

LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE AND THE EFFECT OF
DEAF IDENTITY ON RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

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by
David W. Hylan, Jr.
B.S., Lamar University, 1983
M.S., Lamar University, 1984
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by

DAVID W. HYLAN, JR.

Approved:

Dr. Iris Johnson, Ph.D. Date
Director, Leadership Studies
Doctoral Program

Dr. Michael Chikeleze, Ph.D. Date
Chair, Dissertation Committee

Dr. Nancy Miller, Ph.D. Date
Dean, College of Business,
Education, & Human
Development

Dr. Melissa Hawthorne, Ph.D. Date
Member, Dissertation Committee

Dr. Sanjay Menon, Ph.D. Date
Dean, Graduate Studies

Dr. Glenn Anderson, Ph.D. Date
Member, Dissertation Committee

Dr. Emmanuel Clotey Date
Member, Dissertation
Committee

Dr. Kevin Krug Date
Member, Dissertation Committee

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To the Northwest Louisiana Deaf Community.

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ABSTRACT

LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE AND THE EFFECT OF DEAF IDENTITY ON RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

David W. Hylan, Jr., Ed.D.
Louisiana State University Shreveport, 2017

Advisor: Michael Chikeleze, Ph.D.

Even though leaders and followers are both necessary and important to an organization, dominant hearing society weakens the leader-follower relationship by discouraging Deaf identity. The scope of this study was the leader-follower relationship and how Deaf identity can predict the quality of that relationship. The framework for this study was the Leader–Member Exchange theory. A sample comprised of 302 self-identified deaf individuals was administered the Deaf Acculturation Scale (DAS) to determine the level of their Deaf identity and the Leader-Member Exchange-7 (LMX-7) scale to rate their relationship with their leader. The research was guided by three questions. First, to what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items? The results of a paired-samples t-test indicated that participants scored significantly higher on the DASd than they did on the DASH; this indicated that they identify more as Deaf than as hearing. Second, to what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the workplace leader–follower relationship? The results of a Pearson r correlation analysis supported a significant positive correlation between the DAS score (Deaf identity) and the LMX-7 score (leader-member relationship). A linear regression analysis indicated Deaf identity was a significant predictor of the leader-member

relationship and accounted for of the variance in the leader-member relationship. These findings showed that Deaf identity is a significant predictor of the leader-member relationship as hypothesized. Third, to what extent does each of the subscale scores on the DAS predict the workplace leader-follower relationship? The multiple regression was significant. Of the predictors investigated, cultural involvement, cultural preferences, cultural knowledge, and language competence were significant. Cultural identification was not a significant predictor of LMX. LMX theory states that leaders should be respectful and construct trusting relationships with all members, acknowledging that each member is unique and desires a special relationship. For Deaf individuals that exchange is improved by a strong Deaf identity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership evaluates, sets, and attains challenging goals. These characteristic skills involve taking immediate and pivotal action. The result is revealed in the surpassing of the competition and inspiration of followers to perform well. “Organizations that have effective leaders tend to have effective followers. Effective followers are partners in creating a vision, take responsibility for accomplishing their jobs, take the initiative to fix problems or improve processes, and question leaders” (Lee, 1993, p. 131). Leadership studies have undergone a renewed interest in leader-follower relationships as an important consideration when studying the dynamics of leadership (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Bass, 1998; Greenleaf, 1996; Lee, 1993). The relationship between follower and leader is fundamental to all organizations and crucial to the health of an organization because it is through the eyes of their leaders that followers learn about and assimilate into an organization’s culture (Kempster & Parry, 2013). The particular abilities and qualities of an organization’s leaders assist in reinforcing followers’ comfort with the organization’s climate and culture. The leader-follower relationship and how it is influenced by the followers’ rational thought is explained by implicit leadership theories (ILTs) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Kempster & Parry, 2013). The leadership process and the ILT schemas have been the focus of several research studies (Engle & Lord, 1997; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Offermann, Kennedy, & Wirtz, 1994; Subramaniam, Othman, & Sambasivan, 2010; van Gils,

van Quaquebeke, & van Knippenberg, 2010). Similarly, there is significant research focused on the LMX theory. Although much of the leadership literature deals with leader effects on followers, there has been less consideration of followers' influence on the relationship and how followers affect the leader (Avolio, 2007; Bligh, 2011). Yukl, Chavez, and Seifert's (2005) discrepancy model of follower satisfaction with the leader indicated that some research does concentrate on the active contribution of followers to the leadership process. It has been "proposed that subordinate personality characteristics and aspects of the situation create subordinate preferences for leadership, and in turn, the match between those preferences and the leader's actual behavior drives the subordinate's satisfaction with the leader" (Coyle & Foti, 2014, p. 161) and productivity of the subordinate. The follower's self-concept and self-identity were key components of this study, as was the follower's role (Deaf identity) in the leadership relationship (Dvir & Shamir, 2003; Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord; Brown, & Freiberg, 1999; Shalit, Popper, & Zakay, 2010).

The development of self and identity is a multidimensional, instinctive progression encompassing psychological inspiration and motivation, cultural comprehension, and the ability to perform appropriate roles (Fitzgerald, 1993). Identity is a multifaceted, multidimensional, and evolving cognitive and social composition containing a collection of character segments or identity components the individual uses to connect to particular social groups

(Baumeister, 1997; Erikson, 1968, 1980; Grotevant, 1992; Harter, 2015; Leary & Tangney, 2013; Moskowitz, 2005).

Marginalization and the colonial treatment of deaf individuals have resulted in a negative impact on the leader-follower relationship as it relates to the Deaf community. Humphries (1975) first described the idea that a person is of a higher caliber because of their capability to hear or speak—and the discriminatory behavior against those who cannot hear—as *audism*. Audistic thinking includes the concept that life is futile and miserable without hearing. Also, this attitude and methodology founded on unreasonable and insalubrious thinking ends in harmful shame toward people who are hard-of-hearing or deaf and can be considered a colonial behavior toward the Deaf community (Gertz, 2003).

