Servant Leadership and Adult Volunteers in the Boy Scouts of America

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SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS
IN THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) features several leadership theories and models in their trainings and programs for youth members and adult volunteers. Servant leadership was an integral model in BSA trainings, in the 2000 to 2021 timeframe, and influenced the attitudes and approaches of youth and adult leaders in the organization and beyond. However, there is only a small body of scholarly work on the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA. Additionally, scholarship on the topic has overlooked the key nature of BSA leadership trainings and the adult volunteer perspective in the overall relationship. Through a primary source analysis of leadership trainings, along with a historical narrative, and qualitative interviews with adult volunteers, this study clarifies key aspects of servant leadership practices and attitudes in the BSA. The primary source and historical analysis found that servant leadership was heavily integrated into BSA trainings and became one of the leading models and attitudes in the organization. Participants in the qualitative interviews displayed servant leadership attitudes and approaches that strongly correlated to community variables and putting others first. The study helps to clarify the importance of servant leadership in the BSA and the widespread integration of the theory in the organization.
I dedicate this thesis to my parents and the many hours we spent discussing and editing. I also want to dedicate this thesis to the unknowable number of adult volunteers that dedicate their time and passion to help empower youth through the Scouting Movement.
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CHAPTER ONE:
STUDY INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

In the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), there was a common perception, among adult volunteers, youth participants, and professional staff, of the importance and centrality of the servant leadership theory in the frameworks and approaches of the organization and members. However, academic sources have not extensively studied servant leadership in the organization and a gap in scholarly knowledge existed on the importance and widespread use of servant leadership in the BSA. The present study delves into the literature of the BSA and the attitudes of adult volunteers to explore and clarify the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the scouting movement.

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship and dynamics between servant leadership and adult volunteers in the Scouts BSA program of the Boy Scouts of America through qualitative interviews and primary source analysis. The research question for this study asked: Does the 21st century leadership development practices and trainings of the Boy Scouts of America develops servant leadership skills, attitudes, and qualities in adult volunteers of the Scouts BSA program? Servant leadership was one of the most prominent leadership models in the BSA, between 2000 to 2021, and was integrated into multiple aspects of the organization.

The present study utilized two methodologies to explore and answer the research question. First, a primary source and historical analysis was conducted on the trainings and literature of the BSA that included servant leadership and other important
information. Second, a case study was conducted in the Middle Tennessee Council of the BSA, and adult volunteers participated in qualitative interviews to explore servant leadership using Liden et al.’s (2015) SL-7 model. The primary source and historical analysis were based on national trainings, programs, and literature and generally applies to the wider BSA. The qualitative interviews took place in the Middle Tennessee Council of the BSA as a specific case study of adult volunteer perceptions, attitudes, and understanding of servant leadership in the organization and are not generalizable to the rest of the BSA.

The study focuses on “how” servant leadership was incorporated and utilized in the BSA rather than “why” the model was chosen as the central concept for the organization’s trainings and practices. While the author investigated BSA literature and online sources to a great extent, no source truly answered “why” the organization selected the servant leadership model, only suggestions and indications of a potential answer. Part of this limitation was due to the author’s geographical distance to the BSA’s museum in New Mexico and the COVID-19 pandemic limiting access to the facilities and information of the BSA. Future studies could specifically research why the BSA selected the servant leadership model, which might contribute greatly to the understanding of the relationship between the BSA and the model.

The author’s personal experiences with the BSA includes beginning as a youth in the Cub Scouts program, becoming an Eagle Scout, and, in recent years, serving as an adult volunteer in the Middle Tennessee Council. The author’s time as an adult volunteer in the Middle Tennessee Council inspired the present study. Due to the conflict of interest, author focused on his responsibilities as a student at Western Kentucky
University and approached the topic from an academic perspective. All content and arguments in the study are from the subjective perspective of the author but are informed by extensive experience in the scouting movement and through his undergraduate education with Western Kentucky University.

The present study incorporates practices and terminology from an organizational leadership perspective and from the history discipline. The main overlap between the two disciplines is the difference between primary and secondary sources, as known in history-related terminology. Additionally, there is a difference between primary research, the qualitative interviews in this study, and the primary and history source analysis. Understanding the differences between each element of research and sources is critical to navigating this study as it combines multiple perspectives and disciplines.

Primary research is the information and data collected by an investigator such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, and other methods (Purdue University, 2021). For example, the present study collected interviews from adult volunteers in the Middle Tennessee Council, discussed in Chapters Four and Five. The interviews in this study are considered primary research since it is original material obtained by the investigator and not secondary information or data collected by other scholars.

Primary sources, on the other hand, are typically original records, objects, or literature generated by individuals when the event occurred and includes retrospective materials such as oral histories and memoirs (Forrest, 2022). The primary and historical source analysis, in Chapter Three, examined the literature, news articles, and other publications of the BSA. Additionally, primary sources are used in Chapter One to explore the principles, positions, and structure of the BSA and accompanying elements.
Secondary sources are one step and perspective removed from the event or researcher, they include scholarly articles, magazine entries about previous events, books written by other investigators, and information or data published by other people (Forrest, 2022). The literature review in Chapter Two contains mostly secondary sources to help establish the current knowledge and perspectives on the topic of servant leadership, the BSA, and the scouting movement. Secondary sources can be considered primary research, such as the interviews in Rohm (2014), but are still considered secondary sources since they were published by other people and the information and data was not collected in the present study.

Primary and secondary source terminology differs between fields and disciplines but the structure and perspective in the present study falls under the aforementioned definitions. In the present study, most of the documents and articles about the BSA are primary sources while the majority of secondary sources are from scholarly journals and books. Besides for primary and secondary sources, there is also other parts of the present study that needs to be clarified. In order to familiarize readers with the critical concepts and topics of this study, there will be a general review of servant leadership, the BSA, and the Middle Tennessee Council.

**Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership was first conceptualized by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970 in subsequent years through several essays on various topics related to the theory. Servant leadership in these early essays was conceived under language such as servant-leader, leader-first, and servant-first. Additionally, rather than a specific theory, Greenleaf described more of an approach to leadership, captured in the idea of the servant-leader.
The servant-leader is servant first [...] It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (Greenleaf, 1977, pp. 13-14)

Since the initial idea of the servant-leader, the idea and philosophy of servant leadership exploded into a movement that influences various organizations and fields of research. In 1977, Greenleaf expanded on his early essays and authored a full book on servant leadership, which also included his earlier works on the subject. Greenleaf further developed servant leadership by detailing organizational structures and systems and how to apply the approach in various institutions and settings. As the approach continued to be explored by Greenleaf and others, various descriptions emerged to establish the nature and boundaries of servant leadership.

Servant leadership is generally described using a variety of dimensions or characteristics. In essence, dimensions or characteristics are variables found in the servant leadership theory that describe various aspects or ideas. Spears (2002) identified ten characteristics that initiated the first conceptualization of servant leadership (Northouse, 2016). The characteristics included: 1) Listening; 2) Empathy; 3) Healing; 4) Awareness; 5) Persuasion; 6) Conceptualization; 7) Foresight; 8) Stewardship; 9) Commitment to the growth of people; and 10) Building community; and they “represent Greenleaf”s seminal work on the servant as leader. They provide a creative lens from which to view the complexities of servant leadership” (Northouse, 2016, pp. 227-9). The characteristics, or dimensions, are important foundations to the various servant leadership models and in framing how the theory is integrated and applied in real-world organizations.
After more than five decades of research, discussions, and books, servant leadership has gone through several phases of development and refinement, as described by Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, Dierendonck, and Liden (2019). There were three distinct phases of research in servant leadership and the first era was “conceptual development,” mainly by Greenleaf (1977) and Spears (1996) (Eva et. al, 2019, p. 111). While Greenleaf initiated the servant leadership movement, Spears (1996) analyzed on the development of theory and further defined the model and the dynamic existence of the servant-leader. “Servant leadership encourages everyone to balance leading and serving within their own lives,” a leader’s main focus should be on serving others and followers should provide leadership at all possible opportunities and those dynamics should improve individual lives and the potential of institutions (Spears, 1996, pp. 33-4).

After the initial conceptualization period, servant leadership transitioned into a phase dedicated to measurement development and researching the relationships between servant leadership and various outcomes (Eva et. al, 2019). However, the third phase had the greatest impact on the present study due to the development of various models of servant leadership. In the third phase, servant leadership research transitioned into developing models and exploring the limits, structures, and concepts behind the theory (Eva et. al, 2019). The major articles and studies into the relationship between servant leadership and the Scouting Movement, described in Chapter Two, utilized models developed during the third phase of servant leadership. However, with Eva et al.’s (2019) review of servant leadership, the theory began evolving beyond previous understandings and conceptualizations and into a scientific and research driven phase.
Eva et al. (2019) refined the available literature and understanding of servant leadership into a working definition: “Servant leadership is an other-oriented approach to leadership manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community” (p. 114). This definition of servant leadership was used during the qualitative interviews of the present study.

With developments across multiple decades, the 2020s should feature very important advances in the field of servant leadership as new synthesis models are created and tested. Servant leadership is much more expansive than what is presented in this short discussion. Numerous articles, books, and studies have expanded the field of servant leadership, yet many organizations and institutions and their relationships and usage of the theory remain unstudied or understudied. This current study helps to clarify the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA, which is one of the understudied institutions in this field of research even though the organization integrated the theory so heavily into their trainings and overall frameworks.

**Boy Scouts of America**

The BSA is one of the largest youth-service organizations in the United States of America. According to the BSA’s official website, “since its inception in 1910, more than 130 million young men and women have participated in the BSA’s youth programs. More than 35 million adult volunteers have helped carry out the BSA’s mission” (n.d., para. 2). Most of the membership in the BSA centers around youth participants and adult volunteers in local communities. Traditional Scouting programs are organized and chartered through local community organizations that appoint volunteers to lead the unit,
and those units and institutions are supported by local councils (Boy Scouts of America, n.d., para. 4). The following discussions will highlight the important concepts, structures, and methods of the BSA so that readers can understand the various references, terminology, and ideas presented in this study.

**Boy Scouts of America: Organization and Structure**

The BSA grouped geographical areas together to provide more structure in the organization and promote scouting at various levels. When a youth or adult joins the organization, they participate in a unit, operating under a district, under a council, under an area, under a region, and under the national organization of the BSA (Boy Scouts of America, 2019). However, the simple overview does not explain each part of the structure of the BSA. The following discussions will elaborate on the structure of the BSA because numerous components of the present study touch on all levels of the organization and readers need to understand the differences between a national-level course and a unit-level training.

The BSA is split into various regions, councils, districts, and units that become more geographically focused with each successive level. A local unit might only operate in a single town or a portion of a large city. A council might cover dozens of towns and counties or operate across multiple states. The National Council of the BSA covers the entirety of the United States and overseas territories. The top-down structure of the BSA is essential to understanding the organization’s operation and programs. Figure 1 details the traditional top-down structure of the BSA in terms of organization, from national to individual units. Each level of the organization focuses on distinct roles and responsibilities. The unit-level primarily interact with the youth while the national
organization deals with international systems and deals with widespread social and cultural variables.

Figure 1. BSA Organization – Top-Down (US Scouting Service Project, n.d.).

The broadest level, and the highest out of them all, is the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, often shortened to National BSA or National Council, which is spread across the entire United States and oversees all regions, councils, and the national high adventure bases. The National Council also operates four high adventure bases known as Philmont Scout Ranch, Summit Bechtel Reserve, Northern Tier, and Florida
Sea Base. This layer of the BSA will be abbreviated to either National BSA, National Council, or as the national-level.

On the next level, the United States is split into various regions, and there are currently four BSA regions: the Western region, the Southern region, the Central region, and the Northeast region. On a side note, regions can vary across time depending on membership and overall distribution in any given year. This layer of the BSA will be abbreviated as the regional-level.

Between regions and councils are various territories, sometimes referred to as sections or areas, that group similar geographical zones and councils together. This assists the BSA in narrowing down large regions into manageable areas that are still broader than a local council. In 2021, the National BSA rebranded the territories/sections into the National Service Territories, in which sixteen areas are defined. The Middle Tennessee Council, and all of Tennessee, Kentucky, and parts of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, reside in National Service Territory 14 (Boy Scouts of America, 2021). This layer of the BSA will be abbreviated as the territorial-level.

Within each region, there are numerous councils that cover a multitude of communities and cities and that provide direct service to units within their area. Councils are the intermediate organization between the National BSA and local units. Councils often run a local summer camp for units within their geographical area, as well as for units and scouts from other councils, and can host various activities, programs, and opportunities throughout the year. Councils are also responsible for providing access to professional scouters, which are paid employees of the BSA, for units in their area. Councils can also host Order of the Arrow lodges, typically one per council, which
operate various chapters in the local districts. This layer of the BSA will be abbreviated as the council-level.

Within each council are a variety of districts. Districts are simply coordinated efforts between various units within an area, typically in a large city or across several counties, which are overseen by a professional scouter from the local council. Districts typically host a monthly roundtable for local units and district committee meetings to plan events and lead various programs. Common events for districts are seasonal camporees for Scouts BSA troops, Cub Scout campouts and activities, and chapter meetings for the local Order of the Arrow chapter. This layer of the BSA will be abbreviated as the district-level.

Between districts and individual units are the Chartered Organizations, which are groups and organizations that maintain a charter with one, or more, units in their local community. All units need to be chartered with an organization to be recognized as an official unit in the BSA. Additionally, each Chartered Organization must select a Chartered Organization Representative. This position acts as a representative of the Chartered Organization, as an intermediate between the organization and unit, and as an intermediate between the organization and the local BSA council. The BSA appoints and approves chartered organizations by issuing annual charters to religious, community, and education-based organizations that are compatible with the values and mission of the BSA, and the charter provides support services and official recognition (Boy Scouts of America, 2015).

Finally, there are individual units made up by youth in the various BSA programs and the adult volunteers that occupy various positions in a unit. Many of the direct
activities, ideas, programs, and goals of the BSA are conducted at this level of the organization, led by the youth and guided by adult volunteers. During the initial history of the scouting movement in the United States, many scouting units started as grassroots groups with little to no direct oversight by the National BSA. However, modern units have the availability of a widespread and established organization along with the many opportunities at the district, council, and national levels that their historical counterparts did not have. This layer of the BSA will be abbreviated as the unit-level.

**Boy Scouts of America: Mission, Vision, Aims, and Methods**

“The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law” (Boy Scouts of America, n.d., para. 8). The BSA began in 1910 and went through a rapid expansion of membership to become one of the leading organizations for boys in the United States (1910-1950s). Beginning in the 1960s, females, both youth and adults, were slowly incorporated into all BSA programs. By 2019, females were included in all levels of the organization and various programs. The values and methods of the BSA were developed from a complex interaction of organizational history and by adhering to guidelines set forth by the international association.

The foundations and concepts of the BSA are influenced by the World Organization of the Scouting Movement (WOSM), that oversees the global scouting movement and affiliated organizations. One of the primary ideas behind the BSA, developed by WOSM and historical principles, is the Scout Method, a model to guide scouting programs and foster key aspects of youth development. The Scout Method
revolves around a “system of progressive self-education” and interrelated elements that operate in-tandem to develop Scouting values and principles in youth (World Organization of the Scouting Movement, 2019, p. 11). The Scout Method, as outlined by WOSM, has various elements and dimensions that contribute to the overall approach: the Scout Promise (Oath) and Law; Learning by Doing; Personal Progression; Team System; Adult Support; Symbolic Framework; Nature; and Community involvement (World Organization of the Scouting Movement, 2019). WOSM requires members to develop similar versions of the Scout Promise and Law, but each organization may have a culturally appropriate version, such as the BSA’s Scout Oath and Law. WOSM’s Constitution requirement and versions of WOSM’s Scout Promise and Law and the BSA’s Scout Oath and Law can be found under Appendix A.

In addition to the Scout Promise and Oath, WOSM members need to stand by three principles of Scouting: Duty to God, Duty to Others, and Duty to Self (World Organization of the Scouting Movement, 2021). Duty to God can be seen clearly stated in the Scout Oath with verbatim language. Duty to Others can be seen in the Scout Oath in “to do my duty to God and my country” and “to help other people at all times.” And the final principle, Duty to Self, in the Scout Oath is emphasized in the final statement, “to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight” (See Appendix A).

In order to promote and teach the Scout Method, the BSA prepared four aims and eight methods. The Aims of Scouting are character development, citizenship training, personal fitness, and leadership development. As a note, there used to be only three Aims of Scouting, but leadership development was introduced in the 2019 Guide to Advancement. The eight methods of scouting include: 1) ideals; 2) patrols; 3) outdoor
programs; 4) advancement; 5) association with adults; 6) personal growth; 7) leadership development; and 8) uniform. In addition to the aims and methods, the BSA vision statement is that “the Boy Scouts of America will prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law” (Boy Scouts of America: Troop Leader Resources, n.d., para. 4).

The mission, vision, aims, and methods of the BSA all are in service to promoting growth and development in youth. Additionally, the BSA’s approaches and practices are based on the principles of scouting as set forth by WOSM. The concepts of Duty to God, Duty to Others, and Duty to Self and the Americanized Scout Oath and Scout Law, play a prominent role in shaping the attitudes of youth and adults in the BSA. However, each BSA program has unique ways to develop the values and objectives of scouting.

**Boy Scouts of America: Overview of Programs**

The National Council operates several programs such as Scouts BSA, previously known as Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. The main focus of this study is the Scouts BSA program and the leadership trainings for adults and youth in the program. However, the present study touches upon numerous sections and programs of the BSA. Hence, this section provides a brief overview of the main BSA programs and societies and the key concepts within each program.

The Scouts BSA program can trace its roots back to the first program ever developed by the BSA, which was targeted at boys ages 11-14. The program was later revised to include participation by males and females ranging in age from 11 to 17. At age 18, a scout can no longer participate as a youth within the Scouts BSA program but may continue as an adult volunteer. There is a progressive advancement system in the
Scouts BSA program of various ranks and rank requirements. The ranks, in order of completion, are the Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle Scout. Youth participate in the program traditionally through a Troop, which is a program-specific designation for a unit. Units is a broad term applying to all program specific designations such as troops, crews, ships, packs, labs, teams, and posts. Youth and adults in the Scouts BSA program wear khaki uniforms with green pants, or shorts, and green socks, with red or green loops on the shoulders to signify the Scouts BSA program. Additionally, troops are not co-ed and are split between youth males and females, however, adults of any gender can serve in either troop format.

The Cub Scout program is for youth between the school grades of kindergarten to the fifth grade, with a progressive series of ranks culminating in the Arrow of Light award. Cub Scout units are called Packs, which feature Dens that are split and grouped by grade level. The Cub Scout program is heavily dependent on parental involvement in activities and campouts. Cub Scouts age out of the program by 10 to 11 years old, depending on certain conditions, and may continue onto the Scouts BSA program. Cub Scout youth either wear a blue or khaki uniform, depending on den grade, and adults wear the classic khaki uniform with blue shoulder loops to signify that they are volunteers in Cub Scout packs.

Venturing is a co-ed program that focuses on high-adventure activities for youth ranging in age from 14 to 20. After a scout turns twenty-one, they have officially aged out and may continue in the program as an adult volunteer. The Venturing program is centered around the A-L-P-S model, which stands for adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service. The highest rank in the Venturing program is the Summit award,
which is the equivalent to the Eagle Scout award. Youth and adults wear a green uniform with grey shoulder loops and grey pants, or shorts, and grey socks. Venturing units are known as Crews and are less common than troops or packs but can still be seen in almost all councils of the BSA.

Sea Scouts is a co-ed program that focuses on maritime activities on, in, or around the water, including rivers, lakes, and oceans. As with Venturing, the program is only for youth between the ages of 14 to 20, and youth age out of the program at 21 but can still come back as an adult volunteer. The highest rank in the program is the Quartermaster award, which is one of the rarest awards in the BSA due to limited membership and availability of units. Sea Scout units are known as Ships that can either be focused on powered vehicles, boats or ships running on fuel, or non-powered vehicles such as sailboats or paddle-craft. The uniforms of Sea Scouts have undergone recent changes in the last ten years, but the current mandatory version features navy blue shirts and pants with mixed white and navy-blue shoulder loops. Additionally, the Sea Scouts became the official youth program of the Coast Guard Auxiliary in 2018 (Sea Scouts, n.d.).

The Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts programs make up the core structure of the BSA. However, there are a several other programs in the BSA that offer unique opportunities. These include STEM Scouts, Exploring, and Order of the Arrow, and one discontinued program called Varsity Scouts.

STEM Scouts is constructed around the idea of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and preparing youth for a technological and science-driven careers. It is a co-ed program with Labs that focus on various activities for youth between Elementary School to the end of High School. STEM Scouts also represents some of the
efforts by the BSA in the 21st century to modernize programs and opportunities in the organization.

Exploring is a co-ed program that has a variety of opportunities for Clubs, offered for youth between 11 to 14, and Posts, offered for youth 14 to 20. The program is centered around a “unique and dynamic relationship between youth and the organizations in their communities. Businesses and community organizations initiate a career-specific Exploring post or club by matching their people and organizational resources to the career interests of youth in the community” (Exploring, n.d.). With the unique emphasis of the Exploring program on institution-specific education, future studies could explore how those groups influences the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA, and vice versa on how the relationship affects the Chartered Organization.

The Order of the Arrow is the national honor society of the BSA and features membership from various youth in other BSA programs. According to the Order of the Arrow’s website, the society “was founded in 1915 to serve a useful purpose: to cause the Scout Oath and Law to spring into action in all parts of the nation. To this day, the Order is dedicated to this high purpose” (n.d., para. 2). A more substantial section on the Order of the Arrow can be found in Chapter Three which analyzes the society’s historical relationship with servant leadership.

Varsity Scouts was a program offered for youth primarily in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or more commonly known as the LDS Church or Mormon Church. Varsity Scouts was overall a separate but equivalent program to that of the Scouts BSA program but with more additions and program features. However, the
program ended in 2017 due to various circumstances. The highest rank in the program was the Denali Award and units were named Teams.

The present study focuses on the Scouts BSA program due to the nature of the research question and the qualitative interviews with adult volunteers. However, servant leadership can be found throughout all the programs and societies of the BSA. Future studies might examine servant leadership in the contexts of the other BSA programs and find unique relationships and dynamics that differ between each unique section of the organization. Such research would help to elaborate on the complex relationship between servant leadership and the BSA.

**Boy Scouts of America: Leadership Positions and the Key Three**

In the BSA, there are a variety of volunteer positions ranging from individual units up to national-level opportunities. The most common type of adult volunteer positions can be found in units, districts, and councils, such as positions of a Scoutmaster or a Committee Member. Each position has a relative focus of responsibility that either concentrates on youth development, adult management, or public relations, and sometimes a combination of the three.

For example, in Scouts BSA troops, there are two general branches of focus in the units: Scoutmasters that concentrate on youth development and the Unit Committee that oversee adult and unit management. However, adult volunteers can serve in multiple areas of a unit such as being a Committee Member and a Merit Badge Counselor for the youth. Hence, it is up to the individual needs of the units and the desire and leadership of each adult volunteer to determine which roles and responsibilities they will perform at any given time.
The Scoutmaster has been an integral role in the BSA ever since the inception of the movement in 1907 and remains one of the pillars on which units and the BSA are built and supported. The Scoutmaster works directly with the youth “providing direction, coaching, and support” and oversees and mentors the youth leadership and the adults serving as Assistant Scoutmasters (Boy Scouts of America: Troop Leader Resources, n.d., para. 1). The Scoutmaster also has a team of Assistant Scoutmasters that are “assigned specific program duties” or “fill in as necessary to assure the junior leaders have what they need to run things” (Boy Scouts of America: Troop Leader Resources, n.d., para. 1). The roles and responsibilities of Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters are fluid and are subject to the complex dynamics and circumstances within each unit and the needs of individual youth.

The Unit Committee focuses more on adult-related matters and the overall administrative side of each unit. For example, each adult volunteer is required to go through several initial trainings upon joining the BSA, and the Unit Committee can assist with facilitating those trainings. Additionally, each unit will have finances, equipment, public relations, and other programs that are usually managed by the adults and the committee. Also, there are three positions that are present in any Unit Committee: the Committee Chairman, the Committee Member, and the Chartered Organization Representative.

The Unit Committee is “a cross between a board of directors and a parent support group” that oversee regulations and administrative tasks, which allows the Scoutmasters to focus on the youth (Boy Scouts of America: Troop Leader Resources, n.d., para. 1). The Committee Chairman is the equivalent of a manager of the Unit Committee and is
appointed by the Chartered Organization (Boy Scouts of America: Troop Leader Resources, n.d.). As mentioned previously, the Chartered Organization Representative acts as an intermediate contact between the unit, the Chartered Organization, the District Committee, and the local Council (Boy Scouts of America: Troop Leader Resources, n.d.).

