THE NONPROFIT BOARD SERVANT LEADER:
A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR IN NONPROFIT BOARD PRESIDENTS FROM THE PERCEPTION OF NONPROFIT CHIEF STAFF OFFICERS USING LIDEN'S GLOBAL SERVANT LEADERSHIP SCALE

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School,

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USING LIDEN'S GLOBAL SERVANT LEADERSHIP SCALE

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it is worthy of acceptance.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to fill the gap in the current body of research regarding the leadership behavior characteristics, specifically servant leadership traits, exhibited by volunteer nonprofit board of director presidents. Using Liden's (2008, 2015) Global Servant Leadership Scale, a survey instrument was developed and administered to chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations, asking respondents to reflect on the behavior traits of their nonprofit's board president.

Data from the study participants (n = 133) were analyzed to determine a) if servant leadership behavior is exhibited in nonprofit board presidents and to what extent; b) if differences exist in the servant leadership traits of 501(c)3 nonprofit board presidents and the presidents of other types of 501(c) nonprofit organizations; and, c) if a difference exists between servant leadership behavior in board presidents and the nonprofit organization characteristics of organization focus, annual budget size, and geographic scope of the organization's mission, and demographic characteristics of nonprofit board presidents including age, tenure, length of volunteer involvement, and gender identity.

The study addresses gaps in the current literature by advancing empirical research using a reliable and valid instrument to assess servant leadership and the use of empirical

research in the nonprofit sector to study the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents. The findings of the study suggest that nonprofit board presidents do exhibit servant leadership behavior, as defined by Liden's seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping others grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically). On average nonprofit board presidents score highest in exhibiting behaving ethically and empowering. The sample studied scored lowest on average in putting others first and helping others grow and succeed.

The study findings found significant difference in the behavior dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically between nonprofit board presidents of city/locally focused nonprofits and those with a inter/national geographic service scope. Additionally, significant difference was found in leadership behavior of the dimension conceptual skills between nonprofit board presidents age 40 to 55 and those age 56 to 75 years old.

Keywords: servant leadership, nonprofit research, nonprofit board president.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the earliest days of colonial America, groups of people have formed associations along shared common interests as a means of exchanging information and ideas. These associations and the role they played in the development of communities, providing services, and as a means of social, professional, and political organization were specifically noted by Alexis De Tocqueville, the French historian and writer, who spent considerable time in the United States in the 1800s studying its citizenry and democracy in action. In his seminal work, *Democracy in America*, De Tocqueville wrote:

> Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools. If it is proposed to inculcate some truth or to foster some feeling by the encouragement of a great example, they form a society (1835/2004, p. 22).

The formation and grouping of associated societies remains true today. According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, in 2018 over 1.56 million nonprofit organizations existed in the United States as registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) (McKeve, 2018). This includes public charities, private foundations, and membership-based associations. Nonprofit organizations provide a

bevy of educational, professional, health care, social affiliation, and social services, which account for 9.2% of paid employment in the United States (McKever, 2018). Meanwhile, membership based association are a means of providing community, professional development, and are a primary mechanism for the delivery of adult education through credentialing and certification programs (Gazley & Bowers, 2013).

Background

Day-to-day operations of these not-for-profit organizations are often run by professional staff, but these organizations ultimately are governed by and led by a volunteer board of directors. This group of nonprofit organizational leaders is the largest sector of volunteers in the country—an estimated 26% of the adult population in America (Blackwood, Roeger, & Pettijohn, 2018). This model of balancing mission implementation and operations with governance and strategic oversight, mirrors that familiar to many in how school districts are led and administered. In the school district context, an elected or chosen school board of directors (comprised of volunteers) provides governance and strategic leadership to a superintendent (the chief staff member of the district) who is responsible for the execution of curriculum, learning assessments, and day-to-day operations with staff and educators. Given the importance of this similar organizational model in the nonprofit sector for the delivery of such important social and human services, it is therefore important to understand the leaders at the top of these organizations—specifically, the volunteer board president.

Professionals working in the nonprofit sector frequently cite anecdotal observations about good and best practices within the field of work. This includes stories that range from praise for the perfect president to chief staff officers commiserating over

horror stories of ineffective, inept, disengaged leadership (Heiserman, 2005). General observations aside, there is a need for empirical research to validate or dispel the generalizations frequently made about volunteer leadership in the nonprofit sector (Harrison, Murray, & Cornforth, 2014; Renz, 2012).

Problem Statement

There is a lack of information about the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents (Freiwirth, Hiland, Burns, Gifford, & Beck, 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2014). Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical research on servant leadership, which is often associated with leadership in the nonprofit sector given the charitable nature of the sector (Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, & Liden, 2019; Parris and Peachy, 2013).

In the last two decades a rise in scrutiny occurred over the leadership of and dispensation of funds within the nonprofit sector, which resulted in the call and need for greater organizational transparency (Freiwirth, Hiland, Burns, Gifford, & Beck, 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2014; Heiserman, 2005; Holland, 2002; Ostrower, 2007). This transparency largely falls on a nonprofit's board of directors, comprised of volunteers who are passionate about and in support of the organization's mission (Brown & Guo, 2010). These volunteers are ultimately responsible for the legal oversight of the organization and its paid top professional (Brown, 2007). Due to this level of responsibility entrusted in these volunteers, it is important to understand this audience, through its exhibited leadership behavior.

Prior studies reveal much about the form and function and structural aspects of what effective nonprofits organizations and their volunteer leadership do and do not do (Renz, 2012). However, these studies have not fully addressed the behaviors exhibited

by boards of directors. Further still, there is little body of research on the individual most senior within a nonprofit organization, the volunteer board president (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2012; Renz, 2012).

Without this knowledge and understanding of volunteer behavior, professionals and volunteers alike within the nonprofit sector continue to recruit and train nonprofit board members and officers in traditional ways, which vary in effectiveness and impact (Gill, Flynn, & Reissing, 2005; Renz 2012). As the understanding of leadership has evolved over the last 50 years, simultaneously so has the application of leadership behavior knowledge within the nonprofit sector (Harrison, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Harrison & Murray, 2012; Herman & Renz, 2000; Renz, 2012).

The volunteer board president serves as the executive officer of any nonprofit organization (Brown & Guo, 2010). Given the important leadership role this volunteer serves, it is crucial those working in the field of nonprofit administration and association management understand the behavior traits of these vital volunteers (Renz, 2012). The work of Renz (2012) and Harrison and Murray (2015) give attention to and focus on the structural components of organizational management and the activities of a board of directors as a whole, but there is limited research on the specific role of volunteer board president (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; Harrison, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Herman & Rentz, 2008). Additionally, research on behavior-based practices of leadership within the volunteer board president role is limited and the literature to-date does not address this area of research (Harrison & Murray, 2012; Renz, 2012; van Dierendonck, 2015).

Given the service-oriented environment inherent within nonprofit organizations, one important leadership approach to study is that of servant leadership (Parris and

Peachey, 2013; Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, & Liden, 2019). A means of understanding organizational leadership within the nonprofit arena is to understand if board presidents possess and exhibit the traits of servant leadership. This lack of information regarding servant leadership and nonprofit board president behavior is a gap in the current research and literature in both leadership theory research and the nonprofit sector literate and is explored in this study. Understanding the leadership behavior of board presidents informs future practices for volunteer development for professionals working in the nonprofit sector. Such knowledge may aid the nonprofit sector's response to society's need for and call for transparency in the leadership from and operations of nonprofit organizations.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to address the gap that exists in the current body of research on the leadership behavior characteristics, specifically servant leadership traits, exhibited by volunteer nonprofit board of director presidents. The research conducted in this study gathered and analyzed data on the perception nonprofit chief staff officers have on their respective organization's board president leadership behavior.

The study focused on three main research questions. First, what, if any, difference exists between the leadership behavior of a charitable 501(c)3 designated nonprofit board president and that of the leadership behavior exhibited by board presidents of other 501(c) tax designations (such as trade associations, membership organizations, political action groups, or social clubs). This question is explored assessing the seven dimensions of servant leadership identified by Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2008, 2015),

from the perception of nonprofit board president followers, the organization's chief staff officer.

Next, the study sought to identify what, if any, relationship exists between servant leadership in nonprofit board presidents and nonprofit organization characteristics of classification type, geographic scope, and budget size; and, finally, the study sought advance the body of knowledge related to nonprofit board president leadership behavior and the empirical research on servant leadership, given the gap in the present literature on these questions (Eva, et al., 2019; Harrison & Murray, 2014; van Dierendonck, 2011).

By assessing exhibited behavior reflective of servant leadership, leaders, paid or unpaid, may be better informed as to the motivations behind volunteerism within the nonprofit sector. With this information and understanding of leadership behavior nonprofit organizations may make strategic decisions as to their recruitment, retention, training, and development of volunteer, nonpaid members of the boards of directors. To address this research purpose this research study administered Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale instrument to a convenient sample of chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations, asking respondents to reflect on the servant leadership behavior exhibited by their organization's respective board of director chair or president.

Research Questions

To better understand leadership behavior exhibited by nonprofit board presidents, the study examined the following questions:

RQ1: Descriptive statistics report on the demographic information of the study participants, including length of board service, board presidency tenure, age, and sex.

Additionally, using statistical analysis of the data, the author sought to provide insight on leadership differences by exploring the following research questions:

RQ2: Do nonprofit board presidents exhibit Liden's (2008; 2015) seven dimensions of servant leadership?

a. Emotional healing.

b. Creating value for the community.

c. Conceptual skills.

d. Empowering.

e. Helping subordinates grow and succeed.

f. Putting subordinates first.

g. Behaving ethically.

And if so, to what extent?

RQ3: Does a difference exist between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations?

RQ4: Does a difference exist between servant leadership dimensions in board presidents and the characteristics of nonprofit organizations, including:

a. Nonprofit organization focus.

b. Size of nonprofit organization based on annual operating budget.

c. Geographic scope of the nonprofit organization.

Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses for this study are:

H_o1: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008; 2015)

seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

H_o2: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations.

H_o3_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o3_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

H_o3_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

Conceptual Framework

One way to understand a problem of practice is to view the research topic through a theoretical framework (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012). The application of such framework identifies central concepts underlying the research topic and provides a foundational perspective for analysis (Mertens, 2005; Bryant, 2004). In considering the behavior exhibited by volunteers, an appropriate framework for analysis is leadership theory. Specifically servant leadership is a theory of prevalence within the nonprofit environment to use when assessing volunteer behavior, given its origins in service to others and its altruistic nature (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010; Eva et al., 2019; Goodwin, 2011; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Silvers, 2012).

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership as a leadership concept was first formally developed in Robert K. Greenleaf's 1970 essay, *The Servant Leader*. In this seminal work, informed by his 40 years of management work at AT&T, Greenleaf stated, "Servant-leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (1970, p. 13). Greenleaf's leadership practice promotes an environment of trust, collaboration, compassion and moral consideration between leaders and followers (Greenleaf, 1977). At the heart of the leadership practice is a strong sense of service to others (Spears, 2004). This theory is reflected in volunteerism and service provided by volunteers in nonprofit board leadership roles (Sinsi, 1993).

Maslow (2011) constructs a hierarchy of human needs based first on one's physiological needs, which then progressively leads to the highest need, that of self-actualization. It is in this advanced area of need where actionable-behaviors, such as volunteerism and service occur (Beck, 2004; Sinsi, 1993; Shafritz, Ott, & Jang, 2011); however, the manifestation of this actionable-behavior, while focused on service—may be inwardly focused (on the ego of self) or outwardly focused in an altruistic manner of service to others (Greenleaf, 1977; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Maslow, 1949/2011).

Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale

In this study, Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale was administered to chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations to reflect on the leadership behavior traits of nonprofit board presidents. Liden's work builds upon prior research to provide an improved instrument from previous servant leadership assessments available (van Dierendonck, 2011). Given its sound design and construct validity, use of the instrument

adds to the body of empirical research on servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019). Liden, et al., identify seven dimensions of servant leadership behavior traits, including: emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering others, helping others grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically (2008, 2015).

Nonprofit Board Presidents

Understanding these concepts, the leadership behavior exhibited by volunteer board presidents through the conceptual frame of servant leadership theory will assist organizations in capitalizing on their human and financial resources (Silvers, 2012). The identification of the point where organizational characteristics meets volunteer leadership behavior will be the point for the continued growth of the nonprofit sector (Harrison & Murray, 2016; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Preston & Brown, 2004). And, through the work of the voluntary sector, this will allow, as de Tocqueville identified, the capacity to improve human conditions and for all to grow and improve together.

Research Design and Methods

This research study was developed to address a problem of practice within the body of nonprofit research—a lack of understanding in the leadership behavior traits of volunteer board presidents. The researcher explored this topic from the approach of posed research questions, by the administration and distribution of a survey instrument for quantitative and descriptive statistical analysis. Quantitative research is used to elaborate and modify existing theory by matching the theory against data gathered (Mertens, 2005). In this case, the study tests whether characteristics of Greenleaf's (1977) theory of servant leadership are present in the behavior of nonprofit board

presidents through the use of Liden's (2008, 2015) quantitative Global Servant Leadership Scale assessment.

Study participants (n = 133) consisted of chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations, as designated by a 501(c) tax-exempt classification by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The convenient sample was drawn from the larger population of nonprofit organizations the researcher had access to through personal and professional networks over a two-month period of time. Participants were recruited to comprise the convenient sample through outreach by the researcher through professional association networks, peer-to-peer referrals, list-serv distribution, posting in online discussions and forums, inclusion in professional network e-newsletters, and the researcher's network of known contacts. Participant recruitment continued until the necessary sample size was achieved. Participants completed the survey instrument online, which gathered data about organizational characteristics, board president demographic information and the servant leadership behavior exhibited by the board president, from the perception of the chief staff officer.

Assumptions & Limitations

It is important to identify key assumptions that are made within the scope of a study (Creswell, 2009). Although debate continues as to the breadth of empirical research supporting the theory of servant leadership, this study assumes the leadership theory to be sound and one worthy of further analysis within the context of this study (Eva et al., 2019; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004; van Dierendonck, 2011). The methodology and design of the study was carefully constructed so as to ensure sound

research methods, data collection, data protection, and proper statistical analysis (Creswell, 2009; Fink, 2009).

A further assumption positions the study within the constraints of its scope and the participants from which data were collected. Although criteria were spelled out for consideration to participate in the study, the researcher assumes the following regarding participant responses: a) all respondents were the designated chief staff officer for their respective organization; and, b) when asked to reflect on a board president, the respondents kept a singular individual in mind for the duration of the survey.

Definition of Key Terms

To fully understand the language used in this research study, it is important to provide a definition of key terms and terminology used (Creswell, 2009). These terms are defined within the context of this study and based on their use within this study (Becker, 1998).

501(c) organization. A nonprofit organization in the federal law of the United States is recognized by the Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c) and is one of over 29 types of nonprofit organizations exempt from some federal income taxes. Section 501(c)3 is the portion of the US Internal Revenue Code that allows for federal tax exemption of nonprofit organizations, specifically those that are considered public charities, private foundations or private operating foundations. Other 501(c) designated organizations may be federal tax exempt, but not are classified as charitable in nature.

Board of directors. The board comprised of volunteers that governs a 501(c) nonprofit organization. This board possesses the legal responsibility for the oversight and management of the organization. Other common terms include board of governors,

board of trustees or governing board. This body is required to meet the three legal duties of a nonprofit organization of care, loyalty and obedience, to the organization's fiduciary operations, its governing by-laws, and its mission fulfillment to its stakeholders.

Board president. The individual volunteer who chairs and leads the board of directors. In most nonprofit organizations this is an unpaid, volunteer position. Another common term used for this role is chair or chairperson of the board. In this research study, the servant leadership behavior traits of the board president are assessed.

Chief staff officer. The individual in the highest staff leadership position. This is often a paid, fulltime, professional, but some nonprofit organizations have a part-time or volunteer chief staff officer (CSO). This position may also be referred to as the chief executive officer (CEO) or executive director, depending on the type and size of the nonprofit organization. In this research study, this audience comprises the target respondents for the sample.

Nonprofit organization. A corporation or an association that conducts business for the benefit of the general public without shareholders and without a profit motive. Formal designation is granted by the Internal Revenue Service, permitting such organizations to be tax-exempt, such as 501(c)3 organizations, which are charitable in nature.

Servant leadership. An approach to leadership that focuses on developing individuals to their fullest potential in the areas of task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities. A leadership concept proposed first by Robert Greenleaf in his seminal writings and essays in the 1970s. For this study, it is defined as, "an (1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested

through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interest, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self toward concern for others within the organization and the larger community" (Eva et al., 2019, p. 114). It comprises three features of motive, mode, and mindset (Eva et al., 2019).

Tax-exempt organization. The formal designation given by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to nonprofit organizations that are exempt from some federal taxes and in some cases state taxes. These groups are identified and defined within Section 501(c) of the U.S. Tax Code. As of 2019, the IRS identified 29 different classifications and categories of 501(c) tax-exempt organizations. The majority of tax-exempt organizations are classified as charitable in nature and focus, with the 501(c)3 designation.

Volunteer. A person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. Volunteers comprise nonprofit boards of directors, including the board presidency or chair role.

The terms defined above are referenced throughout this research study.

Significance of the Research Study

This study and the research questions explored within are important in filling the existing gap in the current body of research about nonprofit board president behavior and in advancing empirical research about servant leadership. There is a plentiful body of work on nonprofit research focused on organizational structure and board development, but little research has been conducted on behavior and on the specific role of the volunteer board president (Freiwirth, et al, 2016; Harris, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Hilland, 2008; Renz, 2012). There is a constant need for volunteers to step into

leadership roles of these organizations, given the important delivery of programs and services provided (Ryan, Chait, & Taylor, 2012). Additionally in an era where stakeholders demand accountability from the leadership of the nonprofit organizations they support through their time, talent, and treasure, identifying quality leadership skills is essential (Ostrower, 2007; Sinsi, 1993).

Therefore, it is important for professionals working within the nonprofit administration field to understand the behavior and organizational characteristics which may impact volunteer leader behavior. Such understanding allows professionals to improve recruitment, training, selection, and retention efforts. This study and its findings adds to the body of existing literature in new ways through the identification and analysis of leadership behavior specific to that of the volunteer nonprofit board president. This knowledge further allows professionals to ensure long-term organizational success through new and expanded information regarding nonprofit leadership.

Additionally, while servant leadership as a leadership theory has been conceptualized and discussed for the last 40 years, it has remained loosely defined (van Dierendonck, 2011). The last 10 years have seen a growth in empirical research and the emergence of valid measures for assessing servant leadership behavior (Eva et al., 2019); but, the need for continued empirical research within various contextual environments remains necessary to add to the body of research to further inform servant leadership theory (Sendjaya, Eva, Butar-Butar, Robin, Castles, 2018).

Summary

Nonprofit organizations are a significant sector within American society—both historically and currently. These organizations provide a bevy of educational,

professional, health care, social affiliation, and social services. Although day-to-day operations are run by professional staff (chief staff officers), these organizations ultimately are led by and provided leadership from a volunteer board of directors. Given the importance of this organizational model for the delivery of such important services, the scope of charitable support donated to the sector, the size of the sector's workforce, and the extent of volunteerism supporting the sector, it is important to understand the leaders at the top of these organizations—specifically, the volunteer board president.

It is crucial that those working in the field of nonprofit management understand the leadership behavior traits of these vital volunteers. The purpose of this quantitative research study was to identify the servant leadership behavior characteristics exhibited by nonprofit board of director presidents. The study assessed whether nonprofit board presidents exhibit seven characteristics of servant leadership and what, if any, difference exists in the behavior exhibited across type of nonprofit designation.

In an era where stakeholders demand accountability from the leadership of the nonprofit organizations they support philanthropically or with an investment of time and resources, identifying quality leadership skills is essential to inform the nonprofit body of research that will enhance the profession through understanding of its volunteer leadership. Further, the study builds upon prior empirical research in exploring further servant leadership theory as a lens to view and understand leadership behavior.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When conducting academic research it is important to consult prior research to inform current studies in guiding the research questions, identifying gaps in the literature, and informing a researcher's mastery of a topic (Galavan, 2013). This review of literature explores the evolution of servant leadership as a leadership theory of study and the contextual environment and subjects the study researched, the nonprofit sector and board presidents.

In recent years a rise in scrutiny occurred over the leadership of and dispensation of funds within the nonprofit sector, which resulted in the call and need for greater organizational transparency (Freiwirth, Hiland, Burns, Gifford & Beck, 2016; Ostrower, 2005). This transparency largely falls on a nonprofit's board of directors, comprised of volunteers who are passionate about and in support of the organization's mission (Brown & Guo, 2010). Although a board has a set of management and legal obligations it must adhere to on an annual basis, the need for exhibited leadership on the human aspects of the organization, such as external constituents and internal organization staff and volunteers, is often greater (Brown, 2007).

Increased accountability such as the disclosure of donor names, transparency in board action, and the reporting of how charitable donations are used, from the public and key stakeholders is influencing the nonprofit sector (Freiwirth et al., 2016). Hampered by scandals of the misappropriation of funds, improprieties by leaders, accusations of sexual harassment, and mission creep are just a few of the headline topics of recent years, which cast a negative light on the work of nonprofit organizations including the National Rifle

Association, the Salvation Army, the Smithsonian, and the United Way. This scrutiny and rise of accountability in the nonprofit sector is a positive call for ensuring ethical standards are met and integrity prevails. It is with this need for transparency and a call for continued focused attention on those a nonprofit organization serves that brings servant leadership to the attention of nonprofit practitioners (Fields & Winston, 2010). This national attention on the ethics of leadership in nonprofit organizations, has brought to light the continued need for further understanding of the unique leadership structure found within these organizations. While many studies have focused on the effectiveness of boards of directors as a whole, few have honed in on the specific role of the board president (Gazley & Bowers, 2013; Herman & Renz, 2010; Hiland, 2008).

Multiple researchers agree there is a need for greater empirical research on the leadership behavior of the nonprofit board president (Freiwirth et al., 2016; Harrison, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Iecovich & Bar-Mor, 2008). One leadership approach often perceived to be exhibited in this sector, given its voluntary nature, is servant leadership (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Stone et al., 2004); however, this leadership style remains loosely defined, in part due to the lack of agreement on a full definition and in finding valid assessments for research study and the need for additional empirical study on the leadership approach of servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019; Peachy & Parris, 2012; Russel, 2012; van Dierendonck, 2013). This need for additional research on servant leadership and on the behavior of board presidents in the nonprofit sector, make this an important topic for additional study, which is guided by prior research and literature.

This review of literature includes two primary focuses. First, to describe servant leadership as a leadership theory for analysis, its origins, and the measurement tools developed and utilized for assessing servant leadership in individuals. Second, to describe the contextual environment of nonprofit organizations, structure, and the application of leadership theories within this specific environment and through the leadership position of the nonprofit board president.

This literature review is presented in three sections. The first section examines leadership theory and the evolution of research on leadership. Characteristics of leadership are identified and a synthesis of theories will be discussed, which are relational and process-oriented.

The second section examines specific research related to servant leadership theory and the associated models presented by scholars who have previously attempted to build a theoretical framework for servant leadership and tools for assessing and measuring its characteristics. This examination includes key characteristics of leadership used to define servant leadership, and a synthesis of the research used to show evidence of the lack of empirical research on servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019; Joseph & Winston, 2005; Jones, Ovando & High, 2009; Russell & Stone, 2002; van Dierendonck, 2010).

In the third section research related to the nonprofit sector will be synthesized. This includes an exploration of prior research on the sector's leadership structure, the role of the board president, governance in nonprofit organizations, and the need for additional research on the leadership role of the nonprofit board president (Freiwirth et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2012; Harrison, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Hiland, 2008; Otto, 2003).

Leadership

The concept of leadership is often observed and familiar, yet not fully understood due to the complexity of the topic and its roots as a psychosocial, motivational and contextual construct (Burns, 1978; Northhouse, 2010; Yukl, 2010). Equally challenging has been the debate as to how leadership is defined. Early approaches suggest it is an individual characteristic based through a lens of power and position (Northhouse, 2010). Other research focuses on context and environment in which leadership is observed as a social constraint, specific to culture (Hosking & Morley, 1988; Letihwood & Reihl, 2003). Blending these approaches, which prevails as the leading focus of research today and its evolution over the last half-century, is that leadership is about the relationship and interactions between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2010; Yukl, 2010). Within this relationship are a myriad of leadership theories that are grounded in motivational theory, management approaches, political power theory, and psycho-social research (Northouse, 2010).

Characteristics of Leadership

In his seminal work, *Leadership*, Burns (1978) posits that leadership is defined by the relationships with others. This focus on leadership as a relationship process has been the leading approach to leadership research over the last half-century (Northhouse, 2010; Yukl, 2010). But, prior to this shift, leadership was viewed from an individual trait perspective. Trait-approach leadership placed an emphasis on the idea that leaders are special and born with talents for leadership, which in turn provides inherent power and political capital due to position or class in a hierarchy.

This trait leadership style view is reflected in how history is often studied and learned from the individual leader experience with the use of military heroes, influential presidents, and accomplished athletes (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). The seminal work by Bass (1960) and French and Raven (1959) reflect leadership roles based on positions of power and how it was then leveraged for influence. Although these works were influential, they were limited in their approach, by not accounting for the larger context or the behavior interactions between leaders and followers (Yukl, 2010).

Conversely, the prevailing philosophy of leadership today is focused on broader process-oriented theories (Northouse, 2010). This processed-focused perspective accounts for additional elements that conceptualize leadership, such as the behavior of both leaders and followers, the environment in which the interactions occur, and the relationship between leaders-followers (Yukl, 2010). The leadership-as-a-process-perspective is inherently more complex, as are the environments in which leadership behavior is demonstrated today (Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2010).