Introduced by King (1991, 1998) and Jones (2000), internalized racism is the result of acceptance of negative messages about their abilities and intrinsic worth. Jones (2000) goes further.

It [internalized racism] is characterized by their not believing in others who look like them, and not believing in themselves. It involves accepting limitations to one's own full humanity, including one's spectrum of dreams, one's right to self-determination, and one's range of allowable self-expression. It manifests as an embracing of "whiteness" (use of hair straighteners and bleaching creams, stratification by skin tone within communities of color, and "the white man's ice is colder" syndrome); self-devaluation (racial slurs as nicknames, rejection of ancestral culture, and fratricide); and resignation, helplessness, and hopelessness (dropping out of school, failing to vote, and engaging in risky health practices). (p. 1213)

Similarly, dysconscious audism is a "distorted way of [internal] thinking about deaf consciousness . . . the prejudicial assumption that to be deaf is to be inferior to hearing people—in belief, attitude, and behavior" (Gertz, 2012, p.

397). The leader-follower relationship built on a lack of Deaf identity or dysconscious audism is impaired (Gertz, 2003). A leader knowledgeable in Deaf culture and American Sign Language (ASL) can combat dysconscious audism and its ill effect on the leader-follower relationship.

How followers react to specific leaders and leadership styles relates to how they view themselves and contributes to their concept of an ideal leader (Wrench, 2012). This study explores the probable influence of a Deaf identity on the quality of the leader-follower relationship. Understanding the role self-identity plays in the leader-follower relationship is key to understanding leadership itself (Lumby & Coleman, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Jobs play an important role in the development of a person's self-esteem and identity, and they add to one's sense of individualism. "The effects of the self on information processing and behavior are mediated by the working self-concept, which is composed of self-views, possible selves, and goals" (Lord, Brown, Freiberg, 1999, p. 167). It is through employment that people develop statuses, lifestyles, discourse communities, and a sense of belonging to a particular profession (Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999). Similarly, it is the case for people with hearing loss. Considering the important role of work and the known facts about employment rates of deaf people, it is important to address the issue of their self-identity and suitability in the workplace. "The quality of life is significant for everyone, but it takes on a special significance for those who (have to) exist in society under more difficult conditions than others" (Hintermair, 2008,

p. 278). Researchers have not studied the effects of Deaf identity on the Deaf individual's work environment (i.e., leader relationship). A dyadic approach to studying the leader-follower relationship could reveal methods and systems that add to the improvement and support of team spirit in the workplace involving the deaf follower, the hearing coworkers, and the leader. Individuals with either a mental or physical disability have historically been chronically unemployed or underemployed. Research has shown that discrimination of and stigmas against people living with disabilities are usually prevalent in various workplaces. Communication disabilities affect employees who are deaf in the social interactions that take place within the work setting (Lillestø & Sandvin, 2014). It is important that people with hearing difficulties comprehend that they can be successful in the various job markets (Garberoglio, Cawthon, & Bond, 2013). Deaf individuals develop a high sense of dysconscious audism from the colonialism produced "when one group rules the other through systems of dominance, authority, extrication, and marginalization" (Wrigley, 1996, p. 73). Because of the audism, misconceptions, and misunderstandings, people with hearing loss are not in a position to communicate their approaches effectively. It is for this reason that they could be belittled and handed lighter tasks that are below their full potential. This treatment leads to a diminished Deaf identity and the internalization of audism in the form of dysconscious audism (Gertz, 2003, 2012).

Gertz (2003) posits that a strong Deaf identity is crucial "for judging another culture in relation to one's own values and for understanding one's

community before one can contribute to social change” (p. 5). A cultural identity is critical for Deaf people. The constructs of internalized audism will lead to a weakened Deaf identity and subsequently a weak leader-follower relationship. This study examined the role Deaf identity plays in the leader-follower relationship in the context of employment. Followers typically give superior performances when they feel there is a close relationship between themselves and the leader (Miricescu, 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the predictability of the deaf individual’s Deaf identity on the leader-follower relationship.

Research Questions

This exploratory study was guided by the following three research questions:

- Q₁: To what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items?
- Q₂: To what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the workplace leader-follower relationship?
- Q₃: To what extent does each of the subscale scores on the DAS predict the workplace leader-follower relationship?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses and null hypotheses were tested:

- H₁: β Deaf identity = 0
- H₁: Participants will significantly endorse Deaf acculturation more than hearing acculturation.

- H₀: β Deaf identity \neq 0 H₀₁: Participants will not significantly endorse Deaf acculturation more than hearing acculturation.
- H₂: β Deaf identity = 0 H₂: Overall Deaf identity predicts the quality of the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.
- H₀: β Deaf identity \neq 0 H₀₂: Overall Deaf identity does not predict the quality of the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.
- H₃: β Deaf identity = 0 H₃: Each DAS subscale will significantly predict the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.
- H₀: β Deaf identity \neq 0 H₀₃: Each DAS subscale will not significantly predict the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical and conceptual framework for this study combines the concept of Deaf identify as measured by The Deaf Acculturation Scale (DAS) developed by Maxwell-McCaw and Zea (2011), with the leader-follower exchange theory as measured by the Leader-Member Exchange Scale-7 (LMX-7). The conceptual framework of this research is illustrated in Figure 1.

The LMX-7 is based on the leader-follower exchange theory and emphasizes that people's fundamental suppositions, ideals, philosophies, and

representations affect the degree to which they scrutinize their relationship with their leaders and associated followers. Leaders will categorize followers in the *in-group* or *out-group*. In relation to leader categorization theory, “a category is a mental representation of non-identical objects and events, including people and their characteristics that are perceived as belonging together” (Goethals, Sorenson, & Burns, 2004, p. 823).