The Scoutmasters and the Unit Committee concentrate on separate roles and aspects of the BSA program but are integral within the overall unit to facilitate youth development in their unit and local communities. The positions of Scoutmaster, Committee Chairman, and Chartered Organization Representative are the key pillars of any troop. The key pillars in a group or section of the BSA are often labeled the Key Three.

The Key Three is a leadership concept within the BSA that refers to the dynamic between the three core leader positions in a program, unit, or group. The Scoutmaster, Committee Chairman, and Chartered Organization Representative are simply one example of a Key Three relationship. The concept applies to all levels of the BSA, ranging from individual units, all the way up to the highest offices at the National BSA, and is often the main driving force in each section (Wendell, 2015). However, the Key Three have a slight change from the unit-level compared to the higher levels of the BSA. Starting from districts on up, there is at least one professional scouter position and two volunteer positions in the Key Three dynamic. At the unit-level, volunteers fill all Key Three positions.

At the district-level, there are more committees and adult-led management than at the unit-level. Youth-adult dynamics still exist, such as Scouts BSA camporees, Cub
Scout activities, and Order of the Arrow chapters, but adult-related positions make up most district-level positions. Also, public outreach is usually more incorporated into district activities and is sometimes part of the responsibilities of the District Executive. A District Executive is a professional scouter serving in a specific geographical area.

Council-level positions vary between youth development, adult and committee management, and public relations, depending on the specific focus of the council-level function and position. Summer camps, for example, have staff almost entirely focused on youth development, but there are also positions for program development and positions for public outreach to units and sponsors. Councils are more variable depending on the context of the program, function, and position.

There are also various youth positions at the unit, district, and council levels. Those youth positions tend to focus on personal development, others-focused service and leadership, and a variety of opportunities for growth and development. Even beyond the council-level, territories and regions frequently have youth positions and offer more options for personal and professional growth (Wendell, 2016). Youth can also participate as staff members in council-level trainings, serve as staff members at summer camps, and hold various positions within their unit or in Order of the Arrow chapters and lodges. The youth equivalent of the Key Three, in a Scouts BSA troop, is the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, and the Patrol Leader’s Council.

**Boy Scouts of America – Summary**

The three aspects of the BSA, organizational structure, values and ideals, and positions, provide an overview of the organization and the major concepts of the scouting movement. The BSA is much more expansive that what is presented in this brief
discussion and study. However, this introduction is intended to help familiarize readers with the BSA and provide a foundation for the exploration to take place in this study about the relationship between the BSA and servant leadership. In the next section, there will be a discussion of the Middle Tennessee Council due to the case study portion of this study.

Middle Tennessee Council

The Middle Tennessee Council of the BSA operates in the region commonly referred to as Middle Tennessee. Tennessee is geographically divided into Three Grand Divisions, those being East Tennessee, Middle Tennessee, and West Tennessee, with boundaries set by the Tennessee River. East Tennessee is everything east of the Tennessee river. Middle Tennessee is between the eastern and western segments of the river. West Tennessee is everything from the western section of the Tennessee river to the Mississippi River.

The Middle Tennessee Council covers thirty-seven counties in Middle Tennessee as well as parts of northwestern Kentucky. The council headquarters, called Jet Potter Service Center, is located in Nashville, TN. Across the Middle Tennessee area, the council operates three reservations and one canoe base. The most utilized property is Boxwell Reservation located on the Cumberland River in Wilson County, TN. The second property, Latimer Reservation, is a high-adventure base on the Cumberland Plateau that services both the Middle Tennessee Council and various organizations in Tennessee. Charles E. Parish Reservation is a historical property of the Middle Tennessee Council on the Cumberland Plateau that offers camping and district activity opportunities. Grimes Canoe Base operates on the Buffalo River in Perry and Wayne
counties with various options for canoeing and kayaking. Map 1, under Appendix B, provides an overview of the Middle Tennessee Council with key points of interest and the various districts in the council.

While the function of a BSA council is generally self-evident, the BSA has provided several detailed definitions and purposes for their councils. The purpose of a council is to primarily oversee and manage the programs of the BSA in an assigned geographical area (Boy Scouts of America, 2019). However, the BSA did establish a more detailed definition in their available literature. Being “a voluntary association of citizens,” councils have the primary responsibilities of membership, fund development, program, and unit service, and accomplishing their goals by adapting to local contexts and situations (Boy Scouts of America, 2013, p. 2). In addition to the definition of councils, there are several details on the nature of councils that needs to be clarified.

Councils are not static. New councils can be created, or existing councils merged together to form larger councils. In history, some councils were created in a geographical area just to later fall apart within a few years. This was especially true during the early years of the BSA as the initial structure of the organization was being established and refined. The Middle Tennessee Council has remained semi-consistent in geographical area and name ever since the 1950s.

Councils occasionally reform their districts. In the same way councils are not just static entities, the districts within a council can be periodically reviewed and reformed according to membership, school districts, community demographics, etc., and needs of the council at the time. A common name for this action is re-districting, and this occurred in 2020 in the Middle Tennessee Council. Different districts can be splintered, be
merged, or be absorbed, and new names selected for the new districts. For example, the Bledsoe Creek district, in the Middle Tennessee Council, was created by merging together the Warioto district and parts of the Cherokee district.

Council functions, focuses, and programs change across time. A council from 1950 might be substantially different from a 2020 council. Councils are dynamic both in nature and in history, and studies need to keep in mind the general differences that can occur in the many variables that come with using councils for case studies.

Districts can easily be overlooked because councils play a very prominent role in the literature of the BSA, the analysis for this study, and in public relations and presence. Districts play a significant role in the day-to-day operations of individual units and a council through organizing volunteers and committees for various programs such as camporees, trainings, and popcorn selling. In essence, districts serve geographic areas within a council and mobilizes resources to promote and enable scouting in that area (Boy Scouts of America, 2011). District support, by collaborating with local communities and scouting units, should empower local units and grow the movement in their area (Boy Scouts of America, 2019).

Districts can be even more dynamic in nature than councils if new adult volunteers are coming into leadership positions in the district every few years. Programs and ideas for camporees and events can be heavily dependent on the adult volunteer variable. Long-term volunteers in district leadership positions could promote a certain style of camporees, such as building structures or vehicles with timber and rope, while districts with a higher turnover of adult volunteers might have unique camporees and programs year to year. Such variables cause districts to be interesting case studies in
themselves on dynamics in the BSA and how adult volunteer retention affects the overall program in local areas.

The Middle Tennessee Council has several important landmarks, locations, and names that could appear during the qualitative interviews of this study. Hence, this discussion will highlight important locations and their roles in the council. Boxwell Reservation hosts several important events and programs: the council’s summer camp for Scouts BSA and Cub Scouts; the dedicated building of the Order of the Arrow in the council, Wa-Hi-Nasa Lodge; Camp “Beany” Elam for council Wood Badge courses; the Gaylord Cubworld camp for Cub Scouts; the Stahlman and Craig Camps for summer camps and general events; and a variety of other programs and features. Hence, Boxwell Reservation plays a significant role in the Middle Tennessee Council as a place to host events and as a place where numerous stories and histories are made.

The Middle Tennessee Council is one of the largest and most active councils in Tennessee, with numerous programs and units across its geographic influence. The councils usually host annual Wood Badge and NYLT courses, has an active Order of the Arrow lodge, named Wa-Hi-Nasa, with various chapters throughout the council, and actively serves all counties and major communities under its influence. For more information on the Middle Tennessee Council and its history, see Creighton and Johnson (1983), Eades (2021), Middle Tennessee Council (2021), and Stevenson (2016).

Regarding servant leadership, prime areas of consideration are the Wood Badge courses regularly conducted by the council as well as the Wa-Hi-Nasa Lodge which runs annual programs and trainings. Additionally, the summer camp at Boxwell Reservation provides numerous memories and experiences for staffers that might relate to servant
leadership, and the districts in the council are proactive at hosting camporees, events, and programs. Then there are the numerous units and troops in each community and town with unique experiences and histories. The Middle Tennessee Council is an excellent area to conduct studies due to the active nature of the council and the various activities that produce unique perspectives and understanding in their adult volunteers, youth, and professional staff.

Chapter One Summary

Servant leadership as a theory has progressed through several phases including a conceptual phase to the current phase of model development and refinement. Servant leadership focuses on an others-oriented approach to leadership where leaders model ethical behaviors and concentrate on the growth of their followers. The BSA recognized the nature and appeal of servant leadership and how the theory was closely related to the values of the scouting movement. In the early 2000s, the BSA began integrating servant leadership into the frameworks and trainings of the organization.

The structure of the BSA features different geographical areas, those being individual units, districts, councils, territories/areas, regions, and the National BSA, and the volunteers and professionals that occupy various positions in each different level of the organization. The Key Three is a leadership concept that applies to various roles and dynamics across the entire BSA, with one such example being at the unit-level of the Scoutmaster, Committee Chairman, and Chartered Organization Representative. Each position comes with distinctive challenges and responsibilities that produce similar, but unique attitudes and perspectives of each adult volunteers, youth, and professional staff.
The Middle Tennessee Council operates across the broad geographical area of Middle Tennessee with multiple districts, reservations, and annual programs and activities. Adult volunteers and youth participants have a variety of options to gain leadership experience and servant leadership training ranging from council run courses, such as Wood Badge, to the Order of the Arrow, to volunteering in individual units, and other available opportunities. The broad scope of the culture, individuals, and perspectives within the council presents valuable opportunities for case studies and other forms of research. The following chapters will present a literature review of scholarly sources on servant leadership in the BSA and scouting movement, an analysis of primary sources of the BSA on servant leadership, and the results of the qualitative interviews for the present study.
CHAPTER TWO:
LITERATURE REVIEW

The 2000s and 2010s marked an important shift in scholarly and higher education studies, as well as various articles, focusing on the BSA’s role as an institution for leadership development for both youth and adults. The wide array of scholarly work included theses, dissertations, peer-reviewed studies, and other articles. This study will refer to that body of literature as secondary sources and documents from the BSA, such as lessons, magazine articles, statements, and so on, as primary sources. The secondary sources covered various themes from individual reflections (Griggs, 2009), to a study on leadership in recreational activities of the BSA’s high-adventure programs (Lizzo, 2013).

However, four separate articles stood out in relation to the topic of this study: 1) Fredric Rohm and Bramwell Osula’s (2013) comparison of servant leadership and the scouting movement; 2) Rohm’s (2014) study on Eagle Scouts and servant leadership; 3) Bernard Goodly’s (2008) study on the influence of servant leadership in Eagle Scouts; and 4) George Ehler’s (2014) case study in the Middle Tennessee Council about the 11 Leadership Competencies. The following literature review will summarize the four sources as well as address the different methodologies and ideas in each paper. Additionally, the literature review will cover Liden et al.’s (2015) SL-7 model of servant leadership and why it was selected above other models in the field of servant leadership.
**Literature Review Structure**

The literature review was organized around a conceptual idea of each secondary source, centered on scope, scale, and related significance to the present study (Randolph, 2009). Secondary sources that analyzed servant leadership in the scouting movement from a broad and global perspective were first analyzed and then sources detailing regional case studies followed next. Rohm and Osula (2013) analyzed the topic from a global perspective, Rohm (2014) studied parts of the wider BSA and some regional factors, and Goodly (2008) conducted a regional case study in the Greater Alabama Council. Ehler (2014) was the last BSA-related source discussed due to just being a related topic, on the 11 leadership competencies in the BSA, and that the case study took place in the Middle Tennessee Council. An analysis of Liden et al.’s (2015) SL-7 model of servant leadership was presented after the BSA-related sources due to the material being directly connected to the present study and the most specific out of all the analyzed literature.

**Secondary Sources on Scouting and Servant Leadership**

Rohm and Osula (2013), Rohm (2014), and Goodly (2008) were selected for the literature review due to their focus specifically on servant leadership in the scouting movement and BSA. Other scouting-related sources studied other aspects of leadership in the movement and organization but not specifically the servant leadership theory. The present study is concerned specifically about servant leadership and the BSA and not the general leadership development practices of the organization. Ehler (2014) was included due to the study taking place in the Middle Tennessee Council and being somewhat relevant to discussions in the present study. The analysis by Rohm and Osula (2013)
covered broad connections between scouting and servant leadership but little tangible connections or utilization of the theory in the scouting movement was presented in their article. Rohm (2014) delved further into the specific relationship between the BSA and servant leadership but only demonstrated apparent themes and connections from a literature review and four qualitative interviews and did not touch upon organizational practices or sources. Goodly (2008) conducted the only widely known quantitative study on the topic but did not establish or explore any organizational connections between the BSA and servant leadership which were in effect during the period of his dissertation. The present study helps to establish the missing organizational perspective within the current literature as well as beginning to demonstrate the unique and broad attitudes and approaches of adult volunteers in relation to servant leadership and the BSA.

**Rohm and Osula, 2013**

“Scouting and Servant Leadership in a Cross-cultural Perspective: An Exploratory Study”

Rohm and Osula’s (2013) article focused on overarching trends and ideas found in the scouting movement and organizations compared against servant leadership using Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora’s 2008 model. Rohm and Osula’s (2013) article can be seen as a preliminary analysis that goes over apparent comparisons between servant leadership and scouting but lacks a detailed evaluation beyond the general trends. Rohm and Osula’s (2013) analysis focused on the shared ideas of the scouting movement, those being the Scout Promise (Oath) and Law, with the primary comparison being between the WOSM’s version of the Scout Promise and Law and Sendjaya et al.’s servant leadership model. Rohm and Osula’s (2013) “comparison yielded a relationship between scouting principles and servant leadership” and that the origins of the scouting movement might in fact be that of a servant leadership movement (p. 37). While broad in nature, the article
outlines the potential for servant leadership characteristics and ideas to be found in the scouting movement and affiliated organizations.

Rohm and Osula also commented on the BSA’s relationship to servant leadership. Rohm and Osula (2013) “argue the principle or ethos of servant leadership has been a part of the scouting movement from its early origins in 1910” and points towards a specific reference of servant leadership in the 2007 edition of the Scoutmaster Handbook, this example will be explained in Chapter Three, and they say that “one can only guess at the significance of this inclusion in the BSA literature” (p. 37). Rohm and Osula misrepresented the scale and importance of servant leadership in the BSA. It is not merely “the BSA’s recognition of servant leadership” (Rohm and Osula, 2013, p. 37) but rather the integration of servant leadership into the trainings and frameworks of the organization. Two preliminary examples can demonstrate the integration of servant leadership into the BSA, the Order of the Arrow and the Wood Badge leadership training.

The Order of the Arrow, often called the honors society of the BSA, started integrating servant leadership into its leadership training programs and overall attitudes in the early 2000s. Drafted and implemented in 2001-2002, the 2003-2007 strategic plan of the order outlined the future of the society, which also aligns with the new revisions and directions that the BSA was taking for the new millennium during the late 1990s and early 2000s. The core of the Order of the Arrow “is its heritage of service” which revolves around supporting the BSA at all levels and “[fostering] the ethic of servant leadership in the unit and in the life of the individual Arrowman (n.d., p. 2).

The primary adult leadership training of the BSA, Wood Badge, started integrating servant leadership into the training, around 2004, for the new program of
Wood Badge for the 21st Century. One of the five themes of Wood Badge is Leading to Make a Difference and particular emphasis is placed on the importance of servant leadership, as shown by a 2018 Wood Badge Staff Guide: “The fifth of the central Wood Badge themes is ‘Leading to Make a Difference.’ [Participants] have learned that a major aspect of this is servant leadership” (Boy Scouts of America, p. 329). Wood Badge also contained an entire lesson on servant leadership, and which will be discussed during the primary source analysis in Chapter Three.

The two primary source examples of the Order of the Arrow and Wood Badge demonstrate a more complex dynamic between servant leadership and the BSA than what is initially discussed by Rohm and Osula. The present study does not need to guess on why servant leadership was included in the 2007 printing of the Scoutmaster’s Handbook. It was part of the wider efforts by the BSA to integrate servant leadership into the frameworks, practices, and trainings of the organization during the major revisions to the programs and organization in the early 2000s.

The advantage of the present study over Rohm and Osula (2013) is the focus on servant leadership in BSA and an in-depth analysis of literature and using the Middle Tennessee Council as a case study, which contrasts with the broad overview of similarities and comparisons done by Rohm and Osula. However, Rohm and Osula’s (2013) article provides the idea that the scouting movement and organizations have the potential to implement and integrate servant leadership into their frameworks and practices. This idea was substantiated by the BSA’s large scale efforts in the 2000s and 2010s to integrate servant leadership across the organization.
Rohm, 2014
“Eagle Scouts and Servant Leadership”

Rohm (2014) conducted an additional study into Eagle Scouts and servant leadership, where he examined Townley’s (2009) book on Eagle Scouts as well as performing four qualitative interviews with Eagle Scouts that he personally knew. Rohm utilized Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora’s 2008 model of servant leadership to perform the qualitative study. Rohm’s (2014) is a more detailed analysis of servant leadership and the scouting movement compared to Rohm and Osula (2013).

Rohm’s (2014) initial analysis of some of Townley’s interviews with Eagle Scouts identified an apparent connection between Eagle Scouts and servant leadership (p. 76). This line of reasoning continues Rohm and Osula’s (2013) initial thinking on the connection between scouting and servant leadership where apparent characteristics and similarities exist between the two movements and institutions (p. 37). Additionally, according to Rohm’s (2014) literature review between Scouting principles and servant leadership, “both empirical and qualitative studies show an emerging linkage between Scouting and servant leadership, in particular that of Eagle Scouts” (p. 76). Such a linkage can be seen in the implementation of servant leadership into BSA literature and trainings. However, Rohm suggests the linkage from an academic perspective and until the writing of the present study, there was not a clear understanding of the scope and scale of servant leadership in the BSA from the perspective of academic sources. Thus, from Rohm’s scholarly perspective, it is not so much an emergence but rather a recognition, by academia, of the BSA policies and thinking in the 2000s and 2010s.

Servant leadership was already being implemented and integrated into the BSA during Rohm’s (2014) study and his analysis simply recognizes that dynamic rather than
finding a new emerging theme. For example, the initial youth leadership program of the BSA, for the Scouts BSA program, is the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops. The training contains an entire section on servant leadership which states the following: “It is important to build up the idea and value of servant leadership in our [Scouts] and adult leaders” (Boy Scouts of America, 2018, p. 29). Beyond Rohm’s (2014) initial literature review, the study also performed four qualitative interviews with Eagle Scouts to understand their perspective and relationship with servant leadership.

Rohm’s (2014) research question asked: “Do Eagle Scouts display servant leadership characteristics as outlined in Sendjaya et al.’s (2008) model?” (p. 76). Rohm proceeded to interview four Eagle Scouts, that he knew, and told their responses and thoughts to several servant leadership questions. Rohm (2014) concluded that Eagle Scouts and Scouting principles “match the characteristics of servant leadership” in terms of Sendjaya et al.’s (2008) model, and that the values of the Scouting Movement are already a “philosophy and model” of servant leadership (p. 20).

Rohm’s findings are also important, partly, because of the dates of when the four Eagle Scouts earned their ranks, in the 1970s and 1980s, which was prior to the implementation of servant leadership in the BSA in the 2000s and 2010s. The values of scouting were established prior to Greenleaf’s works in 1970 and 1977, but both scouting and servant leadership became intertwined despite the difference in time. This might allude to the principles of the values of scouting and the ideas of servant leadership sharing similar frameworks and mindsets. Perhaps that helps to explain why the BSA chose servant leadership as a critical leadership style for all leaders and programs in the
organization because of the similar ideas and concepts between the Scouting Method and servant leadership.

Overall, Rohm’s (2014) work, both with Osula (2013) and independently, contribute to the recognition of a link between, and the implementation of, servant leadership in the Scouting Movement and the BSA from the perspective of academia. While the BSA already recognized the relationship prior to Rohm’s (2014) work, he contributed to helping describe the relationship between servant leadership and scouting and establishing the idea of similarities between the two.

*Goodly, 2008*

“Leadership Development Within the Eagle Scouts: An Investigation of the Influence of Servant Leadership Values”

Goodly (2008) conducted a study in the Greater Alabama Council of the BSA that involved sending out a quantitative questionnaire to potential participants in the region and analyzing the results from the answers of respondents. Goodly (2008) focused on Eagle Scouts because he identified them as a unique group in the BSA and in American society comparable to military servicemen. The significance and widespread recognition of Eagle Scouts also prompted Goodly’s (2008) rational for the study. Goodly explored four research questions with a quantitative methodology that sent out a questionnaire to potential participants in the Greater Alabama Council. The questionnaire contained fifty questions from Wong and Page’s 2000 servant leadership profile and then used statistical analysis, cross-examining probabilities and trends in a set of data, to examine the questionnaires that were returned. Goodly (2008) examined various aspects of Eagle Scouts, including significant correlations, ethnic background, perceived family income, and educational achievement.
Goodly’s (2008) first research question evaluated any correlation between individuals that earned the rank of Eagle Scout and servant leadership. Goodly (2008) concluded no significant correlation between years as an Eagle Scout and servant leadership characteristics. Goodly (2008) did make a connection between age and the scouting concept of trustworthiness; that as an Eagle Scout matures, “keeping one’s word” and “the need to do the right thing” becomes more important (p. 67).

Goodly’s (2008) second research question searched for any correlation of servant leadership and Eagle Scouts in different demographic ethnic groups in the Greater Alabama Council. However, the primary participants in the study were White/Caucasian, around 95% of respondents, with smaller percentages of minorities in African-Americans, Hispanics, and others. Goodly (2008) indicated that ethnicity did not contribute to the dynamics between Eagle Scouts and servant leadership but recognized the skewed nature of the data and could not establish a significant correlation. Out of the four research questions and conclusions, the demographic analysis lacks the needed diversity of participants across ethnic groups to be considered grounded in evidence-based arguments and Goodly speculates on the nature and conclusion of the data. Part of the problem of large-scale studies in the BSA is the dominate nature of scouts and adult leaders of White/Caucasian backgrounds, and this is due in part to the historical roots of the organization. The BSA used to be segregated between Whites, Blacks, Asians, etc. White Troops dominated throughout most of the first half of the 20th century, but the BSA has made attempts to reach other non-white groups, with varying success.

Researchers and individuals interested in studying other aspects of servant leadership and the BSA might select the role of religious institutions in the organization
and how their participation affected the relationship between servant leadership and scouting. Goodly (2008) identified a potential connection between religious affiliation that might have a greater significance, rather than ethnic background, on the leadership approaches and mindsets of individuals. Goodly somewhat understates the importance and integration of religious institutions into the BSA framework and attitudes. Religious institutions have chartered with the BSA since its earliest years and for many decades volunteers and leaders from those groups have influenced the organization. However, many religious institutions have been reexamining their relationship with the BSA in recent years, due to a variety of factors, and the Mormon Church broke away from the organization in recent years. This area of research does not only have significance for the servant leadership in the BSA, but also how religious institutions have influenced and impacted the practices and frameworks of the organization.

Goodly’s (2008) third research question investigated any correlation of perceived family income and Eagle Scouts as future servant leaders. Goodly (2008) did find a correlation between the two factors. Goodly (2008) states that “the results tend to illustrate that it is harder to classify oneself as a servant leader the higher one’s perceived family income becomes” (p. 71). Goodly (2008) speculates that Eagle Scouts from higher-income homes perceive themselves more independent from societal support systems and that the more individual-oriented transformational leadership style might be fit better for them. Goodly (2008) continues and speculates that “for the Eagle Scout of moderate family income, servant leadership characteristics may be closer in line with family upbringing because [they] may have interfaced more with persons being served” (p. 71). On a spectrum of income perceptions, Goodly speculates that lower income
perceptions can develop higher servant leadership characteristics while higher income perceptions can develop more individual leadership characteristics.

Goodly’s (2008) fourth and final research question considered if educational achievement had any correlating factors for Eagle Scouts and servant leadership. Goodly (2008) indicated that “educational achievement can be viewed as the means in which Scouts find greater interest in working together and supporting the group, or peers’ interests,” but he also emphasized the lessons learned by scouts on the success of the group and the need for teamwork (p. 72). In essence, Eagle Scouts that achieve a higher level of education tend to have a greater understanding, interest, and support of others and teamwork in general.