Additionally, contemporary leadership practices now place even a stronger emphasis on the shared, relational perspective where the interaction between leader and follower are key elements (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). The next section describes leadership theories that highlight these leader and follower interactions. Given the relational nature of servant leadership, between the dual focus of both the leader and followers, it is important to understand other theories with an emphasis on a leader-follower framework. Comparing and contrasting these theories to servant leadership informs the framework for this research study.

Leadership Theory

Observations of leadership behavior suggests that in some settings a leader's action is not the same towards all subordinates (or followers). The importance of potential differences in this respect and the interaction between a leader and subordinate forms the focus of Graen's leader-member exchange model or LMX theory (1975). It is also known as the vertical dyad linkage theory. The theory views leadership as consisting of a number of dyadic relationships linking the leader with a follower (Liden et al., 2008). The quality of the relationship is reflected by the degree of mutual trust, loyalty, support, respect, and obligation (Northouse, 2010).

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

According to the leader-member exchange theory (LMX theory), leaders form different kinds of relationships with various groups of subordinates (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). One group, referred to as the in-group, is favored by the leader. Members of the in-group receive considerably more attention from the leader and have more access to the organizational resources (Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997). By contrast, other subordinates fall into the out-group. These individuals are disfavored by the leader. As such, they receive fewer valued resources from their leaders (Graen, 1975; Northouse, 2010).

Leaders distinguish between the in-group and out-group members on the basis of the perceived similarity with respect to personal characteristics, such as age, gender, or personality. A follower may also be granted an in-group status if the leader believes that person to be especially competent at performing his or her job (Graen, 1975). The relationship between leaders and followers follows three stages (Liden, Sparrowe, &

Wayne, 1997). The first is role-taking when a new member joins the organization, a leader will assess the talent and abilities of the member, then offer opportunities for engagement based on his/her demonstrated capabilities. The second stage is role-making, where an informal negotiation occurs between the leader and member. Members are more similar to the leader is more likely to succeed. The third stage shifts to a mature partnership, which is characterized by a high degree of trust, mutual respect and shared commitment to the work or goal (Yukl, 2010).

LMX theory emphasizes the effective leadership being characterized by high degrees of community, mutual trust, respect, and shared commitment between the leader and follower (Northouse, 2010); however, the theory falls short of articulating how such high-quality leader-member exchanges are created. Further, the theory assumes fairness and justice from the start of the exchange, when often the environment does not inherently create equal member-access to leaders (Liao, Wayne, Liden, Meuser, 2016).

Transformational Leadership

Introduced by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1990), transformational leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate others to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of group. Similar to leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership focuses on the leader-follower relationship and the development of followers (Northouse, 2010; van Dierendonck, 2011). This leadership approach emphasizes the relationship between leader and follower needs, but also gives attention to the process, organization and environment as whole (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978).

Thus the transformational leadership theory is more holistic in its approach, than that of leader-member exchange theory, and incorporates growth and change in both the personal skills and traits of individuals as called upon by servant leadership (Andersen, 2008). Leader-follower roles, responsibilities, and interactions within the organizational context are elevated and transformed resulting in personal and organization growth (Bass, 1999; Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2010).

Because it empowers others in its use and application, servant leadership is considered transformational (Keith, 2008). Many similarities exist between the two leadership philosophies, most notably that transformational leadership and servant leadership emphasize the importance of appreciating and valuing people, listening, mentoring or teaching, and empowering followers (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; Stone, et al., 2004; Parolini, Patterson & Winston 2009).

These leadership theories place emphasis on what leaders must and should do for followers and society through the use of shared values, exploration of moral convictions, and development of consensus (Sendjaya, et al., 2008). As a transformational force, servant leadership has the potential to inspire leaders and followers toward higher levels of motivation and morality (Eva et al., 2019; Hamilton & Bean, 2005).

Servant Leadership

The term servant leadership as a leadership philosophy was first formally developed in Robert K. Greenleaf's 1970 essay, "The Servant as Leader." In this seminal work, informed by his 40 years of management work at AT&T, Greenleaf stated, "Servant-leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (1970, p. 13). Greenleaf's

leadership practice promotes an environment of trust, collaboration, compassion and moral consideration between leaders and followers (1977). At the heart of the leadership practice is a strong sense of service to others (Spears, 2004).

Servant Leadership Origins

This view of service first, then leadership evolving from it, was drastically different from early theories of leadership, which focused solely on personal traits of individuals as the commonly held notion was a few great men possessed pre-destined leadership traits, while others were designated solely as followers (Bass, 1999; Northouse, 2010). These early leadership theories gave little attention to the surrounding environment in which the leader operated, and conversely gave little attention to what is called for in servant leadership—the focus on the needs of others (Russell & Stone, 2002).

Greenleaf envisioned a servant leader as "one who facilitates achievement of a shared vision through the personal development and empowerment of others" (Washington, Sutton, & Field, 2006, p. 701). Such attention to the needs of others, consideration for environment, and empowerment began in the Industrial Revolution (Shafritz, Ott & Jang, 2011). During this period a working class population was created and a hierarchy of leadership simultaneously became more commonplace.

Foremen oversaw workers' tasks, and prompted the development of a new concept, management, a theory first formalized by Fayol (trans. 1949/2011), and which later achieved wider acceptance through Taylor's (1916/2011) notion of "scientific management" (Shafritz et al., 2011). The foremen leading the working class and the foremen's approaches to the management of this sector opened a whole new philosophy

to leadership, which Weber (1947/2011) classified as transactional leadership. Instead of the personal traits exhibited by heroes and a chosen few, the philosophy of transactional leadership reflected the time and the emergence of hierarchy, organizational structure, situational context, position, power, and the exchange of goods (quid pro quo) within organizations and between leaders and followers (Weber, 1947/2011).

Servant Leadership Research

While transactional leadership did allow for the empowerment of others through promotion and access to resources, the leadership approach did not fully rise to Greenleaf's stated desire for shared commitment to cause or his notion of putting service to others first (Washington, et al., 2006). Furthermore, this hierarchy and power distribution between leader-follower did not allow for the development of individuals and Greenleaf (1977) challenged this traditional theory as he suggested "a first-among-equals approach to leadership is key to greatness" (p. 21). Transactional leadership focused on process and structure, without regard for the needs of followers, a central tenet of the servant leadership philosophy, and in Greenleaf's view placed over-emphasis on authoritarian power (Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008).

This is not to say power and influence are not present within servant-leadership; however, servant leaders are more likely to rely on reverent power based on a respect for the collective wisdom of the group (French & Raven, 1953/2011; Andersen, 2008). Reverent power further aligns with servant-leadership as it is demonstrated by showing concern for the needs and feelings of others, trust and respect, and expressing a consistent set of values rather than one's positional authority (Spears, 2004).

Another important differentiation in servant leadership from traditional approaches to leadership as it relates to power, is the use of persuasion. The role of persuasion is one of the clearest distinctions between servant leadership and traditional positional or authoritarian leadership models (Keith, 2008). The servant-leader is effective at building consensus and derives influence from service itself (Russell & Stone, 2002). Servant leaders develop relationships where followers "follow by example in service to others and relies upon the influence of self-giving without self-glory" (Stone, et al., 2004, p. 357).

Although servant leadership is seen as an outgrowth of transformational leadership, differences do exist, largely on where final emphasis of development and growth is placed (Bass, 2000; Stone, et al., 2004). Servant leaders invest more in enabling others and ultimately in helping others achieve their best (Page & Wong, 2000), whereas in contrast, transformational leaders develop followers to engage followers in the organization, with the organization being the primary focus of growth (Burns, 1978; Eva et al., 2019; Yukl, 1998). Servant leadership requires a partnership commitment between leader and followers, while conversely commitment within the transformational approach is rooted in the follower-organization partnership (Savage-Austin & Guilluame, 2012).

In servant leadership emphasis is placed on the needs of individuals and service to others. This philosophy gained broader application and relevance as an organizational theory and as a lens in which to view organizational development since its introduction by Greenleaf in the 1970s (Andersen, 2008; Savage-Austin & Guilluame, 2012). However, an often cited criticism of servant leadership is the lack of empirical research to support its position and leadership approach (Andersen, 2008; Eva et al., 2019; Stone &

Russell, 2002; van Dierendonck, 2011). Frequently viewed as a philosophy and not a theory (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005), this criticism has lessened in recent years due to a growing body of work and empirical research (Andersen, 2008; Eva et al., 2019; Washington, et al., 2006).

Servant Leadership Characteristics

A criticism of servant leadership has been the lack of an accurate or agreed upon definition. This void has led to wide interpretation of the traits or dimensions which exemplify the behavior described by Greenleaf of that being a servant leader. The models of Spears (1995), Laub (1999), Russell and Stone (2002), Patterson (2003) have been influential in the evolution of creating consensus in the research on a definition (van Dierendonck, 2011).

Spears, who worked directly with Greenleaf on book collaborations and conceptual papers, and served as the director of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, first translated Greenleaf's ideas into 10 distinguishable characteristics to form a picture as to what the servant-leader exhibits. These characteristics include (1) listening; (2) empathy; (3) healing; (4) awareness; (5) persuasion; (6) conceptualization; (7) foresight; (8) stewardship; (9) commitment to the growth of others; and, (10) building community (Spears, 1995).

Subsequent research from the influential work of Laub (1999), Russell and Stone (2002), Patterson (2003), Liden et al. (2008, 2015) and van Dierendonck (2011) introduced variations to these 10 characteristics, which allowed the definition of servant leadership to evolve, but at the same time confused the shared understanding with over 50 characteristics identified and classified differently across research studies and

assessment scales. Using the data from the empirical evidence gained from the measures of servant leadership, van Dierendonck (2011) then articulated six key characteristics of servant leadership behavior that brought order to the overlapping traits. These six key characteristics give a good overview of servant leadership behavior as experienced by followers: servant-leaders empower and develop other people, show humility, are authentic, provide interpersonal acceptance, offer direction, and exhibit stewardship (van Dierendonck, 2011). Similar to the evolution of servant leadership characteristics, the assessments used to measure servant leadership characteristics have also continued to evolve.

Servant Leadership Assessment Instruments

When Greenleaf first coined the term and presented his philosophy of servant leadership, he provided no empirically validated definition. The Spears (1998) summarized Greenleaf's writing into 10 attributes of servant leadership and added, "these ten characteristics of servant leadership are by no means exhaustive" (p. 6). His work did not include an instrument for assessment of these attributes in leaders though, which resulted in a wide range of behaviors used to define servant leadership in the decades of research that followed (Laub, 1999; Russell & Stone, 2002; van Deirendonck, 2011).

A review of literature suggests that the body of servant leadership research can be categorized into three phases. The first is a conceptual phase where the work of Greenleaf (1970, 1977) and later Spears (1996) was debated as to its composition and the original 10 proposed characteristics. The second phase is one of measurement, where the first scales of assessment are developed with more rigor and included for the first time in peer reviewed publications (van Deirendonck, 2011). And the third, current phase, one

focused on model development allowing for more sophisticated research designs emerge, to understand relationships and outcomes on deeper levels of analysis (Eva et al., 2019).

Over 20 years after Greenleaf introduced servant leadership as a concept to approach leadership, the publication of the first peer-reviewed servant leadership scales in late 1990s became a turning point in the study of servant leadership. The first by Lytle, Hom and Mokaw (1998) and shortly followed by Laub (1999). These instruments moved research from a conceptual theory to one that began to be measured and assessed in leaders. The Servant Leadership subscale (SERV*OR) tool developed by Lytle, et al. (1998) consisted of only six questions, but started bringing servant leadership into the realm of empirical research and introduction in more rigorous study, thus making it an important milestone in the evolution of the study of servant leadership theory (Banks, Gooty, Roos, Willians, and Harrington, 2018).

Using the foundational efforts of Spears, Laub (1999), developed the extensive 60-item Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA). Laub categorized servant leadership into six primary domains: values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership. Laub (1999) theorized that one could indeed define the characteristics of servant leadership as well as measure the presence of these characteristics within an organization, through a written assessment. His work is important as it was the first attempt to assess how servant leadership is operationalized (Stone, et al., 2004).

Building upon the early work of Lytle and Laub, today there are currently 16 measures of servant leadership that have been presented in peer-reviewed publications (Eva et al., 2019). Each work assesses servant leadership, but each in its own way

(Dennis & Winston, 2003; Page & Wong, 2000; van Dierendonck & Nuitjen, 2010). "The concept of servant-leadership appears to be so complex as to defy simple definition—it is multidimensional," wrote Page and Wong (2000, p. 70).

This includes Patterson's (2003) construct model of servant leadership, which has offered valuable insight into the interrelatedness of the virtues said to be in keeping with its nature; however by Patterson's own account, "more investigation and research is needed to fully understand the servant leadership phenomena" (p. 7). Much of the empirical research is limited to begin with and most is cross-sectional, with a need for longitudinal research to study the development of the interactions between leaders and followers.

Further, the assessment instruments available have methodological weaknesses, as most studies relied on leaders to reflect on their own behavior and estimating their own exhibition of servant leadership traits, thus likely causing self-inflation in responses (Cresswell, 2009; Fink, 2009; van Dierendonck, 2011). There remains a clear need to better understand the effectiveness of the application of servant leadership through development programs (Sip and Frick, 2009) and there are no pre- and post- experimental control group design studies (van Dierendonck & Nuitjen, 2010), thus the long-lasting and real effectiveness of becoming a servant leader remains to be fully studied and is an area of further study (Eva et al., 2019; van Deirendonck, 2011).

Notably, the year 2008 became a pivotal moment for the advancement and study of servant leadership in addressing many of the criticisms of the existing researching. The last decade has seen dramatic shift in research from that of conceptual to empirical in nature. According to Eva, et al. (2019), prior to 2008 there were 41 conceptual articles

and only 21 empirical articles in the published peer-reviewed literature. However, since 2008 there have been 26 conceptual articles and an impressive 171 empirical studies (Eva et al., 2019). Additionally, 2008 offered the peer-reviewed publication of Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008) and Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henerson (2008) measures of servant leadership. These two scale instruments of servant leadership are important to note given their content strength, reliability, and construct validity (Eva et al., 2019).

Although many studies vary as to the definition of servant leadership, this body of research is allowing core traits of servant leadership to begin to emerge and show a cross-cultural validity of servant leadership, as it has been found to exist in a wide-range of countries (Hale and Fields, 2007; Sun and Wang 2009; West, et. al, 2009). This cross-cultural validity allows servant-leadership to be a leadership approach that is diverse and inclusive, or inherently focused on the nature of human instinct (Simon, 2016).

At the time of this research study, of the 16 servant leadership measures peer-reviewed, only three presently available meet the seven-step scale development guidelines established by Hinkin (1995) and Hinkin, Tracey, and Enz (1997), which provides methodological rigor in the construction and validation stages (Eva et al., 2019). These measures of servant leadership include Liden et al.'s (2008, 2015) SL-7 and Global Servant Leadership Scale (GLS); Sendjaya et al.'s (2018) Servant Leadership Behavioral Scale (SLBS-6); and van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) (Eva et al., 2019).

Liden et al. first introduced the Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS) in 2008 through a multidimensional construct. The SLS extends the work of prior assessments in explaining community citizenship behaviors, in-role performances, and organizational

commitment (Freeman, 2011). The 28-item SLS has successfully validated all seven of its dimensions of servant leadership (Liden, 2014; van Dierendonck, 2011). These seven dimensions include: (1) emotional healing; (2) creating value for the community; (3) conceptual skills; (4) empowering; (5) helping subordinates grow and succeed; (6) putting subordinates first; and, (7) behaving ethically. The instrument is administered to followers to reflect on the behavior exhibited by their respective leaders. This follower-focused response helps mitigate concerns score self-inflation, a criticism of other servant leadership instruments available today (van Dierendonck, 2011). Later, Liden et al. (2015) created a short-form measurement of only seven items, which is straightforward and appropriate for use when paired with other measures.

The Servant Leadership Behavior Scale (SLBS-6) developed by Sendjaya et al (2018), incorporates the dimension of faith and spirituality. This reflects Greenleaf's early views that the servant leader is driven by a higher power in being called to serve and lead (1977). The spiritual dimension of servant leadership is another unique factor differentiating the theory from other approaches to leadership. Although the SLBS-6 has sufficient evidence of construct validity, given the inclusion of the spiritual dimension as a measurement, the contextual environment in which it is administered for assessing servant-leadership behavior should be considered, in that it may not be relevant for a given leader-follower environment (Eva et al., 2019).

The third measurement with construct validity is van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS). The SLS consists of 30-items representing eight dimensions of servant leadership. Longer in nature, than the first two, it also takes into account the juxtaposition between the servant-oriented dimensions and the leader-

oriented dimensions of servant leadership and places less emphasis on the follower engagement of the relationship. It is an appropriate scale for leaders to self-reflect on their behavior traits and leadership characteristics (van Dierendonck et al., 2018).

These tools for measuring servant leadership with construct validity show promise for expanding empirical research on servant leadership as a framework for understanding how leaders influence their immediate followers, and ultimately the culture of the organization and the larger community in which the organization is embedded and is a reflection of stronger empirical research giving structure and guidance to a definition of servant leadership (Liden, 2014; van Dierendonck, 2011).

The work of Liden et al. (2008, 2015), Sendjaya et al. (2018) and van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011, 2013) is helping move research from being prescriptive to becoming descriptive. This study aimed to further advance this body of research in leader-follower relationships in the nonprofit sector, therefore the researcher chose to utilize Liden et al.'s instrument.

Servant Leadership Definition

Work by van Dierendonck (2011) began to make a valuable contribution toward an operational definition of servant leadership. Van Dierendonck believed, "the roots of servant leadership can be traced back many centuries [coming] close to what Plato suggested as the ultimate form of leadership: leadership that focuses on the good of the whole and those in it" (p. 1254).

The last 10 years of peer-reviewed literature as continued to evolve from conceptual to empirical in nature, which allowed Eva et al., 2019, to offer the most succinct and comprehensive definition of servant leadership to-date, "Servant leadership

is an (1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interest, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self toward concern for others within the organization and the larger community" (p. 114).

This definition, regardless of what characteristics, traits, or dimensions may be assessed, comprises three features encapsulating the essence of servant leadership– motive, mode, and mindset (Eva et al., 2019). Motive reflects Greenleaf's (1970) original notion that the leader is a servant-first, from which he/she then leads. A unique distinction of the moral character and altruism of the leader has long been central to differentiating servant leadership from other leadership theories (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). The second tenet, mode, recognizes that the ways in which leaders and followers engage differs, based on the needs, interests, desires, goals, and is thus contextual based on the environment and culture (Antonakis, Bastradoz, Liu, & Schreisheim, 2014). Third, the mindset of the servant leader is one of stewardship and trustee. There is a deliberate focus on the development of the followers for an elevated impact on the greater good of the organization or community (Block, 1993).

The servant-leader possesses a willingness to take responsibility for the larger institution and to be focused on service instead of self-interest (Block, 1993; Spears, 1995; van Dierendonck, 2011). This servant leadership mindset "is a centrifugal force that moves followers from self-serving toward others-serving orientation, empowering them…to make a positive difference in others' lives" (Eva et al, 2109, p. 114). This

definition, encompassing the body of 20 years of empirical research, will assist future research to further develop the comprehensive theory of servant leadership.

In summary, although it took 40 years, the notions first presented formally by Greenleaf are gaining traction as a supported theoretical framework applicable to organizational and leader development through the development of servant leadership assessments to measure behavior and its effectiveness (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Goodwin, 2011; Laub,1999; Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; Page & Wong, 2000; Savage-Austin & Guilluame, 2012; Silvers, 2012). Results from this expanded body of work indicate that the "practice of servant leadership profoundly affects the nature of organizations in a positive manner" (Savage-Austin & Guilluame, 2012, p. 72).

Therefore, much attention has been given to what Smith and Lindsay (2007) have called a "transformative leadership flowing into servant leadership" (p. 56), placing greater emphasis on the leader-follower relationship, noting an important shift toward follower health and maturation, over the interests of the organization (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Russell & Stone, 2002).

Given the service oriented focus within servant leadership, the theory has a strong and relevant application within the nonprofit sector (Goodwin, 2011). The nonprofit sector is inherently voluntary and service-oriented, making it relevant for further study in this environment (Silvers, 2012). The next section further explores the research literature of the nonprofit sector and the leadership theories of this specific environment.

Nonprofit Organizations and Board Presidents

Nonprofit organizations are inherently about the needs of people (Goodwin, 2011; Silvers, 2012). Be it professional livelihood, outlet for volunteerism, donors making

charitable contributions, or the service to clients in need of the resources provided by the organization, people and their needs are at the heart of the nonprofit sector. According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, as of 2016, over 1.6 million nonprofit organizations exist in the United States, which provide a bevy of educational, professional, health care, social affiliation, and social services, making it the third largest employment sector of the work force today (McKeve, 2018).

Although day-to-day operations are run by professional staff, these organizations ultimately are managed and overseen by a volunteer board of directors. This group of nonprofit organizational leaders is the largest volunteer sector in the country—an estimated 26.8% of the adult population in America (Blackwood, et al., 2017). Given the centrality of human needs, servant leadership is a relevant leadership approach within this professional sector (Goodwin, 2011; Silvers, 2012).

Nonprofit Board Research

The rise of the scale and scope of the nonprofit sector over the last 40 years, has led to increased attention on the scholarly research of the sector (Cornforth, 2012). While the nonprofit sector is diverse in the number of organizations, location, and focus, Frumkin (2005) posits that the work of the nonprofit sector today, regardless of tax-exempt classification, reflects four key societal functions a) service delivery, b) civic and political engagement, c) social entrepreneurship, and d) values and faith.

The research across the nonprofit sector has been narrow and classified into four primary reoccurring research topics a) board roles and responsibilities, b) board effectiveness, c) board composition, and d) the board-staff relationship (Cornforth, 2012; Ostower & Stone, 2007; Renz, 2006). Similar to the research trends on servant

leadership, the last 20 years have shown a shift from conceptual- and theoretical-focused scholarly work to research with an increased emphasis on empirical research design (Coule, Dodgem & Eikenberry, 2020).

How a board approaches its work in its respective function is varied and often debated, based on the focus, sector, and size of a nonprofit (Coule, et al., 2020; Herman & Renz, 2008). While nonprofit roles and responsibilities may be debated based on the specific organization's composition, boards of directors have three legal duties of organizational oversight—the duties of care, loyalty, and obedience (Holland, 1996). These duties collectively shape the approach a board may employ when it comes to its governance of an organization (Herman & Renz, 2008; Cornforth, 2012).

Board Roles and Responsibilities

Empirical data has fallen short in exploring what is considered the most important roles of board governance (Brown & Guo, 2009; Zahra & Pearce, 1989). In a national study of nonprofit boards, Brown and Guo (2009), identified 13 key roles for nonprofit boards, based on the needs of executive directors. The widely adopted 10 roles and responsibilities of the nonprofit board are those identified by BoardSource (2018), a national policy and research organization focused board development and the nonprofit sector, which were first developed to offer clarity to the sector in the 1990s. Further still, Harrison and Murray (2016), identify nine dimensions of governance that drive the work of a board, with an emphasis on effective performance.

A seminal national study conducted by Gazley and Bowers (2013) in cooperation with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), focused on member-serving nonprofit organizations (also known as membership associations). Although

these organizations have a different 501(c) tax classification than charitable 501(c)3 nonprofits, these nonprofits are also governed by boards of directors. The study represented a recent shift in research, which has focused on understanding differences and similarities across the nonprofit sector (Cornforth, 2014). Their focus on identifying what makes a high performing boards, reflects the trend of research being overly focused on performance or effectiveness, but also helped identify key trends across the nonprofit sector (Coule, et al., 2020; Harrison & Murray, 2016; Miller-Millesen, 2003). Their key findings included that board recruitment remains a challenge in finding qualified leaders, the importance of investing in board training and staff support of board work, the perennial question of board size matters to some, but the focus of boards on their roles and responsibilities matters more, and that high-performing boards have a strong strategic focus (Gazley & Bowers, 2013).

These findings advance prior work by Jackson and Holland (1998) that suggests an attention to board development, which they define as improving performance through the use of a board self-assessment, can help advance organizational performance by strengthening the financial position of the nonprofit organization the board is responsible for governing and stewarding its financial assets. As financial resources vary from organization to organization, it is likely the board's role and involvement in fundraising changes. Research suggests that in a resource poor environment, a board will be more engaged in fundraising and development activities to support the agency's resources, as assessed through asset size, implying that larger asset organizations inherently have a different level of board activity in this role (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; Miller-Millesen, 2003)

Nonprofit Board Effectiveness

The complexity and diversity of the nonprofit sector means that there is no single recipe for a high-performing board (Gazley & Bowers, 2013). This is a consistent theme in the literature that there is no one-size-fits-all model of effective board governance because context influences board behavior (Ostrower & Stone, 2001; Ryan, 1999; Taylor, Chait, & Holland, 1996). Nonprofit board effectiveness is difficult to assess, given the multitude of stakeholders with conflicting claims on the organization's resources which may influence the nonprofit organization's activities, performance, effectiveness, and overall legitimacy using different evaluation criteria (Kanter & Summers, 1987). This complexity makes research on nonprofit boards a challenge, but also reiterates the need for continued and contextual research to further inform the literature (Chait, Ryan & Taylor, 2005; Miller-Millesen 2003).

A critique of existing research is given the breadth and sheer volume of nonprofit organizations, that national representative sample surveys are rare, large organizations are overrepresented in the research, and the field of human services is most often cited as the source of organization type (Cornforth, 2012; Ostrower, 2007; Ostrower & Stone, 2006). The first national representative survey of nonprofit governance research in the United States wasn't conducted until 2005 by the Urban Institute and while seminal in reporting and benchmarking data, it has been difficult to replicate (Ostrower, 2007).