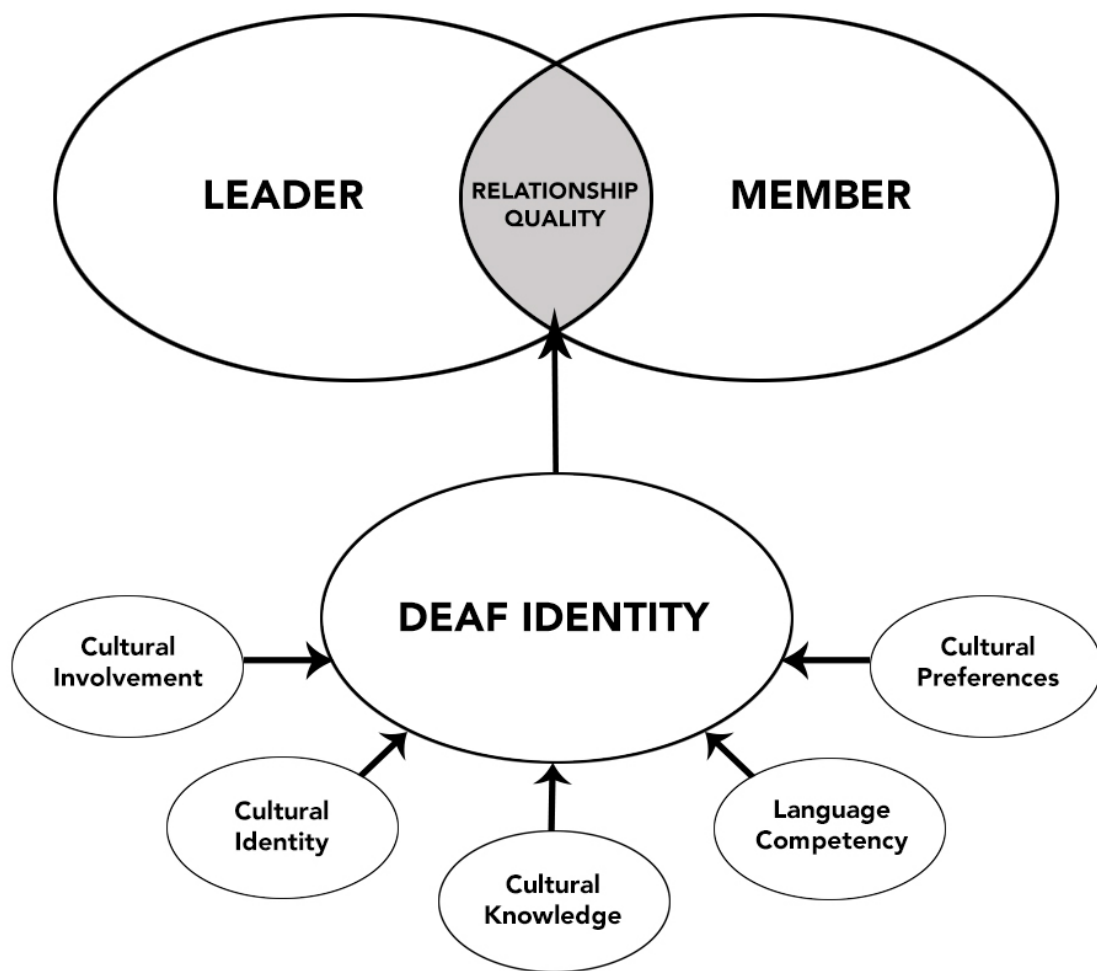


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework. A model of Deaf identity and subscales (independent variables) and predictability of the leader-follower relationship quality (dependent variable).

Followers represent themselves based upon their concept of a model leader. Consequently, this view is related to how followers see themselves and how they self-identify. Deaf people who have not developed their own Deaf identity and identify with the colonial approach to deafness are categorized as *dysconscious audists*. Their Deaf identities are distorted to varying degrees, and this is reflected in their leader-follower relationships (Leigh, 1999). The negative impact of dysconscious audism results in a poor employee and a weakened leader-follower relationship. This research was directed by the overarching question of when it comes to the study of the leader-follower relationship, to what extent does Deaf identity predict the quality of that relationship.

Significance of the Study

As hearing human beings, we depend on our sense of hearing to obtain information, connect with our surroundings, identify occurrences in our environment, and simply survive and thrive. Our dependence and comfort with hearing is not unlike the unexplained or subconscious act of taking a step. It is as much a part of us as any other automatic function of the body (e.g., the heartbeat). However, for some people, the sense of hearing is nonexistent or has no functional use. Professionals have identified several models that describe how a deaf individual is treated or considered. Two of the most common are the medical model and cultural model (Lane, 1992). The medical model used to label and designate deafness is driven by the attitude that deafness is undesirable and should be treated as a medical condition. *Late-*

deafened adults, or people who lost their hearing later in life, typically identify as *hearing impaired* or *hard-of-hearing*. These individuals are known as late-deafened adults. Their deafness is defined by the results of an audiogram, and they use English as their preferred language (National Association of the Deaf, 2014). Culturally Deaf individuals like to stress that being deaf is a difference, and they do not view deafness as a disability or some ailment (National Association of the Deaf, 2014). Members of this group are very proud and celebrate their deafness as a characteristic that makes them unique and distinguishable. Sign language is their mode of communication, and they defend it as a recognized language (Gallaudet University, 2015a; Lane, 1992).

The unemployment and underemployment of deaf individuals can be traced to colonialism by hearing supervisors, the belief in stereotypes and myths, and discrimination (i.e., audism). There have been a number of accessibility changes for the deaf and hard-of-hearing since the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed more than 25 years ago. This includes the increased use of sign language interpreters by corporate America. However, the negative stigmas and attitudes about those with disabilities have prevailed (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007). Many people with disabilities are accepted as kindhearted, but are still battling the stigma of incompetency. However, these stereotypes and myths have been thwarted in study after study. It has been determined that employees with disabilities (e.g., blindness, deafness, ADHD) outperformed nondisabled coworkers and demonstrated greater loyalty to their employers (Morris, 2005).