Goodly’s findings are important for understanding the variables and connections between servant leadership and the scouting movement in the BSA. First, age, or years as an Eagle Scout, did not have a significant correlation for servant leadership characteristics in the measured groups. Second, Goodly did not have enough diversity in background ethnicity of participants to conclude if ethnicity had a correlation in servant leadership characteristics; however, he speculated that the results leaned towards ethnicity being a non-related factor. Third, perceptions of family income could sway servant leadership characteristics depending on the amount of service that families received due to income variability. Eagle Scouts from higher income families, with less need for help or services, could develop more independent leadership preferences. Lower income families, with more need for help or services, could recognize and prefer others-focused leadership styles, such as servant leadership. Fourth, higher educational
achievement generally indicated more group-related focus, by Eagle Scouts, with emphasis on success as a team rather than individual achievement.

The non-correlating factor of age might relate to Rohm’s idea of the timeless values of scouting aligning with values of servant leadership. The factors of perceived family income and educational achievement points towards experience, both personal, professional, and educational, contributes to the development of servant leadership characteristics in Eagle Scouts, at least from the Greater Alabama Council. The importance of Goodly’s (2008) dissertation is that it explores the factors and specific contexts behind servant leadership characteristics of Eagle Scouts and contributes to the overall picture of servant leadership in the BSA. One downside of Goodly’s (2008) study was an apparent lack of examining culture-related factors and variabilities. As demonstrated in the qualitative interviews of the present study, cultural and other context specific factors can influence servant leadership in the BSA and individual attitudes and perspectives.

**Ehler, 2014**

“*Fostering Leadership Through the Middle Tennessee Council Boy Scout Program: A Narrative Non-fiction Inquiry*”

Ehler (2014) completed qualitative interviews with adults in the Middle Tennessee Council that covered a narrative nonfiction about the 11 leadership competencies incorporated into BSA trainings and programs between the 1960s to the 1990s. Ehler focused on the timeframe between 1970 to 2000, which was the era of leadership practices and attitudes, in the BSA, immediately prior to the time period of the present study. The unique nature of Ehler’s study, a narrative non-fiction history of how adults utilized and applied the 11 leadership competencies, was a specialized case study of the Middle Tennessee Council and might not be applicable to the wider BSA.
Additionally, Ehler’s study focused on how the 11 leadership competencies were incorporated into Middle Tennessee Council programs, and he provided recommendations for improving the delivery and integration of those competencies. One weakness of the dissertation was that Ehler did not effectively explore the history behind the 11 leadership competencies or the change in leadership development approaches, in the BSA, between the late 1990s and early 2000s. However, the study still provides useful insights on the era of the 11 leadership competencies and the effectiveness of integrating leadership skills into BSA programs and trainings.

Other Secondary Sources on Scouting and Servant Leadership

Two other secondary sources were identified during the length of this study that analyzed and explored servant leadership in the BSA and scouting movement. However, neither source contributed greatly to the topic nor offered new insights not covered in the present study. Both sources will be explored in a brief discussion so that future studies may reference them for later research.

Bacastow (2018) explored the leadership development practices and attitudes of the BSA and compared the servant leadership and the transformational leadership models against scouting values and methods. While detailed to an extent, Bacastow’s thesis covered the entirety of the BSA’s leadership development practices rather than narrowing in on a specific topic such as servant leadership or trainings in the organization. Bacastow covered many different topics, but the broad scope and reach of the thesis, in both secondary and primary source review and analysis, caused the overall structure to feel disjointed and a loose connection of ideas and conclusions. Bacastow (2018) examined servant leadership in BSA trainings and highlighted the model’s incorporation into the
Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops course. However, Bacastow failed to identify or discuss the other prominent trainings of the BSA that included servant leadership and did not reference Goodly’s (2008) dissertation that specifically pertained to the topic. Bacastow did reference Rohm and Osula (2013) and Rohm (2014), however, both of those sources analyzed Goodly’s (2008) dissertation and incorporated it into their analysis and discussions, which draws attention to the lack of inclusion in Bacastow’s paper. Bacastow’s (2018) thesis does not contribute anything substantial that is not already covered in the present study.

Pennsylvania State University offered a course within its curriculum that operated a blog on Leadership, PSYCH 485 blog. One specific essay from the blog covered servant leadership and the BSA, authored by the user cms5820 (2012). The essay can be considered a qualitative reflection by the author on their time in the BSA and how servant leadership relates to the program, the volunteers, and the scouting movement. The author particularly focused on servant leadership’s connection to adult volunteers and the values of the wider scouting movement. The essay is useful due to the qualitative reflection of the author and establishing one more perspective on the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the scouting movement.

**Summary of BSA-related Secondary Sources**

While the secondary sources that explored servant leadership in the scouting movement contributed to the overall field of research, many gaps in knowledge and understanding still exist. Specifically on the level of integration of servant leadership in the BSA and missing perspectives in the organization and movement, such as adult volunteers. The present study helps to lay the foundation for filling in the current gaps
and knowledge and expanding the existing literature in unique and novel ways, specifically through analysis of organizational practices and adult volunteer perspectives. Future studies can expand upon and continue to explore the relationship between servant leadership and the scouting movement. The next discussion will focus on Liden et al.’s SL-7 model of servant leadership and touch on other important models and developments in the field of servant leadership.

**Liden et al.’s Short Form SL-7 Model of Servant Leadership**

Liden et al. (2008) developed a servant leadership model, commonly known as SL-28, with 28 items that demonstrated seven dimensions of servant leadership. After several years, Liden and others returned to the SL-28 model and ran another study that developed a short form of SL-28, commonly known as SL-7. Liden, Wayne, Meuser, Hu, Wu, and Liao refined SL-28 into SL-7, which still utilized the same seven servant leadership dimensions and the reliability of instruments and measurements (Linden et al., 2015). Liden et al. did revise the descriptions of each servant leadership dimension from the original 2008 version of the model. The dimensions and associated descriptions can be found in Appendix E. The dimensions included: 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 (Liden et al., 2015). For the purposes of the present study, the 2015 dimensions and descriptions were used to develop the qualitative and quantitative questions.

Eva et al. (2019) examined the nature of various servant leadership models including Sendjaya et al. (2008) and Liden et al. (2015). The study included several notable individuals, who constructed and validated their own servant leadership models,
including Sen Sendjaya, Dirk van Dierendonck, and Robert Liden. The study marks an important milestone in refining servant leadership models and defining the theory itself. By examining the various models of servant leadership, the study narrowed down the numerous available approaches and ideas to a set of three models based on rigorous construction and validation: Liden et al.’s (2015) SL-7; Sendjaya et al.’s (2019) SLBS-6; and van Dierendonck and Nuijten’s (2011) SLS; and each model has unique elements that can cover different situations and purposes (Eva et al, 2019).

The first servant leadership model described was Liden’s 2015 SL-7, and it was notable for the community-based, competency-based, and character-based dimensions factors. The community-based dimension of the model was also notable due to focus on the value of the organization in the community and in promoting follower participation in the community (Eva et al., 2019). “It is therefore fitting to use this measure specifically in relation to community-related outcome variables, or if the research model includes aspects of organizational or cognitive-based competencies” (Eva et al, 2019, p. 116). Part of the reason that the SL-7 model was selected for the present study was due to the community and competency elements, which aligns with various aspects of the BSA and adult volunteers.

First, numerous BSA literature and trainings emphasize creating a program and climate centered on servant leadership values and characteristics. Additionally, one of the Aims of Scouting is to promote and train youth in citizenship. Based on those reasons, the community-based dimension of SL-7 matches with the practices and ideas in the BSA. Second, the BSA literature and trainings emphasize various skills and characteristics that adult volunteers and staffers need to model and perform to be
effective servant leaders, a competencies-based variable. Third, character development is an essential aim and method in the scouting movement, which aligns with the character-based dimensions of the model. For those reasons, Liden’s SL-7 model is very suitable in exploring how the skills, attitudes, and qualities of servant leadership are utilized and perceived by adult volunteers.

The second model discussed in Eva et al.’s analysis was Sendjaya’s 2008 model of servant leadership, which revealed to be more spiritual in emphasis. Spirituality connects to the original work of Greenleaf (Eva et al., 2019) and is an important dynamic in the BSA and the principles of the wider scouting movement. Eva et al. (2019) recommend the Sendjaya (2008) model for spiritual-related studies and research. And the final model that was discussed by Eva et al. (2019) was developed by van Dierendonck and Nuijten in 2011 and featured 30 items that described eight dimensions of servant leadership and the model could be used to examine various situations and servant-side and leader-side dynamics of the theory. Eva et al. also developed a definition of servant leadership that the present study utilized to develop a qualitative interview question that asked interviewees to describe and discuss servant leadership, based on the definition, in the BSA and the scouting movement.

For the purpose of the present study, Liden’s SL-7 model provided coverage and emphasis on many variables that involve adult volunteers in the BSA, specifically the variables of community, conceptual skills, and character. Additionally, the present study wished to expand the current literature on servant leadership in the BSA in unique ways from previously used models. However, the three models from Sendjaya, Liden, and van Dierendonck are the prime models in the servant leadership field and can be used for
various studies and research into servant leadership in the BSA. Sendjaya et al.’s (2008) model has previously been utilized by Rohm and Osula (2013) and Rohm (2014) and appeared to have positive connections between servant leadership and scouting. This discussion should help future studies identify new avenues of research in the relationship between servant leadership and the scouting movement.

**Literature Synthesis**

Rohm and Osula (2013) established the potential for servant leadership in the scouting movement and organizations based on similarities and comparisons. Rohm’s (2014) study recognized the relationship between servant leadership and the scouting movement in the BSA as well as describing parts of the relationship. Goodly’s (2008) dissertation focused on specific portions of servant leadership characteristics in BSA Eagle Scouts and found that age and ethnicity were non-correlating factors and that perceived family income and educational achievement did correlate to servant leadership development. This suggests that personal, professional, and educational background experience plays a role, at least in Eagle Scouts, in developing servant leadership characteristics. Parts of the relationship between servant leadership and scouting have been clarified and explored by previous studies, but many portions remain unclear such as ties of servant leadership between scouting and religious institutions, the transitional phase between the 11 leadership competencies and servant leadership, as well as a broad-based history on leadership attitudes and development in the BSA. Even more so, current academic sources do not effectively explore servant leadership in the BSA within the organization’s literature and frameworks or analyze the unique perspectives of adult volunteers.
Chapters Three, Four, and Five will greatly expand on the understanding of the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA through primary source analysis and qualitative interviews. In Chapter Three, there will be a primary and historical source analysis of the organizational literature and practices of the BSA, related to servant leadership, centered around the Scouts BSA program and associated leadership development trainings for youth and adults. Chapter Four presents the methodology of the present study and introduces the qualitative interviews with adult volunteers in the Middle Tennessee Council. Chapter Five presents the results of the qualitative interviews with adult volunteers that covered the dimensions of Liden et al.’s (2015) SL-7 model, the effectiveness of BSA leadership trainings, and volunteer thoughts on servant leadership. Chapter Six is the conclusion for the study and presents major arguments and findings.
CHAPTER THREE:
SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA:
PRIMARY SOURCE AND HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

The primary source and historical analysis of this study examined BSA literature and documents to form a preliminary history of the Scouts BSA leadership trainings and how servant leadership was integrated, structured, and utilized in those courses. The combination and analysis of multiple literature and documents from the BSA can allow an informed interpretation of the changing history of BSA leadership development practices, and the inclusion of servant leadership, during the 1990s and into the 21st century. Literature and documents that contributed to leadership development trainings in the Scouts BSA, related to servant leadership in those courses, or helped in exploring the history of the topic were considered and included in the historical analysis.

The interpretations and history in the following analysis do not provide a holistic perspective of servant leadership in the BSA nor a comprehensive understanding of the BSA’s leadership development trainings across the entire organization. The analysis focused on “how” servant leadership was integrated into the Scouts BSA program and trainings rather than “why” the BSA chose that specific model. The late 1990s and early 2000s is somewhat of a dark zone in terms of online publications and materials for the BSA and can be a difficult period to research without physically travelling to the National Scouting Museum or interviewing individuals that made such decisions. The analysis does demonstrate the servant leadership was an integral model in the Scouts BSA trainings between 2000 and 2021. The analysis focused on leadership development in the
Scouts BSA program along with other discussions to establish transitionary periods or aspects of the history that closely aligned to the program.

The analysis starts by examining the broad concept of leadership development in the BSA and then describing the transitionary phase between the 11 leadership competencies and servant leadership. Servant leadership in the Order of the Arrow was discussed due to the society’s integration into multiple BSA programs including Scouts BSA. The main analysis of Scouts BSA adult and youth leadership trainings included exploring each course that included servant leadership and the associated literature, mostly handbooks, guidebooks, publications, and online articles.

**Leadership Development in the BSA**

The BSA (n.d.) describes itself as the leading youth character development and values-based leadership training organization in the United States. Leadership, as a concept and ideal, is integrated into almost all programs and functions of the BSA. For example, leadership development is a critical component in the aims and methods of the BSA making the concept one of the integral core components of the organization.

Leadership Development – The Scouting program encourages Scouts to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership and becoming a *servant leader* [emphasis added] helps a Scout accept the leadership role of others and guides them towards participating citizenship and character development. (Boy Scouts of America: Troop leader Resources, n.d.) Leadership development has been part of the methods of the BSA, under a variety of forms and names, for many decades. The introduction of leadership development, as a method, can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s with the expansion of leadership-focused programs and mentality of the BSA (inquiry.net, n.d.). However, the Aims of Scouting remained relatively unchanged in BSA history until recent years. The Aims of
Scouting did not always include leadership development. Between 2017 and 2019, the BSA changed the Aims of Scouting to include leadership development. The 2017 Guide to Advancement included only character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness for the three Aims of Scouting (p. ii). The addition of leadership development as an aim of the BSA reflected nearly a decade and a half of reconsidering and expanding how leadership development was managed in the organization.

In order to foster leadership development in youth and adults, the BSA relied on various leadership models and theories integrated into the practices and frameworks of the trainings and the organization. However, the leadership models and theories changed across the lifetime of the organization. Servant leadership would be integrated into the BSA in the 2000s and 2010s. Prior to the integration of servant leadership, the 11 leadership competencies was the predominate model in the BSA throughout the 1960s up until the 1990s. While other leadership models, theories, and ideas were used in the BSA, servant leadership and the 11 leadership competencies were especially important due to their preeminent nature and integration into the organization during their respective eras.

In the following discussions, servant leadership in the BSA in the multitude of literature and trainings, primarily in the Scouts BSA program and in the Order of the Arrow, of the organization. Servant leadership was integral to the leadership development trainings of the Scouts BSA program and the Order of the Arrow and both section utilized the model in unique and dynamic ways. To begin, there will be a general discussion on the 11 leadership competencies so that readers may understand the previous BSA attitudes and frameworks, and part of the transitionary period between leadership models in the 1990s and 2000s.
11 Leadership Competencies, 1964-1999

The 11 leadership competencies are a series of skills, attitudes, and frameworks that help youth and adults become better leaders in their roles. The competencies, developed by Béla Bánáthy and others, include: 1) Getting and Giving Information; 2) Understanding Group Needs and Characteristics; 3) Knowing and Understanding Group Resources; 4) Controlling the Group; 5) Counseling; 6) Setting the Example; 7) Representing the Group; 8) Planning; 9) Evaluation; 10) Sharing Leadership; 11) Manager of Learning (White Stag, n.d.). The White Stag Association developed and oversaw the 11 leadership competencies across various organizations and continued to operate in the 21st century.

The origins of the 11 leadership competencies began in the scouting movement and by individuals wanting a more boy-centered leadership style in the BSA. The group that would eventually develop and lead the 11 leadership competencies style was the White Stag Association, a moniker taken from scouting’s founder, Baden-Powell (White Stag, n.d.). For a concise history of the White Stag organization and the 11 leadership competencies, please reference “White Stag History Since 1933.”

Observers will note that the initial development period for the 11 leadership competencies began in 1958, rather than 1964 (White Stag History, n.d.). However, the program caught the eye of the National Council of the BSA and was inspected for implementation in 1964 (White Stag History, n.d.). The 1958-1963 timeframe was the initial development phase between the White Stag leaders and the Monterey Bay Area Council of the BSA, through experiential summer programs and thesis development. Widespread consideration, by National BSA, began in 1964, which marked the 11
leadership competencies’ takeover as the preeminent leadership model in BSA trainings and practices throughout the latter 20th century.

The National BSA decided to first integrate the 11 leadership competencies into experimental Wood Badge to evaluate and explore the capabilities and potential applications of the model. The experiments and potential lead to a youth version, called the Troop Leader Development Staff Guide, being released in 1974. However, around the same time, the disastrous 1972 National BSA Program, entitled Improved Scouting Program, prompted reconsiderations about the exclusion of traditional Scoutcraft from the organization’s programs and trainings. By 1978, the changes were effectively undone and “returned the organization to a more traditional approach” (Hubbard, 2016, p. 74). In 1979, the National BSA released an updated training curriculum, the Troop Leader Training Conference Staff Guide, which reflected the widespread efforts to undo the changes from the Improved Scouting Program and reintroduce traditional Scoutcraft elements (White Stag History, n.d.).

The 11 leadership competencies would remain integrated into BSA trainings and programs throughout the 1980s and 1990s, but the BSA began a slow march away from the earlier dominance and prevalence of the leadership style. By 2000, “the National BSA Council began to look at how [Junior Leader Training] might more closely follow the revised Wood Badge program, Wood Badge for the 21st Century” (White Stag History, n.d., para. 2000). The 2000 period marked the transition away from the 11 leadership competencies preeminent nature in the BSA and towards other models and theories such as servant leadership.
The 11 leadership competencies dominated trainings and programs would be phased out for the new curriculum and ideas presented in Wood Badge for the 21st Century, which would eventually pave the way for more focus on servant leadership in the organization. White Stag as an organization continues in the modern day with its traditional programs under the 11 leadership competencies, but the national widespread recognition and dominance primarily ended in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The gap left by the 11 leadership competencies would eventually be filled by servant leadership, which became a leading model in the BSA in the 2000s and 2010s.

**Laying the Foundation for Servant Leadership in the BSA**

As the 21st century approached, new hope and aspirations of a brighter future prompted reconsiderations and reflections in various organizations and institutions. The BSA was one such organization that began to look towards the future and reconsider some aspects of the programs and trainings of the organization. In the BSA’s Annual Report in 2000, under the 1998-2002 Strategic Plan, “scouting has a long tradition of quality leadership. To continue the proud heritage, we must continue to select effective volunteer leaders who share our values; have influence, vision, and commitment; and focus on their role in Scouting” (para. 3). To achieve that goal, the BSA began revising multiple aspects of each program and the overall organization to streamline the programs and trainings for both adults and youth. Similar to the 11 leadership competencies, servant leadership began a slow march to prominence starting off in the early 2000s, largely in the Order of the Arrow society and test runs in the Wood Badge training.

*Scouting*, the official magazine of the BSA, released a brief timeline of important events in Wood Badge history in the March-April 2014 issue. This timeline included the
transition from the “old” style of Wood Badge towards Wood Badge for the 21st Century.

1997: Discussions begin to revise Wood Badge and offer one course for all programs.
2000: Two pilot Wood Badge for the 21st Century courses held — one at the Florida Sea Base and one at Philmont.
2002-today: BSA requires that all courses and councils teach the course.
(Wendell, 2014)

Introduced in 2001, the new Wood Badge was “developed for all Scouters” and it marked the consolidation of program-specific trainings into one course for the entire organization (Boy Scouts of America: National Council, 2008). However, this was not just the case for the Wood Badge trainings, the BSA also ran and conducted other courses throughout the organization that were under review and revision. A few years later, new youth leadership trainings would be modeled after Wood Badge for the 21st Century, most notably the National Youth Leadership Training.

The transitionary phase laid the groundwork for the rise of servant leadership in nearly all BSA trainings due to the numerous revisions and reconsiderations occurring in this timeframe. By 2004, servant leadership was slowly being integrated into the Wood Badge courses, and the new National Youth Leadership Course was about to introduce servant leadership to youth. However, the Order of the Arrow began integrating servant leadership into its structure and frameworks by 2001.

**Servant Leadership in the Order of the Arrow**

The Order of the Arrow (OA) describes itself as “Scouting’s National Honor Society” and maintains separate membership requirements that are, however, tied directly to the other programs of the BSA (2021, para. 3) Membership in the OA could come from a variety of BSA programs, including Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouts, and
other programs. In light of this dynamic, adult volunteers could discuss their servant leadership perspectives, during the qualitative interviews of this study, from their time in the OA. So, a brief analysis of the OA will help establish a background in the event that specific perspective emerges in the interviews. Servant leadership became integrated into the society in the early 2000s and remained a dominant idea until 2018, as seen in annual reports and other articles.

Annual reports offer a summary of a year’s event and the BSA and OA released public annual reports throughout 2001 to 2018. The annual reports provide a general overview and history of servant leadership in the OA as the reports contain membership figures, financial information, and program updates from each year (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.). Since 1911, the BSA has consistently released annual reports each year and the OA also published their own reports, which are available online as far back as 2001. While the annual reports present a pro-scouting and pro-OA perspective, they are also highly valuable because they report values and ideals and try to portray the society according to the direction and vision of the leadership. With servant leadership being so highly integrated into the messaging and focus of the annual reports, the OA considered the model appropriate to reflect the values and image of the society to the wider public.

With available online primary sources, servant leadership can be seen in the OA as far back as the 2001 OA Annual Report, which states, “our efforts contributed countless hours of manpower, while our national programs, [mainly National Leadership Seminars,] have epitomized servant leadership in the examples set by our members” (Order of the Arrow, p. 1). The National Leadership Seminars was one of the core leadership trainings of the OA and mirrored the wider utilization of servant leadership by
the BSA in the main leadership courses in each program of the organization. However, servant leadership messaging and focus, in the annual reports, would greatly expand with the 2002 Annual Report as the society looked to consolidate and integrate the new model.

The 2002 Annual Report contained more elements of servant leadership, with the title of the report being “A Renewed Legacy: Servant Leadership 2002” (Order of the Arrow). The 2002 Annual Report introduced the 2003-2007 strategic plan of the OA, titled “A Legacy of Servant Leadership.” In the strategic plan, “the ethic of servant leadership” was introduced as a way to foster and promote the “heritage of service” in the society, in units, and in Arrowmen (Order of the Arrow, 2002, p. 2). Servant leadership became ingrained into the overall structure of the OA in the early 2000s through messages and themes centered around the model and the trainings that utilized the model.

Training of Arrowmen, a nickname for members of the OA, became centered around the National Leadership Seminar, a premier training program of the society. As noted in the 2002 Annual Report, the National Leadership Seminar played a central role as the “cornerstone of […] leadership development” in the OA and the foundation of the training was that of “Trust and Servant Leadership” (Order of the Arrow, 2002, p. 6). On November 20, 2001, the National OA Chief, Don Cunningham, authored an article where he stated that “servant leadership is truly the essence of our Order” (para. 2). From multiple angles, trainings, annual reports, and top executives, the OA was pushing to integrate servant leadership into the frameworks and practices of the society. Similar language of “a legacy of servant leadership” and ongoing emphasis on the National Leadership Seminar for servant leadership continued throughout the 2003-2005 Annual Reports. The next decade and a half would feature servant leadership would as a central
model in the leadership trainings and organizational identity of the OA. However, the
2006 Annual Report featured a different attitude regarding servant leadership in the OA.

The initial integration of servant leadership into the OA, prior to 2006, featured
efforts and messaging that pushed for the incorporation of servant leadership into the
society. However, the language and messaging of servant leadership in the OA,
beginning in 2006, became an attitude of an ingrained and cemented philosophy of the
society, a part of the everyday life for Arrowmen.

The foundation of the Order of the Arrow is exemplified by those Arrowmen who
live the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives as they strive for a life of servant
leadership. On this foundation are three pillars: Brotherhood, Cheerfulness, and
Service. (Order of the Arrow, 2006, p. 2)

By the 2006 Annual Report, servant leadership was integrated into the OA and would
serve as the primary leadership style for at least another decade. The OA also mentioned,
in the 2006 Annual Report, that Arrowmen at the 2006 National Order of the Arrow
Conference (NOAC) challenged members to grow in servant leadership. However, the
2006 Annual Report was the beginning of a larger trend away from servant leadership
messaging and focus in the reports.

The 2007 Annual Report highlights the holistic integration of servant leadership
into both youth and adult trainings of the society. Adult advisers in the OA were trained
to support, guide, and mentor youth in servant leadership values. The 2007 Annual
Report highlighted that adult advisers and youth officers received instruction on
“instilling the concepts of servant leadership in other members” through the Lodge
Leadership Development Program (Order of the Arrow, p. 4). The trainings of the OA
taught servant leadership to not only regular members but also to adult advisers and youth
leaders of the society.
In the 2008 Annual Report, the theme for the year was “Service in the Environment” and had Arrowmen travelling to sites in National Forests for projects and service, which reminded the nation “that Scouting is about servant leadership” (Order of the Arrow, 2008, p. 1). However, the 2009 Annual Report did not mention servant leadership, or servant leaders, which was a symptom of a much larger shift away from the centrality of servant leadership in terms of national-level messaging and language in the society. Servant leadership was still heavily integrated into the core trainings and attitudes of the OA, but its preeminent role in messaging and language in the annual reports was slowly declining.