For the last 20 years, BoardSource has conducted a biennial report on board data and nonprofit board practices called *Leading with Intent* (2017). The report, while interesting and helpful, is descriptive in nature, but does not explore the relationship

between survey questions that may lead to conclusions on causation (BoardSource, 2017).

Nonprofit Board Composition

A key data point of the *Leading with Intent* biennial report includes information on the composition of nonprofit boards, including size, demographic composition, and term limits. According to BoardSource (2017), even though the national call for diversifying board leadership remains, nonprofit board members remain predominately Caucasian (84%) and are most often led (43%) by older (50-64 years old) men (58%), who chair a 15-member average size board, with directors serving 3-year terms (61%) for up to two terms (42%). The contextual environmental factors specific to a nonprofit organization (such as geographic location, function, budget size) influence an organization's recruitment strategies for prospective board members and board chairs (Miller-Millesen, 2003).

The contextual variance of the nonprofit sector adds to the complexity of board governance, but intentional focus on composition, recruitment, and training of boards is important for a representative and high-performing board (Gazley & Bowers, 2013). Board composition also informs the authority of a board and of the organization's management (executive director or leadership staff) is one of the key elements essential to a healthy relationship between a board and chief staff officer (Harrison & Murray, 2016; Hilland, 2008; Renz, 2009).

Nonprofit Board Chair-Staff Relationship

Several studies indicate that board chairs and organization chief staff officers have different perspectives about the work of the board and the relationship between the

board and the CEO (Berstein, Buse, & Bilimoria, 2014; Jager & Rehli, 2012; Millesen, 2004). The power-sharing, authority, and leadership dynamic between the board chair and an organization staff leader is important to understand given the unique relationship which exists in leading a nonprofit organization (Brown, 2009). Regardless of who leads (the board chair or the chief staff officer), the leadership pair should focus on shared collaboration in the management, strategic planning, and organizational leadership of their respective nonprofit (Hilland, 2008).

The board chair-chief staff officer relationship is a powerful resource to be leveraged in support of the organization's mission. The strength of this dynamic is often built through the establishment of trust between the two parties (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005). While the literature emphasizes the importance of trust for an effective board chair-chief staff officer relationship, it falls short of detailing specific behavior or describing the interpersonal dynamic components that actually build trust (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; King, 2004; Nicolaides, LaPort, Chen, Tomassetti, Weis, Zaccaro, & Cortina, 2014).

Liden's Servant Leadership Dimensions

In examining the perceptions of servant leadership behavior exhibited within the nonprofit sector by board presidents, Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale is the appropriate instrument for this research study for several reasons. First, the ability of administering the instrument to a follower to reflect on the behavior of a specific leader. In this study, the follower (respondents) are chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations and the leader is the volunteer nonprofit board president. Further, Liden, et al.'s dimensions are secular in nature, making the instrument more inclusive and accessible to

a wider audience of organization types, where other instruments explore servant leadership dimensions of spirituality or a sense of faith in one's approach to leadership (Eva, et al., 2019). Third, the validity of Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS) supports the integrity of the data collection and analysis findings (Coule, et al., 2020; van Dierendonck, 2011).

It is important to understand the seven dimensions identified and defined by Liden, et al. in the Global Servant Leadership Scale. These seven dimensions include: (1) emotional healing; (2) creating value for the community; (3) conceptual skills; (4) empowering; (5) helping subordinates grow and succeed; (6) putting subordinates first; and, (7) behaving ethically (2008, 2015). Each servant leadership dimension is further explained.

Emotional Healing

Emotional healing is the ability for a leader to show and acknowledge sensitivity to others' personal concerns. Empathy has been a tenet of servant leadership theory since the early days of Greenleaf's writing on the topic (1977). However, emotional healing includes a next level leadership trait of going beyond a leader's ability to be empathetic, but to have an awareness about other' feelings or position in a holistic manner (Maxell, 2016). This reflects the more contemporary leadership traits of emotional intelligence – the ability to control one's own emotions while being aware of others in a socially appropriate and responsible manner (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

Creating Community Value

The servant leader possesses a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community. Motivations of altruism and the service-oriented approach to leading is at

the heart of servant leadership. The servant leader is not one motivated by self-interest, but rather driven to improve the community and those within it around them (Greenleaf, 1977; Page & Wong, 2000). This sense of altruism is a key tenet to the exploration of the presence of servant leadership in volunteers in the nonprofit sector, given the charitable focus of mission-driven organizations (Parris and Peachey, 2003).

Conceptual Skills

Servant leaders possess knowledge of the organization and operations, so as to be in a position to effectively support and assist others, especially immediate followers. Greenleaf posits that positional sources of power, when applied appropriately, can reflect a service-oriented approach in leadership (1977). Position allows for influence, access to information, knowledge of an organization's stakeholders. However, how this position and information is used by a leader in interaction with followers, is what determines the conceptual skills of a servant leaders. This trait builds upon prior leadership theories, including leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Liden and Maslyn, 1998).

Empowering

The servant leader is one who encourages and facilitates followers' abilities to identify and solve problems. Building the skills of others to find satisfaction in task completion reflects the early origins of Greenleaf's work in the corporate sector and his years of experience in management at AT&T (1977). Helping others understand their role in organization success has been part of organizational development study since the Industrial Age (Shafritz, Ott, & Jang, 2011). When leaders nurture self-efficacy and self-motivation in others, employees (or followers) are more willing to maintain high performance levels (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997).

Helping Others Grow and Succeed

Demonstrating a genuine interest for others' career growth and development by providing support and mentoring is paramount to the servant leaders' work. This focus leads to positive relationship development between the leader and followers, which has shown to heighten follower commitment to organizational values (Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993). Servant leaders want others to improve for their own good, own self-worth, or for the organization as a whole, not for the self-ego of the leader (Ehrhart, 2004).

Putting Others First

Central to Greenleaf's philosophy is the tenet that leaders should be a servant first (Spears, 2002). This servant-first mentality is visible by followers when leaders use their actions, words, and resources to make it clear to others, particularly immediate followers, that their needs are a priority. Further strengthening the leaders-follower relationship in a positive manner establishes trust, which is important to any scenario of mutual goal achievement (Northouse, 2010).

Behaving Ethically

The servant leader interacts in open, fair, and honest ways with others and embodies integrity. Greenleaf's writings speak to the morality, spirituality, and faith of the servant leader, but in a contemporary lens a more secular view is adopted. Liden, et al.'s view focuses on ethics and integrity as the central principle, regardless of one's views on faith or spirituality (van Dierendonck, 2011). Greenleaf's focus on faith in servant leadership has been a criticism of the leadership theory, but this more contemporary interpretation has allowed servant leadership theory to be applicable in

more inclusive environments where leaders-followers interact while guided by shared values of behaving ethically (Coule, et al., 2020; Eva, et al., 2019).

Understanding these seven dimensions of servant leadership in Liden's work is important in the evolution of Greenleaf's original theories and writings on servant leadership. Continued research using sound empirical practices, such as Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale, helps researchers further refine the definition of what comprises servant leadership as an important approach to leadership today.

Summary

The historic focus of nonprofit research and prior literature largely focuses on what boards do and how effective they are in their governance role, rather than focusing on how boards and their respective leaders actually behave within their roles and responsibilities (Miller-Millesen, 2003). Zahra and Pearce (1989) noted, "there are countless lists of what boards should do. Yet evidence of what boards actually do is not well documented . . . there is a pressing need to document what boards actually do" (p. 325-326).

Today the literature is rich with prescriptive advice about the kinds of activities that should occupy the board's time and attention, but research to date has given less attention to the leadership behavior of the board chair (Colue, et al., 2020; Harrison & Murray, 2016). As the research advanced on board activity, Miller-Millesen (2003) extended this call for further research, "it is time to supplement our knowledge of what boards look like and what they should do with more empirical evidence of their actual behaviors" (p. 543).

Given the volunteer nature of nonprofit board service, servant leadership is an appropriate theory to study in further understanding the behavior of nonprofit board presidents (Silver, 2012; Parris & Peachy, 2013). As the literature indicates, a gap exists in sound empirical research on servant leadership, the use of valid instruments in assessing servant leadership behavior, empirical research on the nonprofit sector, and the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents (Brown, 2009; Coule, et al., 2020; Eva, et al., 2019; Freiwirth, et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2016; Liden, et al., 2015; Miller-Millesen, 2003; van Dierendonck, 2011).

This empirical study addresses these gaps in the research by exploring nonprofit board president leadership behavior, through the lens of servant leadership, as assessed through a valid instrument, using Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale. In doing so, the study advances the knowledge on these unanswered questions as it exists in the literature today.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapters 1 and 2 provided an overview of this research and a review of the literature related to servant leadership, assessment instruments studying servant leadership and the research on the nonprofit sector. This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used by the researcher to build upon the prior research of Liden, et al. (2008, 2015). Utilizing Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS), as a basis of the measurement instrument, a 36-question survey was developed and administered to nonprofit executive directors (followers). The survey asked respondents to share nonprofit organization data, demographic information of the board president and then respond to the GSLS while reflecting on the leadership behavior exhibited by that board president (leaders).

Problem Statement

So that nonprofit organizations may be successful in mission fulfillment through governance accountability, it is imperative to further understand the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents. A gap exists in the current literature addressing nonprofit board president leadership behavior, in addition to a continued need for empirical research on servant leadership as a leadership theory within organizations (Cornforth, 2014; Eva et al., 2019; Freiwirth, Hiland, Burns, Gifford, & Beck, 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2014; Herman & Renz, 2004; Parrish & Peachey, 2014; Renz, 2015; van Dierendonck, 2011).

Given the important role nonprofit organizations serve in society—as employers, as service providers, as volunteer outlets, as advocacy organizations, as economic engines

of society—it is necessary to understand the governance of these organizations (Herman & Renz, 2006). Societal demands for transparency in the management and stewardship of nonprofit organization resources amplifies this need (Ostower & Stone, 2006). A component of effective nonprofit governance is the leadership ability of the nonprofit board president (Brown & Guo, 2010). Due to the volunteer nature of nonprofit board president roles, the theory chosen through which to study behavior is servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019; Parris & Peachey, 2012; Spears, 2008).

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to (a) advance the body of knowledge related to nonprofit board president leadership behavior and the empirical research on servant leadership; (b) to better understand the leadership behavior exhibited by nonprofit board presidents; (c) to identify which, if any, of Liden et al.'s (2008, 2015) seven dimensions of servant leadership are exhibited in the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents, from the perspective of nonprofit organization chief staff officers; (d) to identify what, if any, difference exists between the leadership behavior of a charitable nonprofit board president (501(c)3 designation) and that of the leadership behavior exhibited by board presidents of other 501(c) tax designations; and, (e) to identify what, if any, relationship exists between servant leadership in nonprofit board presidents and nonprofit organization characteristics including organization focus, geographic scope, and budget size.

Research Questions

To explore these purposes of servant leadership behavior in nonprofit board presidents, the study explored the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the descriptive statistics and demographic information of the study participants including nonprofit board presidents and nonprofit organizational characteristics?

RQ2: Do nonprofit board presidents exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions of servant leadership?

h. Emotional healing.

i. Creating value for the community.

j. Conceptual skills.

k. Empowering.

l. Helping subordinates grow and succeed.

m. Putting subordinates first.

n. Behaving ethically.

And if so, to what extent?

RQ3: Does a difference exist between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations?

RQ4: Does a difference exist between servant leadership dimensions in board presidents and the characteristics of nonprofit organizations, including:

d. Nonprofit organization focus.

e. Size of nonprofit organization based on annual operating budget.

f. Geographic scope of the nonprofit organization.

Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses for this study are:

H_o1: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

H_o2: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations.

H_o3_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o3_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

H_o3_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

Table 3.1

Research Questions, Null Hypotheses Summary and Descriptive Statistics Report

Research Question	Null Hypothesis
1. What are the descriptive statistics and demographic information of the study participants including nonprofit board presidents and nonprofit organizational characteristics?	
2. Do nonprofit board presidents exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions of servant leadership? a. Emotional healing, b. Creating value for the community. c. Conceptual skills. d. Empowering. e. Helping subordinates grow and succeed. f. Putting subordinates first. g. Behaving ethically. And to what extent?	$H_0$1: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's seven dimensions of servant leadership.
3. Does a difference exist between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations?	$H_0$3: There is no difference between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organizations.
4. Is there a difference between nonprofit organization characteristics and servant leadership dimensions? a. Organization focus. b. Organization annual budget size. c. Organization geographic scope.	$H_0$3a: There is no difference between nonprofit organization focus and servant leadership behavior in board presidents. $H_0$3b: There is no difference between nonprofit organization annual budget size and servant leadership behavior in board presidents. $H_0$3c: There is no difference between nonprofit organization geographic scope and servant leadership behavior in board presidents.

Table 3.2

Summary of Data Analyses

Study Question	Analysis Strategy	Independent (IV) and Dependent Variables (DV)	Data Visualization Strategy
1. Descriptive summary statistics of nonprofit organization characteristics.	Mean, median, mode, standard deviation.		Table, bar and pie chart, by classification, mission focus, budget size and scope.
Descriptive summary statistics of nonprofit board president demographics.	Mean, median, mode, standard deviation.		Table, bar and pie chart by gender, age and tenure.
2-3. Servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents.	Mean, median, mode, maximum, minimum, range, and standard deviation. Independent-samples *t*-test.	DV (continuous): Emotional Healing, Creating Value for the Community, Conceptual Skills, Empowering, Helping Subordinates Grow and Succeed, Putting Others First and Behaving Ethically	*t*-test tables. Histogram of dimension scores and distribution.
4. Difference, if any, between organization characteristics and servant leadership dimensions, including: a) nonprofit organization focus. b) nonprofit organization annual budget size. c) nonprofit organization geographic scope.	One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tests and Pearson's correlation coefficient.	IV – (categorical, nominal): organization classification, mission focus, budget size, geographic scope, board president age, tenure, and length of volunteerism.	ANOVA tables.

Research Design and Methodology

Design rationale, the selection of a sample from a larger population, collection of data, data treatment, and analysis of data is an integral part of a research study (Creswell, 2009). Great care was given to the development of valid and reliable instrumentation and data procedures in this study. This section details the procedures used for data collection, describes the survey instrument used and its development, and identifies steps taken by the researcher to address validity and reliability.

Multiple factors impact leadership style and behavior (Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Harrison & Murray, 2012). Additionally, understanding board behavior is a complex problem of practice within the nonprofit community (Brown, 2007; Renz, 2012). Given the combination of this complex problem with multiple factors, this study examined the research questions through the development of a survey instrument, administration of said survey to volunteer nonprofit board presidents, analysis of data using factor analysis, and determined what, if any, relationships may be identified.

Population and Sample

Cohen (1998) offers guidelines (in Field, 2009) for determining sample size stating that if a study sets a standard alpha-level of .05 and power of .8, then 783 participants are needed to detect a small effect (r = .1), 85 participants to detect a medium effect size (r = .3) and 28 participants to detect a large effect size (r = .5). If the circumstances allow, a researcher would have better power to detect a small effect size with approximately 30 participants per variable. For instance, Cohen and Cohen (1975) demonstrate that with a single predictor that in the population correlates with the dependent variable at .30, 124 participants are needed to maintain 80% power. With five

predictors and a population correlation of .30, 187 participants would be needed to achieve 80% power. Finally, Field states, "a researcher should have at least 10-15 participants per variable, up to 300 for a good sample size" (p. 647, 2009). With these guides for sample size in mind, a minimum study sample of 70 was established by the researcher. Data collection efforts yielded a final sample size of 133 (n = 133).

Larger samples result in increased power. Larger samples more accurately represent the characteristics of the populations from which they are derived (Cronbach, Gleser, Nanda, & Rajaratnam, 1972; Marcoulides, 1993). A power level set to .8 is conventional, allowing the study to detect at least large effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). Larger sample sizes increase power and decrease estimation error. However, the practical realities of conducting research such as time, access to samples, and financial costs restrict the size of samples for most researchers. The balance is generating a sample large enough to provide sufficient power while allowing for the ability to actually garner the sample (VanVoorhis & Morgan, 2007).

Effect size is linked to three statistical properties including sample size, probability level, and the ability of a test to detect an effect of that size (Field, 2009). Often the effect size is simply out of the researcher's control. In those instances, the best a researcher can do is to be sure the dependent variable is as reliable as possible to minimize measurement error (VanVoorhis & Morgan, 2007).

Data Collection Procedure

The primary means of data collection occurred through the use and administration of an assessment survey instrument developed by the researcher, incorporating the Global Servant Leadership Scale as developed by Liden et al. (2008, 2015) to measure servant

leadership behavior from the perspective of a follower. A survey instrument is an efficient and effective method of data-collection to "describe, compare, or explain individual and societal knowledge, feelings, values, preferences, and behavior" (Fink, 2009, p. 1).

The survey instrument was loaded into an online data collection tool (Google Forms), to ensure secure capture of participant response data. This link was shared via email to potential research participants. Only the researcher had access to the online data collection to ensure the integrity of the data and its maintenance during the collection process.

The target audiences for study participation consisted of the chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations, as designated by a 501(c) classification by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The convenient sample was drawn from the larger population of nonprofit organizations the researcher had access to through personal and professional networks. This population base included outreach by the researcher to the following organizations for voluntary participation in the research study: Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, American Society of Association Executives, Association of Fundraising Professionals-Kansas City Chapter, Fraternity Executives Association, Georgia Society of Association Executives, Kansas City Society of Association Executives, National State 4-H Foundations Network, National State Farm Bureaus Association, National Panhellenic Conference, Nonprofit Connect-Kansas City, North-American Interfraternity Conference, Ohio Society of Association Executives, Self-Governing Alumni Association Forum, Texas Society of Association Executives, and nonprofit organizations affiliated with the academic study nonprofit leadership programs

in the School of Management at William Jewell College and the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Research, Bloch School of Management, University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Study participant recruitment included direct email outreach, email list serve distribution, organization e-newsletter inclusion, online forum posts through association channels, and promotion of study participation through LinkedIn. Additionally, potential subjects were asked for referrals who met the study criteria for outreach by the researcher or were asked to forward the recruitment materials to their network of contacts and colleagues in the nonprofit sector. The researcher estimates the invitation to participate in the study reached approximately 1,000 nonprofit executive leaders or chief staff officers.

To participate in the study respondents needed to meet the following criteria: (a) currently serve as the chief staff officer of a nonprofit organization; (b) have access to the internet to complete the survey instrument online; and, (c) consent to sharing information including organizational data, personal demographic information, and exhibited leadership behavior and qualities. The researcher asked participants to identify just one volunteer board president role with a specific organization and use this one volunteer experience in which to consider, reflect, and respond to the survey questions. Participants were also asked to complete the survey in one sitting.

The resulting sample from this population provided a convenient sample of participants for the study. The desired sample size for the study was 70 respondents. This study utilized a convenience sample, which is characterized by those respondents within a population a researcher has access to and who are willing to voluntary complete the survey (Fink, 2009).

The Survey Instrument

The survey instrument consisted of four sections of questions, with 37 total questions. The first section provided informed consent for the participant as to the purpose, use, focus of the study. The second section (four questions) included questions the characteristics of the nonprofit organization for which the participant served as the chief staff officer. These organizational characteristics included size of the organization (as determined by annual budget), tax-exempt classification as charitable 501(c)3 or other 501(c) designation, organizational mission focus, and geographic scope of the organization. These questions were developed by the researcher to analyze servant leadership within the nonprofit sector to identify if patterns exist based on the characteristics of nonprofit organizations. This included the distinction between those nonprofit organizations which are charitable in their structure and classification (501(c)3) compared with nonprofits that are not charitable in their tax-exempt focus, including membership associations, trade groups, unions, professional society, political organizations, business chambers, or social-recreational clubs. The researcher also explored what, if any, differences, may exist, based on organization size, based on small, medium or large nonprofits, as determined through respondents self-reporting of annual budget size, and by the geographic focus of an organization, be it local, regional or (inter)national in its focus.

The third section of questions (four questions) captured demographic information about the volunteer board president. This demographic information included age, gender, length of tenure and length of involvement as a volunteer with the nonprofit organization. Few studies related to servant leadership have explored antecedents of leader behavior

resulting in limited knowledge about leader characteristics (Eva et al., 2019). Prior research indicates that while females are more apt to exhibit certain aspects of servant leadership than males (Beck, 2014; de Rubio & Kiser, 2015), more research is needed on the topic to fully understand the extent of difference that may exist in terms of gender (Hogue, 2016).

Questions associated with the length of involvement reflect both the exploration of research around the duration of board terms (national average of 3.6 years, based on BoardSource's 2017 national survey of nonprofit organizations) and those of organizational identification and affinity, based on length of affiliation of involvement as a volunteer or member (Peterson et al., 2012).

Linden's Global Servant Leadership Scale

At the time of this research study, of the 16 instruments currently available in the literature to measure servant leadership, only seven are shown to exhibit construct validity, and of these only three adopt rigorous scale development guidelines established by Hinkin (1995) to ensure content validity appropriate for measuring psychometric properties in social science research. The three measures of servant leadership meeting this threshold include Liden et al.'s (2008, 2015) SL-7 and Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS); Sendjaya et al.'s (2018) Servant Leadership Behavioral Scale (SLBS-6); and van Dierendonck and Nuijten's (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) (Eva et al., 2019).

Hinkin, Tracey, and Enz (1997), built upon Hinkin's prior work and developed seven steps of scale development and validation. These seven steps include: item generation, content adequacy assessment, questionnaire administration, factor analysis,

internal consistency assessment, construct validity, and replication. Review of the 16 instruments measuring servant leadership by Eva et al., 2019, using these guidelines, informed the selection of the Global Servant Leadership Scale for this study.

The Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS), (Liden, et al., 2008, 2015). The GSLS builds on previous assessment instruments that measure servant leadership. The first of these to be developed were Lytle et al.'s (1998) Servant Leadership subscale (SERV*OR) and Laub's (1998) Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) The OLA is an extensive assessment instrument to measure the presence of servant leadership characteristics within an individual's approach to leadership, but lacks construct validity in its design (Arfsten, 2006).

Subsequent assessments include the Revised Servant Leadership Profile (RSLP) of Wong and Page (2003) and Barbuto and Wheeler's Servant Leadership Questionnaire (2006). The tools have been broadly used and further studies have enhanced their validity and reliability as an accurate assessment tool, but these too face limitations based on their design (Goodwin, 2011). Collectively these instruments do assess servant leadership behavior and their use adds to the body of empirical research regarding servant leadership, but to conduct high quality empirical research it should be conducted using the best tools available to a researcher (Fink, 2009). Ensuring survey information is valid is crucial when conducting quantitative research. Valid information "comes from reliable and valid survey instruments and from the validity of the survey's design" (Fink, 2009, p. 75). With this in mind the researcher considered which of the three servant leadership measures available would be the most appropriate for this particular study.

The GSLS-28 was chosen as an appropriate instrument for this study, based on the several factors. First, the instrument invites followers to reflect on the behavior exhibited by leaders, which is reflective of the chief staff officer-board president relationship. Additionally, by asking followers to reflect on the behavior of leaders, this helps control of response bias, as instruments asking for self-reflection on personal behavior may lead to inaccurate reporting or an over-reporting of behavior for some perceived outcome (Fink, 2009; Slater & Moss, 2013). The instrument has sound construct validity (Eva et al., 2019). And, last, the servant leadership characteristics assessed are reflective of the contextual environment and culture of the nonprofit organization, making it an appropriate instrument for use in social science research (Eva et al., 2019).

Content validity of the instrument was provided to this research study in a number of ways. First, after several drafts of the survey instrument and revisions by the researcher, with dissertation advisor feedback, a draft was shared with a team of experts to provide content validation. These experts included Sharon Moss, Ph.D., CAE, director of research, American Society of Association Executives, Washington, DC, and, Dave Renz, Ph.D., research director, Midwest Center of Nonprofit Research, University of Missouri, Kansas City. These professionals are regarded professionally and by their peers as experts not only in research, but on the topics of research affiliated with nonprofit board governance/leadership and the nonprofit sector as a whole. Previous use of the questions in other assessments and research added further validity to the use of the instrument within this study (Creswell, 2009; Eva et al., 2019; Field, 2009; Sendjaya, et al., 2008).

With feedback provided by these experts, another draft of the instrument was developed. This draft was then administered and piloted with a group of four volunteers, (three known to the researcher and one referred to the researcher by colleagues). Piloting and testing a survey provides a means of ensuring reliability, in order to test internal consistency of responses, using tests such as Cronbach's alpha (Field, 2009; Fink, 2009).

These volunteers met the criteria of the study's focus, as they were current nonprofit chief staff officers. In completing the survey, the researcher asked pilot respondents to be in an environment free from distraction and to take the survey in one sitting, without interruption. These volunteers also were asked to note for feedback to the researcher the following: (a) confusing words or phrases in the introduction letter or survey questions; (b) confusion on how to access the instrument online or of any technical issues; (c) the time it took to complete the survey; and (d) any formatting or display errors on their computer screen, which may impact ease of reading the survey questions.

Feedback from the pilot testing was incorporated into another draft of the survey instrument, which was reviewed by the researcher and the researcher's faculty advisor. This feedback resulted in the final, 37-question survey instrument, administered in this research study. A copy of the survey instrument is included in Appendix A.

Data Collection Process and Protocols

The researcher administered the survey instrument to nonprofit chief staff officers by email invitation and cover letter outlining the scope of the research study. The email was broadly distributed through the researcher's personal and professional network including individual colleagues and contacts, organizational list-serves, online discussion

boards of nonprofit professional organizations, and through LinkedIn contacts/group network.