Houtenville and Kalargyrou's (2012) study consisted of analyzing a survey of 320 employers. Overwhelmingly, the employers had a shared concern that their employees with disabilities could not successfully complete their work. Additionally, the employers were concerned with the expense related to providing accommodations (sign language interpreters) for persons with disabilities as mandated by the ADA.

However, a study conducted by the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), shows that workplace accommodations not only are low cost but also positively impact the workplace in many ways. (Job Accommodation Network, 2016, p. 3)

Should employers have to dismiss a disabled employee, they are often also afraid of legal action (Lengnick-Hall, Gaunt, & Brooks, 2001). It is extremely problematic to substantiate that an employer has discriminated against someone in not hiring him or her. With these myths and stereotypes, why would a company's human resources department take such risks in hiring incompetent people and incur such expenses?

People's ideas regarding leader-follower relationships, leader preferences, and leader characteristics are not formed in a vacuum, but from their life experiences and interactions with previous leaders and portrayals of leaders (Offermann et al., 1994). Given these differences in life experiences and perceptions, people's implicit theories will also be varied and different (Offermann et al., 1994). Understanding the role discrimination plays in the leader-follower relationship, and what role Deaf identity plays in the relationship is key to understanding leadership itself. There are two ways of advancing

knowledge in understanding the dissimilarities concerning acuties of leaders, effectual leaders, and supervisors.

First, the content of the leader-follower exchange may help us to better understand and ultimately predict its effect on ratings of leader behavior. Second, and most importantly, leadership researchers may find that certain aspects of leadership are commonly understood or inferred (as indicated by their relationship with followers) that are not taken into account in current theories and models of leadership. (Offermann et al., 1994, p. 45)

The study of the leader-follower relationship theory “can provide clues that will help in the development of explicit theories to understand the phenomenon called leadership” (Offermann et al., 1994, p. 45).

The most proximal predictor of followers’ preferences for a particular leader should be their conceptualization of an ideal leader, which is influenced by their own self-concept (Lord & Maher, 2005). According to Lord and Maher (1991), individuals form knowledge structures about what leadership or the leader-follower relationship is, which are subsequently used in a relatively automatic manner to categorize new stimuli (e.g., potential leaders). Also, the knowledge structures allow the perceiver to make schema-consistent attributions toward the focal person as a means of lightening the cognitive load necessary to process new information about him or her. In other words, the similarity among the perceived leader-follower relationship, the person’s Deaf identity, and the potential leader will drive follower judgments about the extent to which the leader will be effective, how much the follower will like the leader, and whether the follower will want to work with that leader. Thus, Deaf identity should predict follower preferences for leadership.

Note that these two concepts, Leader-Member Exchange and Deaf identity, are distinct. Potential followers have within themselves an identity, and a supposition of a model leader, which they access at the leadership happenstance, and which may differ contingent on the followers and their inimitable character, temperament, principles, and other characteristics. Empirical research has supported the idea that when followers face a leader, it is the level of balance between their identity and the leader's performance that determines their responses to the leader and anticipation of the leader-follower relationship (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Fraser & Lord, 1988; Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984).

Yukl (1971) proposed that subordinate personality characteristics and aspects of the situation create subordinate preferences for leadership. The pairing between those preferences and the leader's actual performance drives the subordinate's satisfaction with the leader.

This research study will build on previous leader-follower relationship research by focusing on followers' identities and their predictability of the leader-follower relationship. Specifically, the primary dependent variable is the rating of the leader-follower relationship as determined by the LMX-7. The focus on the leader-follower relationship is consistent with the theory of leader-follower exchange. In addition, this research focuses on how "followers may actively choose a leader and decide to follow him or her, based on the extent to which the leader is perceived to embody their beliefs and characteristics" through their knowledge of the Deaf person's unique culture and language (Shamir et al.,

1993, p. 588). Additionally, the application of leadership preferences is guided by research completed by Liden et al. (1993), which demonstrated that followers' identity and first acquiescence to their leaders in terms of expectancies, observed similarity, and fondness could predict the development of the LMX. This phenomenon insinuates that the first meetings between leaders and followers make a meaningful impression on the association that develops between them. We can also learn more about how leader-follower relationships develop by investigating why followers initially respond to leaders the way they do, what role their Deaf identity plays, and what characteristics and thoughts mold those reactions. The impact of these features and views is relevant to resolving relationship issues presented between deaf, marginalized, and culturally-isolated followers and leaders.

Definition of Terms

Acculturation: an individual's behavioral response from exposure to a new culture (Cartmell & Bond, 2015).

American Sign Language (ASL): ASL is a visual language that is visually processed by the brain. The grammatical and syntactical structure of the language lies in the movement, shape, and placement of the hands. Facial expressions and body movements provide the "tone" of the transferred information (Baker-Shenk & Cokely, 2007).

Audism: "The notion that one is superior based on one's ability to hear or to behave in the manner of one who hears" (Humphries, 1975, p. 3).

Bicultural: an individual who has high average scores (3.0 or greater) on both the DASH and DASd scales of the DAS (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011).

CODA: an acronym for a *Child of Deaf Adult*, descriptive of person that is nurtured and reared by one or more deaf parents (CODA, 2017).

Deaf: typically refers to Deaf culture and deafness as a social construct (Padden & Humphries, 1990).

deaf: typically refers to the physicality of hearing impairment. It may also refer to deaf individuals who do not affiliate with Deaf culture, its traditions, norms, or language (Padden & Humphries, 1990).

Deaf acculturated: a deaf individual who has high DASd (above 3.0) and low DASH averaged scores on the DAS (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011).

Deaf community: Deaf people are a linguistic minority who have a common experience of life. As such, they identify as a unique community (Gallaudet University, 2015b).