With the end of the 2003-2007 Strategic Plan, the OA refocused their messages and annual reports away from themes of servant leadership. The messaging and role of servant leadership in annual reports was changing for new language and themes in the OA. Servant leadership would still be present in annual reports but in a diminished role, in terms of messaging and language, compared to the early 2000s. Servant leadership did remain highly prevalent in the day-to-day activities and trainings of the society. However, the transition, away from the language and messaging of servant leadership in annual reports, would be interrupted during the BSA’s 100-year anniversary celebrations.

In 2010, the BSA celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the organization. The 2010 Annual Report saw an uptick in the inclusion of servant leadership in the messages: “The OA Service Corps proved, through cheerful service, that the principles of servant leadership are alive within the hearts of every Arrowman” (Order of the Arrow, p. 1). There were a couple of additional references to servant leadership, but they were
repetitive statements from early reports and did not contribute new information or
dynamics (Order of the Arrow, 2010, p. 3 & p. 9).

The 2011 Annual Report continued the general trend of servant leadership during
this time, a leadership model interwoven into the fabric of the society: “Our organization
has been charting a path upward and outward as our message of servant leadership is
being carried out in words and actions by thousands of Arrowmen across the nation”
(Order of the Arrow, p. 1). However, the 2011 Annual Report marked the end of the
interruption caused by the 100-year anniversary of the BSA. The role and language of
servant leadership in the annual reports were primarily relegated to reoccurring messages
and statements. The 2012 Annual Report had several mentions of servant leadership, but
they were under sections of the reports that had reoccurring statements. The 2013 and
2014 Annual Reports were similar to the 2012 Annual Report in terms of reoccurring
messages and statements.

The 2015 Annual Report saw more diversity in servant leadership messages and
more emphasis was placed on the concept throughout the report. This was due in part as a
reflection of the 100-year anniversary of the OA occurring in 2015. To clarify, the
previous 100-year anniversary was for the BSA organization itself. An important event
for the year was “a resolution by the National Executive Board of the BSA, praising the
Order for its legacy of service” (Order of the Arrow, 2015, p. 2). The resolution focused
on the importance of the OA for both youth development and in the history of the BSA
“through its example of servant leadership” (2015, p. 3). There were additional references
to servant leadership and servant leaders but those centered around awards, trainings, and
messages for the 100-year anniversary of the OA.
The 2016 Annual Report returned to the similar style seen in the 2012, 2013, and 2014 reports, but there was an additional article posted to the OA main website that featured servant leadership and servant leaders. David Dowty (2016), the 2004 National Vice chief, authored an article on “Thoughts on Servant Leaders and the Great Outdoors,” where he focused on the roles of servant leaders to leave “an everlasting legacy of cheerful service” (para. 2). Additionally, Dowty (2016) reflected on a servant leaders’ ability to see beyond the mundane of everyday life to eventually reach their grand goals and dreams. Ideas of servant leadership and servant leaders were still alive and well in the OA even with a lack of focus in annual reports during the 2010s.

The 2017 Annual Report featured an interesting addition to servant leadership training in the OA for the 2017 National BSA Jamboree and how they developed through servant leadership-focused approaches and training (Order of the Arrow, 2017). However, beyond that special instance, the report continued the reoccurring messages and statements of servant leadership. The 2018 Annual Report marks the end of available annual reports on the OA main website at the time of the present study. The available document only features pages 36-49, leaving out the first three dozen pages for some unknown reason. And in those available pages, there is only one reference to servant leadership or servant leaders and that is in a recurring message on OA high adventure activities (Order of the Arrow, 2018).

2018 was a more significant year as it featured an important change in one of the core training programs of the OA, the National Leadership Seminar (NLS). According to an October 10, 2018, article by Matt Kusche, on the OA’s main website, the NLS course was changed after an extensive, multi-year review of the program. Previously, NLS relied
on the servant leadership theory, but the training transitioned to utilizing the adaptive leadership model that “focuses on the leaders who have the group rise to the occasion to overcome the challenges that may be faced” (Kusche, 2018, paras. 2-3). The upper-level leadership training program for adults, the Developing Youth Leadership Conference, was also brought in-line with the updated NLS course to maintain continuity between the material and programs (Kusche, 2018). This change in one of the primary leadership models of the OA might signal a wider spread move away from servant leadership in the society. However, the 2021 Field Operations Guide of the OA under Appendix 2: Council Mergers, still listed servant leadership as a core part of the society (Order of the Arrow, 2021).

At the time of this study, it was still unclear about the future of servant leadership within the Order of the Arrow due to the study concluding in early 2022, which could fall within the OA’s transition away from servant leadership and towards adaptive leadership. Across the 2001-2018 timeframe, the servant leadership model was a vital part of the society and was taught to thousands of scouts and adults in the main trainings and programs of the OA. This aspect of the history of servant leadership in the BSA shows how integrated the model became in the BSA and the OA between 2000 to 2021.

Servant Leadership in the Scouts BSA Program

With the standardization of adult and youth leadership trainings in the early 2000s, servant leadership began a slow but impactful rise in the overall BSA organization and the Scouts BSA program. Most of the integration and delivery of servant leadership occurred in newly developed programs and trainings that focused on leadership development. The OA stood out, compared to the BSA, by the society’s overall
engagement and integration of the servant leadership into the majority of their frameworks and practices, but the model was still primarily taught through leadership courses. In the core Scouts BSA leadership trainings, including youth and adult courses, servant leadership was an integral model, for both participants and staff members, which rose in prominence and emphasis with each subsequent course.

The following analyses will focus on servant leadership in adult and youth trainings, along with some additional literature, and will detail important historical information from appropriate sources. After the analyses of the adult and youth trainings, there will be a personal reflection from the author on researching primary sources in the BSA. In conclusion, there will be a general history of servant leadership in the BSA focused on the Scouts BSA program.

**Adult Leadership Trainings with Servant Leadership**

There were two primary leadership trainings for adult volunteers in the Scouts BSA program between 2000 to 2021, Wood Badge and the Philmont/Summit Leadership Challenge. Both courses placed great emphasis on servant leadership for both participants and staff members. Staff members were integral in the trainings to guide and enable adult volunteers to become better servant leaders. While the BSA did conduct additional trainings, the courses were usually discipline-specific, such as aquatics or shooting sports, rather than focusing exclusively on leadership development. Multiple councils conducted Wood Badge courses each year and offered one of the primary opportunities for adult leadership development training in the organization.

Wood Badge has been around, in one form or another, for around 100 years and holds a unique place in both the BSA and the hearts of the participants and staff.
members. The essence and purpose of Wood Badge is to develop skilled Scouting leaders that could support and enable units and progress the mission of the BSA (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.). Being “the embodiment of Scouting spirit,” the courses put participants through an intensive schedule to foster teamwork and various skills and for the universal goal of empowering youth and leading to make a difference; without that motivation, adults might not spend “16-hour days” on an optional training (Wood Badge, n.d., para. 5).

Wood Badge for the 21st Century was organized around five main themes: Living the Values; Bringing the Vision to Life; Models for Success; Tools of the Trade; and Leading to Make a Difference. Across six to seven days, the five themes were explored in various lessons and experiences. As a note, the Leading to Make a Difference theme included a lesson on servant leadership. Wood Badge did not end after the main training days. Participants needed to complete five Wood Badge Tickets, which were a series of projects or goals that focus on improving scouting, personal development, or other objectives. Only after attending the main training days, completing the five tickets, and reporting the results to their Troop Guide, can participants finish the training and earn their Wood Badge beads and neckerchief.

Adult volunteers could learn servant leadership in Wood Badge from two positions and perspectives, as a participant or as a staff member. From the participant perspective, there were several key servant leadership concepts and ideas explored, as explained by the 2013 Wood Badge Staff Guide.

Servant leadership encourages leaders to serve others while staying focused on achieving results in line with the organization’s values. At heart, the individual is a servant first, making the conscious decision to lead; his or her drive is to lead because he or she wants to serve better, not because he or she desires increased
power. Servant leadership encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening, and the ethical use of power and empowerment. Above all, it is a selfless, egoless style of leadership where “others first” is paramount. It is truly character-based leadership. (Boy Scouts of America, 2013, pp. 311-2)

Additionally, the training spent an entire lesson on servant leadership near the end of the course. While the BSA explained the nature of servant leadership, the organization also tied the model into the core components of the scouting movement, primarily the character-based values. Scouting is often described as a character-based movement and the BSA directly tied servant leadership to the core ideas behind the movement. With the placement near the end of the course, servant leadership was greatly emphasized and was an important concept for the participants to remember, practice, and model in their units and positions in the BSA.

For several years, servant leadership teaching was focused on the participants rather than staff members. However, around 2018, the Wood Badge Administrative Guide started to emphasize servant leadership not only among participants but also among staff members. The guide described that staff members “must embrace the culture servant leadership” and stressed the importance of the staff to the success of each course (Boy Scouts of America, 2018, p. 1). The inclusion of staff members into the overall framework and methodology for developing servant leadership helps to show an integrated approach of teaching and modeling in the course and organization. Staff members model and teach servant leadership to adult volunteers and leaders, who in turn return to their units and positions and demonstrate the concept to youth and other adults. Staff members were important conduits for the teaching and demonstration of servant leadership for the participants during the course.
Wood Badge is an important element for the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA. Participants developed a conceptual understanding of servant leadership throughout the Wood Badge course and gain some first-hand experience on using and modeling a servant leader attitude and approach. Future studies might specifically focus on Wood Badge participants and staff members for qualitative and quantitative studies to further understand servant leadership and the BSA. On the next level of trainings, national-level courses, the Philmont Leadership Challenge and the Summit Leadership Challenge offered a more experiential experience and setting for developing servant leadership.

The Philmont/Summit Leadership Challenge was a national-level course and was the direct continuation from the Wood Badge course. The training required Wood Badge as a prerequisite for participation. For simplicity, PLC will refer to the Philmont Leadership Course as well as the Summit Leadership Course as the only difference between each training was geographical location. The Philmont Scout Ranch, or simply Philmont, was in New Mexico. The Summit Bechtel National Scout Reserve, or just Summit, was in West Virginia. The first PLC course was conducted at Philmont in the fall of 2008 and was modeled after the National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience course (Ray, 2009).

Each year, the BSA published an annual guidebook for PLC and the 2021 version provided an overview and the purpose of the course. Claiming to be “the ultimate training experience,” PLC empowered adults “to follow a life of servant leadership based on the values of Scouting” and promised to foster skills and leadership abilities for a variety of challenges and situations (Boy Scouts of America, 2021, p. 2). Servant leadership was
one of the core models of the training and was integrated into the critical structure, practices, and attitudes of the course.

One of the core objectives of the course was to “[provide] a clear understanding of servant leadership in challenging wilderness environments” (Boy Scouts of America, 2021, p. 4). Within those core objectives are learning outcomes with some focusing on developing servant leaders with enhanced knowledge and abilities original fostered in Wood Badge (Boy Scouts of America, 2021). Additionally, even with the geographical differences of the courses, the underlying goals remained the same: to “emphasize Wood Badge skills, particularly servant leadership and leaving a legacy” (Wendell, 2015, para. 5). Servant leadership was integrated into each individual layer of the course and was continually reinforced throughout the training and the attitudes of participants and staff members. The PLC Design Team Project Leader and course director for the 2008 pilot course, Dr. Mary Stevens stated that “the servant leadership theme is absolutely the bedrock of [the] course” (Ray, 2009, para. 4).

PLC placed great emphasis on developing and training servant leadership in participants and possibly staff members. However, there was not much literature on the PLC course beyond the guidebooks and the occasional article, which might be in part due to the experiential nature of the training. Rather than the combined theoretical and practical lessons found in Wood Badge, PLC was almost entirely dedicated to experiential learning and hands-on training. However, the available literature still provides an overview of the importance of servant leadership in the course. Due to the limited number of trainings available each year, the PLC courses have less participants overall when compared with Wood Badge courses that are held in multiple locations each
year. Yet the greater emphasis on servant leadership might produce better servant leaders overall. It is a quality versus quantity discussion that could be explored in a later study.

The Wood Badge and PLC leadership development trainings incorporated servant leadership lessons and practices to varying degrees between each course. The Wood Badge course included other leadership lessons and models so the overall effect and development of servant leadership in the participants might vary between individual experiences and perspectives. However, the Wood Badge training placed great emphasis on staff members modeling and demonstrating a servant leadership attitude and approach. In the PLC training, servant leadership served as a foundational element of the course since the inception of the training and continued to operate in that capacity across the years and hosting locations.

**Servant Leadership in Adult-related Literature**

The BSA’s literature for adult volunteers that featured servant leadership was split between two purposes, as reference material or as handbooks in a course. The most prominent sources being the Scoutmaster Handbooks, presently known as Troop Leader Guidebooks, Wood Badge handbooks, and some online publications from the BSA. The adult volunteer literature not only demonstrates the importance of leadership trainings when discussing the BSA and servant leadership but also highlights how the organization utilizes the model.

Starting from the Scoutmaster Handbook, this study previously mentioned how Rohm and Osula (2013) referenced servant leadership in the 2007 edition of the Scoutmaster Handbook. The author of this study was only able to get a 2008 printing of the Scoutmaster Handbook. However, from a preview of the 2007 Scoutmaster
Handbook, available at an online website, there seemed to be little difference between the two years. As such, the 2008 printing will be used as a substitute to the 2007 handbook.

Rohm and Osula do not explore why servant leadership was referenced in the handbook. The primary reference, as pointed out by Rohm and Osula, was a module for Troop Leadership Training, the initial leadership course for the Scouts BSA program that covered broad concepts for successful leadership and some experiential challenges (Boy Scouts of America, 2008). The title of Troop Leadership Training was used in the 2000s but was later revised to Introduction to Leadership Skills (for Troops) in the 2010s, but the overall training structures remained the relatively the same, despite the name changes. The training was split into three modules with module three containing a lengthy section on servant leadership, the specific lesson being titled 2. Servant Leadership—Motivating Scouts to Lead. The lesson stressed the importance of building the thought of servant leadership into youth leaders and other various conceptual ideas of the theory (Boy Scouts of America, 2008). The handbook also referenced servant leaders in a description for the National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience and how the course “[guided] Scouts along their journey to become true servant leaders” (Boy Scouts of America, 2008, p. 77).

The 2007 edition of the Scoutmaster Handbook primarily pointed towards other leadership trainings that included servant leadership, which further emphasizes the idea that servant leadership was structurally tied to the leadership trainings of the BSA. The 2018 Guide to Leader Training functioned in a similar way to the Scoutmaster Handbooks, as a reference guide point adults and youth to leadership trainings that include servant leadership. However, there was a section of BSA literature that focused
on developing and fostering servant leadership, and not just as a reference guidebook, that of training handbooks found in Wood Badge and other courses. Wood Badge Handbooks are another instance of literature that can greatly contribute to the understanding of the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA.

Wood Badge Handbooks are rather unique literature sources in the BSA as trainings were usually council-specific and had distinctive traditions and styles for each council and course. However, with the standardization of BSA leadership trainings in the 2000s, the content and lessons between Wood Badge courses remained consistent and the primary differences came from council-specific traditions and history. The author of this study attended a Wood Badge course in 2019 through the Middle Tennessee Council. Early handbooks in the latter 2000s might or might not mention servant leadership, but most books in the 2010s mentioned servant leadership, as dedicated sections of the course were made, and the concept became more grounded in the wider BSA. One challenge of the present analysis was the inherent lack of handbooks available from online sources and databases. In addition to the author’s handbook, only two other handbooks were available from the Heart of Virginia council through a basic online search. However, with the available handbooks, a general understanding of servant leadership in the course can be acquired.

A Wood Badge Handbook made for a course in the Heart of Virginia Council sometime in the late 2000s, had a single reference to servant leadership. During Day Six of the course, participants reflected on the course and rekindled their dedication to servant leadership (Heart of Virginia Council, n.d.). That was the only specific reference for servant leadership in the handbook. While servant leadership did not have a specific
lesson in this book, later versions of different handbooks had sessions for servant leadership.

Several years later, in 2016, the Heart of Virginia Council hosted another Wood Badge course with a whole lesson dedicated to servant leadership. The lesson stated that “servant leadership is an international movement that teaches ‘other first’ thinking” (Heart of Virginia Council, 2016, p. 92). The lesson also expanded on servant leadership as a concept that “surpasses self-interest” and reorients the focus of leaders towards others-first thinking, improving teamwork, and being “modest stewards of organizational resources” (Heart of Virginia Council, 2016, p. 92).

In 2019, the Middle Tennessee Council hosted a Wood Badge course attended by the author of this study. Servant leadership was more defined in the handbook, compared to the 2016 Heart of Virginia Council book, and emphasized the importance of the model for adult leaders. Specifically, servant leadership attitudes promoted others-first service, performed through “collaboration, trust, empathy, and the ethical [use] of power,” and that leaders serve to improve others, not increase their power; “it is truly character-based leadership” (Middle Tennessee Council, 2019, p. 114).

Due to the limited public availability of Wood Badge handbooks, a thorough analysis of differences of the presentation and definition of servant leadership cannot be fully done. However, the available sources can provide a general framework for how servant leadership is presented and taught in modern Wood Badge courses. The trainings focused on the others-first approach of servant leadership and can have a variety of concepts and dimensions, depending on the individual course, which are associated with the theory. From the preliminary analysis, servant leadership seemed to increase in depth
and importance as the trainings continued to be refined and improved in the 2000s and 2010s. However, future studies will need to proactively acquire a diverse collection of Wood Badge handbook to conduct a more thorough analysis. Additionally, studies will need to be aware of the diversity across handbooks and how the overall course theme can change from council to council, course to course, which could affect how servant leadership was included in each handbook and training.

Most adult literature for the Scouts BSA program, which included servant leadership, were simply references for the various leadership trainings, for both youth and adults. However, Wood Badge handbooks are prime sources for understanding how servant leadership is taught within the BSA. Yet, the limited availability of such literature currently prevents a comprehensive analysis and will need to be addressed if future studies investigate servant leadership specifically in the Wood Badge training. The present study could not locate any handbooks or similar literature for the PLC courses. Additionally, the author does not know the extent of servant leadership training in programs such as National Camp School or the material for professional scouters, but these are areas that can be considered for further studies into the topic.

**Youth Leadership Trainings with Servant Leadership**

Youth leadership trainings followed the same general format for adult trainings, due to the standardization of programs and leadership courses in the 2000s and 2010s. However, there were three primary youth leadership trainings for the Scouts BSA program, rather than just the two courses for adults: the unit/district-level training called Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST); the council-level training called National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT); and the national-level training called
National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE). All three youth trainings emphasized servant leadership to varying degrees. At the time of this study, there was not an adult leadership training on the unit-level that emphasized servant leadership. Figure 2 details the training pathways for a Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scouts youth.

Figure 2. The Youth Leadership Training Continuum (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.).
The Kodiak Challenge and Powder Horn trainings were specifically for youth and adult volunteers in the Venturing program but did allow other program members, mainly for the Powder Horn courses. The Sea Scout Advanced Leadership (SEAL) Training was for youth in the Sea Scouts program. At 18 years old, program-participants, scouts older than 18 but are still in programs as participants, and adults could participate in Wood Badge regardless of program affiliation. ‘On the Job’ Experience simply referred to the leadership experience a youth gained while being in positions of responsibility and participating in their program. All these courses taught general leadership skills and experiences, but youth in the Scouts BSA program could only participate in ILST, NYLT, and NAYLE courses without being affiliated with other programs in the organization.

There were, in general, similarities and differences among the youth leadership trainings, for which there are three tiers: unit-level, council-level, and national-level. The primary similarities, between each course, were the topic itself, that of servant leadership, and the progressive nature of the trainings going from the unit/district-level, the council-level, and then the national-level. The main differences between each training were based on what aspect of servant leadership was taught and how the material was learned, either in theoretical lessons or through practical experiences. ILST provided a broad overview of servant leadership, and other leadership concepts, and challenged youth to develop their conceptual understanding of the topic. NYLT trained youth to understand the theoretical ideas and approaches of servant leadership, and how to translate the theory into practice. NAYLE was an experiential learning course which provided youth with practical experiences and how to cement their own approaches based on the ideas of
servant leadership. The following sections will describe each leadership training and associated servant leadership content. The format will follow the traditional leadership training pathway for youth in the Scouts BSA program, starting from ILST and finishing with NAYLE.

**ILST Leadership Course**

ILST was the entry-level leadership course for Scouts BSA troops and was sometimes conducted as a district-wide event. Between the early 2000s up until 2010, ILST used to be called Troop Leader Training but was later revised due to standardization efforts. The introductory leadership trainings of the Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts programs fell under the Introduction to Leadership Skills (for Troops, Crews, or Ships) curriculum that was part of the standardization of BSA throughout the 2000s and 2010s. The author of the present study planned and led an ILST course in the former Warioto District, now the Bledsoe Creek District, of the Middle Tennessee Council in 2021. ILST was split into three modules that focused on various aspects of leadership, scouting values and structure, and practical games.

In Module 1, under the “Leadership Principles” section, a whole lesson was dedicated to servant leadership. The lesson primarily developed a conceptual understanding of the servant leadership, detailing the role of the servant leader in a team, the leader’s general responsibilities and servant attitudes, and how the approach benefits the overall team (Boy Scouts of America, 2018). Under the Key Teaching Points of the lesson, the course provided a more concrete definition of servant leadership.

Servant leadership is about making the choice to lead, to give more than you receive, and to make a difference. Effective servant leaders care about others, about helping others succeed, and about making the group successful. Servant leaders want to lead because they know they can help make a difference and
provide a better experience for every individual. (Boy Scouts of America, 2018, p. 29)

The placement of the lesson was important as it takes place at the end of module one and usually right before a break. The lesson served as a capstone of the overall module as well as being presented early in the course, potentially increasing knowledge retention in scouts due to the minimized effects of fatigue. However, the ILST course taught other concepts and models to give an overall introduction of leadership for youth. That could diminish the overall impact and emphasis of servant leadership by the end of the course.

The course did not specifically define any characteristics or dimensions of servant leadership, rather, the training provided various actions and attitudes of servant leaders that created a conceptual baseline for the participants. The subsequent leadership development courses, NYLT and NAYLE, would refine the participant’s conceptual understanding of servant leadership into grounded theories and characteristics.

**NYLT Leadership Course**

NYLT was a council-level course that brought together scouts and staff from diverse geographical areas for a one-week course. NYLT was the equivalent to the Wood Badge course, but for youth rather than adults. One of the earliest syllabi, around 2004-2005, was available online and retrieved by the author. The syllabus included multiple references to servant leadership and in a similar form to Wood Badge, the theory was important for both participants and staff members.

Staff members were rigorously trained in modeling and presenting the values of NYLT, including servant leadership (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.). One of the more interesting elements of the 2004-2005 staff guide was the emphasis on transitioning old staff members, from previous NYLT versions, into adapting and accepting the new model
of youth training and that “the philosophy of servant leadership [is] essential to conducting modern NYLT courses” (Boy Scouts of America, n.d., p. Staff Guide-10). Staff members were extremely important for NYLT trainings, and their proper training and attitudes was essential to establishing the new courses, as evidenced by the heavy-handed language of the BSA during the transitionary period.

In the same 2004-2005 staff guide, servant leadership was included in the course lessons on day three, but under a different name, that being “Others-First Leadership.” However, the accompanying DVD slide for the section, slide 3-30 as referenced in the guidebook, was named “Servant Leadership” (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.). With the guidebook being one of the first versions of the training, the BSA was still refining and developing the course into their modern polished versions, which could help explain differences in language and terminology in literature.

In a 2011 edition of the NYLT staff guide/syllabus, many of the original elements of the previous version was present, including some other additions. Most of the additions were staff related, highlighting the importance placed on staff members modeling servant leadership but may be in part due to the nature of the material. One addition emphasized the need for staff members to “embrace the culture of servant leadership” to create a successful program for all (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p. Staff Guide-2). More emphasis was placed on staff modeling servant leadership by targeting the disconnect between staff members and participants, which focused on the idea of the staff elite and “eliminating staff-only items” (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p. Staff Guide-10). At a lot of council events, such as summer camps, jamborees, etc., staff receive unique gear, usually hats, shirts, and patches, which are different from that of
gear available to participants. A lesson on servant leadership was still taught on day three of the course.