The email invitation included a link to the survey to be completed online. Survey response data were securely submitted electronically via Google Forms, a trusted and reliable online tool for gathering survey instrument data. Furthermore, to broaden distribution and to encourage a larger sample size of participants, upon completion of the survey respondents were asked to forward the survey to a friend, whom they knew met the desired sample criteria as well. Such processes for data collection are approved by research design scholars and common with modern research data collection methods (Creswell, 2009; Field, 2009; Fink, 2009).

Human Subjects Protection and Informed Consent

When research is conducted that involves a human subject, defined as an individual from which data are gathered where data may be private in nature, proper protocols for the protection of these human subjects is required (Bizilia, 2000). The researcher, in keeping with ethical standards of good research and data collection methods, sought and secured approval for this study and the gathering of data from human subjects from the University of Missouri's International Review Board (IRB) (Bizila, 2000; Creswell, 2009). A copy of the IRB approval for this research study is included in the Appendix

Furthermore, when collecting data from participants, each respondent was provided with a letter of informed consent. This outlined the purpose and parameters of the study and stated that the non-invasive survey was intended for academic research. Additionally, individual responses were protected and identifiable information

was not attached to a participant's response. These steps were taken to ensure proper treatment of the participants and to assure them in their safety, as a means to encourage their honest and thoughtful responses. Such efforts enhance the soundness of the study design (Creswell, 2009; Fink, 2009; Mertens, 2005).

Data Analysis Procedures

Only the researcher conducting the study had access to the raw data, which were securely stored in a cloud-based, password protected web site. Access to the data and its use for analysis was conducted on the researcher's private, personal computer, which was also password protected, further protecting data privacy and content. Such steps further assist in guiding the research study in an ethical manner (Field, 2009; Fink, 2009).

Testing of the central research questions and their accompanying hypotheses were conducted through a series of statistical analysis using IBM's SPSS Software, Version 26.0. Data responses were appropriately coded for numeric analysis within a central spreadsheet. Statistical analysis were used as a means of relationally understanding the data collected. This process allows a researcher to take a larger set of data incorporating many factors and break it down into a smaller subset of measurable variables (Field, 2009). This analysis allowed for comparison across several variables including exhibited behavior, organizational type, organization budget size, organization focus, and organization geographic scope (Field, 2009; Creswell, 2009).

The significance level for this study was ($p < .05$), as informed by sampling theory and research design scholars in survey-based, quantitative studies (Field, 2009). This pre-determined value is used to test statistical hypotheses and determines if the researcher rejects or fails to reject the null hypotheses (Fink, 2009). Given the

complexity of factors addressed in the survey instrument a number of statistical tests were used for analysis. These tests included a) independent samples *t*-test, which allowed to test for differences and "compare the means of two groups to determine the probability that any differences between them are real and not due to chance" (Fink, 2009, p. 87); and, b) analysis of variance (ANOVA), a statistical test for comparing the means of several groups; and c) Pearson's correlation coefficient for identification of relationships between variables (Field, 2009).

Limitations and Assumptions

Care was taken in developing this research study; however, all research studies possess limitations and assumptions. A researcher must be particularly mindful of his or her own biases and worldview, and acknowledge such through continued use of practices of validity and reliability, as previously discussed (Mertens, 2005).

A first limitation is that the focus of leadership behavior is within the context of the nonprofit sector (Sendjaya,et al., 2008). Therefore, results and findings, while generalizable within this specific sector environment, may not be applicable to other sectors of leadership (Mertens, 2005).

The extent and size of sample is another limitation. Obtaining the desired sample size is not always achieved. Efforts are taken by the researcher to identify more respondents for further data collection, but sample size drawn from a convenient sample is a consideration when drawing conclusions on a larger population (Field, 2009). Since participants took the survey online, the researcher could not control the data collection environment (Fink, 2009). However, in the cover letter accompanying the survey,

respondents were asked to take the survey in one-sitting, without distraction so that responses were well reasoned, insightful, and accurate.

Finally, data were collected within a designated one-month period of time. It should be noted that findings are reflective of respondents serving as nonprofit chief staff officers at this moment in time. This can inform the current body of work and be a point of reference for future research. Additional in-depth analysis of servant leadership, the perceptions of leadership behavior in nonprofit board presidents, and the board-chief staff officer relationship may be further enhanced by a different type of research study, perhaps one longitudinal in nature (Field, 2009; Stone, et al., 2004).

It is important to identify key assumptions made within the scope of this study (Creswell, 2009; Grix, 2004). Debate continues as to the breadth of empirical research supporting the theory of servant leadership, but this study assumes the leadership theory to be sound and one worthy of further analysis within the context of this study (Stone, et al., 2004).

A further assumption positions the study within the constraints of its scope and the participants from which data were collected. Criteria were spelled out for consideration to participate in the study, but the researcher assumes the following: a) all respondents were the chief staff officer of a nonprofit organization; b) respondents in their professional capacity worked closely with the nonprofit's board president; c) respondents completed the survey within the context of a specific individual volunteer board president in mind when responding to questions about servant leadership behavior. Additionally, it was the researcher's assumption that the nonprofit chief staff officer

responding to the survey was knowledgeable and informed enough to answer the organization characteristic specific questions.

All research work includes a set of limitations and assumptions. However, given the extent of the design and care taken in the development of this research survey, readers of the findings and subsequent results may be assured that validity, reliability, ethics, and accuracy guided the study design processes and data procedures.

Summary

A gap exists in the research regarding the leadership behavior exhibited by the nonprofit board president and servant leadership theory. Understanding board president behavior is a complex problem of practice within the nonprofit community. Given the combination of this complex problem with multiple factors, the researcher examined the research questions through the development of a survey instrument, administration of the survey to nonprofit chief staff officers to reflect on the specific leadership behavior of a nonprofit board president, analysis of data using factor analysis, and determined what, if any, relationships may be identified between the variables. The design of the study allow the findings and results to be generalized to the broader nonprofit community to inform professionals working in board development, further adding to the body of knowledge and research regarding nonprofit volunteer leadership and advance the empirical research on servant leadership.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter provides the presentation and analysis of the data collected to test the research questions and null hypotheses of the study. A brief review of the problem and purpose of the study are provided, along with a review of the survey instrument used in the research study. Next, an overview of the organization of the data analysis is outlined, and the demographic characteristics of the study group (nonprofit organizations and board presidents) are presented in table and figure format. Research question and null hypothesis data are analyzed showing the results of each statistical test used in determining the acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses, where applicable. Finally, a summary of the chapter is included.

Review of Problem Statement and Study Purpose

There is a lack of information about the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents (Freiwirth, Hiland, Burns, Gifford, & Beck, 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2014). Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical research on servant leadership, which is often associated with leadership in the nonprofit sector given the charitable nature of the sector (Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, & Liden, 2019; Parris and Peachy, 2013).

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to address the gap that exists in the current body of research on the leadership behavior characteristics, specifically servant leadership traits, exhibited by volunteer nonprofit board of director presidents. The research conducted in this study gathered and analyzed data on the perception nonprofit chief staff officers have on their respective organization's board president leadership behavior.

Instrumentation Review

In examining the perceptions of servant leadership behavior exhibited within the nonprofit sector by board presidents, Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale is the appropriate instrument for this research study for several reasons. First, the ability of administering the instrument to a follower to reflect on the behavior of a specific leader. In this study, the follower (respondents) are chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations and the leader is the volunteer nonprofit board president. Further, Liden, et al.'s dimensions are secular in nature, making the instrument more inclusive and accessible to a wider audience of organization types, where other instruments explore servant leadership dimensions of spirituality or a sense of faith in one's approach to leadership (Eva, et al., 2019). Third, the validity of Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS) supports the integrity of the data collection and analysis findings (Coule, et al., 2020; van Dierendonck, 2011).

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

The study examined multiple independent variables, which consisted of both categorical and continuous data, against the study's dependent variables (Liden's servant leadership dimension behavior). To examine these variables the study explored the following questions:

RQ1: Descriptive statistics report on the demographic information of the study participants, including nonprofit organization demographics (classification, focus, scope and budget size) and nonprofit board president demographics (length of volunteer service, board presidency tenure, age, and gender).

RQ2: Do nonprofit board presidents exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015)

seven dimensions of servant leadership?

a. Emotional healing.

b. Creating value for the community.

c. Conceptual skills.

d. Empowering.

e. Helping subordinates grow and succeed.

f. Putting subordinates first.

g. Behaving ethically.

And if so, to what extent?

RQ3: Does a difference exist between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations?

RQ4: Does a difference exist between servant leadership dimensions in board presidents and the characteristics of nonprofit organizations, including:

a. Nonprofit organization focus.

b. Size of nonprofit organization based on annual operating budget.

c. Geographic scope of the nonprofit organization.

Based on these research questions the null hypotheses for this study were:

H_o1: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

H_o2: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations.

H_o3_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o3_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

H_o3_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

Organization of Data Analysis

The population of the study group and presentations of the demographic characteristics of the study group are provided in narrative form, tables and figures. In addition, data and the statistical analysis for each research question and its corresponding null hypothesis are examined. The statistical tests used included the following: descriptive summary statistics of study participants for research question one (RQ1); examination of the mean and distribution analysis for each dimension of servant leadership dimension index (RQ2); independent-sample *t*-tests (RQ3); and, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis on servant leadership dimension indexes across nonprofit organization and board president characteristics (RQ4).

Study Participants

The target population for the research study consisted of nonprofit chief staff officers. Target study participants from the population were invited to respond to the

research survey instrument and data were collected between February 20 and March 24, 2021. A total of 141 responses were collected. Based on guidance of data collection best practices of ensuring the most accurate data set was used for analysis, eight participant responses were removed due to inconsistencies or errors (Field, 2009; Fink, 2009). These included three respondents who self-identified as a role other than that of chief staff officer (survey question 1, which of the following best describes your role within your nonprofit organization? chief staff officer, deputy or associate staff member or board chair/president) and four responses were removed due to missing or incomplete survey information. This resulted in a study sample size of 133 nonprofit chief staff officers (n = 133).

Analysis of Data

The statistical reporting and analysis for each research question used for this study is provided in this section. All data were analyzed using SPSS version 26 using the appropriate dataset for each analysis.

Research Question 1

1. What are the descriptive statistics of the study participants regarding organizational classification, organizational focus, organization budget size, organization geographic scope, and board president demographic information including board presidency tenure, length of overall voluntary service, age, and gender?

Nonprofit organization demographics.

The first series of survey questions asked chief staff officer study participants (n = 133) to report demographic information of their respective nonprofit organization. The

descriptive summary statistics are provided in both table and chart format. The demographic characteristics presented in Tables 4.1 to 4.5 are of importance to the study research questions and were independent variables for the study.

Of the 133 chief staff officers in the study, 81 (60.9%) represent 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit organizations and 52 (38.1%) of respondents represent other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations (such as (c)4, (c)6 or (c)7). Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 display the nonprofit organization classification of study participants.

Table 4.1

Nonprofit Classification of Study Participants

	n	Percent of Total
Charitable 501(c)3 Nonprofit	81	60.9
Other 501(c) Nonprofit	52	38.1
Total	133	100

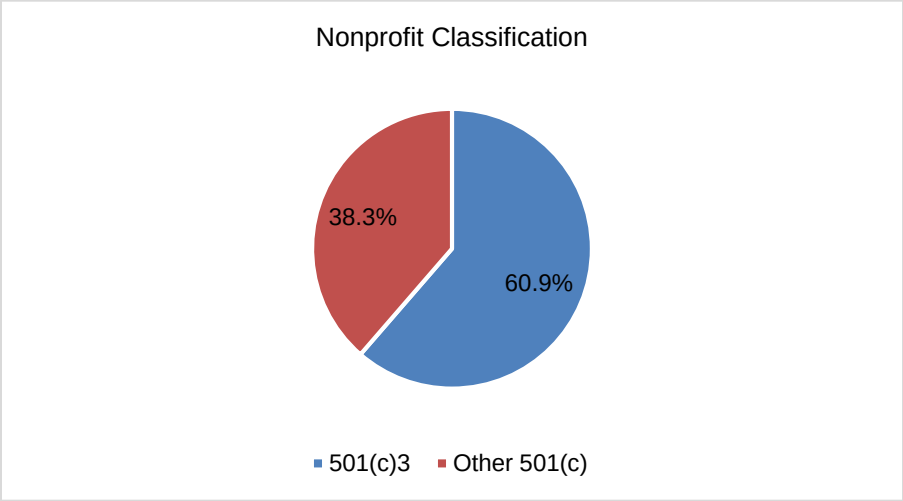

Figure 4.1. Nonprofit classification of study participants by percent (*n* = 133).

Study participants reported the focus of their respective nonprofit organization as follows: 63 (46.6%) membership, trade or policy association; 60 (45.1%) public charity; and, 10 (7.5%) charitable foundation. Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 summarize nonprofit organization focus.

Table 4.2

Nonprofit Organization Focus

	n	Percent of Total
Association	63	46.6
Public Charity	60	45.1
Foundation	10	7.5
Total	133	100

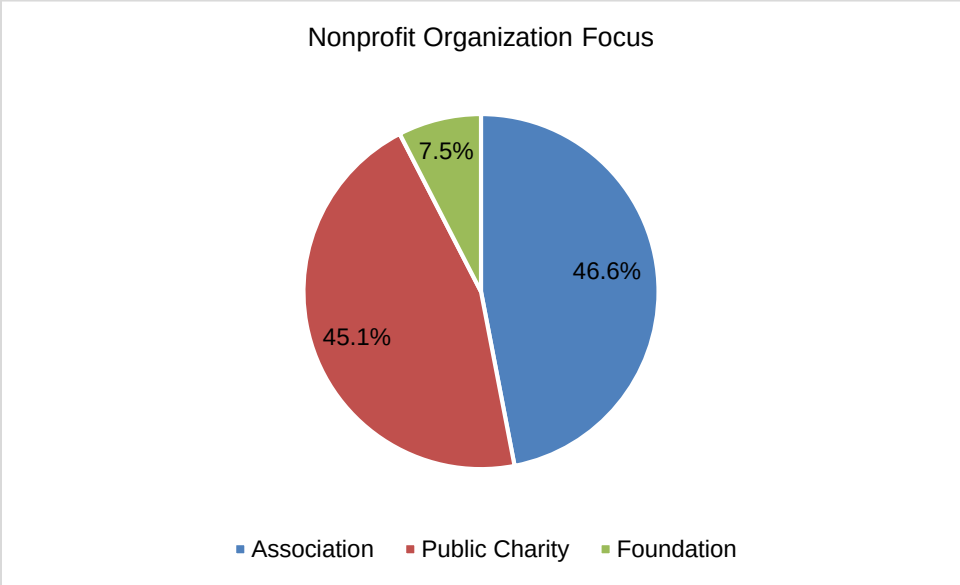

Figure 4.2. Nonprofit organization focus by percent (*n* = 133).

Study participants reported annual revenue budget size for their respective nonprofit organization. The mean annual nonprofit organization budget size was $4,276,950; median annual budget size of $1,300,000; mode annual budget size of $150,000 (12); minimum annual budget reported was $40,000; and, maximum annual budget size reported was $125,000,000.

The researcher analyzed budget size responses and classified budgets into small, moderate, and large sizes, based on natural breaks in the data, and to organize the independent variable into groups for further analysis. These budget size ranges included: 44 (33.1%) small budget nonprofit organizations (under $750,000 in annual revenue); 47

(35.3%) moderate budget nonprofit organizations ($750,000 to $3,000,000 in annual revenue); and, 42 (31.6%) large budget nonprofit organizations (annual revenue over $3,000,000). Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Figure 4.3 summarize nonprofit organization budget data.

Table 4.3

Nonprofit Organization Annual Budget Size

	Mean	Median	Mode	Min	Max
n = 133	$4,525,594	$1,300,000	$150,000	$40,000	$125,000,000

Table 4.4

Nonprofit Organization Annual Budget Range Size

Budget Size	*n*	Percent of Total
Small	44	33.1
Moderate	47	35.3
Large	42	31.6
Total	133	100

Note: Small budget size is under $750,000 in annual revenue. Moderate budget size is a range of $750,000 to $3,000,000. Large budget size is over $3,000,000 in annual revenue.

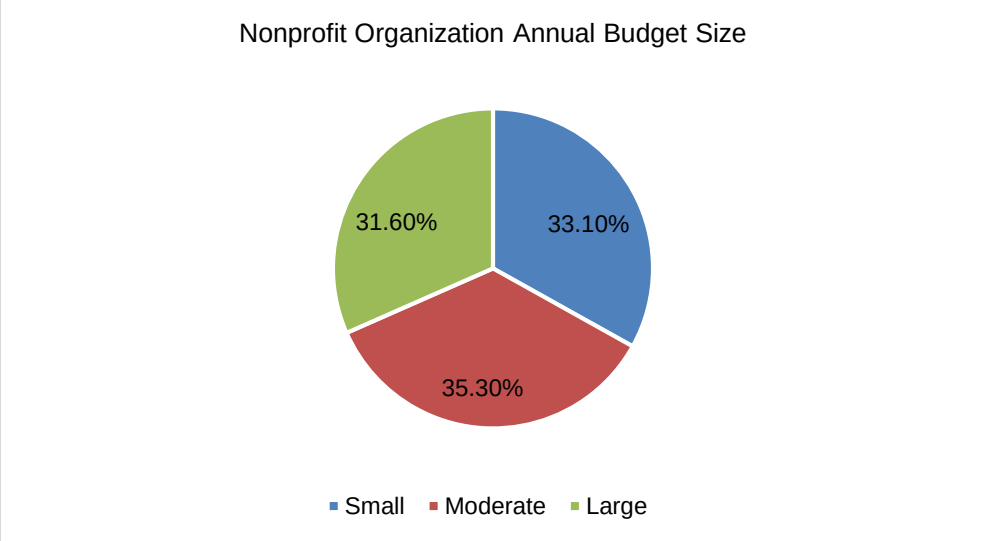

Figure 4.3. Nonprofit organization annual budget size. Small budget size under $750,000 in annual revenue. Moderate budget size range is $750,000 to $3,000,000. Large budget size is over $3,000,000 in annual revenue.

The last nonprofit organization demographic question asked participants to report the geographic scope of work of their respective nonprofit. Geographic scope of work included: 54 (39.8%) national/international scope, 23 (17.3%) state/regional scope, and 56 (42.1%) city/local geographic scope. Table 4.5 and Figure 4.4 summarize nonprofit organization geographic scope data.

Table 4.5

Nonprofit Organization Geographic Scope

Geographic Scope	*n*	Percent of Total
National/International	54	39.8
State/Regional	23	17.3
City/Local	56	42.1
Total	133	100

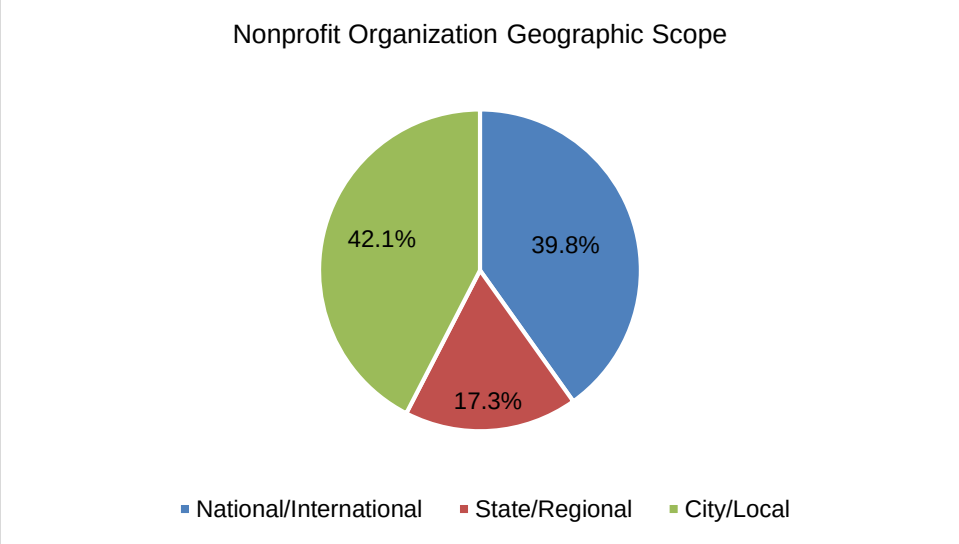

Figure 4.4. Nonprofit organization geographic scope of work or mission.

Nonprofit board president demographics.

To better understand those whose leadership behavior was being assessed, the second series of questions asked participants to report demographic information of their nonprofit organization's respective board president, including tenure as president, length

of volunteer involvement, age, and gender identity. Nonprofit chief staff officer participants reported that 93 (69.9%) board presidents have served in their respective role under three years, 25 (18.8%) have served three to six years as president, nine (6.8%) have served six to nine years, and six (4.5%) have served their nonprofit organization as board president for over nine years. Table 4.6 and Figures 4.5 and 4.6 summarize board president tenure data.

Table 4.6

Nonprofit Board President Tenure

Length of Tenure	*n*	Percent of Total
Under 3 Years	93	69.9
3 to 6 Years	25	18.8
6 to 9 Years	9	6.8
Over 9 Years	6	4.5
Total	133	100

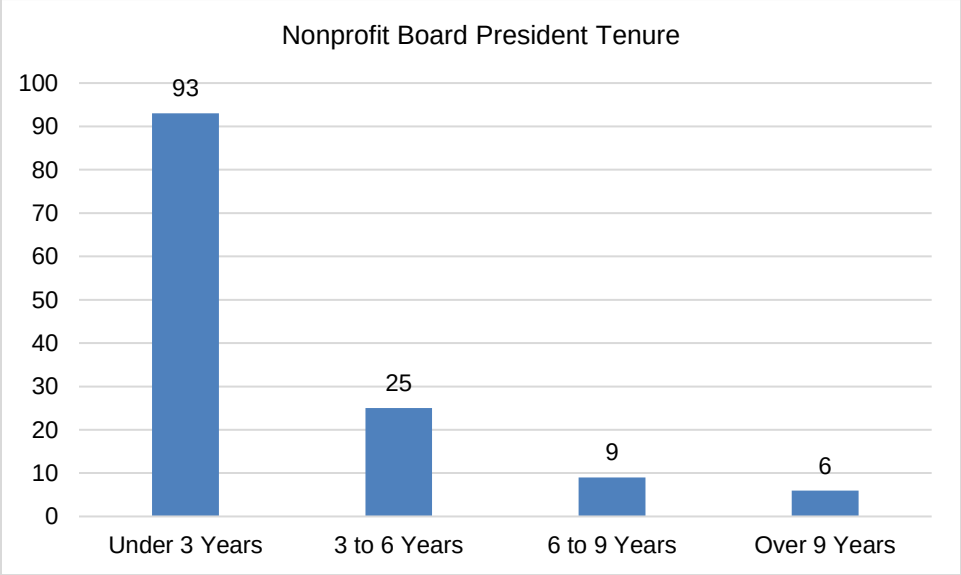

Figure 4.5. Board president length of tenure in role by number.

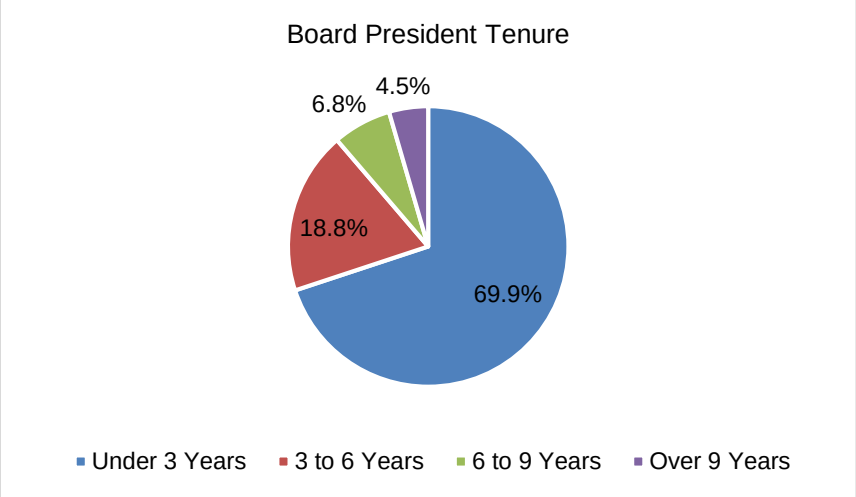

Figure 4.6. Board president tenure in role by percent.

In addition to length of tenure as board president, chief staff officers reported the overall length of volunteer involvement with the nonprofit organization. Only two (1.5%) of board presidents had involvement under three years with their respective nonprofit organization. Twenty-nine (21.8%) had 3 to 6 years of volunteer involvement, 26 (19.5%) had 6 to 9 years involvement, and 76 (57.1%) of board presidents had over 9 years of volunteer involvement with their respective nonprofit organization. Table 4.7 and Figures 4.7 and 4.8 summarize length of overall nonprofit volunteer involvement of board presidents.