Deaf culture: “A system of shared values, beliefs, behaviors and artefacts passed down through generations to function in that group’s world and interact with other members” (Hamill & Stein, 2011, p. 390). Deaf culture has its own social norms, views, values, historical figures, art (Lane, 2005; Padden & Humphries, 1990).

Deaf Identity: “a complex ongoing quest for belonging, a pursuit that is bound up with the acceptance of being deaf while finding one’s voice in a hearing-dominant society” (McIlroy & Storbeck, 2011, p. 494).

Dysconscious audism: A form of audism, dysconscious audism is “an implicit acceptance of the dominant hearing norms and privileges. Dysconscious audism hampers to varying degrees the Deaf individual's consciousness of DI” (Gertz, 2003, p. xii).

Follower: One who accepts the guidance, command, or leadership of another someone who supports and is directed by another person or by a group, religion, etc.: a person someone who demonstrates allegiance to a person, a doctrine, a cause, and the like (Kellerman, 2007).

Hearing acculturated: a deaf individual who has high DASH scores (3.0 or greater) and low DASd scores (2.9 or less) on the DAS (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011).

Identity: a psychological process where an individual finds a sense of belonging to himself or herself and the social context (Adams & Marshall, 1996).

Leader: a person who influences a group of people towards the achievement of a goal (Messick, 2005).

Marginal Acculturated: a deaf individual who has low scores (2.9 or less) on both the DASd and DASH scales (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011).

Limitations and Delimitations

This section clarifies the deliberate design boundaries of this study. “The features that contribute to the construction of a Deaf consciousness [include]:

- awareness of oppression
- rejection of audism
- positive language attitudes toward ASL

- Deaf cultural behaviors
- cultural acceptance of *Deaf living*" (Gertz, 2003, p. 12).

This study took place between June 2016 and May 2017. The DAS and LMXS-7 were administered through a website. In furtherance of ensuring proper management of the data collected, all the instruments used employed statements that asked for the selection of one answer from a list of five possible responses, and did not include an essay or open-ended response to questions. There was a total of 302 participants who responded and not a predetermined sample size. The DAS and LMX-7 were restricted to deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals who were currently employed.

Limitations

Several limitations were anticipated with this study. Lack of prior research studies specific to the deaf follower and the leader could have been a meaningful constraint. The number of questions and statements in the survey (80) could have contributed to participant fatigue. Self-reported data were limited by inability to be independently verified. The participants' responses were accepted at face value. Participants' selective memory (remembering, or not remembering, events that contributed to their responses), attributing feelings or memories according to their negative or positive outcomes, and exaggerating feelings or outcomes by embellishing their significance could have possibly influenced their responses. Fluency in English or ASL could have also placed limits on the participants' responses.

Delimitations

This course of study was chosen by the researcher due to the emphasis that was being placed on the importance of deaf pride, Deaf culture, and ASL by the Deaf community and the professional community in the field of deafness. The positive impact of these areas of Deaf identity must be investigated and evaluated in the context of the employment scenario (relationship). The researcher chose to limit the scope of this exploratory study to Deaf identity's possible effect on the quality of the relationship between the leader and the follower. Results from this exploratory study can serve as a foundation for additional research regarding the impact of a robust and confident Deaf identity. The sample was limited to currently employed followers due to the concern of selective memories. Other studies addressed Deaf identity using a quantitative and a time-consuming qualitative approach (Gertz, 2003; Glickman, 1993; Lane, 1992; Leigh, Marcus, Dobosh, & Allen, 1998). The qualitative option was not practical due to time constraints when interpreting and analyzing results. A qualitative approach would also pose challenges to confidentiality and anonymity when presenting findings.

Assumptions

The assumptions made in this study are constructs that are accepted as true, or at least plausible, by the researcher. These assumptions include:

1. Gender would not significantly correlate with perceptions of participants.

2. Responses to DAS and LMX-7 statements would be honest and to the best of the participants' abilities.
3. The American Deaf community would prefer ASL over spoken language and agree it is as much a legitimate language as any written and spoken language.
4. Deaf culture can be validated by fulfilling five fundamental characteristics and criteria: a distinct language, a particular folkloric tradition, discrete social institutions, shared traditions, and distinct social customs and protocol.
5. Audistic behavior is an oppressive force, similar to racism.
6. Dysconscious audism has the effect of weakening, if not causing, a complete lack of a Deaf identity.
7. Deaf individuals born to deaf parents have higher levels of Deaf identity compared to people whose parents are hearing.

Summary

It is difficult to read any literature today about business without seeing leadership and the leader-follower relationship discussed in great detail. The leader-follower relationship is a crucial component of leaders' ability to inspire and lead an organization to produce better services, products, and benefits for its stakeholders. An examination of the effects of internalized discrimination in the form of dysconscious audism as well as audism will lead to a better understanding of relationship failures and how to prevent them. The success of improving the leader-follower relationship has implications for society in general.

Organization of Dissertation Chapters

The background of this study is provided in Chapter 1 and elucidates the researcher's interest. The problem statement focuses on the predictability of Deaf identity on the leader-follower relationship. The theoretical and conceptual framework section demonstrates the type of research study being undertaken and introduces the DAS and LMX-7 instruments. The problem statement clarifies, in one simple statement, the issue being addressed. Chapter 2 is a thorough review of the literature associated with Deaf identity, audism, employment, and the leader-follower relationship. Chapter 3 elucidates the design of this research, the various methods used to collect data, and the process for analyzing the data. Chapter 4 presents the findings and interpretation of the data collected. Chapter 5 recapitulates the entire project and the findings, including the implications of the study and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

“The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one who gets the people to do the greatest things.” — Ronald Reagan (Hewitt, 1975).