Sometime after the 2011 staff guide/syllabus, a 2014 version was released with an expanded lesson on servant leadership. However, other elements of the course, which included servant leadership, remained the same as in previous years. For example, one new section focused on a discussion on the differences between autocratic leadership versus servant leadership (Boy Scouts of America, 2014).

However, the more substantial addition was the inclusion of ten principles of servant leadership and descriptions for each dimension. The ten principles included: 1) Listening; 2) Empathy; 3) Healing; 4) Awareness; 5) Persuasion; 6) Conceptualization; 7) Foresight; 8) Stewardship; 9) Growth; and 10) Community (Boy Scouts of America, 2014). The full ten principles and accompanying descriptions can be found in Appendix C. The ten principles of servant leadership were modeled from Spear’s (2002) essay, “Tracing the past, present, and future of servant-leadership” which can be found in Spears, Lawrence, and Blanchard (2001). However, the two principles of Growth and of Community were shorted from the originals of Commitment to the Growth of People and of Building Community.

Additionally, in the summary of the lesson, there were more general elements of servant leadership and how other scouting values influenced the leadership approach.

**Summary**
A servant leader will focus primarily on the growth and well-being of people. Servant leaders serve first. Servant leaders behave in a special way. The Scout Oath and Scout Law can be used as a guide to help us become better servant leaders. (Boy Scouts of America, 2014, p. Day Three-54).
With the ten principles and the summary of servant leadership, NYLT challenged youth not only to understand the roles and responsibilities of servant leaders, but also to step into that role in their communities and units.

Ever more so than the ILST training, NYLT heavily emphasized servant leadership and challenged youth to develop a conceptual understanding and practical approach to being a servant leader. ILST provided an overview of servant leadership while NYLT established concrete dimensions and definitions of the theory. In a similar way to Wood Badge, NYLT acted as one of the main trainings to develop and foster servant leadership in youth of the Scouts BSA program.

**Between NYLT and NAYLE**

The BSA published an interesting document in 2010 called, “The NYLT to NAYLE Bridge.” The course functioned as an introduction to NYLT for youth, not in the Boy Scouts or Varsity programs, who could not previously attend the training (National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, 2011 version). The guidebook for the course clarified the nature of the training, existing between the first quarter of 2010 to 2012 and made for Venturers previously unable to participate in NYLT (Boy Scouts of America, 2010). The bridge course was designed for youth in the Venturing program, which falls out of the purview of the present study that focuses on the Scouts BSA program. However, the guidebook does contain important historical information on NYLT which pertains to the Scouts BSA program. So, there will be a limited analysis of the document that focus on relevant components, even though servant leadership was an integral topic in the bridge course.
“NYLT has only been open to Boy Scouts, [Scouts BSA program,] since its inception in 2004 and thus youth of other programs have not had the opportunity to acquire this information” (Boy Scouts of America, 2010, p. 10). This statement directly clarifies a portion of the history of servant leadership and the BSA. Over approximately six years, one of the primary trainings to develop servant leadership was only open to youth in the Scouts BSA program. While not stated in the quote, females were also excluded from the NYLT course due to the Boy Scout/Scouts BSA program only allowing boys prior to 2017. Venturing and Sea Scouts were already co-ed in the 2000s which prompted NYLT also becoming co-ed with the inclusion of those programs.

Additionally, the guidebook also clarifies that the National BSA first began standardizing adult trainings in the early 2000s and then dedicated efforts to realign the terminology in other programs to match the new standardization during the latter 2000s: The BSA were working in 2010 to standardize the Venturing trainings to match the new revisions found in the Scouts BSA trainings and there was a disconnect between the old and new courses (Boy Scouts of America, 2010). While the NYLT to NAYLE Bridge course did not contribute to the content of servant leadership in the Scouts BSA program, it does clarify several aspects behind the trainings and expands on the historical knowledge of the 2000s and early 2010s.

**NYLT Leadership Academy**

The National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) Leadership Academy was an intermediate program between NYLT and NAYLE that focused on training youth to become effective NYLT staff members and delivering “world class courses” (2021, para. 1). Some of the activities and objectives of the academy included increased
understanding of NYLT methods, better presentational skills, “living and learning about the concepts of Leading Yourself and Servant Leadership,” teaching scouting-related material, and providing practical experiences for growth (NYLT Leadership Academy, 2021, para. 2). The NYLT Leadership Academy’s history helps to display the expansion and revisions of the leadership development programs of the BSA in the 1990s to the 2010s.

In the 1990s to about 2005, the BSA operated a National Junior Leader Instructor Camp (NJLIC) that trained youth staff members to teach and staff leadership trainings in their local councils. The history section of the NYLT Leadership Academy website explained the next evolution of that program: “To continue in the Instructor Training tradition, a group of past leaders of the Philmont NJLTC programs created a new instructor program for those who are selected to teach NYLT, and the NYLT Leadership Academy was begun in 2006” (2021, para. 5). However, the course was only based in the northeast region of the BSA between 2006-2009 and was called the Youth Staff Development Course; but it was later moved near Washington D.C. and became the modern course and academy (NYLT Leadership Academy, 2021).

NYLT Leadership Academy became a national course in 2013 and expanded to different cities and regions to offer the training. The academy continued to operate and train youth staff members on a variety of topics, including servant leadership, past the date of the present study. However, the overall impact of the academy might be situational. The limited geographical availability in the 2000s and 2010s could mean reduced participation to individuals who could afford the travel and registration costs.
Further research and investigation would require individual case studies to explore its overall effect on the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA.

**NAYLE Leadership Course**

The equivalent to the PLC training for adults, NAYLE provided experiential, hands-on learning at one of the four national high-adventure bases of the BSA, but primarily at Philmont and Summit. NAYLE was first hosted at Philmont in 2006 and the location continued to conduct courses throughout the 2000s and 2010s (Boy Scouts of America, 2019). As with PLC, the present study could not locate any handbooks given to participants during the course. The only online material was the general guidebook for pre-course preparation and travel. However, with available online articles and the guidebook, a general understanding of servant leadership in NAYLE can be acquired.

Servant leadership was one of the foundations of NAYLE and the course was designed to develop and foster the leadership model in participants for their future endeavors (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.). In an article written for the March-April 2007 issue of the *Scouting* magazine, the new national youth program NAYLE was introduced and discussed. The article provided the mission statement of NAYLE as “[providing] Scouts with a Philmont-based wilderness encounter that motivates them to follow a life of helping others succeed, based on the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Law” and that mission is carried out through a variety of principles, including the Scouts learning “a clear understanding of servant leadership in challenging wilderness environments” (Daniels, 2007, para. 54). In the learning objectives of the course, particular emphasis was placed on participants to “act as a Servant Leader who share the skills of NYLT,” and then bringing those skills and attitudes back to their positions and community to help
other leaders and promote BSA trainings (NAYLE, 2011 version, para. 6). Servant leadership was integrated into both the mission and objectives of NAYLE while also reinforcing the lessons learned at NYLT, cementing the model’s role and eminence in the course and participants. NAYLE also served as a template for PLC, which began at Philmont in 2008 (Boy Scouts of America, 2019).

The NAYLE website, accessible through the Wayback Machine, offered a promotional PowerPoint, the “NAYLE Overview Presentation,” that covered the early 2010s lessons with significant emphasis on servant leadership. The presentation only explored the lessons taught at Philmont, as it would not be until 2015 that NAYLE would expand into all four high-adventure bases (Wendell, 2014). Additionally, NAYLE took lessons and ideas from other programs at Philmont to develop the course, such as the Philmont Ranger Training and advanced Search and Rescue (Boy Scouts of America, 2009-2010). Thus, the 2007-2014 timeframe acted as a development phase for NAYLE before the course was distributed to the rest of the high-adventure bases and the wider BSA in 2015 and beyond.

In reviewing the NAYLE Overview Presentation, the overall course, during the publication of the presentation, was split into seven different modules: 1) Project COPE; 2) Wilderness First Aid; 3) GPS and Geocaching; 4) Search and Rescue; 5) Leave No Trace; 6) Conservation; and 7) Philmont History (Boy Scouts of America, 2009). On Slide 7 of the presentation, the graph highlighted key leadership skills from NYLT taught in each section, with the two modules having servant leadership being Conservation and Philmont History (Boy Scouts of America, 2009). Slide 14, on Conservation, stated the “purpose [of the module was to] give back to Philmont through service [based on] NYLT
Skills [of] Teaching EDGE [and] Servant Leadership” (Boy Scouts of America, 2009). Slide 15, on Philmont History, stated the “purpose [of the module was to] understand the value of a legacy [based on the] NYLT Skill [of] Servant Leadership” (Boy Scouts of America, 2009). The last slide of importance, Slide 16, was titled “And most of all… Servant Leadership,” with the following sentence below the title: “The core of NAYLE is ‘servant leadership’—learning to lead for the good of others” (Boy Scouts of America, 2009).

From the analysis, the presentation marked an important understanding on how the BSA placed particular emphasis on Service and Leaving a Legacy in connection to servant leadership in the trainings. Servant leadership appeared alongside Leaving a Legacy in multiple trainings including Wood Badge, PLC, and NAYLE. Additionally, the OA was centered on Service and Brotherhood and heavily emphasized servant leadership as a core part of the society. Future studies could develop methodologies to explore the importance of Service and Leaving a Legacy on the relationship between servant leadership and scouting movement.

Another important source for the history of the NAYLE training came from the history page of the NYLT Leadership Academy website. Initially restricted to Philmont, NAYLE was then tested in the various regions of the BSA, in 2012, until the organization decided to implement at the course at the four high adventure bases annually beginning in 2014 (NYLT Leadership Academy, 2021). Since then, NAYLE courses have been continually held at the high adventure bases, primarily at Philmont and Summit, and influenced dozens of participants each year.
The NAYLE training was centered around the idea of servant leadership and enabling youth to become better leaders through experiential learning and practical experiences. Additionally, NAYLE served as the capstone national course for youth leadership trainings in the Scouts BSA program. Youth that went through all three core leadership trainings in the BSA were undoubtedly influenced by the servant leadership model based on their experiences in each course and throughout the entire journey. However, the conceptual and practical understanding of servant leadership increased with each subsequent level of training. Hence, a youth that only experienced the ILST course might not have the same quality and understanding of servant leadership as a youth that completed all three trainings.

**Reflections on Primary Sources in the BSA**

One of the primary obstacles that the author found, while researching, was the lack of available online digital sources by the BSA. The references section of this study includes most of the available online material available through basic searches. However, future studies that want to try to find more primary source material will need to dedicate time to the search and use some unique methodologies to get material. One way would be to collaborate with other scout historians and digitize materials so that literature and information can be made available to the public and help facilitate future studies.

The problem of a lack of online sources becomes more pronounced the further back one goes in the historical record. Most modern sources are available online to be easily accessible to a wide audience, and the internet revolution has prompted more independent efforts in uploading and archiving material. However, the BSA has not made substantial progress in digitizing and making historical documents available in a common
place for the public that is easily accessible and known. Even in the present study, the Order of the Arrow annual reports were only available online back to 2001 without asking a third-party for the older reports.

Hence, a thorough analysis of leadership styles prior to the servant leadership style, such as the 11 leadership competencies, would require more work than just finding available online sources. Studies would need to locate primary sources via scout historians or the official museums of the BSA, and schedule times to go and research the material. Or studies would need to invest in procuring primary sources which could add a significant amount of cost to a project.

Another avenue of potential research and knowledge could be through the independent publications of scholars, such as histories of councils or regions, and the publications authored by scouts during trainings. The College of Commissioner Science allowed scouts work through a progressive series of courses that could culminate into a capstone thesis paper. Topics and research are highly varied, and each council might have dozens of papers across the years. However, only a few councils post the most recent papers to their sites and a lot of physical copies might be sitting in storage.

In effect, primary source research in the BSA can be difficult due to limited internal infrastructure supported by the organization and the independent, but scattered, efforts of adult volunteers and researchers. However, the HaitiTrust database probably houses the most BSA historical documents outside of the Scouting Museum itself. Researchers studying the history of the BSA should look towards that database for various primary sources, especially early literature of the BSA and scouting movement. With the thorough analysis and deep references section of this study, future researchers
should be able to overcome some of the obstacles listed above when studying servant leadership in the BSA.

A History of Servant Leadership in the BSA: Primarily in Scouts BSA Youth and Adult Leadership Trainings

As we approach the twenty-first century, we are beginning to see that traditional styles of leadership are slowly yielding to a better model – one which is based on teamwork and community; one which seeks to involve others in decision making; one which is strongly based in ethical and caring behaviour; and one which is enhancing the growth of people, while at the same time improving the caring and quality of our many institutions. We call this emerging approach to leadership and service, servant-leadership. I am convinced that the next 25 years will witness an incredible flowering of servant-leadership within literally thousands of organizations and businesses around the world. (Spears, 1996, p. 33 and p. 35)

In a way, Spears predicated the rise of servant leadership in the BSA, but he probably could not have guessed the BSA specifically would adopt and integrate the leadership model. However, the BSA became one of the biggest organizations that trained youth and adults specifically on servant leadership across nearly two full decades. Servant leadership was integrated into multiple programs and aspects of the BSA, and the incorporation centered around leadership development trainings and courses. The following history will cover how servant leadership was integrated into the Scouts BSA program and other parts of the organization. Also, the history will include key events and changes of the Scouts BSA leadership trainings throughout the 2000 to 2021 timeframe.

Leadership development was an integral part of the aims and methods of the BSA, but the organization’s systems and frameworks of leadership development have changed over time. A common theme of the BSA’s leadership development system was that of a prevailing theory, model, or approach during different eras in history. The last era, between 1964 to 1999, featured the 11 leadership competencies and in the modern period, 2000 to 2021, servant leadership rose to the forefront of BSA trainings and attitudes.
Figure 3, under Appendix D, details a timeline of the history of the leadership trainings of the Scouts BSA program between 1997 to 2021.

The BSA began the process of a major overhaul of the organization’s structures and programs beginning in the late 1990s, as a new millennium approached with promises of bright futures and a new age for humanity. Regarding servant leadership, the BSA mainly incorporated the leadership model into one key area: the main adult and youth leadership trainings for the BSA’s various programs. For trainings, the BSA first overhauled the adult leadership trainings, to act as a testbed for servant leadership, and then standardized youth courses to match their adult counterparts during the early 2000s. As the 2000s progressed, and even into the 2010s, the BSA standardized the leadership trainings across all programs of the organization. This eventually led to youth and adult trainings that mirrored each other so the content and messages would be further reinforced. The standardization of leadership development and the rise of servant leadership in the BSA affected numerous programs in a variety of ways.

The Order of the Arrow, as part of their 2003-2007 Strategic Plan, “A Legacy of Servant Leadership,” integrated the servant leadership model into the overall frameworks and attitudes of their society, with large emphasis on trainings and messaging beginning in 2001. The OA is perhaps the one society, and program, within the BSA that integrated servant leadership the most beyond the main leadership trainings. The OA would consistently remain a program focused on servant leadership until 2018, with indications of the group moving away from the leadership model and towards the adaptive leadership theory.
The first major training overhauled in the BSA was the Wood Badge course, and its various iterations for Cub Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturing, and Exploring programs, with revisions beginning to be considered in 1997. The BSA trimmed away the program-specific trainings and combined Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturing into a new leadership training, Wood Badge for the 21st Century. The program would be fully required by the BSA beginning in 2004 but had various development courses throughout 2000-2004. By the middle to late 2000s, the overall design for the lessons and concepts taught in Wood Badge for the 21st Century would be finalized and distributed in the various course syllabi, administrative guides, and staff guides.

The Philmont Leadership Challenge was developed in the 2000s as a national-level course designed to be the ultimate experiential leadership training for adult volunteers in the BSA. The course was developed and modeled after the National Advanced Youth Leadership training and PLC started courses at Philmont in 2008. The course was only taught at the Philmont Scout Ranch for a number of years until the National BSA expanded the training into the other three high-adventure bases, Northern Tier, Summit, and Sea Base and other areas, during the early to middle 2010s. Servant leadership was integrated into the framework of the course early on and remained the primary leadership model of the training past the date of the present study.

The adult trainings integrated servant leadership into the overall framework of the courses. As the trainings continued to be refined, servant leadership became an important lesson not only for participants but also as a primary leadership model used by staff members of the courses. Wood Badge developed a participant’s conceptual and practical understanding of the theory while PLC enabled participants to live the values of servant
leadership in an experiential setting. Youth trainings followed quickly behind their adult-based counterparts with standardization and introduction of new programs, in the early 2000s, that also focused leadership skills with increasing emphasis on servant leadership at higher level courses.

ILST went through several iterations between 2000 to 2021, first being called Troop Leader Training, TLT, during 2003-to-2010 and then being renamed Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops, ILST, in 2010 and beyond. ILST was part of a larger apparatus that encompassed the Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts programs, with the name of the interconnected trainings called Introduction to Leadership Skills (ILS). In addition to ILST, there was the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) and the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Ships (ILSS). ILS courses were one of the primary mechanisms for youth leadership training as most youth went through at least one iteration during their tenure with a unit.

Servant leadership in an ILST course was placed as a capstone lesson at the end of module one. During the course, youth began to develop a conceptualization of servant leadership and explore various ways to incorporate the model into their own leadership approaches. However, servant leadership was taught in relation to a variety of other ideas and concepts, and that might have affected the overall quality and retention of understanding and knowledge by the end of a course. The next levels of trainings heavily emphasized servant leadership and expanded upon the conceptual base established in ILST.

National Youth Leadership Training, NYLT, was introduced in 2004 as an equivalent to Wood Badge for the 21st Century, but for youth rather than adults. NYLT
was influenced by a variety of decisions between 2004 to the present day and that makes a 2004 course much different to a 2021 course. The training was program-locked to Scouts BSA until 2010, when it would be opened to the other programs in the BSA and become co-ed with both males and females participating. The Venturing and Sea Scouts programs were co-ed prior to 2010 and the inclusion of those programs in NYLT necessitated a co-ed format. Since that major revision, NYLT courses delivered consistent leadership experiences and trainings, with tweaks here and there, to thousands of youths across the BSA with particular emphasis on servant leadership.

Servant leadership, in NYLT courses, was significant for both staff and participants. For participants, NYLT extended beyond the conceptual model, established in ILST, and challenged participants to model and practice servant leadership. A staff member’s role in an NYLT course was to mentor and guide participants by practicing and modeling a servant leadership attitude and approach in their actions. Beyond NYLT, the NYLT Leadership Academy educated youth staff members on how to practice and model servant leadership during their time as instructors in an NYLT course. NYLT courses was delivered and taught to thousands of youth across the organization, marking it as one of the key areas of servant leadership development in the BSA during its time of operation.

NAYLE was developed, prior to launch in 2006, as the national capstone to the main trio of youth leadership trainings of ILS, NYLT, and NAYLE. PLC would be based on the curriculum and approaches in the NAYLE course. Between 2006 to 2014, Philmont was the primary location offering the training, and the timeframe acted as a development phase prior to widespread implementation. In 2012, all regions in the BSA, at the time, offered a NAYLE course to test-pilot the program before becoming a more
widely throughout national-level training. Between 2010 to 2012, scouts had two options for qualifying for NAYLE: through NYLT or the NYLT to NAYLE Bridge Course. However, the latter course opened in 2010 and was discontinued in 2012, and completion of NYLT was the only way to qualify for NAYLE since 2012. In addition, NAYLE was initially limited to only youth from the Scouts BSA program due to NYLT being restricted until 2010. In 2015, NAYLE began being offered at all four national high-adventure bases and continued to operate at those locations. Servant leadership was integrated into the framework, mission, and objectives of the training from the very beginning and continued to be the central model for the course.

Sometime around 2015, after the majority revisions, standardizations, and program expansions were completed, the BSA entered a golden age of leadership development led by trainings such as Wood Badge, PLC, ILST, NYLT, and NAYLE. The integrated language and lessons in BSA trainings contributed to the overall rise of servant leadership in the organization with participants and staff members learning about the model at all levels and courses. While the OA integrated servant leadership in the early 2000s, the core Scouts BSA trainings were still refining and developing their methods and models during that timeframe. Hence, servant leadership became more prominent and utilized in the core Scouts BSA training beginning in the later 2000s and early 2010s. The inclusion of servant leadership in the major trainings of the BSA contributed to an overall perception of the importance of the model in the organization and scouting movement. The BSA would experience another major change in 2017 with the inclusion of females in the last two gendered programs, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.
Female youth were introduced into the Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA programs beginning in 2017, which could have led to some revisions in BSA leadership trainings. However, the overall effects on trainings seemed to be rather minimal in terms of the content and mainly in the more logistical aspects of the courses. Females had participated in many areas of the BSA, including in youth programs, such as Venturing, Exploring, and Sea Scouts, training and course staff members, summer camp staffers, adult volunteers, professional scouters, and other positions, for several decades. Hence, most council-level and national-level trainings already accounted for a co-ed dynamic during the courses for both youth and adults, prior to the inclusion of female youth in Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA. The unit-level and some council-level trainings and programs, such as summer camps, were already somewhat “primed” for the introduction of females and the effects of inclusion mainly resulted in logistical, rather than content, challenges. Future studies could investigate the effect of the inclusion of female youth, in the Scouts BSA program, on the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA.

The history behind the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA began in the early 2000s and the model slowly rose in prominence as new trainings were introduced and refined. Servant leadership became more integrated and prevalent in each subsequent level of BSA leadership trainings, with great emphasis on the model in council-level and national-level courses. Additionally, with the final revisions and standardizations in the early 2010s, BSA trainings and servant leadership entered a new golden age that continued past the date of the present study in 2020 and 2021. Hence, research and future studies into this topic might find unique and interesting dynamics as
the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA continued to evolve past the conception of this history.

Chapter Three Summary

Servant leadership was integrated into the primary leadership development trainings of the Scouts BSA and into the wider BSA in the 2000s and 2010s, as evidenced by the multitude of primary sources and literature. The relationship between servant leadership and the BSA is structurally tied to the main adult and youth leadership trainings between 2000s and 2010s. Servant leadership undoubtedly influenced the thousands of youth and adults that participated in the trainings and elevated the model in prominence within the organizations and its members.

However, the BSA documents and literature of the BSA only illuminates organizational practices and frameworks. The detailed experiences, perspectives, and attitudes of participants, staff members, youth, and adult volunteers are missing from just a purely literature-based analysis. That lack of perspective hinders the knowledge and understanding of the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the scouting movement in the key actors and members of the organization and movement. The qualitative interviews in the next two chapters helps to bridge that knowledge gap and provide perspective and substance to the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA.
CHAPTER FOUR:
MIDDLE TENNESSEE COUNCIL SERVANT LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY:
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship and dynamics between servant leadership and adult volunteers in the Scouts BSA program of the BSA. The research question asked: Does the 21st century leadership development practices and trainings of the Boy Scouts of America develops servant leadership skills, attitudes, and qualities in adult volunteers of the Scouts BSA program? Based on the primary source and historical analysis, servant leadership was integral in the leadership development trainings of the BSA and can be seen as one of the primary organizational practices and models in the framework of those trainings during 2001 to 2021.

While the primary source analysis identified various aspects of the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA, dynamics such as individual thoughts and attitudes are hard to gauge from just literature and written sources. The other half of this study, qualitative interviews, can provide more understanding through investigating the servant leadership thoughts, perceptions, and actions of adult volunteers in the Scouts BSA program. The design for this portion of the study came about after a review of the literature of servant leadership and the BSA and lengthy discussions between the author and his faculty advisors.

Rohm and Osula (2013) and Rohm (2014) inspired some of the methodology behind this study, mainly the qualitative interviews. However, this study is differentiated
from other sources and existing literature in unique ways. Instead of using Sendjaya’s 2008 model on servant leadership, Liden’s Short Form SL-7 servant leadership model was selected to promote diversity and new understanding on the topic. Additionally, the present study focused on adult volunteers, and not previously researched group such as Eagle Scouts, which promotes diversification in participants and in knowledge gained from qualitative research. Also, the present study placed emphasis on leadership trainings and how servant leadership was utilized and taught in the BSA, due to the author’s first-hand experience in participating and overseeing BSA leadership courses. The following discussions will detail demographic and participant information and the qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Participants

Three adult volunteers participated in the study and each individual was active, or currently involved, in the Scouts BSA program within the Middle Tennessee Council between 2000 to 2021. Participants were required to be over 18-years old and served, or currently active, in a Scouts BSA troop that operated and was chartered in the Middle Tennessee Council. The participants were geographically dispersed across the Middle Tennessee Council and came from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Each participant had significant background experience in the Scouting Movement and the BSA. SM-1 was a scoutmaster for several years and had prior experience in the BSA prior to taking up the role. BW-1 volunteered on and off with several units across multiple decades and spent nearly a decade with a Scouts BSA unit in the Middle Tennessee Council. MT-29 spent multiple decades volunteering in the Middle Tennessee Council.
Council with individual units, as a summer camp staffer, Wood Badge staffer, and other positions. All participants were Caucasian/White and were all males.

