several people within the community and allowed our choir and programs to be heard and advocated for to the highest degree.

CPIP3:

I believe the conductor's role and leadership offer the community an opportunity to see a program-centric, purpose-driven, emotional-intelligent, genuine trustworthy, people-valuing, and community-connected leader. This is truly the definition of a servant leader.