Numerous studies have emphasized the significance of followers, identity theories related to leadership processes, and the ability of leaders to support and structure their followers' identities (Collinson, 2006). “Employees' self-identities, or the way in which they define themselves relative to others, have implications for the quality of the leader and follower relationships at work” (Jackson & Johnson, 2012, p. 488). Several researchers have posited that followers' self-identities directly correspond to the relationship with leaders and, eventually, to their work performance (Chang & Johnson, 2010; Lord, Brown, & Freidberg, 1999; Schyns & Day, 2010; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007; Uhl-Bien, 2006). This exploratory study exemplifies an initial empirical examination of this impression that seeks to advance leadership theory by addressing the value of a strong Deaf self-identity and its effect on the leader-follower relationship while exploring the need for a deeper understanding of Deaf culture, language, and complex interactions among Deaf followers with their leaders.

The research questions addressed by this quantitative study are: (a) to what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items; (b) to what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the workplace leader-follower relationship; and (c) to what extent does each of the

subscale scores on the DAS predict the workplace leader-follower relationship? It is hypothesized that participants will significantly endorse Deaf acculturation more than hearing acculturation, overall Deaf identity predicts the quality of the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower, and each DAS subscale will significantly predict the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.

Relevant topics related to Deaf identity and the leader-follower relationship will be presented in this chapter (i.e., social identity theory, audism, Deaf culture, American Sign Language [ASL], and appropriate theories).

Incidence of Deafness

Unfortunately, there is no simple way to know how many deaf people live in the United States. One reason for this is that the public uses the term deaf to describe all people with some degree of hearing loss. The casual definition and understanding of *deaf* mostly depend on an audiogram showing the specific decibels of hearing loss. Others consider deaf as all individuals with challenges in comprehending verbal speech (Atcherson, McKee, Moreland, & Zazove, 2015; Fenell, 2015). Using statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Gallaudet University Library (2014) estimated that more than 37.5 million people in the United States are deaf or hard-of-hearing. At least 2 million of those individuals use American Sign Language (ASL). Approximately 2.1% (4 million) of working-age Americans have difficulty hearing, or are considered deaf based on a variety of causes (Hearing Loss Association of America, 2016).

Within the Deaf community, the use of the capital “D” in Deaf denotes an individual who chooses to be a member of the Deaf community with a Deaf identity. This person advocates for the sharing of the unique traditions, language, values, cultural norms, and rules of social interaction within that group. The use of the lowercase “d” in deaf, on the other hand, represents anyone who has experienced a significant hearing loss and who considers deafness a pathology, and not as a community with a distinct culture (Leigh, 2009).

Causes of Deafness

There are many causes of deafness, but they all fall into three basic categories: accidents, genetics, and illnesses. According to Atcherson et al. (2015), hearing loss can be brought about by disease, trauma, noise, and parental exposure to illness. Some disorders are genetic in nature and result in the presence of deafness in multiple generations. Deafness is sometimes attributed to hereditary or genetic disorders, implying that parents pass genes on to their children (Atcherson et al., 2015).

Although many deaf children are born to deaf parents and are thus introduced to society within a deaf-supportive framework, 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents and siblings (Singleton & Tittle, 2000). The self-identification of a deaf person is a personal decision determined by connections to the Deaf and Hearing communities; how one communicates linguistically; and the point in one’s life when hearing was lost (National Association of the Deaf, 2014). A child of culturally Deaf parents, also known as a Child of Deaf Adults (CODA), for instance, is more likely to acknowledge belonging to and identifying

with Deaf culture as a dominant identity with a set of essential Deaf-related fixed characteristics and values, imparted by the parents, that reflect specific ways of being and connecting with others (Leigh, 2009).

Underemployment and Unemployment of Deaf Persons

According to research, a hearing deficit is one of the most common disabilities in the United States. Hearing loss affects approximately 2.1% of American adults between the ages of 18 and 64 years. In their research, Walter and Dirmyer (2013), found that people who are deaf and use sign language as their core channel of communication are often overlooked. For this reason, it is likely that the number of deaf people could be higher than the 2.1% reported. A person's hearing loss usually impacts communication, social interaction, and educational advancement, which, in turn, hinders access to employment opportunities, resulting in massive unemployment and underemployment for people with hearing deficits.

Individuals who are hard-of-hearing or deaf come from diverse backgrounds, and there exist substantial variances in the causes and extents to which the hearing losses occur, such as advanced age (Punch, Hyde, & Creed, 2015). Individuals with hearing problems usually identify themselves in a rather personal way. Their self-perception and Deaf identity reflect the status of the society's identification with people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

The issue of unemployment is at an all-time high around the world, and a majority of individuals, especially in developing countries, are looking for employment opportunities (Gussenhoven et al., 2013). There is stiff competition

for the limited jobs, and securing employment has become a challenge as there are various hurdles faced by the job seekers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Many employers know little, or nothing at all, about hearing loss, Deaf culture, Deaf identity, American Sign Language (ASL), and difficulties in hearing. Hence, they are likely to be reluctant to hire potentially productive employees who have hearing disabilities. This is one of the main reasons why deaf people are denied job opportunities in which they could perform as well as their hearing counterparts (Terras, 2012).

Jobs play a major role in the development of a person's self-esteem and identity, and they add to one's sense of individualism. It is through employment that people develop statuses, lifestyles, discourse communities, and a sense of belonging to a particular profession. Similarly, it is the case for people with hearing difficulties. It is important to address the issue of their self-identity and suitability in the labor markets, considering the critical role of work and the known facts about employment rates of deaf people. Earlier studies have shown that workforce participation rates of deaf people did not differ significantly from those of hearing individuals (Walter & Dirmyer, 2013).

Individuals with either a mental or physical disability have historically been chronically unemployed or underemployed. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2011, 18.6% of people with disabilities were employed, compared to 63.5% of able-bodied people. Research has shown that discrimination of and stigmas against people living with disabilities are usually prevalent in various workplaces. In general, employers tend to have a positive approach toward

disabled people, but they are reluctant to hire those same applicants (Kurata & Brodwin, 2013).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 dictates employment policies and the acquisition of adaptive workplace equipment for people with disabilities. The ADA includes special requirements and recommended legislative benefits for deaf people (Colker, 2015). Research by Colker (2015) found that regardless of continued professional training, awareness of special needs and legislative programs, disabled people's rates of employment are diminishing. Individuals who are deaf are likely to face potential resistance from the employers, who, because of their perceptions of high costs and undue working hardships, might oppose hiring, training, promotion of, and rational accommodations for people with hearing deficits.