**Methodology Development**

The methodology of the present study was developed to examine servant leadership in adult volunteers of the Scouts BSA rather than other demographics such as Eagle Scouts, youth, or professional staff. While the methodology could be adjusted to study adult volunteers in other contexts and programs of the BSA, applying the approaches described in this study to other demographics and instances outside of the BSA would not be advisable. The questions for the qualitative interviews were designed for scouting-specific contexts and variables and are not generalizable to non-scouting functions or groups. The quantitative methodology was also specifically developed with the context of adult-youth leadership interactions in the BSA and is not generalizable outside of the program or organization. While the study contributes to the understanding of the relationship between servant leadership and the scouting movement, the methods and approaches cannot be applied directly to research outside of the BSA and would need adjustments to be utilized in other BSA and scouting contexts.

The author developed a holistic approach to explore servant leadership in adult volunteers of the Scouts BSA program, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. However, due to delays caused by COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, the author chose to focus on qualitative interviews. The qualitative and quantitative methods in this study was approved by Western Kentucky University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and supported by the Middle Tennessee Council. Both methods will be explained and discussed so that future studies may utilize the holistic approach at later dates.
Within the research question of the present study, the specific language of “servant leadership skills, attitudes, and qualities in adult volunteers” was the main basis for the qualitative and quantitative methods. The word perceptions was later identified by the author as another way to explore and explain servant leadership in adult volunteers. Perception centers around how “sensory information is organized, interpreted, and consciously experienced” (University of Central Florida, n.d., para. 1). The qualitative method focused on the servant leadership skills, attitudes, and perceptions of adult volunteers. The servant leadership qualities of adult volunteers could be explored through a quantitative approach by measuring the understanding and perceptions of “followers” about how their “leader” displays and models certain servant leadership characteristics.

Liden et al.’s SL-7 model of servant leadership was identified to contain community-related, competency-based, and organizational-based variables that aligned with the dynamics and responsibilities of adult volunteers. The servant leadership dimensions identified by Liden et al. (2015) included: 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 full descriptions for each dimension can be found in Appendix E.

**Qualitative Method**

To explore servant leadership skills, attitudes, and perceptions in adult volunteers, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, conducted either in-person or via conference call, with seven questions developed from Liden et al.’s SL-7 model and two topic-specific questions unique to this study. A phenomenological research approach was utilized, which explores the backgrounds and experiences of individuals centered around
an idea or phenomenon and the perspectives culminate into shared experiences, ideas, and attitudes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The results of the interviews become an exploration of the same phenomenon, of servant leadership in the BSA, through the shared experiences of adult volunteers as well as the differences in attitudes and approaches.

**Qualitative Data Collection and Data Analysis**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) described qualitative and quantitative methodologies and mixed method approaches of research. Qualitative methodologies explore the quality of a topic, a unique approach from that of quantitative research, through specific perspectives and experiences and combine multiple viewpoints into their analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the present study, the servant leadership skills, attitudes, and qualities of adult volunteers are explored through qualitative interviews. In the qualitative interviews, the shared experiences and differences in attitudes and knowledge of adult volunteers were analyzed and interpreted.

Interviews were held in a comfortable setting with minimal distractions present, and audio, or audio and video for conference calls, were recorded. Before any interview, the investigator gave an oral explanation of the nature of the study, along with a written description, and received a signed consent form from each participant. Interviews lasted approximately 60-90 minutes, and participants agreed to a follow up 30-60 minutes interview if any additional questions came up during the process of the study. The nine questions were open-ended to help participants share their own perspectives and experiences. The first seven questions were developed based on Liden’s SL-7 model and servant leadership dimensions. The final two questions were developed to explore the
perceived effectiveness of adult leadership trainings in the BSA and how an academic
definition of servant leadership compared to the BSA based on the perceptions of adult
volunteers (See Appendix F). The recordings were collected and analyzed simultaneously
against each other. The investigator established shared experiences and differences in
attitudes and perceptions by interpreting and comparing the answers of the volunteers to
each question asked during the interviews. The answers were interpreted and compared
one at a time before moving onto the next question or dimension.

The skills, attitudes, and perceptions of adult volunteers are an important variable
to understand and explore due to this demographic’s influence on the BSA. Adult
volunteers are part of the foundation of the scouting movement and understanding how
they facilitate leadership development, how they implement and utilize the concepts and
systems of the BSA, and their attitudes on servant leadership, can help improve the
overall organization and movement. Hence, the qualitative approach in this study not
only reveals aspects of servant leadership in the BSA, but also touches upon more
foundational elements of the movement. In addition to the qualitative interviews, this
study developed a quantitative approach to examine the servant leadership qualities of
adult volunteers based on follower perceptions and attitudes.

**Quantitative Method**

While BSA programs are centered around the concept of youth-led units, adult
volunteers play critical roles as mentors and leaders in the development of youth. Youth
learn and grow from the leadership of adult volunteers and develop attitudes and
perceptions by learning from those adults. The relationship could be classified as adult
volunteers being the “leaders” and the youth being the “followers.” The titles of *leader*
and follower are simply designations to describe this quantitative approach; the names only slightly reflect the complex dynamics found in BSA programs. This approach uses the perceptions of followers to understand how leaders are demonstrating and modeling servant leadership qualities in individual units and the organization. When used in-tandem with the qualitative interviews, the servant leadership characteristics of adult volunteers can be understood from both internal and external perspectives.

With the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 and 2021, several delays caused the study to focus on the qualitative interviews rather than trying to set up the complex system behind the quantitative approach. The quantitative approach will be described in the following discussions so that future studies can utilize and expand upon the methodology presented in this study. However, the quantitative approach remains untested at the time of this study. Since youth were identified for the role of followers, additional precautions were necessary due to their protected status as human research subjects.

**Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

The quantitative methodology utilized an existing questionnaire from Liden et al.’s SL-7 model of servant leadership, which was rigorously tested in other studies including the initial development of SL-28 by Liden et al. (2008), Liden et al.’s (2015) verification of the short form SL-7, and compared and contrasted to another servant leadership model by Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011). The participants would evaluate the questions and provide answers based on their experiences and perceptions of the adult volunteer in question. The answers of the participants would be collected and then analyzed using the methodology described in Liden et al. (2015). The quantitative
methodology provides empirical data on the servant leadership qualities of the adult volunteer in question.

Quantitative methodologies rely on gathering and measuring a significant amount of data and results, quantity, to demonstrate pattern and trends across a diverse pool of participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A researcher might select students in a psychology undergraduate program and collect questionnaires to explore patterns behind the enrollment of students in the program. The quantitative approach in this study was designed to provide more data on the servant leadership qualities of adult volunteers. However, the qualitative interviews were the main focus of the present study, and the quantitative method was developed to provide a holistic approach for future research.

Applying the Quantitative Approach

Adult volunteers would first be interviewed, for the qualitative portion, and the investigator would check the scouting status of the volunteer. If the adult volunteer was currently active with a Scouts BSA troop, they were eligible for the quantitative portion of the study. The eligible adult volunteers would be asked if they wished to participate in the quantitative portion, after their qualitative interview concluded. If the adult volunteer responded with yes, then the investigator and volunteer would approach the unit of the volunteer and start the process for the quantitative approach. If the adult volunteer responded with no, then the investigator would not continue with the quantitative approach with that specific participant, but the qualitative interview with that volunteer would still be used in the final results of the overall study.

While the Middle Tennessee Council provided a letter of support for this study, individual units within the council were considered their own separate group/organization
from that of the BSA or council. Any activity, which involved youth, required a letter of support from each unit before any parts of the study took place. However, the qualitative interviews with adult volunteers were exempt from this standard and did not require a letter of support from their unit to participate in an interview. If the unit did not provide a letter of support, the study would stop the quantitative approach with that specific unit and adult volunteer. If the unit provided a letter of support for the study, then the investigator would collaborate with the unit leadership to identify six to twelve youth with appropriate experience for the youth questionnaire. *Appropriate* means youth that have significant experience of interacting with, and being led by, the adult volunteer to answer questions relating to those exchanges. The adult volunteer, who was interviewed, would be aware of this process, but they would not participate to keep the identity of the youth hidden and protected.

Upon identifying a relevant group of youth for the questionnaire, about six to twelve participants, the investigator would collaborate with the unit leadership in contacting the parents of the youth and the youth themselves to begin getting parental consent and youth assent for the study. When dealing with youth participants in a study, it is best to work with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at one’s specific institution to develop the best process to collect consents and assents and protect the youth.

Upon confirming a minimum amount of youth participants, by receiving parental consent and youth assent forms and a minimum of six participants, the investigator would collaborate with the unit leadership to designate a place and time for the youth questionnaire to take place. The questionnaire session would preferably take place in a common, quiet space that is geographically centralized for the participants. One simple
way is to do the questionnaire session at the meeting place of the unit prior to a unit meeting. Unit meetings occur regularly at a centralized location and most youth in the unit, probably, attend the meetings. Hence, thirty minutes prior to a unit meeting, the youth questionnaire session can be held with minimized impact to the youth and their parents. Additionally, the unit leadership would need to supply two adult leaders, but not the adult volunteer that was interviewed, to be present during the youth questionnaire session to maintain the two-deep adult leadership standards of the BSA.

The adult volunteer in question, who was interviewed, could not attend either the discussions on session or attend the session itself. If at any time the adult volunteer in question either inquires on the identity of the youth, time, and place of the session, or attempts to attend the session, then the entire process would be stopped and ended to protect the youth from any risk. Additionally, the youth cannot discuss the results of the study with the adult volunteer in question and should refrain from discussing the results with anyone besides the investigator. If the questionnaire session was held prior to a unit meeting or activity, the adult volunteer in question should be slightly late to the unit meeting to help protect the identities of youth participants.

During the youth questionnaire session, the investigator who takes up the completed questionnaire should carefully examine each paper and mark out, with a permanent black marker or other tool, any personal information from the youth and then mark each paper with a coded number to keep results together. The results of the youth questionnaires would be analyzed using the methods described in Liden et al.’s (2015) SL-7 model. Then there would be a comparative analysis against the qualitative answers of the adult volunteer to understand their servant leadership skills, attitudes, and qualities.
from multiple perspectives. The Youth Questionnaire can be found in Appendix G, replicated in full for future research to use and adapt as necessary.

Due to delays caused by COVID-19 during 2020 and 2021, the investigator was unable to conduct any questionnaire sessions which means the quantitative approach remains unsupported by evidence. However, by using a singular servant leadership model and developing a joint qualitative and quantitative methodologies, a holistic approach was created that can be used in future studies. Adult volunteers represent a unique perspective on the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA, but future studies should not overlook the attitudes and perspectives of youth. Youth undergo similar trainings to that of adult volunteers and can provide their own understanding and attitudes about servant leadership.
CHAPTER FIVE:
MIDDLE TENNESSEE COUNCIL SERVANT LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY:
RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

Three participants were interviewed for the qualitative portion of the study. Each participant selected a designation to replace their names to protect their identities. The three participants included one scoutmaster, an adult volunteer from the 2000s, and one adult volunteer that occupied a variety of positions in the BSA. The designations for each participant were SM-1 for the scoutmaster, BW-1 for the adult volunteer from the 2000s, and MT-29 for the other volunteer.

SM-1 was the scoutmaster for a Scouts BSA troop in the Middle Tennessee Council and was active with the organization for a number of years. BW-1 was the assistant scoutmaster for a Scouts BSA troop in the Middle Tennessee Council during the 2000s and was on and off as an adult leader in the BSA for several decades. MT-29 served in a variety of positions of the BSA including scoutmaster, summer camp staffer, and a volunteer with the Middle Tennessee Council for several decades.

While not an adult leader in a troop between 2000 to 2021, MT-29 actively participated in the Scouts BSA program through other capacities such as a summer camp staffer and as a volunteer in the Middle Tennessee Council. The requirements of the study stated that participants needed to be active within a Scouts BSA troop between 2000 to 2021, however, that did not account for the diversity of positions and roles available within the organization that still directly influenced the program and youth. For
example, summer camps have both adults and youth serving as staff members that
directly teach and influence campers in the Scouts BSA program. Additionally, some the
youth staff members are from the Scouts BSA program and the adult staff members can
act as role models and mentors for those younger staff members. Hence, MT-29 still
directly influenced the Scouts BSA program even though they did not serve in a troop
during the specified timeframe. Future studies should be careful of such flaws in their
participant requirements to not exclude unique perspectives of adult volunteers and other
individuals.

Emerging Themes (Dimensions)

Each adult volunteer displayed servant leadership characteristics and
demonstrated diversity in how the model can be applied to various settings. The
following analysis will follow the various dimensions of servant leadership as identified
by Liden et al. (2015), along with two additional study-specific questions. The analysis
consisted of comparing the answers from each participant to determine shared
experiences and differences in attitudes and knowledge. The length of answers from each
participant varied due to personality and experiences of each volunteer, so some sections
and answers will be longer than others. The dimensions, in order, were: Creating Value
for the Community; Conceptual Skills; Empowering; Helping Subordinates Grow and
Succeed; Emotional Healing; Putting Subordinates First; Behaving Ethically; and then
the thoughts on BSA leadership trainings and the relationship between servant leadership
and scouting were discussed.
Servant Leadership Dimension: Creating Value for the Community

The question for this dimension asked: Discuss your involvement with the Scouting community and the local community around your Troop. How do you encourage scouts to be active in both the Scouting community and local community?

Each participant displayed involvement in both the scouting community and the local communities in their respective areas and each volunteer especially had deep ties and experience in scouting-related positions. However, each volunteer had differences in experience and focus that demonstrated how broad this dimension of servant leadership can be applied by adult leaders under different situations.

SM-1 was highly involved in community activities and actively empowered their youth to participate in both local events and scouting activities in the local area, district-level, and in the Middle Tennessee Council. SM-1 relayed how the scouts were involved in the local community by participating in activities with the local VFW, volunteering at food banks, and other events. In terms of activities in the scouting community, SM-1 encouraged scouts to attend the council summer camp, participate in district camporees, and go to various trainings and opportunities in the BSA.

BW-1 was mostly involved in the local community through the Scouts BSA troop in the area, but they did encourage the youth to be active in the local community through Eagle Scout projects and other service activities. Additionally, BW-1 encouraged youth to participate in the scouting community through district camporees, merit badge universities, and utilizing council properties for campouts.

MT-29 was active in the Middle Tennessee Council for several decades, including being a scoutmaster for a local troop, serving in a variety of positions during Scouts BSA
summer camp at Boxwell Reservation, participating as a Wood Badge staff member and leading some youth leadership trainings, and working in the local community to promote scouting. MT-29 was recently collaborating with the local community to build a small scouting museum/exhibit which both preserves the regional history but also promotes scouting in the area. MT-29 had deep ties to the local and scouting communities and actively worked across both environments to promote scouting. MT-29 wanted to set the example within the community as well as encourage and sell scouting to the community. MT-29 encouraged everyone that was interested in scouting to get involved, enjoy the program, and use it and even in a semi-retired position, MT-29 still actively pushed and sold scouting in the local community. Also, part of the value that scouting creates in a community is for a non-sports alternative, “I was never involved in sports, I had an accident when I was five and so scouting has been my outlet.” MT-29 also encouraged females to join scouting, and as summer camp staffers, to enjoy the program and make use of it.

Each participant displayed a strong connection and prior experience in the scouting communities and to varying extents in local communities. However, adult volunteers did participate in the local communities at least through the structure and programs of the BSA. There were differences in community involvement and how each adult volunteer encouraged various opportunities in the local community and in scouting activities. The individual leadership approaches and cultural climate, in the local community and scouting environment, around the volunteers helped determine the approaches and focus of how the leaders created value in the community and organization. The type of value and how that value is created heavily depends on
individual factors that vary between leaders, between individual troops, and the community or scouting context surrounding each adult volunteer. However, in general, each participant actively created value in both the local community and in organizational contexts, to varying degrees and focuses, and can be seen as one of the strongest and most active servant leadership characteristics in the interviewed adult volunteers. Adult volunteers can also act as conductors to the local community while promoting a variety of scouting activities and opportunities to youth and fellow volunteers. Additionally, some of the organizational aspects of the BSA, such as Eagle Scout projects, Wood Badge tickets, and service activities, contribute to this variable of servant leadership by creating unique instances of value to the local and scouting communities.

**Servant Leadership Dimension: Conceptual Skills**

The question for this dimension asked: *In your own words, describe the mission, vision, aims, and methods of the Boy Scouts of America. How did Boy Scouts of America leadership trainings improve your abilities as a leader in scouting?*

SM-1 conceptualized the mission of the BSA as to “take youth and to” help them become “well-rounded, quality citizens” and to “encourage and develop youth to become good leaders in our society.” SM-1 relayed that the vision of the BSA is to be open to all youth and people regardless of gender, religious background, and other variables. SM-1 stated that youth “learn by doing” and by “engagement” in the program. SM-1 also explained how adult leaders utilized the E.D.G.E., explain, demonstrate, guide, and enable, method in scouting which is one of the leadership approaches used by the BSA. SM-1 also spoke on how the BSA creates a learning environment and opportunities for youth for various topics such as leadership, high adventure activities, and shooting sports.
SM-1 and their troop utilized existing courses and leadership trainings in the BSA to achieve consensus in the adult group, how they used the environment created by scouting to push and train youth in safe, but difficult situations, and ideas such as the Scout Method to empower and develop youth.

BW-1 stated that the mission of the BSA “is to try to develop a whole person as a scout […] so they can contribute positively to their families, to their communities, and to the nation.” BW-1 then described the underlying structure of the methods of the organization: “The BSA has set up a structure that they want to teach the youth about, like guidelines, like wearing uniforms, meeting together, and going camping in the outdoors together as a group to give them some idea of how to work together in a community setting. So it’s like a little mini community that the youth being together and then [the youth and adults] have merit badge books, the fieldbook, and the Boy Scouts [Handbook] that gives them the structure on what [the adults] should teach these boys and allow [the scouts] to progress through different ranks and different challenges so that it forms a more rounded individual and they get a little exposure to different things that they need to become more organized and confident group of boys. So that they can have a good background on the things they need do to develop into a better adult person.” For the vision of the BSA, BW-1 discussed how scouts are taught they are part of a larger community and organization, including the local community, the nation, and the world and how to contribute to each of them. BW-1 also described some overarching themes in the BSA included Duty-to-God, Duty-to-Country, Duty-to-Self, and the Scout Law and how they are all interconnected. BW-1 took a number of BSA leadership trainings across several decades and they enabled the volunteer to be adaptive in a variety of situations
and understand “what the scouting philosophy was” and then applying that knowledge to
guide and mentor the youth on certain actions and approaches.

MT-29 split their first answer between the aims of the BSA and the mission of the
organization and movement. MT-29 described the aims of the BSA as “producing an
individual who is patriotic, supportive of our nation, the government, and the aims are to
develop good character among all scouts, and really when you come down to it’s the
twelve [points of the Scout Law].” MT-29 then discussed their thoughts on the mission of
the BSA and framed it with a story regarding a controversial policy decision of the BSA
in recent years. The story demonstrates leaders responding and reflecting on
organizational policies but also touches on the servant leadership dimension of Putting
Subordinates First by placing the movement and values of scouting above personal
attitudes.

MT-29: “I remember the first [BSA] policy [change] that was very debatable, and
I thought, ‘well, some of these old guys that I’ve known over the years are set in their
ways and they are not going to come back to camp.’ And [that] summer they came [back]
to camp, I only had one leader to say ‘well I’m not coming back because my charter has
been dropped by the institution that supported the scout program.’ And those same people
were back, […] they accepted the policy and the missions that we have now and we let it
go and some of those people are still involved today. I think the mission of what the Boy
Scouts set out in the beginning, it’s still there. The mission is still there. It’s a strong
program and not everyone agrees with it, some people dropped out but […] it’s going to
be strong long after I’m gone.”
MT-29 continued and described how BSA leadership trainings improved their own skills and abilities as leaders in the program and positions. Going through Wood Badge, MT-29 learned leadership skills and how to apply them by practicing during the course. MT-29 initially ran, before attending Wood Badge, their troop without any assistance but after Wood Badge they applied those skills to teaching and leading both in their troop but also at summer camp. As time went on, MT-29 continually applied the skills of Wood Badge and especially at summer camp during meetings with staff members and scoutmasters. MT-29 never forgot the skills of Wood Badge and continually applied them in scouting and other instances in life.

In terms of the Conceptual Skills dimension, the adult volunteers in this study demonstrated similar attitudes of the BSA mission and of leadership trainings. The participants demonstrated a strong understanding of the mission and methods of the BSA and held favorable attitudes that BSA leadership trainings improved their own abilities and skills. The broad variety of approaches and application of those leadership skills and lessons by each participant suggests that each volunteer have unique conceptual skills but share various attitudes regarding the movement and the values of scouting.

The adult volunteers demonstrated a clear understanding of the aims of the BSA, of citizenship training, character development, and leadership development. However, the participants did not remark on the aim of personal fitness, which might suggest that adult volunteers place greater emphasis on aims of character, citizenship, and leadership growth over the aim of physical fitness. Additionally, the participants shared similar ideas of the mission of the BSA is to develop a youth that is “well-rounded” and a “whole
person,” and that development is facilitated mainly through the aims of character growth, citizenship training, and leadership development.

In terms of servant leadership, the participants presented attitudes and knowledge that falls in-line with the core principles and values of the BSA and the scouting movement, demonstrating a moderate-to-strong quality for this dimension. The participants understood the core values of the BSA and scouting but applied different skills and methodologies of the organization and movement in unique ways. The answers suggest that the BSA leadership trainings have skills and lessons that can be applied to other contexts outside of the organization and movement, but those same lessons apply to a broad set of situations and positions within the BSA. However, while each adult volunteer utilized the skills and lessons from the leadership trainings, each participant applied those ideas and methods in a variety of ways due in part to the positions and roles of each leader creating differing dynamics and contexts which necessitates unique responses and approaches. While the participants in this study shared favorable experiences in leadership trainings, other adult volunteers or even staff members in the BSA could have negative attitudes and opinions due to other contexts and factors.

**Servant Leadership Dimension: Empowering**

The question for this dimension asked: *To what degree do you and other adult leaders entrust scouts with responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making? In what areas do you and the other adults retain responsibility and decision-making?*

SM-1 encouraged scouts to take direction and leadership of troop activities by enabling them to develop monthly programs and execute and lead those activities, but those events are set within a “boundary and framework” based on scouting methods. Part
of the framework included the BSA Journey To Excellence, known as JTE, and SM-1 used the standards of that program to help the youth understand the roles and responsibilities of a scout troop both in the BSA and their local community. Additionally, SM-1 and the scouts in their troop worked in their local district to help reinvigorate yearly camporees and to be models in their district by attending and performing at those camporees. SM-1 and other adult leaders put up a “Stop Sign” on activities that are not part of the Guide to Safe Scouting, potentially dangerous or high-risk events and take charge in the event of emergencies such as severe weather or when the scouts might be in a dangerous situation. SM-1 also stated that they have seen other troops being led more by the adults rather than the youth. This indicates the attitudes and leadership approaches of adult volunteers might influence the level of autonomy and decision-making of youth in a troop or unit.

BW-1 displayed similar attitudes to SM-1 by encouraging and enabling the scouts to plan their own meetings, activities, and programs and the adult provided guidance and suggestions in a supporting role. Additionally, BW-1 and other adults retained responsibilities and decision making to ensure the safety of the youth and in logistical tasks such as transportation and accommodations on trips.

MT-29 phrased their answer through the lens of their experience at summer camp. While their answer does not exactly revolve around youth themselves, the perspective still highlights responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making in the organization through unique dynamics. MT-29, when dealing with a conflict or situation at camp that involved adults, would actively listen to both sides and arguments and try to reach a decision that satisfied both sides. Building trust with the leaders at camp and developing friendships
were important for decision-making and to help both sides take responsibility for a situation and work together to find solutions. When it comes to responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making for staff members, MT-29 set an example by doing all the things a normal staff member could do at camp, building trust among the staff, and trying to treat them equally and fair. However, “there are sometimes you have to sit down and let them know you’re the person that has to make the decision.” In the camp environment, MT-29 retained responsibility and decision-making in specific instances that was affected by contextual factors and information. However, MT-29 actively tried to promote group consensus and decision-making for problems that arose during leadership meetings. MT-29 focused on specific program areas of the camp that needed improvement and focused on those areas of concern, sometimes in part due to the experience of the director in charge or safety elements, while providing autonomy and decision-making in other areas of the camp. New directors and inexperienced directors were given more guidance and oversight while more experienced staff members could be trusted with more autonomy and responsibility for their program areas.