Table 4.7

Length of Board President Volunteer Involvement with Nonprofit Organization

Years of Volunteer Involvement	*n*	Percent of Total
Under 3 Years	2	1.5
3 to 6 Years	29	21.8
6 to 9 Years	26	19.5
Over 9 Years	76	57.1
Total	133	100

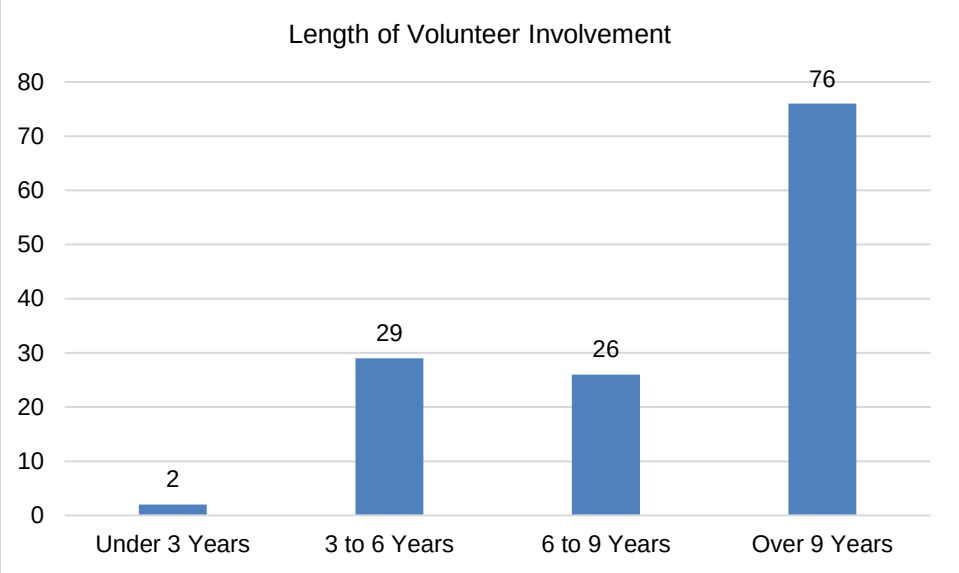

Figure 4.7. Length (in year range) of board president volunteer involvement with nonprofit organization by number.

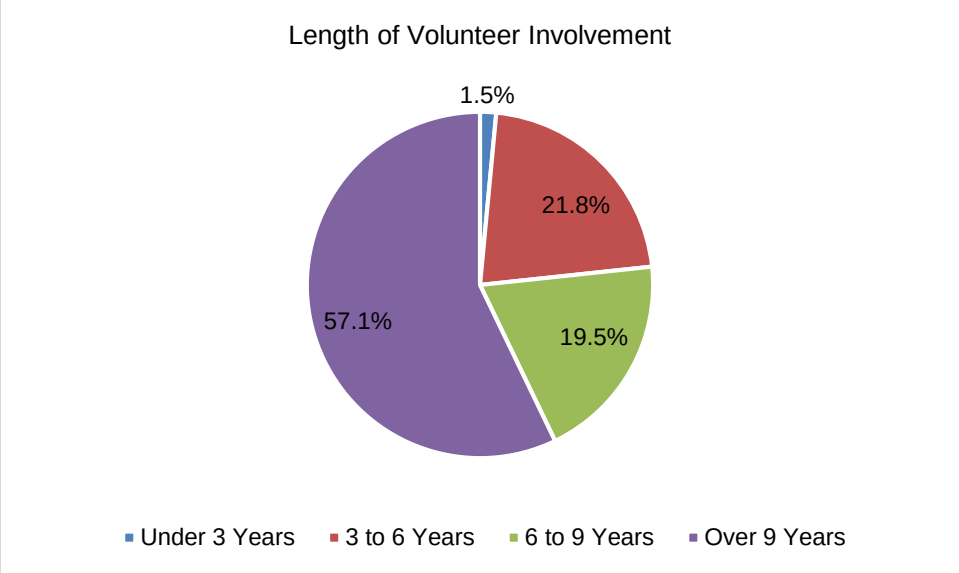

Figure 4.8. Length of board president volunteer involvement with nonprofit organization by percent.

These data reflect the national data trends that nonprofit board presidents are most often long-tenured volunteers (9+ years), but serve relatively short terms as board president (under 3 years) (BoardSource, 2017).

The final two questions regarding board president demographics asked chief staff officers to report board president age and gender. No board presidents were under the age of 25 years old, 15 (11.3%) were 25 to 39 years old, 64 (48.1%) were 40 to 55 years old, 48 (36.1%) were 56-75 years old, and 6 (4.5%) were 75 years or older. The majority (57.9%) of board presidents were male (n = 77) and 56 (42.1%) were female. Although it was an option in reporting, no board president gender identity was reported as transgender or nonbinary.

This demographic representation mirrors that of national studies conducted by Gazley & Bowers (2013) and BoardSource in its biennial index of national nonprofit practices, *Leading with Intent*, which most recently reported national demographics of nonprofit board president gender to be 58% male, 42% female and less than 1% identifying as transgender or nonbinary (2017). Tables 4.8 and 4.9 and Figures 4.9 and 4.10 report board president age and gender identity information.

Table 4.8

Age of Board President

	n	Percent of Total
Younger Than 25 Years Old	-	-
25 to 39 Years Old	15	11.3
40 to 55 Years Old	64	48.1
56 to 75 Years Old	48	36.1
Older Than 75 Years Old	6	4.5
Total	133	100

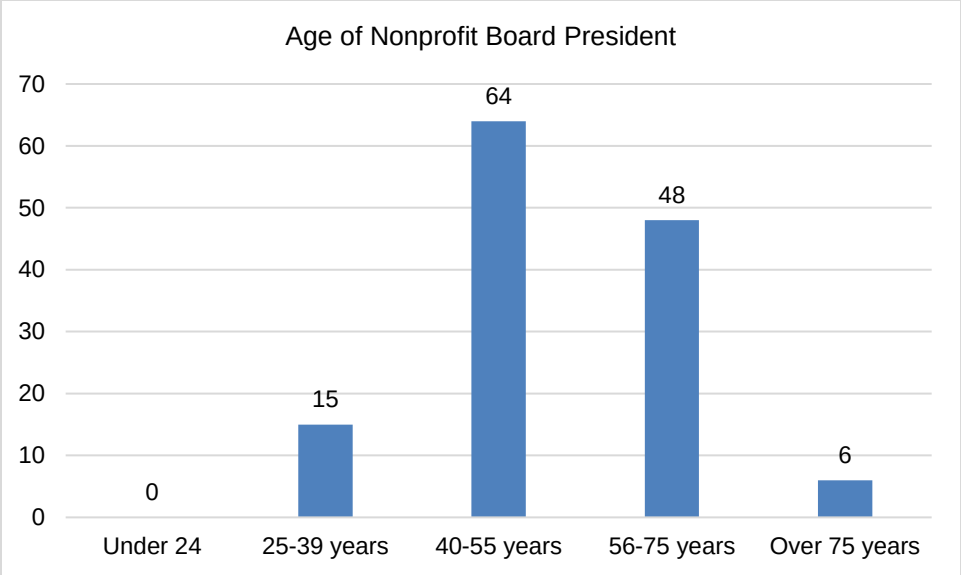

Figure 4.9. Age of nonprofit organization board president by number.

Table 4.9

Board President Gender

	n	Percent of Total
Female	56	42.1
Male	77	57.9
Nonbinary (0 responses)	-	-
Total	133	100

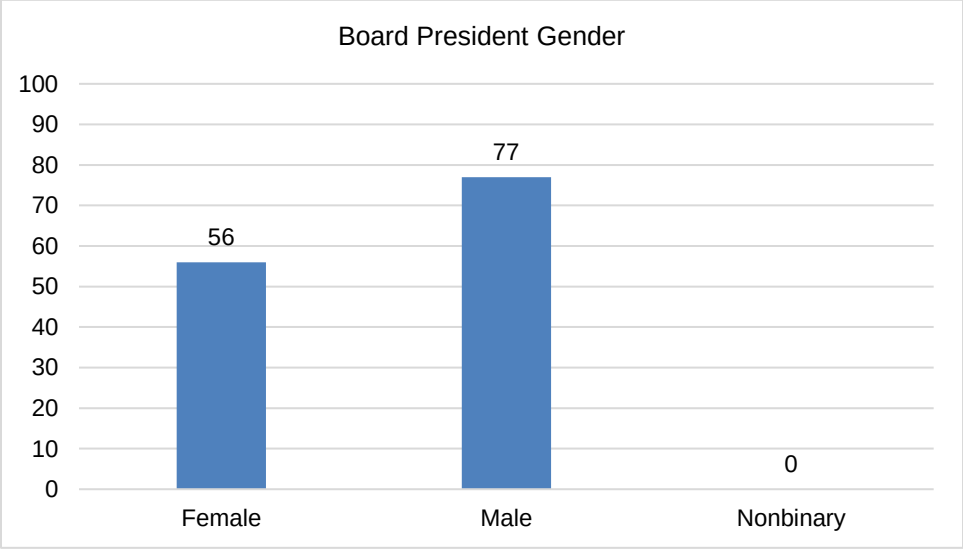

Figure 4.10. Board president gender identify by number.

Summary of Research Question 2

2. Do nonprofit board presidents exhibit Liden's dimensions of servant leadership? And if so, to what extent?

Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale assesses leader behavior traits using a 7-point Lickert scale through a series of four questions for each of the seven dimensions (total of 28 questions). This results in a composite index score on a scale ranging from a possible low of 28 to a high of 196. Using descriptive statistics, the researcher analyzed the servant leadership index score for each nonprofit board president. The mean servant leadership index score was 149.8, with a median index score of 161 and mode index score also of 161. The maximum index score in the study was 196 (the maximum possible), with the lowest index score for a nonprofit board president of 39. Table 4.10 and Figure 4.11 summarize the servant leadership index scores of nonprofit board presidents and visually displays the distribution and range of scores.

Table 4.10

Nonprofit Board President Servant Leadership Index Score

	Mean	Median	Mode	Min	Max	Range	*SD*
n = 133	149.8	161	161	39	196	157	31.9

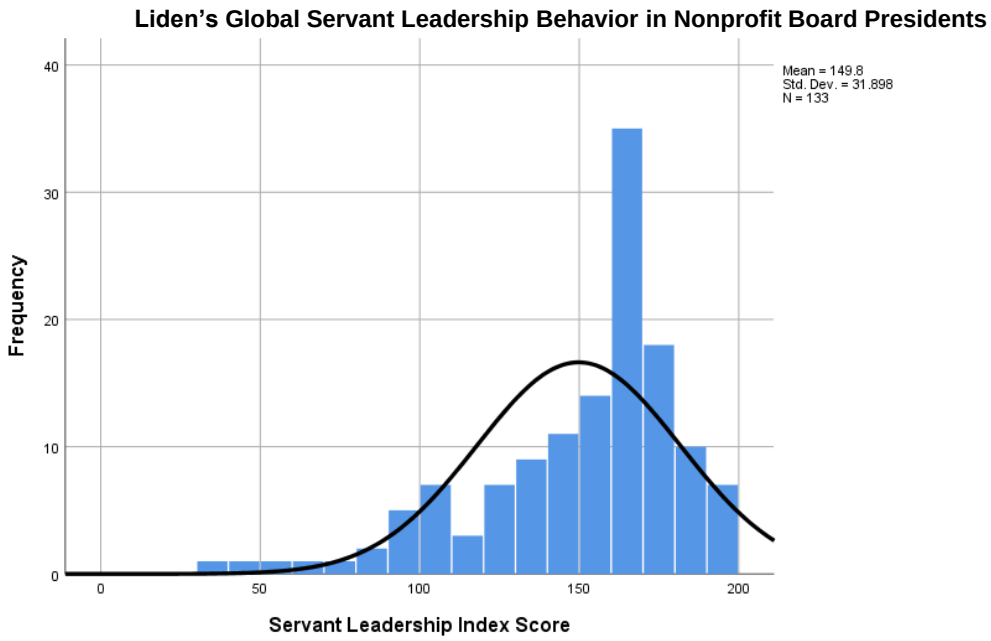

Figure 4.11. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index scores, from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

Beyond the overall servant leadership index score, the researcher analyzed the index score of each of Liden's seven servant leadership dimensions. Each dimension contained a series of four questions used to assess the extent of servant leadership behavior exhibited by board presidents, from the perception of nonprofit executive directors with a dimension index score range from a low of 1 (minimum) to a high of 7 (maximum). The dimension behaving ethically achieved the highest mean score of 6.21. The dimension putting others first had the lowest mean score of 4.41. The descriptive statistics for each servant leadership dimensions are summarized in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

Descriptive Statistics for Servant Leadership Dimensions

Servant Leadership Dimension	Mean	Median	Mode	Min.	Max.	Std. Dev.
Emotional Healing	5.07	5.50	5.75	1.00	7.00	1.46
Creating Community Value	5.54	6.00	6.50	1.25	7.00	1.44
Conceptual Skills	5.67	5.75	5.75	1.00	7.00	1.16
Empowering	5.97	6.25	7.00	1.00	7.00	1.22
Helping Others Grow & Succeed	4.63	4.50	4.50	1.00	7.00	1.59
Putting Others First	4.41	4.50	5.00	1.00	7.00	1.34
Behaving Ethically	6.21	6.75	7.00	1.00	7.00	1.19

A visual representation of the distribution mean for each leadership dimension are summarized in Figures 4.12 to 4.18.

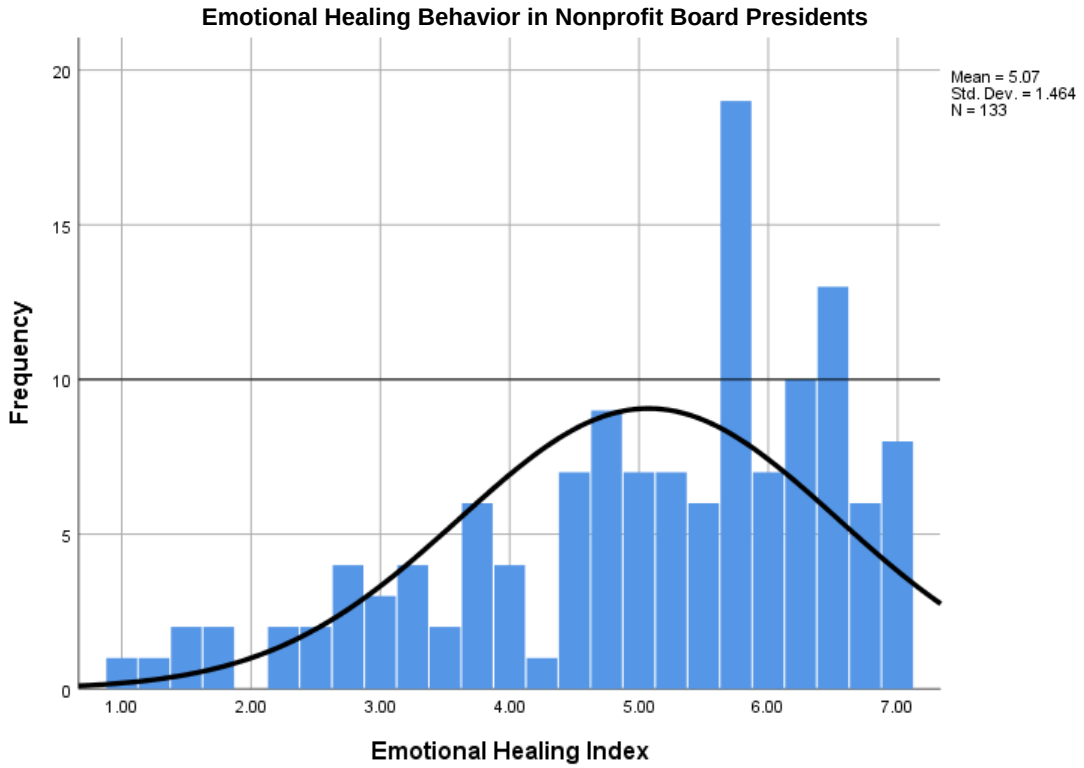

Figure 4.12. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of emotional healing from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

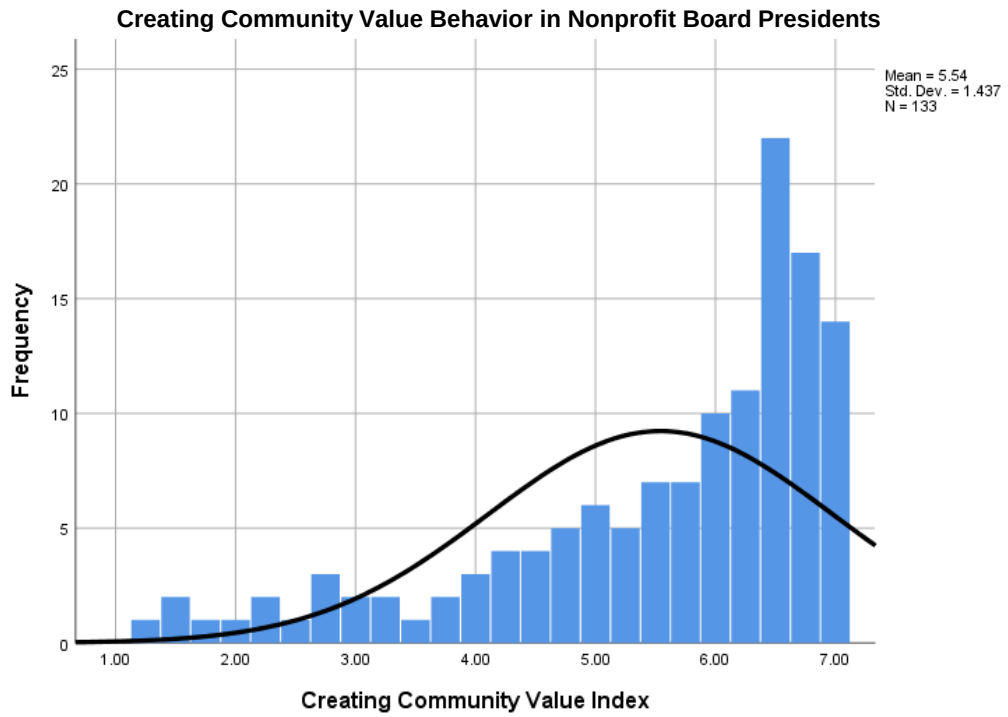

Figure 4.13. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of creating community value from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

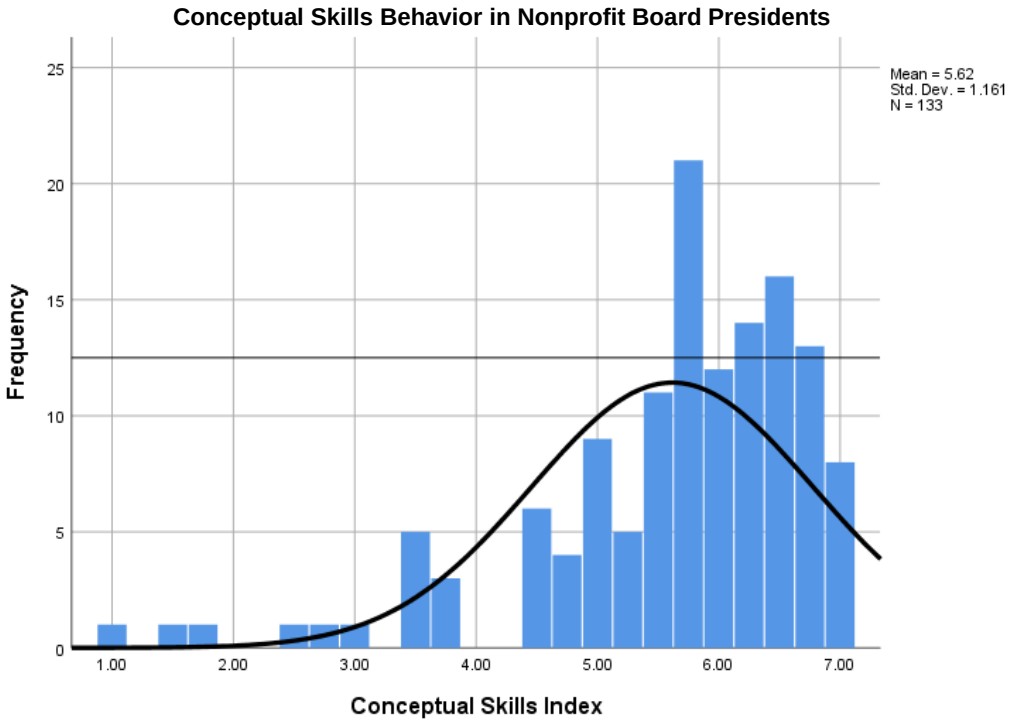

Figure 4.14. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of conceptual skills from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

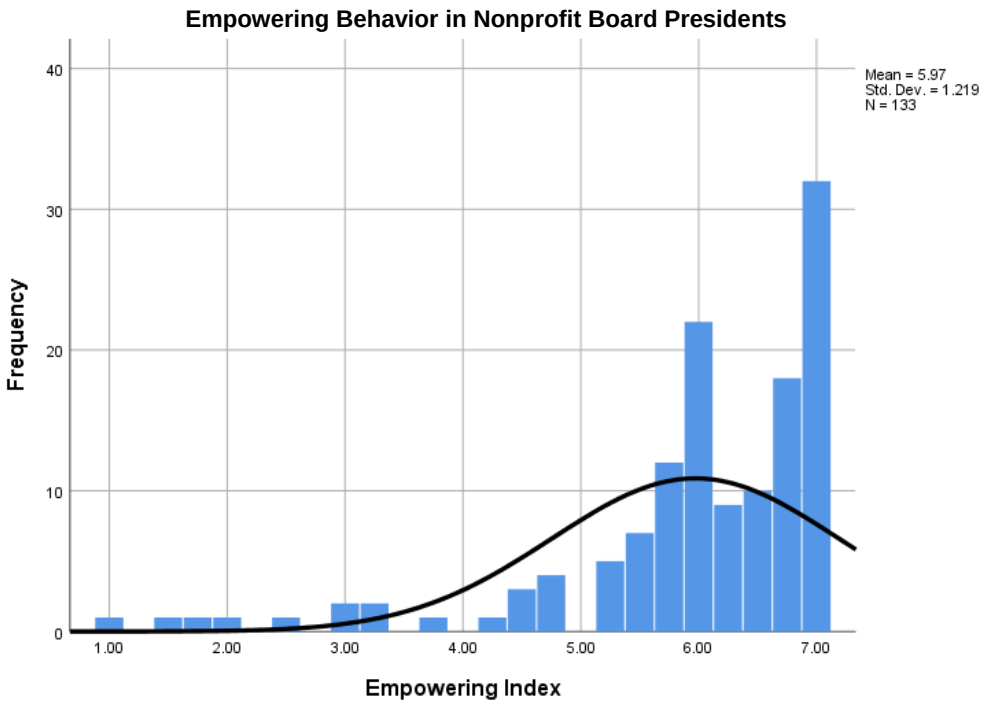

Figure 4.15. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of empowering from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

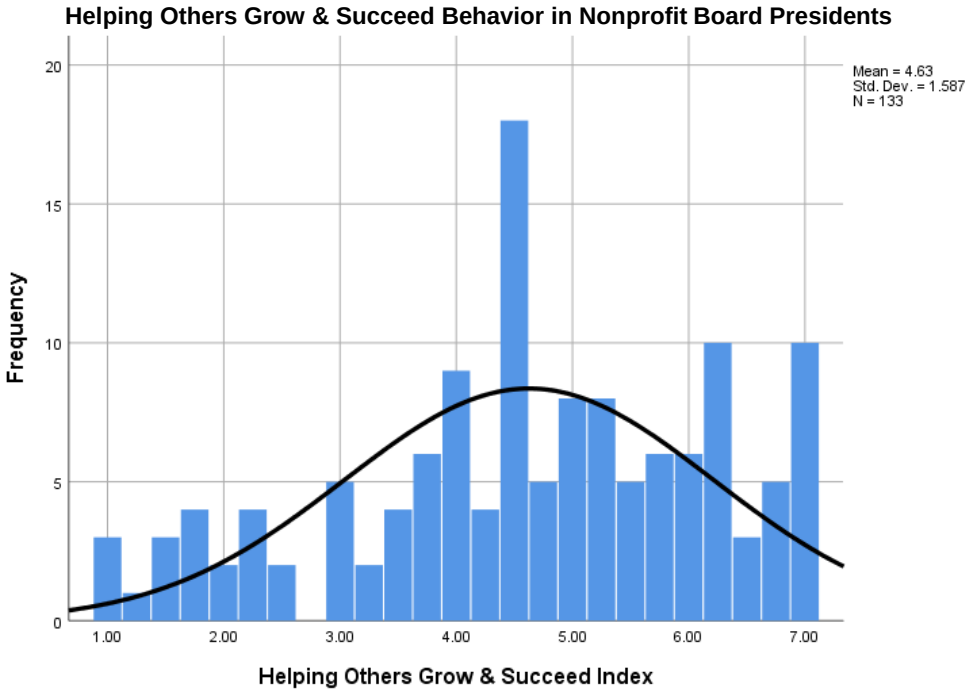

Figure 4.16. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of helping others grow and succeed from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

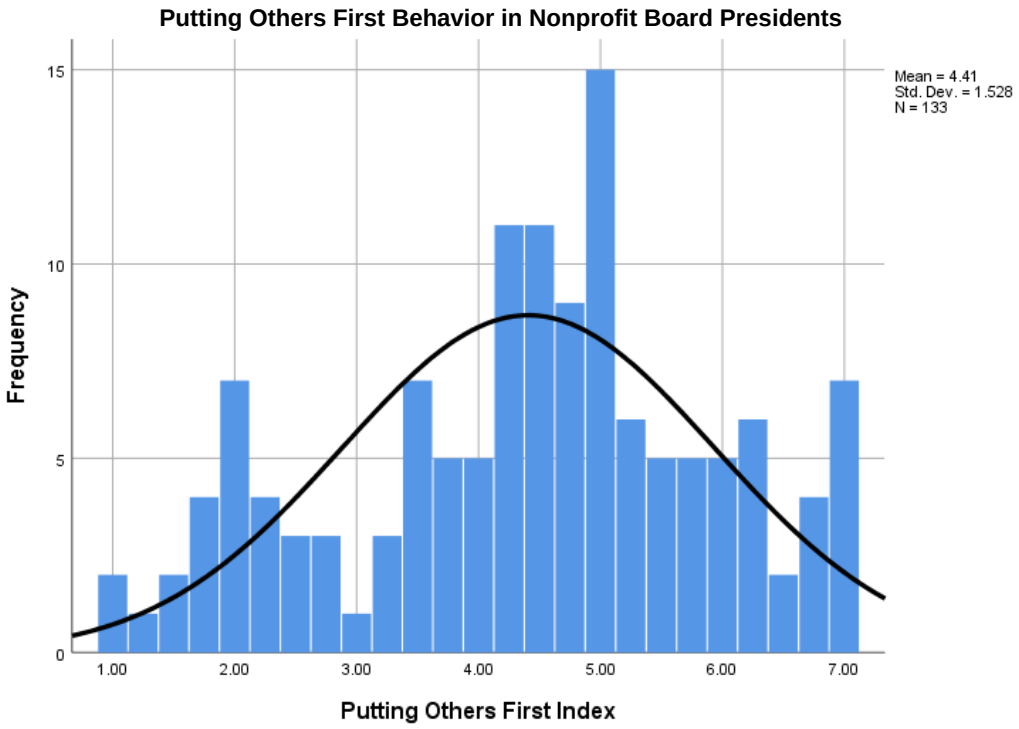

Figure 4.17. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of putting others first from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

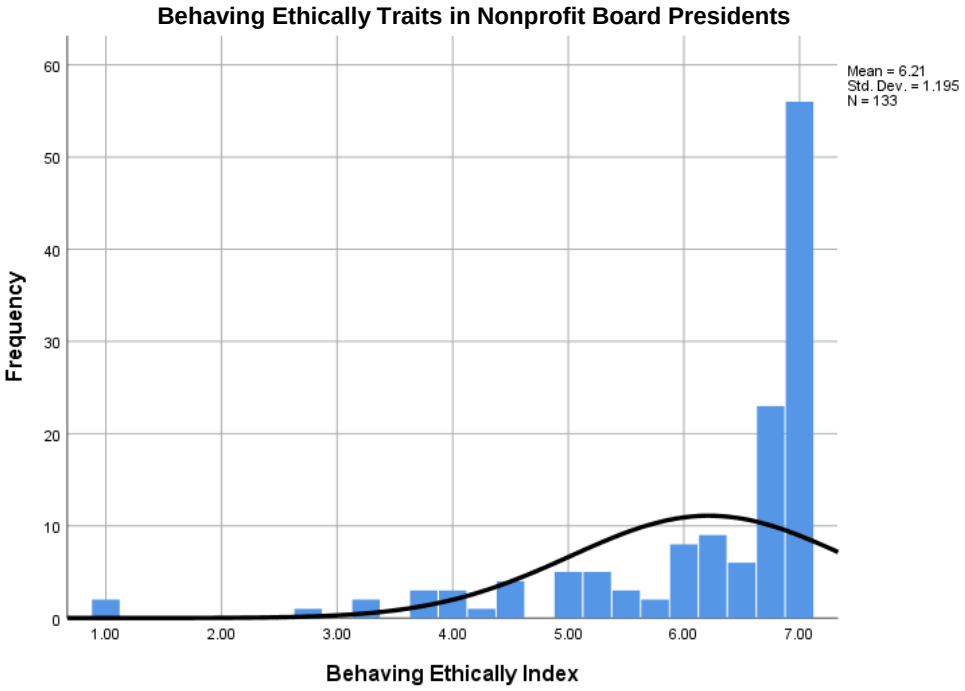

Figure 4.18. Distribution of nonprofit board president servant leadership index score of behaving ethically value from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers.