Communication difficulties are among the most substantial contributors of poor employment rates for people with hearing issues. Communication is vital for an organization to run efficiently and have a smooth flow of both information and activities. For people who are deaf, their inability to communicate effectively with supervisors, coworkers, and customers is a major hindrance to job preservation and promotion. Communication disabilities affect employees who are deaf in the social interactions that take place within the work setting (Lillestø & Sandvin, 2014).

Both reading and writing functions are vital to the workplace environment. Some deaf workers lack the ability to effectively communicate in writing because their primary language is ASL, which does not have a written form. If adult

workers who are deaf had higher English literacy levels and skills, they would potentially have higher wage earnings (Michael, Most, & Cinamon, 2013). Poor written language skills usually have adverse effects on this population's capacity to communicate effectively in written English. Because of the myth that ASL is simply *English on the hands*, many employers believe writing back and forth is efficient and effective and, therefore, is a popular accommodating procedure in the workplace.

In the last 25 years of the 20th century, there were efforts to broaden the availability of post-secondary education. The efforts were meant to provide low-income individuals with an increased range of accessible schools. In 1973, those efforts extended to people living with disabilities with the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, followed by Public Law 94-142 in 1975 (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996). In the intervening years, that legislation has increased the amount of hard-of-hearing and deaf people pursuing post-secondary training. The increased availability of post-secondary education for the hard-of-hearing in the United States has come with massive impacts (Yusof, Yasin, Hashim, & Itam, 2012).

People who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, who complete post-secondary training, are likely to show higher workforce participation (Schley et al., 2011). Unlike untrained personnel, deaf people with post-secondary education obtain employment with high salaries in both managerial and professional areas. For all people—whether hard-of-hearing, deaf, or not—the higher the education level and conceptualization of skills, the higher the chance of better terms of

employment. Post-secondary education increases the potential for employment for hard-of-hearing and deaf people, with graduates earning more money than non-graduates (Walter & Dirmyer, 2013).

Although people with hearing deficits could possess various special skills and abilities suitable for different main industries, the job-hunting process can be difficult. One of the biggest challenges for deaf people in securing jobs is that they have to overcome hurdles like taking part in interviews where sign language interpreters are provided. It is important that people with hearing difficulties comprehend that they can be successful in the various job markets (Garberoglio, Cawthon, & Bond, 2013). Because of the misconceptions and misunderstandings, people with hearing loss are not in a position to communicate their approaches effectively. It is for this reason that they could be belittled and given job tasks or duties that are below the individual's capabilities.

Employment Statistics

Deaf workers experience some disadvantages that their hearing colleagues do not. They are both underpaid and underemployed, and they do not have as many chances for promotion as their hearing counterparts. However, deaf young adults are usually likely to be employed at higher rates than their counterparts with other disabilities. Employment data depict potentially promising employment trends for young adults.

In the year 2011, 48.5% of deaf adults were employed. The employment rates varied across different states, ranging from 35.9% in West Virginia to 68.4% in North Dakota. In the same year, deaf individuals' average income in

the United States was \$39,283 annually, which is \$4,000 less than the general population (Dakota, 2013). The annual average income also varied by gender. On average, deaf men make more than deaf women per annum: \$44,080 for men and \$29,803 for females. Deaf women earn 67.6% of the deaf men's average annual earnings. This difference is similar to the gender disparity seen in the larger population (Dakota, 2013). "The employment gap between deaf and hearing people in the United States is a significant area of concern. In 2014, only 48% of deaf people were employed, compared to 72% of hearing people" (Garberoglio, Cawthon, & Bond, 2016, p. 2).

Leadership and the Leader-Member Relationship

At the heart of this study is the leader-follower relationship and elements that are indicators of its quality. Leadership, one of the most necessary organizational characteristics, can support an effective communication channel between leaders and followers. Despite the fact that sufficient research in this field could provide a better understanding of organizational relations, most of the studies until recently have examined leadership as a form of one-way communication (Ruiz, Ruiz, & Martínez, 2010). Many other factors, such as follower's maturity, interpersonal skills, and job experience, affect the leadership phenomenon, which, upon further consideration, leads to an entirely new perspective on leadership as a two-way communication medium between two agents: leaders and followers (Ruiz et al., 2010).

Of utmost significance is the quality of the leader-follower relationship in which leaders flourish (Northouse, 2015). "The real measure of a leader lies in

their followers. At the core of this power is the relationship between the leader and the follower” (Cashman, 2017, p. 1). An organization’s success is built on two important constructs. First, how well their leaders truly lead; and second, how well their followers truly follow their leaders? These constructs accentuate the significance of the leader-follower relationship in the context of improving the followers’ satisfaction and thus their productivity. Economists, Oswald, Proto, and SgROI (2015), studied workers’ productivity and found happy workers showed a 12% increase in production, which was in sharp contrast to a 10% reduction in productivity of unhappy workers. These findings were not related to compensation, but the company’s willingness to invest in their employees’ support and satisfaction with leadership. Google reported an increase of 37% in employee satisfaction when they made such investments in leaders and followers in their organization (Parkes-Harrison, 2014).