The participants displayed moderate-to-strong attitudes and approaches to the Empowering dimension of servant leadership. The volunteers retained responsibility and decision-making in certain instances and positions but actively tried to promote freedom and fairness among youth and staff members. The volunteers typically retained responsibilities and decision-making for safety-related situations and when activities or factors ran against the policies and rules of the organization and setting. Due to contextual factors and settings, the participants could not give youth or staff member autonomy and decision-making in all instances but still actively supported placing
responsibility in their hands in most instances. However, there were indications during some interviews that other adult volunteers in the BSA could retain a large majority of responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making in their troops and groups.

**Servant Leadership Dimension: Helping Subordinates Grow and Succeed**

The question for this dimension asked: *How do you help scouts grow and succeed in both Scouting and beyond?*

In a similar way to previous remarks, SM-1 discussed how they gave autonomy and decision-making responsibility to the scouts and the adults provide various tools and resources, such as Troop Program Features, to help facilitate the leadership of the youth. SM-1 also remarked on a community-related variable where adult volunteers act as conduits to the wider local community that the youth can utilize to find experts and other adults to teach on various topics and skills. The adult volunteers help to bring in people and resources from the wider community to the scout troop and individual youth and those connections facilitate and empower the scouts through associations with other adults.

BW-1 relied on a more advisory role and focused on discussing with scouts about their end goals and various ways to work towards those goals through activities in scouting. BW-1 also worked with the youth to develop activities and programs that would help the youth develop knowledge and skills to achieve their goals and aspirations. BW-1 also displayed a similar approach to SM-1 as they also acted as conduits to the wider community by providing youth with various contacts in the community to achieve specific goals or activities.
MT-29 discussed encouraging youth through a “pushing and pulling” attitude and they represented that idea through a rope analogy: “You can push a rope but it might not go to far, but if you pull that rope with a boy at the end, you might get something out of him. You just can’t push that rope but you got to latch onto to the end of the rope and pull them along and hopefully they will be successful that’s all you can do, taking a chance. Scouting is not for some boys and scouting is for some boys, that’s the way it is.” In other portions of the interview, MT-29 also demonstrated a similar approach to BW-1 and SM-1 of acting as a conduit between scouting and the local community by promoting the movement and being a point of contact.

All participants encouraged youth to succeed in scouting and beyond, but each volunteer had different attitudes and approaches to help and guide the youth. Each participant was a conduit between scouting and the local community but in varying degrees and approaches. Additionally, the positions and roles of each adult volunteer in scouting and the local community contributed to each participant taking unique approaches and methodologies in being a conduit between the two groups. Other adult volunteers in the organization might focus more on the scouting program rather than acting as a conduit between scouting and the local community, it depends on individual approaches and leadership styles.

Due to the mixed approaches and focuses of each participant, this dimension of servant leadership is more moderate in display and application. The participants actively promoted goals and success in scouting. In non-scouting instances, the volunteers acted in more of an advisory role when discussing goals and activities with scouts. This dimension is hard to classify as a specific instance of servant leadership due to the
inherent roles and responsibilities of the volunteers. For example, scoutmasters work with youth to accomplish various goals and enable growth of character and leadership in the BSA. Additionally, the volunteers could focus more on scouting-related goals and success due to their positions of responsibility in the organization and movement. This might orient the perspective and focus of the volunteer more towards scouting-related goals and growth than non-scouting activities. The current question in this study does not go into detail or focus to determine if the growth is based on servant leadership or on the inherent roles and responsibilities that come with positions in the BSA.

**Servant Leadership Dimension: Emotional Healing**

The question for this dimension asked: *How you do address and console a scout going through personal problems and well-being issues?*

SM-1 and other adult volunteers in their troop took a stance of “we are available but we don’t pry” and try to be “a friend” to the scouts going through difficult situations. In order to help youth going through emotional challenges, the adults tried to develop a level of trust between themselves, and the youth and they talk to the youth as a friend or on the same level, not as an adult talking down to a kid. Additionally, SM-1 and other adults sometimes have to sit down with the parents to understand a situation and work with them on ways to improve the environment for the youth. Additionally, SM-1 remarked that divorce was a common emotional problem for youth in their area.

BW-1 and the other adults tried to create a safe environment at the scouting activities so that the youth could participate without worry and provide general support in various situations. They would typically let the family take care of any internal problems
and the adult volunteers would typically sit and listen to the youth and try to make them feel at ease while at scouting functions.

MT-29 frequently dealt with emotional situations each year at summer camp. MT-29 described one instance at summer camp where the leadership had to release a staff member for a violation of organizational policies. Additionally, over the years, MT-29 and the leadership at summer camp had to release various staff members due to violations of camp and organizational policies. In most cases, the staff members understood the reasons behind the release and the violation of camp and organizational policies. In another instance, MT-29 had to break the news of a parent’s death to fellow staff member and deal with the situation that developed from that news.

The participants generally tried to create a safe environment for youth during scouting activities and worked as mentors and friends that the scouts could go to for advice or for someone to listen to their situation. However, each participant displayed differing approaches and attitudes on how to console a scout and how far to get involved in each situation. Additionally, there was organizational and contextual constraints in different positions and parts of the BSA that influenced the approaches that a leader could take in a situation. This dimension of servant leadership in the BSA seems to be heavily dependent on individual attitudes and approaches and the position and context of the adult leader when a situation arises. However, each participant did participate in emotional healing in difficult situations in most instances. While adult volunteers generally took a part in consoling a youth in a difficult situation, the dynamics and circumstances around the adult leader suggests that this dimension of servant leadership
is constrained by organizational, cultural, and individual contexts. Participants display a moderate application of the Emotional Healing dimension.

**Servant Leadership Dimension: Putting Subordinates First**

The question for this dimension asked: *To what degree do you put the needs of the scouts above your own? Do you prioritize scouting-related activities above other things in your life?*

SM-1 discussed how they prioritized scouting above other activities in their life, however, this was in part due to their role as a scoutmaster in a troop which comes with additional responsibilities and setting the example for other leaders. Besides for the time commitment, SM-1, on several occasions, purchased uniforms and gear for youth that had financial difficulties and if a scout was missing items or food during an activity, the adults in the troop would pull resources to feed and water that youth. On one occasion, an adult volunteer in their troop gave all of his water to one youth that did not bring any water with them. However, SM-1 maintained a philosophy of “families first” where scouting will always be presented, but youth should spend time in other aspects of their life such as seeing family or their education responsibilities. On the other hand, scouts and adults, especially those in leadership roles, should still regularly attend meetings and examples to both participate but also set the example for other members.

BW-1 generally put the needs of the youth above their own. BW-1 was not there for any personal reasons but was there to help scouts achieve their goals. BW-1 also dedicated many weekends and time to scouting activities and that took away somewhat from their family life. However, both SM-1 and BW-1 had their families and
children involved in scouting which contributed somewhat to lessening the impact of the time taken away from their family lives.

The author of this study also conducted another interview with the spouse of BW-1 that was an oral history, and it covered many parts of BW-1’s history with scouting. BW-1 was active on and off with the BSA due to several factors but mainly it revolved around their time in the military. BW-1 volunteered with various units across several states, but often the workload and time requirements in the military prevented them from dedicating vast amounts of time to the BSA. When BW-1’s children were born and they got out of the military, they devoted more time to scouting and working through the BSA with their children. BW-1 had several life events that caused them to not be so heavily involved in scouting but still participate from time to time.

MT-29 went through several stages in life and in recent times they have had to balance time between family and time devoted to scouting activities. “I wasn’t involved in sports and so scouting has been my outlet and that’s been my prior goals in life is to support scouting, one way or another. I like to come and go when I want to and not be tied down” due to position requirements and responsibilities such as meetings and recruitment. MT-29 still balances and works in scouting activities, but their recent priority and focus has been on family. In earlier years of their life, MT-29 devoted a lot of time and energy, across several decades, to the local district committee, to summer camp, to high adventure trips, to being a scoutmaster, being a Wood Badge staff member, and other council activities. However, as MT-29’s children grew up, they prioritized to spending more time with family and children rather than concentrate so heavily on
scouting. MT-29 also experienced other events in life and situations that caused them to create new priorities and things to focus on.

The volunteers demonstrated a strong desire to place the needs of youth above their own and worked actively to make sure the scouts could participate and enjoy activities and the programs. However, the participants went through various phases in life and scouting was prioritized differently due to factors such as children, lifestyles, employment, and other things. When scouting was a priority in life, each volunteer dedicated vast amounts of time and energy to the program and movement while balancing other things in life. The dedication and investment of the volunteers during their time in scouting shows a deep commitment to the movement and organization and represents one of the strongest and active variables out of the various dimensions of servant leadership. However, one limitation to this dimension and results were the background experience of the participants. Each participant was heavily involved in Scouting for a number of years and in a variety of positions. None of the volunteers interviewed was a recently joined member of the BSA that had little to no experience with the organization. Hence, the answers of the current participants do not contain the perspective of recently joined adults and volunteers with little to no experience in the movement. While other adult volunteers might only perform their basic roles and responsibilities in the organization, other leaders are dedicating untold amounts of time and effort to improving the movement and the lives of youth, which goes above and beyond and shows a true characteristic of servant leadership.
**Servant Leadership Dimension: Behaving Ethically**

For this dimension, participants were asked to: *Describe how you implement the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your daily lifestyle and in Scouting activities and community.*

SM-1 answered the question by focusing on the three points of the Scout Oath: Duty to God; Duty to Others; and Duty to Self; and then explained each point in relation to their scout troop. For Duty to God, SM-1’s troop often incorporated prayer times into their meetings and activities and SM-1 had a philosophy that scouting is not specifically a Christian organization but does recognize most of their youth come from a Christian religious background. SM-1 discussed how their troop manifests “Duty to Others” through their volunteer work and service in the community, and that everyone picks up trash regardless of position or responsibilities. SM-1 associated Duty to Self with the ideas of “physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight” points of the Scout Oath. The adult volunteers spend time discussing decision making on a variety of topics such as drugs and other things. Additionally, SM-1 and other leaders encouraged youth to understand and participate in the government system of the United States, but they also maintained an environment where the scouts and adults respect other people’s opinion even if they disagree.

As an Eagle Scout, BW-1 tried to model the values of scouting in their daily lifestyle by setting an example of what scouting should be. Additionally, BW-1 expected the scouts to incorporate the values of scouting into their own lifestyle. If a scout was not following the values of scouting and doing activities that ran against them, BW-1 would sit down with the youth and discuss what a scout does and provide general guidance.
Outside of scouting, BW-1 tried to be honest, helpful, treat people with dignity and respect, and set the example for people and co-workers, in a similar way to the example that Scouting sets and promotes.

MT-29 tried to continually apply the values of scouting, specifically the Scout Oath and Law, to family, to church, to the community, to summer camp, and to scouting itself: “That you need to be trustworthy, you need to be honest, you need to be reverent, you need to be all those things cause people look up to you […] and I’ve tried to live by that.” “Setting an example within the community” and at summer camp was especially important for MT-29. MT-29 discussed how they talked with staff members at summer camp to set an example and live by the Scout Oath and Law because “you’re there for scouting and not just your camp and not for yourself” but you are there for the youth.

The participants displayed an active awareness of incorporating the values and principles of scouting into their daily lifestyles and actions while setting an example within organizational and community settings. The Scout Oath and Law were particularly relevant and important to the overall attitudes and actions of the participants and that might suggest that other volunteers might place equal importance on those two principles. The adult volunteers displayed strong ethical behavior in-line with organizational values and principles, which aligns with the Behaving Ethically dimension of servant leadership. However, the attitudes and experiences behind those ideas and approaches might not necessarily be from a specific servant leadership lesson. Rather, the values of scouting and experiences in the movement and programs could prompt such attitudes and thinking, rather than a specific lesson from servant leadership.
Thoughts on BSA Adult Leadership Trainings

Participants were asked to: Discuss your thoughts on the effectiveness of adult leadership trainings in the Boy Scouts of America.

SM-1 described the leadership trainings of the BSA as “one of the strongest suits that our organization has,” particularly due to the “emphasis” and “continual education” and the variety of courses available. The trainings offer a “10,000-foot look at […] the program” and are tailored for first-time volunteers and for introducing new adults into the organization and movement. “As effective as scouting is for youth development, I think it is equally important and effective in adult leadership trainings as well.” SM-1 went on to discuss how adults in the Wood Badge training go through the same experiences and situations as youth within the program. SM-1 placed particular emphasis on serving as a staff member in the courses: “that’s really […] where the leadership development [takes place], you learn more teaching someone something than you do sitting as a participant.” Overall, SM-1 described the BSA as being set apart from other youth organizations and groups due to the emphasis on training and the variety of courses available.

BW-1 thought the leadership trainings of the BSA were good overall being well organized, lots of problem-solving skills, learning how to teach youth to live the scouting life, and other things. Most of the trainings taken by BW-1 were on the district or council-level with other adult leaders and mainly involved youth protection, safety afloat certifications, or assistant scoutmaster specific courses. BW-1 did not participate a Wood Badge course but would have attended if the opportunity arose.

MT-29 was the Scoutmaster for several Wood Badge courses in the past, prior to Wood Badge for the 21st Century, and lead Basic Leader Training (BLT) for several
years. Trainings allow newcomers to the organization or group to get acquainted with the movement and learn from experienced members about various traditions, concepts, or useful tips to be successful. “I just feel strong about any type of training. I encourage any type of training and I believe in training to be successful.”

The adult leadership trainings of the BSA had a noticeable impact on the participants and each individual held favorable views of the courses. However, the broad nature of the question may cause participants to share a general feeling and attitudes of the trainings and not specific examples of why or how the courses were effective. Which is somewhat reflected in the answers of BW-1 and MT-29 where they share general feelings and thoughts but did not dig deeply into specific contexts or ideas. This specific line of questioning does hold more potential for understanding the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the scouting movement. For example, an additional question could be developed that asks volunteers to explain how leadership trainings improved or developed their own skills and abilities as servant leaders. The current iteration of the question does not have the directed or refined style that invokes thoughts and reflections on the quality and methods of BSA leadership trainings. However, it still offers a baseline to develop and ask such questions.

**Thoughts on BSA Youth Leadership Trainings**

The following question was developed during the process of the interviews and follows in the same style as the previous discussion: *What about the effectiveness of youth leadership trainings in the BSA?*

SM-1 and their troop had extensive experience with the three main leadership trainings of the BSA, ILST, NYLT, and NAYLE, and discussed how each course builds
upon the next. SM-1 described how trainings are “mirrored” and “there is usually a youth and adult equivalent of training” so that “everyone is on the same page.” The “first little tip of leadership concepts” was in the ILST course where the scouts learn a variety of leadership topics. NYLT begins “digging more in-depth of leadership” and expanding the concepts set in ILST. With the NAYLE course, SM-1 talked about their son’s experience in the training while at the Philmont. “He said it was absolutely life-changing for him” and that youth have a “command presence […] coming out of that program.”

SM-1 then described how their troop offered scholarships for NYLT and NAYLE and the requirements to qualify for those scholarships. The requirements were that scouts needed to participate in about 75% of troop activities and meetings, present themselves before the troop committee, explain why the troop should use money for the youth, and what return investment will the troop receive. If the youth qualified, the troop pays half the amount of registration upfront, then the youth completes the training, and then the unit pays the remainder after the scout reports on their experience. “The return on that investment to our troop has been exponential and it’s funny seeing the difference before they go” and when they return. “There’s confidence there, they are better speakers, they are articulate of what their doing, they have some sort of focus on what life means and what direction they want to go.” The reimbursement put accountability and responsibility on the scout. The story also contributes to the empowering dimension of servant leadership by putting autonomy and responsibility on the youth to complete the training and return with ideas to help their troop.

BW-1 did not attend leadership trainings as a youth, but their troop sent several scouts to council-level trainings in the Middle Tennessee Council, by best guess it was
NYLT. When the scouts returned from those trainings, BW-1 considered them to be more focused on the role of scouting and were better at taking on their responsibilities. However, BW-1’s troop never really did conduct ILST or TLT courses within their unit mainly because they did not get around to doing the trainings.

MT-29 did not touch on leadership trainings specifically but more on the concept of On the Job Experience where scouts learn lessons and concepts by participating in activities and programs. “Youth training is important because you are developing leadership, […] developing character, patriotism and so forth and its just like the flag. I believe in raising that flag. At camp we did not say the Pledge [of Allegiance] until a few years ago and I don’t remember [which] program director we had but [they] said we are going to say the pledge. Things like that that you want to develop leadership and you stand there and they are saying the pledge and we’re looking out at those kids and of course some of them [are] half dressed, [some] fully dressed as far as the uniform goes but they are standing there at attention. So that’s to me important developing leadership and patriotism that way too.”

Each participant touched on various aspects of the leadership development for youth, some focused more on trainings while others discussed On the Job Experience. However, each volunteer did hold favorable attitudes regarding the effectiveness of youth leadership trainings but there were variations on the impacts that the courses had on individual troops and scouts. Additionally, BW-1 discussed how their troop did not conduct the ILST or TLT courses at the unit-level. The answers suggest that the youth leadership trainings are effective in themselves, but how troops and youth utilize those
courses and lessons are determined by unit-specific and individual factors and there are variations of impact and return on investment.

**Thoughts on Servant Leadership in the BSA and the Scouting Movement**

The final question asked participants to discuss servant leadership and scouting:

*With the provided definition of Servant Leadership, please discuss Servant Leadership in relation to the Boy Scouts of America and the Scouting Movement.* The definition can be found in Appendix F under Question 9.

SM-1: “It’s a bottom-ups type model instead of a top-down. Maybe like a military-type model of leadership is from a rank standpoint, the higher the rank the more power that you have, the more responsibility you have, and in a situation where your going to war and people’s life are on the line and your yelling out orders, that’s a good model [because] you don’t have time to discuss how people feel and how their emotions are if there is a missile heading for you. That model works for that situation […] but that doesn’t always apply to every single organization. Scouting promotes a servant leadership [model] so that’s a bottoms-up [approach] where the person may have a title but a title doesn’t necessarily mean power, a title just means you have a responsibility. So instead of dictating, […] you are coming down on everyone’s level and organizing and getting everyone’s input on what we can do as a team. You don’t see too many general scrubbing toilets in the barracks, where in scouting you may see the Camp Director plunging out a toilet, […] because it needs done and it doesn’t matter that he’s the head guy of a camp” and the staff will follow that example due to respect and by understanding it is not beneath them to do the same thing. “So as a leader our goal is not just to dictate but is to motivate, encourage, set a vision for the team to succeed, […]"
regardless of where you are on the organizational chart your input, your work is extremely important for all of us to get to where we are going.” When asked about the relationship between servant leadership and scouting, SM-1 stated that: “It’s a hand and glove [relationship]. They are one and the same and that’s the model that we use [in Scouting].”

BW-1: “My experience in scouting was that most of the adult leaders that I was around really took servant leadership to heart. I saw numerous scoutmasters, assistant scoutmasters throughout the council that really epitomized that. They would take and they would make sure that their approach to the boys in scouting was focused on them and what they wanted to do and trying to get them to reach their goals and [they] really didn’t focus at all, or very little, on themselves. There was a lot of activities and a lot of things that they did that really took a lot of effort on their part but it was always for the boys. The Scouting Movement has always tried to focus on their attention on servant leadership in recent years, a lot of the training and a lot of the activities on the council-level were based on that principle. And they were always trying to find new opportunities to apply servant leadership to the different scout troops and activities. So yes, I think that they have done a good job on focusing on what the boys need.”

During the interview with MT-29, the question needed to be rephrased due to certain circumstances. After a couple of exchanges, the interviewer and MT-29 settled on the following question that was closest in spirit to the original: “How do you think adult volunteers show a servant leader mindset and attitudes in the organization?”

MT-29: “I can think back to a lot of the leaders of the people that served in scouting, they were scoutmasters, and all the people that I can think of, and a lot of them
are passed in the last several years, they were active members of the community. They were very involved in community activities [and] leadership and they did support the community and they supported the scouting values that we have today and they were all good people, they were good church going people too.” MT-29 then discussed several parts of the local community and how many leaders tried to be better than what had happened and the negative attitudes that developed in the past. The community culture, attitudes, and past affected the methodology and approaches of local leaders and the perceptions of those adults and the community.

The attitudes and perceptions of the participants present a mindset of servant leadership being an important part of the BSA and the scouting movement and that adult volunteers and leaders display the model based on their actions and attitudes. However, due to the case study nature, the answers and shared experiences only reflect a small portion of leaders in the Middle Tennessee Council and suggests, rather than confirms, that adult volunteers consider servant leadership important in the organization and is modeled by individual leaders. When combining the qualitative interviews with Rohm (2014), the quantitative study by Goodly (2008), and the present study, the current research suggests that there are servant leadership attitudes and approaches in various demographics of the BSA and the scouting movement.

Discussion

There are two overarching points that appeared during the qualitative research with the adult volunteers in the Scouts BSA program: 1) the varied individual leadership approaches of adult volunteers; and 2) the uncategorized and undefined difference between the values of scouting and the servant leadership model.
First, the leadership styles of each adult volunteer varied with experience in the program and trainings, leadership attitudes and approaches, and positions of responsibility and power. Scoutmasters and volunteers in individual units are concerned with the growth of the youth and while regulations and rules are present, the adults might focus on growth and reflection rather than strict punishment or expulsion from the group. Leadership positions in contexts such as summer camps have organizational procedures and policies that might necessitate more harsh penalties or punishments when a staff member breaks a rule. Those differences can help explain the disconnect between why certain leaders display varying levels of servant leadership characteristics and attitudes, and why other leaders have the potential for more individualistic leadership styles.

The participants in the interviews did not display a dominant individualistic approach to leadership in the BSA but indications from SM-1 suggest that such leaders can be found in the organization. The leadership of adult volunteers is of particular importance in the BSA. Adult volunteers are the primary mechanism for leadership in individual units and the adults can heavily influence group culture, attitudes, climate, and other factors and contexts. Future studies could be conducted to investigate the differences in others-oriented and individualistic-led troops and how the two approaches influence the development of youth and the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA.

Second, the values of scouting and servant leadership characteristics might cause potential false flags in analysis due to a mirror effect in terms of the background of attitudes and perspectives. Adult volunteers do display and demonstrate attitudes and approaches that align with servant leadership characteristics. However, the background of
those attitudes and approaches might not be specifically from servant leadership lessons. The values of scouting and servant leadership overlap so much in terms of attitudes, approaches, and overall focus that there seems there is little difference between the two. However, how that quality of servant leadership is created can be from vastly different experiences and perspectives, typically from the values of scouting or lessons on servant leadership. Both approaches and attitudes, between servant leadership and the values of scouting, are heading in the same direction but take different paths and methodology throughout the development of others-first thinking and actions. This idea is explored below through the Behaving Ethically dimension of servant leadership compared against the ideas and principles of Scouting.

There was some evidence in the BSA literature that indicated support for the argument. In the 2021 PLC guidebook, there was a specific sentence that stated, “[PLC] is the ultimate training experience designed to motivate [participants] to follow a life of servant leadership based on the values of Scouting” (Boy Scouts of America, p. 2). The statement only suggests that servant leadership attitudes and approaches can be developed based on a scouting background and experiences. However, with the results of the qualitative interviews and that statement from the 2021 PLC guidebook, the argument does have decent evidence and support to warrant future studies to investigate and research this specific topic.

Even with the potential difference in background experience and perspective, the results indicate the participants display and model a servant leadership approach to leadership and attitudes. Future studies might develop methodology and approaches to study the quality differences between servant leadership lessons and the values of
scouting. The adult volunteers in the present study demonstrated varying degrees of approaches but each shared similar attitudes and mindsets in each specific dimension of servant leadership.

The attitudes and thoughts of the participants in community-related variables, the Creating Value for the Community and the Putting Subordinates First dimensions were of particular importance and significance. The adult volunteers demonstrated deep ties to the local and scouting communities while working within the organization and culture to create value for the youth and wider society. The adult volunteers spent untold hours supporting the BSA and scouting movement and worked tirelessly to guide and mentor youth in the organization. The adult volunteers demonstrated the strongest association with those two specific dimensions of servant leadership and community-related variables, be it organizational or societal.