Of the 28-individual questions comprising Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale nine questions had a mean score higher than 6 on the 7-point Lickert scale. One question had a mean score below the mid-point of the scale, 4. The high and low mean score questions are summarized in Table 4.13 and Table 4.14.

Table 4.12

High Mean Score Survey Questions

Survey Question (Servant Leadership Dimension)	Mean
22. My board president gives me the responsibility to make important decisions about my job (empowering).	6.44
34. My board president holds high ethical standards (behaving ethically).	6.30
36. My board president would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success (behaving ethically).	6.27
35. My board president is always honest (behaving ethically).	6.23
24. My board president gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best (empowering).	6.20
20. My board president has a thorough understanding of our organization and its goals (conceptual skills).	6.11
37. My board president values honesty more than profits or organizational success (behaving ethically).	6.05
11. My board president cares about my personal well-being (emotional healing).	6.02
23. My board president encourages me to handle important work decisions on my own (empowering).	6.02

Table 4.13

Low Mean Score Survey Questions

Question (Leadership Dimension)	Mean
32. My board president sacrifices their own interests to meet my needs (putting others first).	3.93
30. My board president seems to care more about my success than their own (putting others first).	4.18
31. My board president puts my best interests ahead of their own (putting others first).	4.24
29. My board president wants to know about my career goals (putting others first).	4.35
10. I would seek help from my board president if I had a personal problem (emotional healing).	4.36

This data and statistical analysis, as it relates to Research Question Two, did not support the following null hypothesis:

> H_o2: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

The researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis.

Summary of Research Question 3

3. Does a difference exist between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organizations?

To analyze whether a difference exists between two different sample groups it is appropriate to use an independent samples *t*-test for statistical analysis (Field, 2009). The researcher conducted an independent-samples *t*-test to compare servant leadership dimension index score in 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit board presidents and board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organizations. There was no significant difference in the servant leadership behavior index scores for 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit board presidents (M = 153.25, SE = 3.46) and other 501(c) nonprofit organization board presidents (M = 144.44, SE = 4.53); $t(131) = 1.56$, $p > 0.05$.

These results suggest that while on average 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit organization board presidents do have a higher servant leadership index score than their nonprofit board president colleagues from other 501(c) nonprofit organizations, overall nonprofit classification does not have a significant effect on the servant leadership

behavior demonstrated by nonprofit board presidents. Table 4.14 summarizes this statistical data.

Table 4.14

Analysis of Servant Leadership Index Score and Nonprofit Organization Classification

	n	Mean	*SD*	*SE*	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Charitable 501(c)3 Nonprofit	81	153.25	33.12	3.46	1.56	131	0.121
Other 501(c) Nonprofit	52	144.44	32.67	4.53			

To explore possible differences in nonprofit board characteristics further, the researcher conducted a second independent *t*-test analysis to compare servant leadership dimension index score in board presidents based on their gender identity, as the independent variable contained two responses, female and male. There was no significant difference in the servant leadership behavior index scores of female nonprofit board presidents (M = 153.30, SE = 3.40) and male nonprofit board presidents (M = 147.26, SE = 3.84); $t(131) = 1.08$, $p > 0.05$.

These results suggest that while on average female nonprofit board presidents have a higher servant leadership index score than male counterparts, gender identity does not have an effect on the servant leadership behavior demonstrated by nonprofit board presidents. Table 4.15 summarizes this statistical analysis.

Table 4.15

Analysis of Servant Leadership Index Score and Board President Gender Identity

	n	Mean	*SD*	*SE*	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tail)
Female Board Presidents	56	153.30	29.17	3.40	1.08	131	0.28
Male Board Presidents	77	144.26	33.70	3.84			

This data and statistical analysis, as it relates to Research Question Three, did support the following null hypothesis:

$H_0$3: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by 501(c)3 nonprofit organization board presidents and other 501(c) nonprofit organization board presidents.

The researcher therefore failed to reject the null hypothesis ($H_0$3).

Summary of Research Question 4

4. What difference, if any, exists between servant leadership dimensions in board presidents and the characteristics of nonprofit organizations, including nonprofit organization focus, size of nonprofit based on annual operating budget, and geographic scope of the nonprofit organization?

It is important to examine potential areas of difference between the dependent variable (servant leadership dimensions) and the independent variables (nonprofit organization characteristics), which, when three or more categorical data are involved, occurs by conducting an analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical test (Field, 2009).

In addition to analysis of organizational characteristics as independent variables, the researcher also explored board president demographic characteristics, including age, years of volunteer service, and board presidency tenure through a series of one-way ANOVA statistical tests.

No significant difference was found between Liden's seven servant leadership dimensions and nonprofit organization focus (public charity, association, or foundation) or nonprofit organization budget size (small, moderate, and large). Further, no significant difference was found between Liden's seven servant leadership dimensions and nonprofit board president tenure length (under 3 years, 3 to 6 years, 6 to 9 years, over 9 years) and

length of volunteer service involvement with the organization (under 3 years, 3 to 6 years, 6 to 9 years, over 9 years).

To explore any area of potential difference in further detail, the researcher used the numeric value of the report nonprofit annual budget, to consider what if any, relationship may exist through correlation of budget size and servant leadership score, through linear data analysis. Linear data are needed to explore correlation, as it assumes change in one variable will influence change in the other (Field, 2009). Using the whole numbers reported by study participants, the researcher converted prior budget data from categorical to linear. The statistical analysis needed to explore correlation is Pearson's correlation coefficient (*r*). This deeper level of statistical analysis for linear data for the dependent variables (servant leadership index and individual dimensions scores) and independent variable (nonprofit organization budget size), did not result in showing any correlation relationship.

This data and statistical analysis, as it relates to Research Question Four, did support the following null hypothesis:

H_o4_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o4_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

The researcher therefore failed to reject these null hypothesis (H_o4_a and H_o4_b).

Areas of significant difference were uncovered when a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare Liden's servant leadership dimensions in board

presidents and the nonprofit organization's geographic focus (national/international, state/regional, city/local). This significant effect on nonprofit organization geographic focus and the servant leadership dimensions of creating community value, ($F(2, 130) = 9.61$, $p < .05$), putting others first ($F(2, 130) = 3.74$, $p < .05$), and behaving ethically ($F(2, 130) = 6.65$, $p < .05$) for board president behavior.

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the creating community value for national/international board presidents ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.56$) was significantly different than the creating community value index score of city/local board presidents ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 0.99$). Similar post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated the mean score of putting others first ($M = 4.49$, SD = 1.43) and behaving ethically ($M = 5.81$, $SD = 6.62$) for board presidents of national/international focused organizations was significantly different than the putting others first ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.19$) and behaving ethically ($M = 6.61$, $SD = .71$) average index scores of nonprofit board presidents of city/local focus organizations. State/regional board presidents did not significantly differ from these board presidents when considering Liden's servant leadership dimensions.

Taken together, these results suggest that board presidents leading nonprofit organizations with a national/international geographic focus, exhibit certain dimensions of servant leadership behavior differently than their counterpart board presidents leading nonprofit organizations with a city/local geographic focus. Specifically, these differences in servant leadership behavior occur in the dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically.

Table 4.16 summarizes the one-way ANOVA for servant leadership dimensions and nonprofit geographic focus.

Table 4.16

Servant Leadership Dimensions of Significant Difference by Geographic Focus

Servant Leadership Dimension	Inter/National		City/Local		*F* (2, 130)	Sig. *p* < .05
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Creating Community Value	5.02	1.56	6.13	.99	9.61	.00
Putting Others First	4.49	1.19	5.11	1.19	3.74	.02
Behaving Ethically	5.81	1.50	6.61	.71	6.56	.00

Additionally, a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare board president age and servant leadership dimensions. There was a significant effect of age on the servant leadership dimension of conceptual skills, $F(3, 129) = 3.56$, $p < .05$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the conceptual skills for board presidents ages 40 to 55 years old ($M = 5.89$, $SD = .94$) was significantly different than the conceptual skills index score of board presidents ages 56 to 75 years old ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.39$).

This suggests that behavior associated with conceptual skills is exhibited differently by board presidents age 40 to 55 to those board presidents age 56 to 75. Table 4.17 summarizes the one-way ANOVA for servant leadership dimensions and board president age.

Table 4.17

Servant Leadership Dimensions of Significant Difference by Age

Servant Leadership Dimension	40 to 55 Years Old		56 to 75 Years Old		*F* (3, 129)	Sig. *p* < .05
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Conceptual Skills	5.89	.94	5.21	1.39	3.65	.01

Based on the results of the study, there is a statistical significant difference in the servant leadership dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically exhibited by board presidents when considering the geographic focus and scope of the nonprofit organization which they lead.

Further, based on the results, there is a statistical significant difference in the servant leadership dimension of conceptual skills exhibited by board presidents when considering the age of the volunteer.

This data and statistical analysis, as it relates to Research Question Four, did not support the following null hypothesis:

H_o4_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

The researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis (H_o4_c).

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to address the gap that exists in the current body of research on the leadership behavior characteristics, specifically servant leadership traits, exhibited by volunteer nonprofit board of director presidents. The research conducted in this study gathered and analyzed data on the perception nonprofit chief staff officers have on their respective organization's board president leadership behavior, using Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale instrument. The conceptual underpinnings of this study, servant leadership and nonprofit board president behavior, served to frame the study and provide a lens through which the statistical analyses were conducted and interpreted.

The statistical tests used to answer the research questions designed in accordance with this study's purpose. This included descriptive summary statistics and information for the individuals (nonprofit board presidents) the study focused on and the context in which they lead (nonprofit organizations), so as to understand how this sample reflects the larger population of nonprofit board presidents and nonprofit organizations of today (RQ1). In several instances (gender, age, tenure, length of volunteerism), the sample of participants in this study reflect the demographics of the larger population and of prior studies (BoardSource, 2017; Gazley & Bowers, 2013).

Next, for RQ2, descriptive statistics including mean, median, mode, maximum, minimum, range, and standard deviation, were reported and analyzed to represent the extent and breadth of which nonprofit board presidents exhibit dimensions of servant leadership, as measured by Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale. This overall index score and individual score for each of the seven servant leadership dimensions, allows comparisons to be made to understand areas for further analysis or potential difference. On average nonprofit board presidents score highest in the servant leadership dimension of behaving ethically (M = 6.21 out of 7) and lowest in putting others first (M = 4.41 out of 7). Histograms for each of the servant leadership dimensions visually represent the distribution of mean scores of nonprofit board presidents, reflecting the breadth of range in some dimensions and less in others.

To analyze whether a difference existed in the servant leadership behavior between nonprofit board presidents of charitable 501(c)3 nonprofits and board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organizations, the researcher conducted independent samples *t*-tests (RQ3). Additionally, the same independent samples *t*-test was run to analyze any

difference in the gender identity of nonprofit board presidents and servant leadership behavior. No significant difference was found in the servant leadership behavior index scores of board presidents, based on nonprofit classification or gender identity.

Finally, to analyze differences among three or more categorical data in the study's independent variables, one-way ANOVA statistical tests were conducted by the researcher. These ANOVA tests were used to determine if servant leadership dimension scores are significantly dependent on nonprofit organization focus, organization budget size, organization geographic scope, board president length of volunteer service to the organization, length of tenure as board president, or age of the board president (RQ4). No significant difference was discovered when considering nonprofit organization focus, budget size, board president volunteer service, or tenure as board president. However, areas of significant difference were found to occur between board presidents of inter/national nonprofit organizations and those of city/local nonprofit organizations when assessing the servant leadership dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically. Additionally, significant difference was found between those board presidents age 40 to 55 and those age 56 to 75 and how they exhibit and demonstrate conceptual skills.

These statistical analyses and their results led the researcher to fail to reject the following research question null hypotheses:

H_o3: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations.

H_o4_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o4_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

Statistical analyses and findings led the researcher to reject the following null hypotheses associated with the study's additional research questions:

H_o2: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

H_o4_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

Further analysis of these findings, implications of these results, and the study's conclusions, are discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the research study by reviewing the problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, and null hypotheses, which were guided by the study's conceptual frame. As part of this overall summary, brief summaries of a review of relevant literature and the sample group studied are provided, which inform the implications of the study's findings. Next, a review of the research study findings are included from the statistical analyses conducted by the researcher from the data set. Finally, this chapter posits a series of the conclusions and implications of the research study, as well as recommendations for future research in the areas of servant leadership, nonprofit board president leadership, and nonprofit board development.

Summary of the Research Study

The goal of this research study was to advance the body of knowledge about two important areas of leadership research—servant leadership theory and the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents. There is extensive prior research about servant leadership theory, its evolution, and conceptual components, but much of this research has been qualitative in nature, components are conceptual leading to an unclear definition of servant leadership, and the empirical, quantitative research conducted has been limited by valid and reliable assessment instruments (Eva, et al., 2019; van Dierendonck, 2015)

First introduced in the 1970s, by Robert Greenleaf, servant leadership is a leadership practice that promotes an environment of trust, collaboration, compassion and moral consideration between leaders and followers (Greenleaf, 1977). At the heart of the leadership practice is a strong sense of service to others (Spears, 2004).

Given the service-oriented nature of servant leadership, it is a theory often cited as an approach to leadership prevalent in the nonprofit sector, due to the volunteer nature of this work. However, little research exists about servant leadership in the nonprofit sector and the leaders within this space—including the primary leaders of nonprofit organizations: the nonprofit board president (Parris & Peachy, 2013). Prior studies reveal much about the form and function and structural aspects of what effective nonprofits organizations and their volunteer leadership do and do not do (Renz, 2012). These studies have not fully addressed the behaviors exhibited by boards of directors. Further still, there is little body of research on the individual most senior within a nonprofit organization, the volunteer board president (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2012; Renz, 2012).

Without this knowledge and understanding of volunteer behavior, professionals and volunteers alike within the nonprofit sector continue to recruit and train nonprofit board members and officers in traditional ways, which vary in effectiveness and impact (Gill, Flynn, & Reissing, 2005; Renz 2012). As the understanding of leadership has evolved over the last 50 years, simultaneously so has the application of leadership behavior knowledge within the nonprofit sector (Harrison, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Harrison & Murray, 2012; Herman & Renz, 2000; Renz, 2012).

Problem Statement

There is a lack of information about the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2014). Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical research on servant leadership, which is often associated with

leadership in the nonprofit sector given the charitable nature of the sector (Eva, et al., 2019; Parris and Peachy, 2013).

The volunteer board president serves as the executive officer of any nonprofit organization (Brown & Guo, 2010). Given the important leadership role this volunteer serves, it is crucial those working in the field of nonprofit administration and association management understand the behavior traits of these vital volunteers (Renz, 2012). Additionally, research on behavior-based practices of leadership within the volunteer board president role is limited and the literature to-date does not address this area of research (Harrison & Murray, 2012; Renz, 2012; van Dierendonck, 2015). This lack of information regarding servant leadership and nonprofit board president behavior is a gap in the current research and literature in both leadership theory research and the nonprofit sector literate and was explored in this study.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to address the gap that exists in the current body of research on the leadership behavior characteristics, specifically servant leadership traits, exhibited by volunteer nonprofit board of director presidents. The research conducted in this study gathered and analyzed data on the perception nonprofit chief staff officers have on their respective organization's board president leadership behavior.

The study focused on three main research questions. First, do nonprofit board presidents exhibit servant leadership behavior and if so, to what extent? This question was explored assessing the seven dimensions of servant leadership identified by Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2008, 2015), from the perception of nonprofit board

president followers, the organization's chief staff officer. Next, the study explored if any difference existed between the leadership behavior of a charitable 501(c)3 designated nonprofit board president and that of the leadership behavior exhibited by board presidents of other 501(c) tax designations (such as trade associations, membership organizations, political action groups, or social clubs). Finally, the study explored what, if any, relationship exists between servant leadership in nonprofit board presidents and nonprofit organization characteristics of classification type, geographic scope, and budget size.

To address this research purpose this research study administered Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale instrument to a convenient sample of chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations, asking respondents to reflect on the servant leadership behavior exhibited by their organization's respective board of director chair or president.

Conceptual Framework

One way to understand a problem of practice is to view the research topic through a theoretical or conceptual framework (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012). The application of such framework identifies central concepts underlying the research topic and provides a foundational perspective for analysis (Mertens, 2005; Bryant, 2004). In considering the behavior exhibited by volunteers, an appropriate framework for analysis is leadership theory. Specifically servant leadership is a theory of prevalence within the nonprofit environment to use when assessing volunteer behavior, given its origins in service to others and its altruistic nature (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010; Eva et al., 2019; Goodwin, 2011; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Silvers, 2012).

Understanding these concepts, the leadership behavior exhibited by volunteer board presidents through the conceptual frame of servant leadership theory will assist organizations in capitalizing on their human and financial resources (Silvers, 2012). The identification of the point where organizational characteristics meet volunteer leadership behavior will be the point for the continued growth of the nonprofit sector (Harrison & Murray, 2016; Inglis & Cleave, 2006; Preston & Brown, 2004).

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

Using this conceptual frame, to better understand leadership behavior exhibited by nonprofit board presidents, the study examined the following central research questions and the accompanying null hypotheses:

RQ1: Descriptive statistics report on the demographic information of the study participants, including length of board service, board presidency tenure, age, and sex. Additionally, using statistical analysis of the data, the author sought to provide insight on leadership differences by exploring the following research questions:

RQ2: Do nonprofit board presidents exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions of servant leadership?

a. Emotional healing.
b. Creating value for the community.
c. Conceptual skills.
d. Empowering.
e. Helping subordinates grow and succeed.
f. Putting subordinates first.
g. Behaving ethically.

And if so, to what extent?

H_o1: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

RQ3: Does a difference exist between the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations?

H_o2: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by board presidents of 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and the board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations.

RQ4: Does a difference exist between servant leadership dimensions in board presidents and the characteristics of nonprofit organizations, including:

a. Nonprofit organization focus.

b. Size of nonprofit organization based on annual operating budget.

c. Geographic scope of the nonprofit organization.

H_o3_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o3_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

H_o3_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in

nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

Review of Related Literature

For the purposes of this study, the review of literature included two primary focuses. First, to describe servant leadership as a leadership theory for analysis, its origins, gaps in the current literature, and the measurement tools developed and utilized for assessing servant leadership in individuals. Second, to describe the contextual environment of nonprofit organizations, structure, and the application of leadership theories within this specific environment and through the leadership position of the nonprofit board president.

Servant leadership.

Servant leadership as a leadership concept was first formally developed in Robert K. Greenleaf's 1970 essay, *The Servant Leader*. In this seminal work, informed by his 40 years of management work at AT&T, Greenleaf stated, "Servant-leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (1970, p. 13). Greenleaf's leadership practice promotes an environment of trust, collaboration, compassion and moral consideration between leaders and followers (Greenleaf, 1977). At the heart of the leadership practice is a strong sense of service to others (Spears, 2004). This trait is often reflected in volunteerism and service provided by volunteers in nonprofit board leadership roles (Sinsi, 1993).

Although not mutually agreed upon by scholars in a singular definition, there are reoccurring key characteristics of leadership used to describe servant leadership (Jones, Ovando & High, 2009; Russell & Stone, 2002). Empirical research conducted through

valid and reliable instruments continues to help narrow and focus these themes, which is helping move the literature closer to a shared definition of servant leadership. However, prior research and the current body of literature indicate there remains a lack of empirical research on servant leadership, which supported the case for the need for this research study (Eva et al., 2019; Joseph & Winston, 2005; van Dierendonck, 2010).

Nonprofit board presidents.

Several studies indicate that board chairs and organization chief staff officers have different perspectives about the work of the board and the relationship between the board and the CEO (Berstein, Buse, & Bilimoria, 2014; Jager & Rehli, 2012; Millesen, 2004). The power-sharing, authority, and leadership dynamic between the board chair and an organization staff leader is important to understand given the important relationship which exists in leading a nonprofit organization (Brown, 2009). Regardless of who leads (the board chair or the chief staff officer), the leadership pair should focus on shared collaboration in the management, strategic planning, and organizational leadership of their respective nonprofit (Hilland, 2008).

The board chair-chief staff officer relationship is a powerful resource to be leveraged in support of the organization's mission. The strength of this dynamic is often built through the establishment of trust between the two parties (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005). While the literature emphasizes the importance of trust for an effective board chair-chief staff officer relationship, it falls short of detailing specific behavior or describing the interpersonal dynamic components that actually build trust (Freiwirth, et al., 2016; King, 2004; Nicolaides, LaPort, Chen, Tomassetti, Weis, Zaccaro, & Cortina, 2014). Prior research on the nonprofit sector's leadership structure, the role of the board

president, governance in nonprofit organizations, and the board chair/chief staff officer relationship, reflect the need for additional research on the leadership role of the nonprofit board president (Freiwirth et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2012; Harrison, Murray & Cornforth, 2014; Hiland, 2008; Otto, 2003).

Research Design & Sample Group

In this quantitative research study, Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale (2008, 2015) was administered to chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations to reflect on the leadership behavior traits of their respective organization's nonprofit board president. Liden's work builds upon prior research to provide an improved instrument from previous servant leadership assessments available (van Dierendonck, 2011). Given its sound design and construct validity, use of the instrument adds to the body of empirical research on servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019). Liden, et al., identify seven dimensions of servant leadership behavior traits, including: emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering others, helping others grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically (2008, 2015), which build upon the initial theory proposed by Greenleaf in the 1970s.

Approximately 1,000 potential subjects from the broader population of nonprofit chief staff officers were invited to participate in the research study. Participants were recruited to comprise the convenient sample through outreach by the researcher through professional association networks, peer-to-peer referrals, list-serv distribution, posting in online discussions and forums, inclusion in professional network e-newsletters, and the researcher's network of known contacts across the Midwest and nationally. Study participants (n = 133) consisted of individuals who identified as chief staff officers of

nonprofit organizations, as designated by a 501(c) tax-exempt classification by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

Participants completed the survey instrument online, which also gathered data about organizational characteristics, board president demographic information, and the servant leadership behavior exhibited by the board president, from the perception of the chief staff officer. All data were gathered in February and March 2021.

Although the study group was a convenient sample, demographic information captured suggests respondents are representative of the larger population of nonprofit board presidents and organizations from prior research (BoardSource, 2017; Gazley & Bowers, 2013), including organization budget size (small, moderate, large), nonprofit organization classification (public charity, foundation, and association), geographic scope (inter/national, state/regional, and city/local), board presidency tenure, volunteer tenure, board president age, and gender identity composition of board presidents. This suggests that the study findings may be representative of the larger the nonprofit sector.