The Behaving Ethically dimension was defined by Liden et al. (2015) as that “which includes being honest, trustworthy, and serving as a model of integrity” (p. 255). “Setting an example,” “being honest,” and “being trustworthy” was brought up multiple times with each participant, which aligns in most part with the Behaving Ethically dimension if not outright demonstrating the characteristic in attitudes and actions. However, trustworthy is also the first point of the Scout Law and honesty often goes hand and hand with the other principles in the Scout Law. Additionally, setting an example in the organization and the community could be seen as a basic principle of leadership. While adult volunteers display and demonstrate a strong servant leadership approach in this variable, there remains questions on the background experience and perspectives that could come from either servant leadership lessons or the values of scouting. The BSA’s
Scout Oath and Law, methods, aims, and the basic principles of the scouting movement are targeted at developing similar attitudes and values to that of servant leadership. While individuals in the scouting movement could have a servant leadership approach, the background development and ideas behind those attitudes could come from different sources.

The participants demonstrated moderate-to-strong understanding and application of the Conceptual Skills and Empowering dimensions of servant leadership. The adult volunteers understood and applied the foundational principles of the scouting movement, primarily the Scout Oath and Law, the mission of the BSA, and the aims and methods of the organization. This reflects having an understanding and application of values important to the movement and organization which aligns with the Conceptual Skills characteristic of servant leadership. The Empowering dimension of servant leadership was present in the attitudes and approaches of the participants and mainly centered around the idea of the youth-led troop in determining group goals and program activities. However, adults retained decision-making and responsibility in other parts of the group and organization, centered around safety, setting boundaries, some logistical factors, and taking charge in case of an emergency. The adult volunteers empowered youth to take charge in leadership positions and responsibilities in a high degree, but not in all aspects of the group or organization.

The Emotional Healing dimension seems to be affected by factors in the organization, community, and individual units and leaders. The participants identified various boundaries and approaches that were influenced by local culture and individual attitudes. In other instances, organizational policies and rules limited available
approaches and options. For example, while involved at a BSA summer camp, MT-29 made decisions according to the regulations of the camp when a staff member broke rules, policies, or acted against the values of scouting and the camp. The author of this study also staffed at several summer camps and noticed similar situations occurring at various places. Each summer camp and each program area in those camps have specific rules and regulations the staff, campers, and adult volunteers need to follow. In several instances, staff, campers, or adults broke rules or acted against the values of the camp and the leadership of the camp had to respond based on organizational policy. In general, the participants showed concern for others going through emotional situations, made themselves available to talk to, and tried to create safe and trustworthy environments for youth. However, other adult volunteers in the organization might display varying levels of concern or less-sympathetic attitudes regarding emotional concerns. Hence, this dimension of servant leadership in the BSA might be only shown in specific instances and case studies rather than a generalizable variable across the organization. This dimension of servant leadership, for participants in this study, seemed to be of a moderate attitude and application.

The Helping Subordinates Grow and Succeed dimension was hard to classify due to several factors: the vagueness of the question, the inherent responsibilities and focus of the BSA, and the individual approaches of adult volunteers. The question for this dimension could have been more pointed and refined to explore how volunteers enable success in scouting and in other situations such as the community. The inherent responsibilities of adult volunteers as mentors and leaders that focus on the growth and development of youth could be just a basic responsibility of position. There were some
indications during the interviews that some adult volunteers focused primarily on the growing youth within the scouting movement and acted as advisors in non-scouting related factors and instances. The basic roles and responsibilities of scoutmasters and adult volunteers include being “a good role model for the leadership skills expected of the [youth]; a coach and a guide as the [youth] grow through Scouting; [and] an example of the aims of Scouting” (Boy Scouts of America, 2015, p. 18). Why scoutmasters and adult volunteers focused less on outside youths outside goals and activities might be due to the leader’s primary focus being on scouting and how to maximize the youth’s development within the organization so that youth can take the skills and attitudes of scouting and apply them to other instances and situations in their life. However, the participants did display focus and concern for the growth and development of the youth in scouting and moderate concern for outside activities.

**MTC Case Study Conclusion**

The adult volunteers in the present study seem to display an overall servant leadership mindset and approaches in their leadership styles, which comes from demonstrating multiple dimensions and accompanying thoughts and opinions. Community-related variables and Putting Subordinates First were the strongest dimensions of servant leadership demonstrated by the adult volunteers with moderate-to-strong for the other characteristics. Emotional Healing and Helping Subordinates Grow and Succeed were more moderate in application and approaches possibly due to organizational, group contexts, and cultural factors and influences. Individual units could be more tolerant of individual mistakes in order to promote growth and reflection while organizational and professional positions and settings might demand more
professionalism and self-regulation from employees. Group dynamics and setting contexts should be taken into consideration in analyzing how volunteers and leaders utilize servant leadership approaches.

The close similarities and principles between scouting and servant leadership certainly align in values and approaches. However, the background experience and perspective of the adult volunteers suggest that there might be a quality difference between having a servant leadership approach and what goes into developing those attitudes and skills. The values of scouting could potentially foster a servant leader mindset and attitudes even in the absence of servant leadership lessons and trainings. The exact differences between servant leadership and the values of scouting falls out of the purview and methodology of the present study. But that line of research and understanding represents one of the key futures for the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the scouting movement. These findings are not generalizable to the rest of the BSA due to the case study element but suggest that servant leadership can be found in other adult volunteers of the organization.
CHAPTER SIX:
SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA:
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

While the primary source and historical analysis applies to the wider BSA, the results of the case study in the Middle Tennessee Council and the attitudes of the interviewed adult volunteers cannot be applied to the whole organization or movement. The qualitative interviews suggest, rather than widely confirm, some of the servant leadership attitudes and approaches of volunteers in the Middle Tennessee Council. Additionally, the interviews cannot fully represent the perspective of females and other minorities in the organization or the Middle Tennessee Council. Also, all of the interviewees had significant experience in the BSA and scouting movement, which limits how the results and interpretations can be applied to individuals and adults with less understanding and experience but also hold the same positions and responsibilities in the organization. Another limitation is the scope of the interviews with only three volunteers, which only captured a few experiences out of thousands of potential perspectives and backgrounds. While limited in scope and applicability to the wider organization, the qualitative interviews with adult volunteers in the Middle Tennessee Council provides a baseline for understanding the complex relationship between servant leadership and the BSA in this demographic.

The 21st century leadership development practices and trainings of the Boy Scouts of America developed servant leadership skills, attitudes, and qualities in adult
volunteers of the Scouts BSA program throughout the 2001 to 2021 timeframe. From the perspective of organizational practices and frameworks, the servant leadership model was integrated and utilized through the core leadership trainings of the Scouts BSA program and in the other sections and societies of the organization. From the perspective of qualitative interviews, some adult volunteers in the Middle Tennessee Council displayed and model a strong servant leadership approach in their attitudes and leadership styles. Based on those two perspectives and analysis, the BSA focused on developing servant leadership in adult volunteers through their primary leadership development trainings and some adults reflected and modeled the approach. However, the background experience and perspectives of those adult volunteers might develop a servant leadership-style approach through the values of scouting rather than specifically from servant leadership lessons.

Within the organizational structure and frameworks of the BSA, servant leadership was primarily found in the leadership development trainings of the programs and societies of the BSA. While the Venturing and Sea Scouts programs were not analyzed in this study, additional investigation and research will probably reflect their primary integration of servant leadership in their leadership development trainings. Each individual program and society of the BSA incorporated and utilized servant leadership in varying degrees and approaches and future studies could compare and contrast the differences between each section of the BSA.

The Scouts BSA leadership trainings were extensively studied, and a preliminary analysis was conducted on the OA. The Scouts BSA leadership trainings used a progressive system of education for both youth and adults that increase the quality and
focus on servant leadership with each subsequent level of training. For youth, ILST developed a conceptual understanding of servant leadership, NYLT refined and solidified that foundation, and NAYLE built upon that base and allowed participants to exemplify their own leadership style and approach modeled on servant leadership. For adults, Wood Badge created a conceptual and practical understanding of servant leadership while the Philmont/Summit Leadership Challenge built upon that base and further refined the skills and attitudes of participants. The staff for each of those leadership trainings also underwent servant leadership lessons and needed to exemplify the model in their attitudes and actions so that they could set the example for participants. The OA was similar to the Scouts BSA program in the integration of servant leadership into trainings and courses but took a further step of incorporating the model into the messaging, frameworks, and attitudes of the society between 2001 to 2018. In the preliminary overview of servant leadership in the BSA, the organization probably maintained an overall standardized structure and integration of servant leadership in the primary leadership trainings of each program, and each program could incorporate the model in other, unique frameworks, practices, and attitudes for each section. The argument reflects the standardization of BSA trainings and terminology in the 2000s and 2010s while allowing diversity of application and incorporation of servant leadership in each unique program and section of the BSA.

The case study of adult volunteers in the Middle Tennessee Council, through qualitative interviews, also provides new understanding and ideas for the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the Scouting Movement. The participants in the interviews primarily reflected attitudes and actions that display servant leadership
characteristics. Along with Rohm’s (2014) study into servant leadership and Eagle Scouts, there is a growing body of research and evidence that points towards servant leadership having a dominate position in the attitudes and mentality of the BSA and possibly the wider Scouting Movement. The qualitative interviews also expand on the diversity of knowledge in the field and identified a potentially key dynamic in the relationship between servant leadership and scouting, the background differences between the values of scouting and servant leadership lessons. No matter the difference, others-focused leadership and attitudes by adult volunteers might be shared across most of the BSA and the Scouting Movement, and underscores the selfless commitment by adult volunteers, professional scouters, and members of the movement to improve the lives of others and specifically for the youth of the world.

There are several recommendations and suggestions for new research in the field of servant leadership, scouting, and the BSA. Future studies should continue to use servant leadership characteristics and dimensions to ask questions in qualitative research to help further define the model in the organization. Additionally, future qualitative interviews should continue to diversify by using different perspectives and backgrounds found in the volunteers, youth, and professionals of the BSA. There should be a study dedicated to holistically analyze servant leadership in the BSA in all the programs, societies, and sections of the organization to further refine the analysis and arguments in the preliminary arguments presented here. There is also need for more quantitative studies in the field as Goodly (2008) represents the only widely known quantitative research that has been performed.
The present study contributes to the understanding of the relationship between servant leadership, the BSA, and the Scouting Movement and greatly advances the current knowledge and understanding in the field. However, there remains unclear elements and dynamics to the relationship between servant leadership and the BSA. The research and discussions in the present study should help assist future research through the foundations and knowledge presented in the analysis. I hope that this study will help someone in the future and deepen their knowledge and understanding on this topic.
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APPENDIX A: WOSM CONSTITUTION AND COMPARISON OF WOSM’S SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW TO THE BSA’S SCOUT OATH AND LAW

2. All members of the Scout Movement are required to adhere to a Scout Promise and Law reflecting, in language appropriate to the culture and civilization of each National Scout Organization and approved by the World Organization, the principles of Duty to God, Duty to others and Duty to self, and inspired by the Promise and Law originally conceived by the Founder of the Scout Movement. (World Organization of the Scouting Movement, 2021, p. 6).

The Scout Promise
On my honour I promise that I will do my best —
To do my duty to God and the King (or to God and my Country);
To help other people at all times;
To obey the Scout Law.

The Scout Law
1. A Scout’s honour is to be trusted.
2. A Scout is loyal.
3. A Scout’s duty is to be useful and to help others.
4. A Scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout.
5. A Scout is courteous.
6. A Scout is a friend to animals.
7. A Scout obeys orders of his parents, Patrol Leader or Scoutmaster without question.
8. A Scout smiles and whistles under all difficulties.
9. A Scout is thrifty.
10. A Scout is clean in thought, word and deed.
(World Organization of the Scouting Movement, 2021, p. 6).

The BSA’s version of the Scout Promise, called the Scout Oath in the BSA, and the Scout Law is the following.

Scout Oath
On my honor I will do my best
to do my duty to God and my country
to obey the Scout Law;
to help other people at all times;
to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.
Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

(Boy Scouts of America, n.d., para. 6-7)
APPENDIX B: MIDDLE TENNESSEE COUNCIL POINTS OF INTEREST MAP

Map 1: Middle Tennessee Council – Points of Interest (2021)
APPENDIX C: NYLT TEN PRINCIPLES OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

**Listening**—Servant-leaders seek out the will of the group. They listen receptively to what is being said (and not said).

**Empathy**—Servant-leaders try to understand others. They will picture themselves in the place of those they serve. Servant leaders know that people need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique character.

**Healing**—One of the great strengths of servant leadership is the potential for healing one’s self and others. Servant leaders help themselves and others feel better and be better.

**Awareness**—Servant leaders are tuned into the needs of others. They are also aware of their own need for growth.

**Persuasion**—Servant leaders rely on persuasion rather than authority in making decisions. Servant leaders seek to convince others rather than forcing them.

**Conceptualization**—Servant leaders dream great dreams. They must think beyond day-to-day realities.

**Foresight**—Foresight enables servant leaders to understand lessons from the past and the present. These lessons help them understand the consequence of decisions in the future.

**Stewardship**—Servant leaders are careful and responsible as they manage things entrusted to their care.

**Growth**—Servant leaders believe that people have a value beyond being just workers. Servant leaders are deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual.

**Community**—Servant leaders seek to create a community that supports all of its members. (Boy Scouts of America, 2014, p. Day Three-53).
Figure 3. Timeline of Scouts BSA Leadership Trainings
APPENDIX E: LIDEN ET AL. SEVEN DIMENSIONS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

1) Emotional healing, which involves the degree to which the leader cares about followers' personal problems and well-being;

2) Creating value for the community, which captures the leader's involvement in helping the community surrounding the organization as well as encouraging followers to be active in the community;

3) Conceptual skills, reflecting the leader's competency in solving work problems and understanding the organization's goals;

4) Empowering, assessing the degree to which the leader entrusts followers with responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making influence;

5) Helping subordinates grow and succeed, capturing the extent to which the leader helps followers reach their full potential and succeed in their careers;

6) Putting subordinates first, assessing the degree to which the leader prioritizes meeting the needs of followers before tending to his or her own needs.

7) Behaving ethically, which includes being honest, trustworthy, and serving as a model of integrity. (Liden et al, 2015, p. 255).
APPENDIX F: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ASSOCIATED SERVANT LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS

(Dimension 1) Emotional healing, which involves the degree to which the leader cares about followers' personal problems and well-being.

(Question 1.) How do you address and console a scout going through personal problems and well-being issues?

(Dimension 2) Creating value for the community, which captures the leader's involvement in helping the community surrounding the organization as well as encouraging followers to be active in the community.

(Question 2.) Discuss your involvement with the Scouting community and the local community around your Troop. How do you encourage scouts to be active in both the Scouting community and local community?

(Dimension 3) Conceptual skills, reflecting the leader's competency in solving work problems and understanding the organization's goals.

(Question 3.) In your own words, describe the mission, vision, aims, and methods of the Boy Scouts of America. How did Boy Scouts of America leadership trainings improve your abilities as a leader in scouting?

(Dimension 4) Empowering, assessing the degree to which the leader entrusts followers with responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making influence.
(Question 4.) To what degree do you and other adult leaders entrust scouts with responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making? In what areas do you and the other adults retain responsibility and decision-making?

(Dimension 5) Helping subordinates grow and succeed, capturing the extent to which the leader helps followers reach their full potential and succeed in their careers.

(Question 5.) How do you help scouts grow and succeed in both Scouting and beyond?

(Dimension 6) Putting subordinates first, assessing the degree to which the leader prioritizes meeting the needs of followers before tending to his or her own needs.

(Question 6.) To what degree do you put the needs of the scouts above your own? Do you prioritize scouting-related activities above other things in your life?

(Dimension 7) Behaving ethically, which includes being honest, trustworthy, and serving as a model of integrity.

(Question 7.) Describe how you implement the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your daily lifestyle and in Scouting activities and community.

(Question 8.) Discuss your thoughts on the effectiveness of adult leadership trainings in the Boy Scouts of America.

(During the process of conducting interviews, the investigator also asked this question but rephrased to inquire about youth leadership trainings.) What about the effectiveness of youth leadership trainings?
(Question 9.) With the provided definition of Servant Leadership, please discuss Servant Leadership in relation to the Boy Scouts of America and the Scouting Movement.

“Servant leadership is an other-oriented approach to leadership manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community” (Eva et al, 2019, p. 114).
APPENDIX G: YOUTH QUESTIONNAIRE

Youth Questionnaire

Adult Volunteer Name:

_____________________________________________

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

On a scale of 1-7, please rate the adult leader based on each statement (please circle the number).

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = slightly disagree
4 = neutral
5 = slightly agree
6 = agree
7 = strongly agree

Question 1: My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Question 2: My leader makes my career development a priority.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Question 3: I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Question 4: My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Question 5: My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Question 6: My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Question 7: My leader would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

End of survey. Thank you for participating. Please make sure you have no personal information on this sheet before returning this survey back to the researcher.

Informed Consent Adult Participant

Project Title: Servant Leadership and Adult Volunteers in the Boy Scouts of America

Investigator: Andrew Koontz, AS, Western Kentucky University, Mahurin Honors College, Capstone Experience Thesis, andrew.koontz612@topper.wku.edu (615)-585-0642

Faculty Advisor: Dr. John Baker, Western Kentucky University, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Department of Organizational Leadership, john.baker1@wku.edu

You are being asked to participate in an undergraduate research project conducted through the Mahurin Honors College of Western Kentucky University. The University requires a signed agreement of consent of participation for this project.

The investigator is available to discuss the nature and purpose of the project, the procedures for the study; the potential discomforts, risks, and benefits of participating; information confidentiality, and refusal or withdrawal from the study. You can ask questions to further your understanding of the study. A summary of the study is provided below. Please read over the summary and ask any questions to the investigator before signing the consent line.

If you wish to participate in this project, after reading the material below, please sign on the last page of this form. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project: This project seeks to understand the attitudes and perceptions of adult volunteers, in the Scouts BSA program of the Boy Scouts of America, on Servant Leadership. Servant Leadership is a central leadership theory in Boy Scouts of America leadership trainings. This study utilizes a Servant Leadership model to examine adult volunteer perceptions. This study will contribute towards the partial completion of Andrew Koontz’s thesis through the Mahurin Honors College of Western Kentucky University.

2. Explanation of Procedures: For qualifications of this study, you must meet the following standards:

- Currently be serving, or have served, as an adult volunteer in a Scouts BSA (Boy Scouts) Troop.
- Be over the age of 18 years old.
- Be associated with the Middle Tennessee Council, or served with a Troop that operated in the Middle Tennessee Council.

If you do not meet these standards, you will not be included in this study. If you meet the qualifications and are willing to participate, please continue reading or reach out to the investigator to notify them of your interest to participate.

WKU IRB# 21-257
Approved: 11/05/2021
End Date: 4/29/2022
Full Board Review
Original: 11/05/2021
Study procedures for participants:

- 1. A recorded interview, lasting one to one-and-an-half hours (60 to 90-minutes), with the investigator based on a demographic questionnaire and a series of open-ended questions based on Liden’s SL-7 model.
- 2. A follow-up interview to clarify points of the previous interview or additional questions that arose during the study.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There is potential during the oral interview for the resurfacing of memories that might cause discomfort for the participant. The participant does not have to share any memories with the investigator that would cause discomfort or mental harm. If any of the questions will cause discomfort or harm to the participant if they answer them, they do not have to answer the question.

4. Benefits: By participating in the study, you will be helping the investigator towards the partial completion of his honors thesis and contributing to the intellectual knowledge of Servant Leadership and the Scouting Movement.

5. Confidentiality: Your data will be numerically coded for confidentiality and stored in a secure location. Records will be viewed, stored, and maintained in private, secure files only accessible by the P.I. and advising faculty for three years following the study, after which time they will be destroyed.

6. Refusal/Withdrawal: Refusal to participate will have no consequences for the participant from the Boy Scouts of America or from future services with Western Kentucky University. All participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalties.

You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

Signature of Participant ____________________________ Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)

- I agree to the audio/video recording of the research. (Initial here) __________

Witness ____________________________ Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Robin Pyles, Human Protections Administrator

TELEPHONE: (270) 745-3360

WKU IRB# 21-257
Approved: 11/05/2021
End Date: 4/29/2022
Full Board Review
Original: 11/05/2021

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Informed Parental Consent Form

Project Title: Servant Leadership and Adult Volunteers in the Boy Scouts of America

Investigator: Andrew Koontz, AS, Western Kentucky University, Mahurin Honors College, Capstone Experience/Thesis, andrew.koontz612@topper.wku.edu (615)-585-0642

Faculty Advisor: Dr. John Baker, Western Kentucky University, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Department of Organizational Leadership, john.baker1@wku.edu

Your child is being asked to participate in an undergraduate research project conducted through the Mahurin Honors College of Western Kentucky University. The University requires a signed agreement of parental/guardian consent for this project.

The investigator is available to discuss the nature and purpose of the project; the procedures for the study; the potential discomforts, risks, and benefits of participating; information confidentiality; and refusal or withdrawal from the study. You can ask questions to further your understanding of the study. A summary of the study is provided below. Please read over the summary and ask any questions to the investigator before signing the consent line.

If you agree for your child to participate in this project, after reading the material below, please sign on the last page of this form. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project: This project seeks to understand the attitudes and perceptions of adult volunteers, in the Scouts BSA program of the Boy Scouts of America, on Servant Leadership. Servant Leadership is a central leadership theory in Boy Scouts of America leadership trainings. This study utilizes a Servant Leadership model to examine adult volunteer perceptions. Youth scouts are a valuable measurement in understanding how adult volunteers apply their leadership skills for followers. This study will contribute towards the partial completion of Andrew Koontz’s thesis through the Mahurin Honors College of Western Kentucky University. Prior to the questionnaire, an Adult Volunteer with the Scout’s Troop sat down with the investigator and conducted a structured qualitative interview. The following quantitative questionnaire seeks to expand upon the qualitative interview based on youth perceptions of Servant Leadership qualities for the aforementioned Adult Volunteer.

2. Explanation of Procedures: For qualifications of this study, the youth must meet the following standards:

- Be a youth Scout within the Troop that the adult leader volunteers with.
- Have oral and written approval from parents/guardians and unit leader prior to taking the questionnaire (written approval is obtained on the next page) and both the parents and unit leader must be aware of the nature, purpose, and questions to be answered for the project.
- Understand that the youth may not share details of their answers with the adult volunteer in question or with anyone besides the investigator.

WKU IRB# 21-257
Approved: 11/05/2021
End Date: 4/29/2022
Full Board Review
Original: 11/05/2021
If the youth do not meet these standards, they will not be included in this study. If the youth meets the qualifications and you, the parents/guardians, are willing to allow them to participate, please continue reading or reach out to the investigator to notify them of your interest to participate.

**Study procedures for participants:**

- 1. A questionnaire, about the adult volunteer, with seven questions related to Liden’s SL-7 model for Servant Leadership and completed during a 10 to 20-minute in-person session led by the investigator.

**3. Discomforts and Risks:** There is potential during the questionnaire for memories to resurface that would cause discomfort for the participant. The participant does not have to share any experiences or memories, that poses discomfort or causes harm to the youth, with anyone. There is minimized risk for fatigue or tiredness resulting from filling out the questionnaire.

**4. Benefits:** By participating in the study, the youth will be helping the investigator towards the partial completion of his honors thesis and contributing to the intellectual knowledge of Servant Leadership and the Scouting Movement.

**5. Confidentiality:** Answers will be numerically coded for confidentiality and stored in a secure location. Individual information will never be shared or revealed. Records will be viewed, stored, and maintained in private, secure files only accessible by the P.I. and advising faculty for three years following the study, after which time they will be destroyed.

**6. Refusal/Withdrawal:** Refusal to participate will have no consequences for the participant from the Boy Scouts of America or from future services with Western Kentucky University. All participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalties.

*You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.*

Signature of Parent/Guardian #1 ___________________________ Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)

_________________________ ___________________________
Signature of Parent/Guardian #2 (if applicable) Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)

**THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

Robin Pyles, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-3360
APPENDIX J: INFORMED CHILD ASSENT FORM

INFORMED CHILD ASSENT FORM

Project Title: Servant Leadership and Adult Volunteers in the Boy Scouts of America

Investigator: Andrew Koontz, AS, Western Kentucky University, Maharin Honors College, Capstone Experience/Thesis, andrew.koontz62@topper.wku.edu (615)-585-0642

Faculty Advisor: Dr. John Baker, Western Kentucky University, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Department of Organizational Leadership, john.baker1@wku.edu

I, ________________________________, understand that my parents (mom, dad, or guardians) have given permission (said it's okay) for me to take part in a project about ____________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

I am taking part because I want to. I have been told that I can stop at any time I want to and nothing will happen to me if I want to stop.

Signature ___________________________ Date ______________________

Guardians Name: __________________________

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT
THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY
THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Robin Pyles, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-3360

WKU IRB# 21-257
Approved: 11/05/2021
End Date: 4/29/2022
Full Board Review
Original: 11/05/2021