Study Findings

The statistical analyses used for each research questions included descriptive summary statistics for research question one (RQ1); descriptive summary statistics, mean comparisons, and distribution analysis of data displays for research question two (RQ2); independent-samples *t*-tests for research question three (RQ3); one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) for research question four (RQ4).

Research Question One

The first series of survey questions asked chief staff officer study participants (*n* = 133) to report demographic information of their respective nonprofit organization. Of the nonprofit chief staff officers in the study, 81 (60.9%) represented 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit organizations and 52 (38.1%) of respondents represented other 501(c) nonprofit organization designations (such as (c)4, (c)6 or (c)7). The study participants represented 63 (46.6%) membership, trade or policy associations; 60 (45.1%) public charity organizations; and, 10 (7.5%) charitable foundations.

Study participants reported annual revenue budget size for their respective nonprofit organization. The mean annual nonprofit organization budget size was $4,276,950; median annual budget size of $1,300,000; mode annual budget size of $150,000 (12); minimum annual budget reported was $40,000; and, maximum annual budget size reported was $125,000,000. This distribution led the researcher to classify the study participant organizations into small (under $750,000), moderate ($750,000 to $3 million), and large (over $3 million) sized annual budget groupings for analysis. These groupings allowed for similar sample group size appropriate for statistical analysis and follow groupings exhibited in prior national studies (BoardSource, 2017; Field, 2009; Gazley & Bowers, 2013)

The last nonprofit organization demographic question asked participants to report the geographic scope of work of their respective nonprofit. Geographic scope of work included: 54 (39.8%) national/international scope, 23 (17.3%) state/regional scope, and 56 (42.1%) city/local geographic scope.

Nonprofit chief staff officer participants reported that a majority (69.9%) of board presidents have served in their respective role under three years and had a majority (57.1%) of volunteer involvement with the organization of 9 years or more. Most board presidents were under the age 40 to 55 years old (48.1%) and the majority (57.9%) of board presidents were male (n = 77) and 56 (42.1%) were female. Although it was an option in reporting, no board president gender identity was reported as transgender or nonbinary.

Research Question Two

Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale (2008, 2015) assesses leader behavior traits using a 7-point Lickert scale through a series of four questions for each of the seven dimensions (total of 28 questions). This results in a composite index score on a scale ranging from a possible low of 28 to a high of 196. Using descriptive statistics, the researcher analyzed the servant leadership index score for each nonprofit board president. The mean servant leadership index score was 149.8, with a median index score of 161 and mode index score also of 161. The maximum index score in the study was 196 (the maximum possible), with the lowest index score for a nonprofit board president of 39.

Beyond the overall servant leadership index score, the researcher analyzed the index score of each of Liden's seven servant leadership dimensions. Each dimension contained a series of four questions used to assess the extent of servant leadership behavior exhibited by board presidents, from the perception of nonprofit executive directors with a dimension index score range from a low of 1 (minimum) to a high of 7 (maximum). The dimension behaving ethically (M = 6.21) achieved the highest mean

score, followed by empowering (M = 5.97). The dimensions scored lowest were helping others grow and succeed (M = 4.63) and putting others first (M = 4.41).

Research Question Three

The researcher conducted an independent-samples *t*-test to compare servant leadership dimension index score in 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit board presidents and board presidents of other 501(c) nonprofit organizations. There was no significant difference in the servant leadership behavior index scores for 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit board presidents (M = 153.25, SE = 3.46) and other 501(c) nonprofit organization board presidents (M = 144.44, SE = 4.53; $t(131) = 1.56$, $p > 0.05$.

These results suggest that while on average 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit organization board presidents do have a higher servant leadership index score than their nonprofit board president colleagues from other 501(c) nonprofit organizations, overall nonprofit classification does not have a significant effect on the servant leadership behavior demonstrated by nonprofit board presidents.

To explore possible differences in nonprofit board characteristics further, the researcher conducted a second independent *t*-test analysis to compare servant leadership dimension index score in board presidents based on their gender identity, as the independent variable contained two responses, female and male. No nonprofit board presidents were reported to identify as transgender or nonbinary. There was no significant difference in the servant leadership behavior index scores of female nonprofit board presidents (M = 153.30, SE = 3.40) and male nonprofit board presidents (M = 147.26, SE = 3.84); $t(131) = 1.08$, $p > 0.05$.

Research Question Four

The researcher also explored board president demographic characteristics, including age, years of volunteer service, and board presidency tenure through a series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tests. These independent variables were of interest given prior national studies that track such information of nonprofit board presidents over time (BoardSource, 2017). No significant difference was found between Liden's seven servant leadership dimensions and nonprofit organization focus (public charity, association, or foundation) or nonprofit organization budget size (small, moderate, and large). Further, no significant difference was found between Liden's seven servant leadership dimensions and nonprofit board president tenure length (under 3 years, 3 to 6 years, 6 to 9 years, over 9 years) and length of volunteer service involvement with the organization (under 3 years, 3 to 6 years, 6 to 9 years, over 9 years).

Areas of significant difference were uncovered when a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare Liden's servant leadership dimensions in board presidents and the nonprofit organization's geographic focus (national/international, state/regional, city/local). This significant effect on nonprofit organization geographic focus and the servant leadership dimensions of creating community value, ($F(2, 130) = 9.61$, $p < .05$), putting others first ($F(2, 130) = 3.74$, $p < .05$), and behaving ethically ($F(2, 130) = 6.65$, $p < .05$) for board president behavior.

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the creating community value for national/international board presidents ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.56$) was significantly different than the creating community value index score of city/local board presidents ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 0.99$). Similar post hoc comparisons using

the Tukey HSD test indicated the mean score of putting others first (M = 4.49, SD = 1.43) and behaving ethically (M = 5.81, SD = 6.62) for board presidents of inter/national focused organizations was significantly different than the putting others first (M = 5.11, SD = 1.19) and behaving ethically (M = 6.61, SD = .71) average index scores of nonprofit board presidents of city/local focus organizations. State/regional board presidents did not significantly differ from these board presidents when considering Liden's servant leadership dimensions.

Additionally, a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare board president age and servant leadership dimensions. There was a significant effect of age on the servant leadership dimension of conceptual skills, $F(3, 129) = 3.56$, $p < .05$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the conceptual skills for board presidents ages 40 to 55 years old (M = 5.89, SD = .94) was significantly different than the conceptual skills index score of board presidents ages 56 to 75 years old (M = 5.21, SD = 1.39).

Based on the results of the study, there is a statistical significant difference in the servant leadership dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically exhibited by board presidents when considering the geographic focus and scope of the nonprofit organization which they lead.

Further, based on the results, there is a statistical significant difference in the servant leadership dimension of conceptual skills exhibited by board presidents when considering the age of the volunteer.

Null Hypotheses Testing

Ultimately based on the statistical analysis of the study findings, led the researcher to the following action regarding the study's null hypotheses:

H_o2: Nonprofit board presidents do not exhibit Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically) of servant leadership.

H_o4_c: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the geographic scope of nonprofit organization.

The researcher rejected theses null hypotheses (H_o2 and H_o4_c).

H_03: There is no difference in the servant leadership dimensions exhibited by 501(c)3 nonprofit organization board presidents and other 501(c) nonprofit organization board presidents.

H_o4_a: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the nonprofit organization's focus.

H_o4_b: There is no difference between servant leadership dimensions in nonprofit board presidents and the size of the nonprofit organization's annual operating budget.

The researcher failed to reject these null hypotheses (H_03, H_o4_a and H_o4_b).

Discussion of Conclusions

The purpose of this quantitative study was to fill the gap in the body of knowledge in the current literature about servant leadership and nonprofit board president leadership behavior through empirical research. Based on the results of the statistical

analyses conducted in response to the study's research questions, the researcher concludes that nonprofit board presidents do exhibit the servant leadership behavior, based on the seven dimensions identified by Liden, et al. (2008, 2015).

Further, the researcher concludes that areas of significant difference do exist in how servant leadership behavior is exhibited by nonprofit board presidents when considering certain contextual environments of nonprofit organization characteristics and within certain demographic groups nonprofit board presidents. Most notably these include geographic scope of a nonprofit as it relates to creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically, and age differences in nonprofit board presidents when exhibiting conceptual skills behavior. Additional analysis and conclusions of the study are explained within each research question area.

Research Question One

Demographics of the nonprofit organizations and the characteristics of nonprofit board presidents, reflect trends present in the larger population. The nonprofit board presidents of the organizations participating in this study were reported to most often been long-tenured volunteers, having been affiliated with their respective organization in a volunteer capacity for nine years or more. Additionally, most board presidents had served in their role in a tenure length of under three years. These data reflect the national data trends that nonprofit board presidents are most often long-tenured volunteers (9+ years), but serve relatively short terms as board president (under 3 years), as prior national representative sample studies have shown (BoardSource, 2017).

Other areas of demographic areas that mirror trends of national studies include that of gender identity and age. Study participants were reported to most often be age 40

to 55 years old and the majority were male (58%). The most recently reported national demographics of nonprofit board presidents by BoardSource reported board president gender identity to be 58% male, 42% female and less than 1% identifying as transgender or nonbinary (2017). The trend of long-tenured volunteers, serving short terms as board president is also reflective of prior studies (BoardSource, 2017; Gazley & Bowers, 2013).

Research Question Two

Nonprofit board presidents do exhibit a high degree of servant leadership behavior from the perception of nonprofit chief staff officers, with an average score of 149.8 out of a total of 196, on Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale (2008, 2015). Given the service-oriented nature of a volunteer role and the service-oriented nature of the nonprofit sector, this is a positive finding.

Furthermore, in an era when there have been several national headline scandals associated with nonprofit mismanagement and lack of oversight, it is very encouraging to find in this study that nonprofit chief staff officers score nonprofit board president behavior highest in behaving ethically and as empowering, respectively. This indicates that nonprofit board presidents act with integrity and exhibit behavior which results in chief staff officers to feel empowered in their roles. These findings reflect that of prior studies, which found effective board presidents to exhibit a high level of emotional intelligence and have a strong ability to connect with and build relationships with others (Harrison & Murray, 2015; Hiland, 2008; Miller-Millesen, 2003).

Important to note is that at the heart of servant leadership theory and as reflected in Greenleaf's earliest writings and reflections, a leader must be a servant first (1977). Such commitment of serving others putting their needs first and helping others grow and

succeed, would appear to be lacking or are at a minimum areas of leadership growth for nonprofit board presidents, based on the results of this study. Putting others first and helping others grow and succeed scored lowest on average of the seven servant leadership dimensions in Liden's model.

This finding raises a question about intention and the motivations of board presidents to the researcher. If serving in a volunteer role in a service-oriented sector and a board president is not exhibiting service-oriented behavior or is not attuned to serving others, then why is the board president serving in the leadership role? What other motivations may prompt seeking such leadership role?

Research Question Three

On average 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit organization board presidents do have a higher servant leadership index score (M = 153.25) than their nonprofit board president colleagues from other 501(c) nonprofit organizations (M = 144.44). However, overall nonprofit classification does not have a significant effect on the servant leadership behavior in nonprofit board presidents. These findings reflect those of prior studies, which showed no significant differences between the operations and structure of 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit organizations from other 501(c) nonprofit organizations (Gazley & Bowers, 2013). As often as distinctions are commonly drawn in the sector, prior research and this study's findings suggest that 501(c)3 charitable nonprofits and other 501(c) designated nonprofits are more similar than different in many aspects—including servant leadership behavior.

Additionally, while female nonprofit board presidents have a higher servant leadership index score (M = 153.30) on average than male counterparts (M = 147.26),

gender identity does not have an effect on the servant leadership behavior demonstrated by nonprofit board presidents. Although included as an option, no board presidents were reported as identifying as non-binary or non-gender conforming in the study. This mirrors prior research that has shown servant leadership to be a gender-neutral approach to leadership (Scicluna-Lehrke & Sowden, 2017; van Dierendonck, 2013); however, volunteer service and roles such as nonprofit board service, remains a central channel for women to assume leadership roles within their profession or community (Scicluna-Lehrke & Sowden, 2017).

Research Question Four

Similar to the results of research question three associated with nonprofit classification, a nonprofit organization's focus is not a significant factor of difference when considering board leadership. This suggests that public charities, membership associations, and foundations, are more similar in board leadership than they are different through the lens of servant leadership. Additionally, budget size does not make a difference in board leadership. This finding mirrors prior research associated with budget size and perception of nonprofit organization effectiveness (Gazley & Bowers, 2013; Friewirth, et al., 2016), where budget size did not make a significant difference in an organization's ability to achieve its mission. In an environment where competition of resources is intense, this suggests that more resources does not necessarily lead to better leadership, effectiveness, or outcome impact for a nonprofit organization.

Research question four did uncover areas of important significant difference, which are worth further reflection and discussion—including organization geographic scope and the age of nonprofit board presidents, in relation to specific servant leadership

dimensions. First, the servant leadership index score of nonprofit board presidents of city/local organizations is significantly different (higher mean score) than that of board presidents of inter/national organizations for the dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically.

An important consideration here is the concept of community and proximity of geography between nonprofit board presidents and the organization's chief staff officer. In the case of city/local focused organizations, both leaders (the board president and chief staff officer), likely have an innate sense of shared community, given the proximity of being members of the same community and whose work occurs within the community where leadership occurs. For inter/national focused organizations, community likely means something different—it is less geographically bound to a singular location.

Additionally, it is likely that inter/national organization board president and chief staff officer do not live, work, or lead in the same geographic community. Whereas the city/local organization board president and chief staff officer likely have formal and informal interactions, as members of the same community. It is important to note that the mean scores of board presidents in both city/local and inter/national focused organizations, remains high. The difference is mean scores across these three dimensions is different enough to be mindful of how these board presidents may approach these tenets and topics of leadership in the role.

Board presidents serving a leadership role in the community and with stakeholders is identified as important by chief staff officers, but prior research indicates board presidents are often uncertain how to best achieve this role and have uncertainty when it comes to how best engage with constituents (Friewirth, et al., 2016). Prior

studies have also shown chief staff officers perceive their board presidents as being disconnected from the communities and people they serve and perceive that boards do not place a priority on presidents having knowledge of the community served and or having membership within the community served (BoardSource, 2017; Miller-Millesen, 2003). These findings inform a lens of interpretation of why chief staff officers may experience different perceptions of how board presidents create community value and put others first, from an inter/national level and that of organizations that are more city/local focused.

Finally, when considering age of a nonprofit board president, significant difference exists when it comes to demonstrating conceptual skills by board presidents age 40 to 55 (M = 5.89) and those board presidents age 56 to 75 (M = 5.21). Liden et al., define conceptual skills as "possessing the knowledge of the organization and tasks at hand so as to be in a position to effectively support and assist others" (p. 162, 2008). When considering age of board presidents and chief staff officer perceptions of their behavior, it is important to consider the age of the chief staff officer as well. Although this study did not ask chief staff officers their age, prior research indicates that most chief staff officers of nonprofits are between the ages of 40 to 55 (BoardSource, 2017). This may influence how a chief staff officer perceives their board president based on age.

A board president, who is similar in age to a chief staff officer, may be perceived as a peer and colleague, whereas a board president who is older may be perceived as a coach, mentor, or figurehead. This age difference may lend itself in influencing a chief staff officers perception of how attuned a board president may be to roll up their sleeves and dig into the work to fully understand organizational operations. This difference in

how board presidents demonstrate conceptual skill traits and the age of chief staff officers is an area worth further exploration and study.

Study Implications

The findings and conclusions of the study have raised several issues and practical implications for stakeholders interested in servant leadership theory and leadership in the nonprofit sector. In considering the application of these findings and conclusions, it is important to consider identifying these relevant stakeholder audiences. Five primary target audiences are identified as key stakeholders who may be interested in this research and who have a role in the implications of its findings. These stakeholders include: a) nonprofit chief staff officers (both the study participants and their colleagues from the larger population); b) nonprofit board presidents (the leaders who the study is about); c) nonprofit board members (a follower audience and the pool of potential future board presidents); d) nonprofit professionals who work and interact with board members (they are followers too and are future nonprofit executives/chief staff officers); and, e) scholars who are interested in servant leadership and nonprofit board leadership research.

Based on the results of this study and with these key stakeholders in mind, the researcher offers practical implications for action. Practitioners, professionals, nonprofit volunteer leaders, and scholars should consider the following implications:

Snapshot of Servant Leadership

Use this study and its findings as a snapshot of nonprofit board president leadership and servant leadership behavior in the sector today. This study represents a moment in time. Practitioners should consider how to use the study as a lens to

understand their own environment and compare or contrast findings to make meaning of one's own experience in the nonprofit profession or in studying these topics.

Share the Findings

Share these results with board presidents. This study was designed in asking followers (chief staff officers) to reflect on the behavior of a designated leader (board president). Self-improvement comes from evaluation and assessment. Nonprofit board presidents should consider completing Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale (2008, 2015) and self-reflect on their leadership behavior. Additionally, gaining insight from other follower groups, such as fellow board members or other nonprofit staff members, can provide further insight on a board president's leadership behavior. Such assessment can be a source of building a board president's confidence in their leadership role, as prior research indicates those boards which engage in some form of self-assessment perform higher in their governance effectiveness, than those boards who do not engage in self-assessment activities.

Similarities in Nonprofit Organizations

Acknowledge that the nonprofit sector is more similar than it is different when considering organizational characteristics such as 501(c) designation, organization focus, and budget size. But, understand that differences may exist when considering the geographic scope of an organization, which may require intentional action to create shared meaning of leadership dimensions or that certain leadership dimensions will be exhibited differently in board president behavior at different geographic levels.

Celebrate Strengths

Celebrate that a high degree of ethical behavior and integrity prevails in the leadership demonstrated by nonprofit board presidents of today. Professionals working in this sector and who hold professional credentials such as the Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) designation or Certified Association Executive (CAE) title are required to engage in professional development around ethics and integrity on an annual basis through the respective credentialing associations (Association of Fundraising Professionals and American Society of Association Executives). However, other than an annual acknowledge of conflicts of interests, board chairs and board members are not required to engage in such training. It is reassuring that board presidents act with high ethical standards, but nonprofit professionals should continue to directly engage their board presidents and boards of directors in discussions about performing their roles with a high degree of integrity. Such can occur through formal trainings and annual reviews of policies and good governance, including a board's legal duties of care, loyalty, and obedience.

Create Shared Understanding

Chief staff officers and board presidents should take time to create a shared understanding of the community served by the mission of the nonprofit organization's work. The results of this study and prior research suggests that board presidents are uncertain in their role of leadership within the community and unclear how to engage with their respective stakeholders. Intentional time defining community through a shared understanding between chief staff officers and board presidents will help give clarity to presidents in their leadership role within the community and with constituents served.

Informed Board Recruitment Strategies

As previous studies have demonstrated, servant leadership behavior continues to transcend personal demographic traits and is prevalent in leaders across age, tenure, length of volunteer service, and gender identity (von Dierendonck, 2013). Understanding this should inform nonprofit professionals in the identification, recruitment and election of board members and officers. There is not a composite picture of demographic information of who may exhibit servant leadership behavior, but rather servant leadership is more individually demonstrated by volunteers who are inclined to be other-focused and service-oriented. Such may be incorporated into board recruitment and officer nomination efforts through screening questions or completion of a leadership scale profile (such as Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale), should an organization determine the desire for their organization's board members to exhibit servant leadership behavior. Use of a screening and interview process is linked to high performing boards, as has been found in prior studies (Gazley & Bowers, 2013).

Service to Others

Chief staff officers should give time and attention to supporting the development of board presidents' better understanding their leadership role as one that is inherently in service to others. This includes serving their followers: fellow board members, organization staff, constituents served, and the larger community. Professionals working in the nonprofit sector are called to be of service to clients, members, patrons, and beneficiaries. To support them in their important mission-based work, it would behoove board presidents to role model service to others, the central tenet of servant leadership. Although the findings of this study indicate nonprofit board presidents exhibit servant

leadership behavior, on average they scored lowest on the two service-oriented dimensions on Liden's Global Servant Leadership Scale (2008, 2015), helping others grow and succeed and putting others first. There is work to be done in the sector of continuing to develop the service oriented behavior of nonprofit board presidents.

Board President/Chief Staff Officer Relationship

Board presidents and chief staff officers must continue to give attention to developing a healthy, working relationship of shared leadership between governance and mission fulfillment. Prior studies indicate that strong board-chief staff officer relationships lead to healthy organizational outcomes and board effectiveness (Freiwith, et al., 2016; Harrison & Murray, 2014). Developing a relationship built upon the dimensions of servant leadership would aid this leadership dynamic and the role satisfaction of both nonprofit board presidents and chief staff officers.

Board Leadership Diversification

Finally, the diversity of nonprofit board presidents continues to need attention and is an area of growth and improvement. This remains a stated priority of chief staff officers, but little has changed in recent years regarding the demographics of nonprofit board presidents (BoardSource, 2017). As to relates to this study, because servant leadership behavior transcends personal characteristics, an emphasis on it during board member recruitment efforts, may be a strategy in which those not typically represented in leadership roles may achieve leadership roles in the community through their volunteer service.

The above implications are intended for application and reflection by those associated with the nonprofit sector, involved in volunteer leadership in board of director

service, and scholars interested in research associated with servant leadership and nonprofit board leadership. Questions raised from the research findings and conclusions and posed in the implications discussion are areas for further research, which are addressed next.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this quantitative study was to fill the gap in the body of knowledge in the current literature about servant leadership and nonprofit board president leadership behavior through empirical research. The following recommendations for future research are based upon the study's data collection, review of literature, findings, and conclusions.

Longitudinal Analysis

This research study was cross-sectional in nature and is a snapshot of a single data collection period of time and from a singular follower perspective (chief staff officers) of leaders (nonprofit board president). Further research should consider longitudinal analysis of board president leadership behavior and incorporate perspectives of other followers. Research design of this nature would allow for noting possible changes in servant leadership dimensions over the course of a nonprofit board president's tenure to see if service in the role helps evolve the leader's behavior with those dimensions associated with servant leadership. Additionally, multiple follower perspectives (such as fellow board members, nonprofit staff members, stakeholders served by the mission, etc.) on a leader's behavior would provide a more in-depth view and richer picture of how a nonprofit board president's servant leadership traits are perceived by those associated with the community/environment in which they serve.

Potential Replication of the Study

This study explored the servant leadership behavior in nonprofit board presidents where the leader is identified as the board president and the follower was identified as the chief staff officer. The study was conducted in a specific contextualized environment of nonprofit organizations; however, other environments parallel this type of leader-follower relationship, such as school districts, where a superintendent reports to and follows the direction provided by an elected school board, comprised of community volunteers. Further research may consider replicating this study in such an environment to further explore leader-follower roles and the prevalence of servant leadership behavior in other environments, such as school districts.

Impact on Organization Performance

Beyond organizational characteristics of a nonprofit organization, such as focus, budget size, and geographic focus, future studies should consider a deeper level of analysis of nonprofit organization performance or outcome achievement and what, if any, role servant leadership may have in these organizations. Much of the current literature speakers to the effectiveness of boards and considers what makes a high-performing board, but with the knowledge gained through this study (that board presidents do exhibit servant leadership behavior) the servant leadership style of a board president should be considered if the individual is effective in their leadership role through this approach. Additionally, are servant leader board presidents effective in helping the organization in achieving its mission, succeeding in serving its stakeholders, or reaching desired outcomes.

Service and Leadership Motivations

The findings of this study found that nonprofit board presidents scored lowest in the servant leadership dimensions of putting others first and helping others grow and succeed. These two dimensions are at the heart of Greenleaf's earliest reflections on servant leadership. Further research should explore what motivates a nonprofit board president to volunteer their time and to be a leadership role in service-oriented organizations. Research that explores the sources of motivation that prompt a board president to pursue these roles through motivation theory would add more knowledge in our understanding of not only the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents, but their motivations of leading as well. Helping answer the question of why nonprofit board presidents are called to serve, if not for the sake of serving others, may help identify other motivations the sector and scholars should be aware of, such as self-interest.

Board President and Chief Staff Officer Dynamic

There is a need for continued research on the leadership dynamic and relationship between nonprofit board presidents and chief staff officers. Prior research indicates organization success is achieved when this relationship is strong and built upon trust, rapport and a shared understanding of goals. Doing so will have a cascading impact, as servant leaders instill in followers the self-confidence and desire to become servant leaders themselves, ultimately creating a culture of servant leadership in the nonprofit organization they lead.

Attention given to these areas of further study will dive deeper into the questions raised from this study's findings and help continue to advance the scholarly body of knowledge of servant leadership and nonprofit board leadership in society today.

Summary and Closing Remarks

Greenleaf believed that the theme of serving others before oneself extends from traditional leadership environments, such as one's workplace, and to all sectors of life, including home and community. This quantitative study explored the notion of the presence of servant leadership behavior in the community, specifically through nonprofit board presidents leading in the sector today. Further, with valid instrument use and research design, the research study purpose aimed to advance our body of knowledge about servant leadership and nonprofit board president behavior through empirical research.

Using Liden's (2008, 2015) Global Servant Leadership Scale, a survey instrument was developed and administered to chief staff officers of nonprofit organizations, asking respondents to reflect on the behavior traits of their nonprofit's board president. Data from the study participants (n = 133) were analyzed to determine a) if servant leadership behavior is exhibited in nonprofit board presidents and to what extent; b) if differences exist in the servant leadership traits of 501(c)3 nonprofit board presidents and the presidents of other types of 501(c) nonprofit organizations; and, c) if a difference exists between servant leadership behavior in board presidents and the nonprofit organization characteristics of organization focus, annual budget size, and geographic scope of the organization's mission, and demographic characteristics of nonprofit board presidents including age, tenure, length of volunteer involvement, and gender identity.

The statistical findings of the study suggest that nonprofit board presidents do exhibit servant leadership behavior, as defined by Liden's (2008, 2015) seven dimensions (emotional healing, creating community value, conceptual skills, empowering, helping

others grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically). On average nonprofit board presidents scored highest in exhibiting behaving ethically and empowering. The sample of nonprofit board presidents studied scored lowest on average in putting others first and helping others grow and succeed.

The study findings found significant difference in the behavior dimensions of creating community value, putting others first, and behaving ethically between nonprofit board presidents of city/locally focused nonprofits and those with a inter/national geographic service scope. Additionally, significant difference was found in leadership behavior of the dimension conceptual skills between nonprofit board presidents age 40 to 55 and those age 56 to 75 years old.

These findings are important and resulted in implications for stakeholders and audiences associated with these topics to consider including: celebrating the ethical and empowering behavior of nonprofit board presidents of study; leveraging servant leaders as a means of helping continue to diversify nonprofit board leaders; and, acknowledging that there are more similarities than differences in nonprofit organization characteristics. Most important of all, practitioners and leaders in the nonprofit sector should respond to the study's finding that nonprofit board presidents struggle exhibit behavior of putting others first and helping others grow and succeed.

To help address this challenge, chief staff officers should help nonprofit board presidents understand the importance of their leadership role in and for the community and those served by the mission of the organization they lead. Servant leaders serve multiple stakeholders—including their community and society as a whole (Graham, 1991). One approach to do so is through intentional time given to continuing to

strengthen the chief staff officer and nonprofit board president relationship through shared understanding and giving value to the importance of creating community value, conceptual skills, helping others grow and succeed, putting others first, and behaving ethically. Doing so will have a cascading impact, as servant leaders instill in followers the self-confidence and desire to become servant leaders themselves, ultimately creating a culture of servant leadership in our service-oriented organizations—the nonprofit community of society.

"Servant-leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first" (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 13). This central theme of servant leadership, first conceptualized by Robert Greenleaf over 50 years ago, is one still to be fully embodied by nonprofit board presidents in leadership roles today; however, the span of the last half century has seen continued evolution of servant leadership theory as a practical and adopted approach to leading organizations, including those in the nonprofit sector. Additionally, the nonprofit sector has continued to respond to the needs of the communities its organizations serve, through changes in governance, mission fulfillment, and organizational accountability and transparency, over this same span. Collectively the body of knowledge through empirical research continues to sharpen the focus on our understanding of servant leadership theory and the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents. Using and applying the findings of this study will allow, as de Tocqueville identified in his earliest observations on the United States, the nonprofit sector and its leaders to be a force in service to improving human conditions and for all to grow and improve together.

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Appendix A

Institutional Review Board approval for the research study, #2049422.

Institutional Review Board
University of Missouri-Columbia
FWA Number: 00002876
IRB Registration Numbers: 00000731, 00009014

482 McReynolds Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
573-882-3181
irb@missouri.edu

February 19, 2021

Principal Investigator: Chad Harris (MU-Student)
Department: Educational Leadership-EDD

Your IRB Application to project entitled THE NONPROFIT BOARD SERVANT LEADER: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR IN NONPROFIT BOARD PRESIDENTS FROM THE PERCEPTION OF NONPROFIT CHIEF STAFF OFFICERS USING LIDEN'S GLOBAL SERVANT LEADERSHIP SCALE was reviewed and approved by the MU Institutional Review Board according to the terms and conditions described below:

IRB Project Number	2049422
IRB Review Number	302944
Initial Application Approval Date	February 19, 2021
IRB Expiration Date	February 19, 2022
Level of Review	Exempt
Project Status	Active - Exempt
Exempt Categories (Revised Common Rule)	45 CFR 46.104d(2)(i)
Risk Level	Minimal Risk
Approved Documents	E-newsletter recruitment script Survey questions Phone recruitment script Email recruitment script Informed consent

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects and conduct of this study. The PI must comply with the following conditions of the approval:

1. **COVID-19 Specific Information**
   Enrollment and study related procedures must remain in compliance with the University of Missouri regulations related to interaction with human participants following guidance at research.missouri.edu/about/covid-19-info.php
   In addition, any restarting of in-person research activities must comply with the policies and guiding principles provided at research.missouri.edu/about/research-restart.php, including appropriate approvals for return to work authorization for individuals as well as human subject research projects.
2. No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
3. All changes must be IRB approved prior to implementation utilizing the Exempt Amendment Form.
4. The Annual Exempt Form must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the project expiration date to keep the study active or to close it.
5. Maintain all research records for a period of seven years from the project completion date.

If you are offering subject payments and would like more information about research participant payments, please click here to view the MU Business Policy and Procedure: http://bppm.missouri.edu/chapter2/2_250.html

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the MU IRB Office at 573-882-3181 or email to muresearchirb@missouri.edu.

Thank you,
MU Institutional Review Board

Appendix B

Attached is a copy of the survey instrument designed and used by the researcher to capture data from participants regarding servant leadership behavior in nonprofit board presidents. The instrument includes questions from Liden et al.'s (2008, 2015) 28-item Global Servant Leadership Survey (GSLS-28) and was used with permission.

Survey on Nonprofit Board President Leadership

NAME OF RESEARCHER: Chad E. Harris

PROJECT IRB #: #2049422

STUDY TITLE: Servant Leadership Behavior in Nonprofit Board Presidents

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH:

You are invited to take part in this research study, because of your professional role as the chief staff officer, executive director or chief executive officer of a nonprofit organization. This consent form tells you why this study is being conducted and informs you of your role as a participant, should you join the study by completing this survey.

This research study is about the leadership characteristics exhibited by board presidents of nonprofit organizations. This study is being conducted to better understand leadership behavior within the nonprofit organization context.

Research studies help to answer questions that may improve our understanding of human behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and interactions. Taking part in a research study is voluntary. By continuing in completing the survey, you consent to give permission for inclusion in this research study.

Please take as much time as you need to read and review this consent form, then decide if you want to continue in the study by completing the survey.

INFORMED CONSENT:

The purpose of this research is to better understand the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents. Given the voluntary leadership role these individuals provide to the nonprofit sector, it is important to understand the leadership characteristics they offer. This study will focus on servant leadership dimensions.

About 1,000 people will be invited to take part in this study to form a purposeful convenient sample of participants, reflective of the larger population of nonprofit executive leaders.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey, one time, and reflect on the behavior of a board president you have worked with in your role as an executive leader for your nonprofit organization. Completing the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes. You can stop being in the study at any time without giving a reason by exiting the survey.

There is no direct benefit to you in your participation; however, your participation in the study may benefit you in your professional role by reflecting on your work with your board president and his/her leadership behavior. Further, the information learned from you during this study may help the broader nonprofit sector better understand the role of the nonprofit board president.

There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this study. You may skip any question you wish not to answer. You may withdraw from completing the survey.

The information collected will stored in a secure manner. Information that may identify you or your organization may not be given to anyone who is not working on this study without your written consent, or if required by law. Information that could identify you will be removed from your research information so no one will know that it belongs to you. Information collected from you for this study may be used in future studies without asking for your consent again.

You will not be paid for taking part in this study. However, in return for your time and effort, a copy of the study's final research findings may be shared with you. To request a copy of the executive summary findings, please email the researcher, Chad E. Harris, cehd74@umsystem.edu.

If you have questions about the study, your participation, or this research, you may direct them to the researcher's dissertation advisor, Dr. Timothy Wall, timwall@nwmissouri.edu, 660-562-1179, or you may contact the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 573- 882-3181.

You may contact the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board (IRB), if you:

1. Have any questions about your rights as a study participant;
2. Want to report any questions or complaints; or
3. Feel under any pressure to take part or stay in this study.

If you want to talk privately about your rights or any issues related to your participation in this study, you can contact University of Missouri Research Participant Advocacy by calling 888-280-5002 or emailing MUResearchRPA@missouri.edu. If you would like a copy of this informed consent, please print a copy of this page and keep for your records.

Consent to Participate in Research

By continuing in completing the survey, I confirm the following:

- I have read this entire consent form.
- All of my questions were answered to my satisfaction.
- The study's purpose, procedures/activities, potential risks and possible benefits were explained to me.
- I voluntarily agree to take part in this research. I have been informed that I can stop at any time.

Please acknowledge you have read the above and wish to continue...

Subject's Signature (check box of acknowledgement):

□ I have read the above and consent to participate.

Survey Introduction

This survey asks a series questions about leadership in nonprofit organizations. The survey includes three sections for a total of 37 questions.

- Section 1 asks questions specific to the nonprofit organization for which you serve as the chief staff officer (i.e. the executive director, chief executive officer).
- Section 2 asks demographic questions specific to the president (or chair) of the organization's board of directors or the chief elected volunteer leader within the organization.
- Section 3 asks questions about the leadership behavior of the chief elected volunteer leader from your experience working with this individual in your capacity as the chief staff officer. These questions used with permission from Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2008, 2015).
- The individual you have in mind does not have to be the current board president, but the same person should be kept in mind when responding to the questions in Sections 2 and 3.

Continue to the survey instrument.

Section 1 – Organization Characteristic Questions

Section 1 asks characteristic questions specific to the nonprofit organization for which you serve as the chief staff officer (i.e. the executive director, chief executive officer).

1. Which of the following best describes your role within your nonprofit organization:
    a. Chief Staff Officer, CEO, Executive Director – highest staff role
    b. Deputy, Associate, Assistant or Senior Staff Leader – but not the highest staff role
    c. Volunteer Chair or President of the Board of Directors – not a member of the staff.

2. The organization for which you are employed as the chief staff officer is classified as which type of nonprofit organization:
    a. 501(c)3
    b. Other 501(c) designation (such as (c)4, (c)6, (c)7)

3. Which of the following best describes the nonprofit organization's focus?
    a. Public Charity
    b. Foundation
    c. Religious Organization
    d. Membership, Trade or Policy Association

4. The organization's annual budget is:
    a. _____

5. The work and scope of the organization is best described as:
    a. City, Metropolitan Region or Local
    b. State or Regional
    d. National or International

Section 2 – Board President Demographic Questions

For the following section of questions, please think of a specific board president (chief elected volunteer) and answer all questions with this individual in mind.

6. For how many years has the particular individual you have in mind served the organization as the chief elected volunteer for the board of directors (i.e. president/chair):

a. Under Three Years
b. Three to Six Years
c. Six to Nine Years
g. Over Nine Years

7. For how many years has the particular individual you have in mind been affiliated and involved with the organization (volunteer, member, donor, etc.):

a. Under Three Years
b. Three to Six Years
c. Six to Nine Years
g. Over Nine Years

8. What is the age of this particular board president?

a. under 24 years old
b. 25 to 39
c. 40 to 55
d. 56 to 75
f. older than 75 years old

9. Which best describes the board president?

a. ____ Male
b. ____ Female
c. ____ Nonbinary

Section 3 – Board President Leadership

For the following section of questions, please keep the same specific board president (chief elected volunteer) in mind when answering these questions about the individual's leadership behavior. Please respond to the statements as to the degree to which you strongly disagree or strongly agree, on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 equals strongly disagree and 7 equals strongly agree.

Strongly Disagree	*Moderately Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Moderately Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*

10. I would seek help from my board president if I had a personal problem.
11. My board president cares about my personal well-being.
12. My board president takes time to talk to me on a personal level.
13. My board president can recognize when I'm down without asking me.
14. My board president emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.
15. My board president is always interested in helping people in our community.
16. My board president is involved in community activities.
17. I am encouraged by my board president to volunteer in the community.
18. My board president can tell if something is going wrong.
19. My board president is able to effectively think through complex problems.
20. My board president has a thorough understanding of our organization and its goals.
21. My board president can solve work problems with new or creative ideas.
22. My board president gives me the responsibility to make important decisions about my job.
23. My board president encourages me to handle important work decisions on my own.
24. My board president gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.
25. When I have to make an important decision at work, I do not have to consult my board president first.
26. My board president makes my career development a priority.
27. My board president is interested in making sure I achieve my career goals.
28. My board president provides me with work experiences that enable me to develop new skills.
29. My board president wants to know about my career goals.
30. My board president seems to care more about my success than his/her own.
31. My board president puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.
32. My board president sacrifices his/her own interests to meet my needs.
33. My board president does what she/he can do to make my job easier.
34. My board president holds high ethical standards.
35. My board president is always honest.
36. My board president would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.
37. My board president values honesty more than profits or organizational success.

NOTE: Questions used with permission from Liden, Wayne, Zhao and Henderson (2008, 2015).

Closing Statement

Thank you for your time and participation in this study!

In appreciation of your participation you may receive a copy of the study's findings. To request a copy of the executive summary please email the researcher, Chad Harris, at cehd74@umsystem.edu.

If you have questions about the study, your participation or this research, you may direct them to the researcher's advisor, Dr. Timothy Wall, timwall@nwmissouri.edu, 660-853-9039, or you may contact the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 573- 882-3181.

If you want to talk privately about your rights or any issues related to your participation in this study, you can contact University of Missouri Research Participant Advocacy by calling 888-280-5002 (a free call), or emailing MUResearchRPA@missouri.edu.

PROJECT IRB #: 2049422
STUDY TITLE: Servant Leadership Behavior in Nonprofit Board Presidents

** END OF SURVEY **

Appendix C

Permission for use of the Global Servant Leadership Survey (GSLS-28) was requested, granted and obtained from the lead researcher (Liden et al., 2008, 2015) in 2016.

Permission Request - Servant Leadership Assessment Use

Chad Harris <cehd74@mail.missouri.edu> Mon, Mar 21, 2016 at 11:09 AM
To: bobliden@uic.edu
Cc: "cehd74@mail.missouri.edu" <cehd74@mail.missouri.edu>

Dr. Liden -

I am a student in the University of Missouri's Doctorate in Education program. My dissertation research is focused on servant leadership behavior in nonprofit volunteer board presidents, as perceived by nonprofit chief staff officers (executive directors).

Through my academic course work, my review of the literature and in attending the Greenleaf Center's 24th Annual Conference on Servant Leadership in Atlanta in the Fall of 2014, I became aware of your scholarly work in this area of research from fellow scholars and practitioners.

I am writing to request your permission to utilize servant leadership assessment instrument for use as a survey instrument in my dissertation research. If such use is permitted I would appreciate you emailing me a copy of the instrument, along with the factors.

Thank you for your continued research and contributions to this field of study and I appreciate your consideration of my request.

Regards,

Chad Harris

*****

Chad E. Harris, CAE
MU Statewide EdD Program
Department of Educational Leadership
& Policy Analysis
University of Missouri
816.674.1147

Permission Request - Servant Leadership Assessment Use

Bob Liden <bobliden@uic.edu> Mon, Mar 21, 2016 at 1:22 PM
To: Chad Harris <cehd74@mail.missouri.edu>

Dear Chad,

You may use either our full 28-item measure, which is best if you wish to analyze the 7 dimensions separately, or the SL-7, which is designed for efficiently measuring global/overall servant leadership. The items are attached with articles that provide psychometric evidence. I'm assuming that you only need the English version, but we have it in many languages, which I am also happy to share if you need it.

Best of luck with your research,

Bob

Robert C. Liden

Professor of Management

Associate Dean for CBA Ph.D. Programs; Coordinator of the OB/HR Doctoral Program

Department of Managerial Studies (M/C 243) Room 2232

University of Illinois at Chicago

601 S. Morgan Street

Chicago, IL 60607-7123

UIC BUSINESS

[Quoted text hidden]

7 attachments

- **servant leadership scale.doc** 47K
- **Liden et al 2008 LQ servant leadership.pdf** 254K
- **Liden, Wayne, Meuser, Hu, Wu, & Liao 2015 LQ servant leadership SL-7 measure.pdf** 566K
- **Liden et al. 2014 chap - Servant leadership.pdf** 260K
- **Panaccio et al 2015 JBP servant leadership OCB psychological contract.pdf** 602K
- **Panaccio et al. 2015 chap - SL and wellbeing.pdf** 449K

Global Servant Leadership Scale (GSLS-28)

Liden, R.C., Wayne, S.J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multilevel assessment. *Leadership Quarterly*, 19, 161-177. [original scale development research]

Section A. In the following set of questions, think of _____, your immediate supervisor or manager (or team leader); that is, the person to whom you report directly and who rates your performance. If the person listed above is not your immediate supervisor, please notify a member of our research team.

Please select your response from Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 7 presented below and enter the corresponding number in the space to the left of each question.

____1. My manager can tell if something work-related is going wrong.

____2. My manager gives me the responsibility to make important decisions about my job.

____3. My manager makes my career development a priority.

____4. My manager seems to care more about my success than his/her own.

____5. My manager holds high ethical standards.

____6. I would seek help from my manager if I had a personal problem.

____7. My manager emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.

____8. My manager is able to effectively think through complex problems.

____9. My manager encourages me to handle important work decisions on my own.

____10. My manager is interested in making sure that I achieve my career goals.

____11. My manager puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.

____12. My manager is always honest.

____13. My manager cares about my personal well-being.

____14. My manager is always interested in helping people in our community.

____15. My manager has a thorough understanding of our organization and its goals.

____16. My manager gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.

____17. My manager provides me with work experiences that enable me to develop new skills.

____18. My manager sacrifices his/her own interests to meet my needs.

____19. My manager would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.

____20. My manager takes time to talk to me on a personal level.

____21. My manager is involved in community activities.

____22. My manager can solve work problems with new or creative ideas.

____23. When I have to make an important decision at work, I do not have to consult my manager first.

____24. My manager wants to know about my career goals.

____25. My manager does whatever she/he can to make my job easier.

____26. My manager values honesty more than profits.

____27. My manager can recognize when I'm disappointed without asking me.

____28. I am encouraged by my manager to volunteer in the community.

Item Key (SL-28)

Item #s	Reference/comments
1, 8, 15, 22	Servant Leadership: Conceptual skills
2, 9, 16, 23	Servant Leadership: Empowering: our items
3, 10, 17, 24	Servant Leadership: Helping subordinates grow and. Item #3 is adapted from Ehrhart, PPsych, Spring, 2004
4, 11, 18, 25	Servant Leadership Putting subordinates first. Items #11 and #18 adopted from Barbuto & Wheeler, paper under review at G&OM.
5, 12, 19, 26	Servant Leadership: Behaving. Item #5 is adapted from Ehrhart, PPsych, Spring, 2004.
6, 13, 20, 27	Servant Leadership: Emotional healing
7, 14, 21, 28	Servant Leadership: Creating value for the community. Item #7 is adopted from Ehrhart, PPsych, Spring, 2004

Appendix D

Copy of recruitment materials for voluntary participation in the research study.

E-Newsletter Promotion for Research Study

The following is copy for inclusion in e-newsletter announcements to recruit research participants from the nonprofit community, affiliated service organizations, professional associations and membership-based nonprofits.

Understanding Board President Leadership - Your View is Needed!

The role of the nonprofit board president is crucial to governance and your organization's mission. A research project is being conducted about the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents and your voluntary input is needed! Chief staff officers are invited to volunteer to participate in this 10-minute survey research and share your perspective on board president leadership. Professionals interested in completing the survey, may contact lead researcher, Chad Harris, a fellow member of *[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] – if applicable*, and doctoral candidate in educational leadership and policy analysis at the University of Missouri, at cehd74@umsystem.edu or (816) 674-1147 to learn more. Those participating will receive an executive summary of the research findings in appreciation for your voluntary response.

Research Study on Servant Leadership Underway – Add Your Perspective

Servant leadership is often referenced as being embodied by volunteers serving the nonprofit sector. But do they really? How prevalent is servant leadership in our sector? A research study is being conducted to better understand these questions and the leadership traits of nonprofit board presidents. Nonprofit executive directors are invited to volunteer to participate in this research by adding your perspective. Interested voluntary participants in this brief 10-minute, survey-based research, may contact lead researcher, Chad Harris, a fellow member of *[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] – if applicable* and doctoral candidate in educational leadership and policy analysis at the University of Missouri, at cehd74@umsystem.edu or (816) 674-1147 to learn more. Those participating will receive an executive summary of the research findings in appreciation for your voluntary response.

Attention Nonprofit Chief Staff Officers – Share Your Views on Board President Leadership

Chief Staff Officers of nonprofit organizations of any classification are invited to voluntary share your views on the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents, as part of a research study being conducted by Chad Harris, a fellow member of *[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] – if applicable* and doctoral candidate in educational leadership and policy analysis at the University of Missouri. The research study includes completion of a short 10-minute survey reflecting on nonprofit board president behavior,

so as to better understand the work of nonprofit board presidents today in the sector. Chief Staff Officers interested in volunteering as participants may contact Harris at cehd74@umsystem.edu or (816) 674-1147 to learn more. Those participating will receive an executive summary of the research findings in appreciation for your voluntary response.

Email Invitation to Participate in Research / Introductory Script

Email Subject Line: Invitation Participate in Nonprofit Leadership Research

[DATE]

Dear [First Name, if known,] – OR – Nonprofit Colleague,

I am reaching out to you today asking for your voluntary participation in a research study about the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents.

Vary as applicable/pertinent…

- *Your name was suggested to me as a possible research participant, by our mutual nonprofit colleague _____.*
- *As a fellow member of _____ [organization], I am contacting other nonprofit executive leaders who are members inviting you to consider this unique research study participation.*
- *I see you are the chief staff officer of _____ [agency/organization name]. As the organization's leader, I hope you will consider this invitation to participate in this research study.*

I am a 20-year nonprofit professional, so I know first-hand the important role the nonprofit board president has in the leadership of the organization. While this role is important, there is little research to-date about the specific leadership behavior traits exhibited by nonprofit board presidents (or chairs, depending on your organization's terminology).

This research study seeks to learn more about the behavior of these voluntary leaders across the nonprofit sector in society today. In doing so, I hope to advance the body of knowledge of best practices associated with nonprofit board's leadership development efforts, offer insight on the board-chief staff officer relationship and advance research associated with nonprofit board governance. Your participation will help allow this research to move forward.

I invite individuals who are the chief staff officers (president, executive director, or similar title) of a nonprofit organization (any designation is appropriate) to participate in this research study through the completion of an online survey. The survey consists of 37 questions and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Your responses are anonymously recorded and no specific distinguishing information is asked of you or your nonprofit organization. Questions include demographic information about your nonprofit organization, demographic questions about your board president/chair and finally, a series of questions asking you to reflect on the leadership behavior of your organization's board president/chair.

Participation is voluntary and there are no known risks to you by participating. Should you wish, you may withdraw from completing the survey at any time. That is your right as a participant in this research study.

You will receive no compensation for participating, but in appreciation for your time and/or your own interest in this study, you may request an executive summary of the study findings once completed, by sending an email to cehd74@umsystem.edu and requesting a copy.

This research study is conducted in accordance with the University of Missouri's Institutional Review Board and its policies and standards. Should you have questions about the study (reference #2049422), you may direct them to me, as the principal investigator: Chad Harris, cehd74@umsystem.edu, (816) 674-1147 (mobile).

To participate in this study and to begin the survey, please proceed following this link *[link to online survey]*.

I thank you for your time and consideration of this request to help advance research about the nonprofit sector and further understanding the leadership behavior of nonprofit board presidents.

With appreciation,

Chad E Harris, Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
University of Missouri
cehd74@umsystem.edu
(816) 674-1147

p.s. Please consider helping grow the research participant pool by forwarding this invitation to participate to three of your fellow colleagues in the nonprofit sector. I ask that they be the chief staff officer of their respective nonprofit organization, as to meet the criteria for participation.

VITA

Chad Harris is the Chief Development Officer of Cornerstones of Care, a behavioral health and mental healthcare organization serving 15,000 children and families annually across Kansas, Missouri and beyond, through trauma-informed care and programs, based in Kansas City, Mo. Chad leads the agency's fundraising, community engagement and advocacy efforts, including charitable grants, public support, major gifts, special events, and planned giving. He serves as the executive staff liaison to the agency's Board of Directors Fundraising Council and Governance/Nominations Committee and is a member of the agency's seven-member executive leadership team.

He holds a Certificate in Nonprofit Board Consulting from BoardSource and is a Certified Association Executive (CAE) from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). He has extensive involvement in leading professional development work in the fundraising, nonprofit and association management sectors through volunteer leadership roles and consulting work with the Association of Fundraising Professionals-Kansas City Chapter (AFPKC), Kansas City Society of Association Executives (KCSAE), American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), Fraternity Executives Association (FEA) and the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA).

Harris is passionate about the nonprofit sector, professionally, personally, and as a scholar. His personal commitment to the sector includes service as member of the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals-Kansas City Chapter and treasurer of AFP-KC, publicly elected member of the University of Missouri's Jackson County Extension Council, member of the Iowa State University Alumni Association Board of

Directors and Awards Committee chair, and committee member for Kansas City's NPR-affiliate radio station, KCUR 89.3. He is a graduate of the Greater KC Chamber of Commerce's Centurions Leadership Program, past Chair of Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art's Young Friends of Art Council, past professional development committee chair of the Fraternity Executives Association (FEA), past chair of National Philanthropy Day for AFP-KC, and past president of the Kansas City Society of Association Executives (KCSAE).

He is the recipient of several honors and awards including KCSAE's Distinguished Association Executive Award, FEA's Outstanding Contributions to the Professional Community Award, Iowa State University's Outstanding Young Alumni Award, and the Centurions Leadership Program's Outstanding Service Award.

Previously Harris served in professional roles as the executive director of FarmHouse Fraternity for 10 years and began his career in fundraising and university advancement work with the Indiana University Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Alumni Association. He earned his master's degree in education from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in political science from Iowa State University. He is a native Iowan and enjoys travel, hiking, bicycling, cooking, gardening, presidential history, and National Parks. He lives in the Waldo neighborhood of Kansas City, Mo.