The leader-follower relationship is symbiotic – requiring both for existence. The greatest importance is the relationship between the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2015). Trust in the culture of the organization and its leaders is undisputable (Clegg, Unsworth, Epitropaki & Parker, 2002; Dibben, 2000; Kramer & Tyler, 1996; Lewicki, McAllister & Bies, 1998; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer, 1998). “A trusting environment creates an atmosphere of increased employee self-esteem, enhanced productivity, and organizational communication” (Martin, Naylor, Jefferson, David, & Cavazos, 2015, p. 32). However, the absence of a trusting environment impacts each of these elements negatively and does specific harm to the foundations of a relationship between

the leader and followers. (Martin et al., 2015, p. 32). There is now renewed interest in recognizing the importance of trust in the leader-follower relationship as well as organizational and individual success. The LMX theory emphasizes the closeness of the relationship and how concentrating on the importance of the relationship can also lead to success.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

The LMX theory, initially called vertical dyadic linkage (VDL) and illustrated in Figure 2, emphasizes that the leader-follower relationship can be better understood when the “self is defined at a relational level” (Lord & Brown, 2004, p. 58).

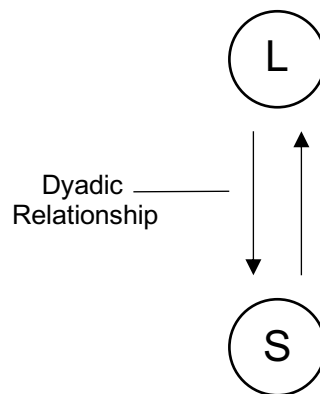


Figure 2: Dyadic Relationship. Leaders (L) form individualized working relationship with each of their subordinates (S). The exchanges (both content and process) between the leader and subordinates define their dyadic relationship” (Northouse, 2015, p. 162).

Northouse (2015) states that LMX

directs managers to assess their leadership from a relationship perspective. This assessment will sensitize managers to how in-groups and out-groups develop within their own work unit. In addition, LMX theory suggests ways in which managers can improve their work unity by building strong leader-member exchanges with all of their subordinates. (p. 172)

There are practical indications to attest that role learning and role performance are key factors in social interactions at dyadic levels and aid in the formation of relational-level identities (Kauppila, 2015). Effective relationships play a major role between leaders and followers because they allow the two parties to understand similarities in attitudes, beliefs, and ethics, while also providing an opportunity for leaders to identify themselves with their followers. Followers obtain their motivations and perceive their leadership qualities by observing leaders positively (Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2010). Figure 3 illustrates how the dyadic relationship is a combination of both the follower and the leader.

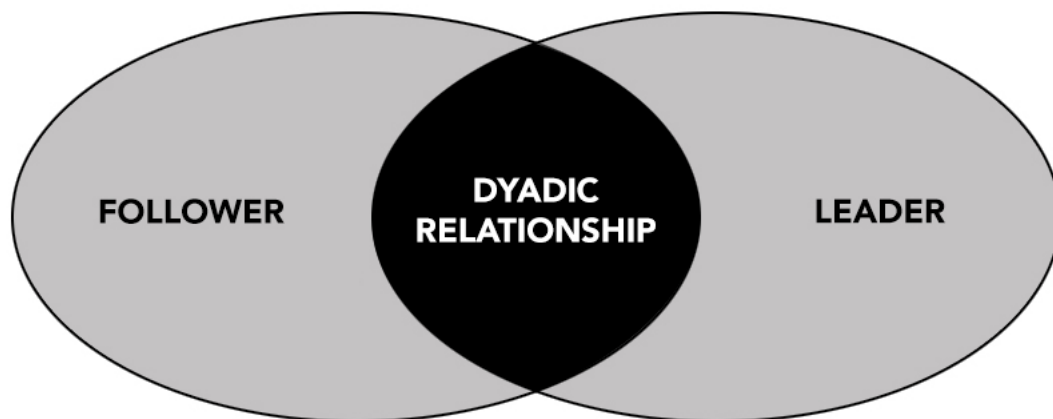


Figure 3. LMX Theory. LMX makes the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers the focal point of the leadership process. Northouse (2015), p. 162.

This effective relationship serves to increase the scope of learning from mistakes and errors. It also improves the dyadic relationship by understanding it as a secure way to form a personal relationship with the leader (Aron & McLaughlin-Volpe). LMX theory encourages leaders to be more aware of how they relate to their followers (members) and to be “sensitive to whether some

subordinates receive special attention and some subordinates do not”
(Northouse, 2015, p. 173).

Before diversifying into two different lines, the model was called the *vertical dyadic linkage* (Figure 2). The first developed model was termed the LMX model, although it was commonly referred to as the leadership-making model. The second developed branch was termed the individualized leadership model (LeBlanc & Gonzalez-Roma, 2012). Although the initial approach was revised, the major focus of the theory comprises the leadership processes. Leaders were theorized to behave similarly with all of their followers, exhibiting an average leadership style. However, by using LMX theory as indicated in Figure 4, researchers later recognized that leaders did not act similarly in interactions with all of their followers, but rather acted differently depending on the follower’s self-identity, thus gaining high-quality relationships (LeBlanc & Gonzalez-Roma, 2012).

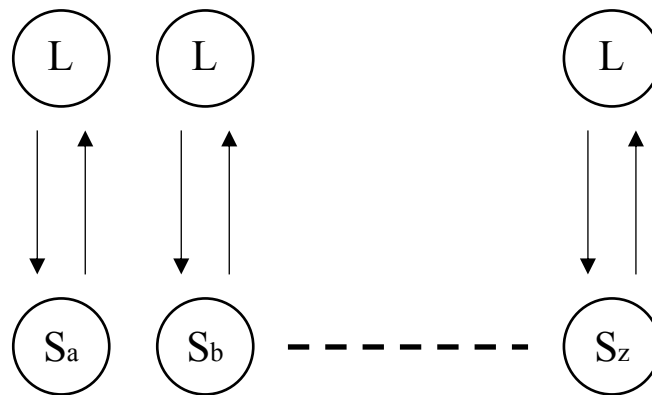


Figure 4. Unique Dyadic Relationship. There are special relationships between the leader (L) and each of the subordinates (S_i). (Northouse, 2015, p. 163).

The discovery led to research on the different ways leaders build relationships with their followers and also on the effects of the follower's self-identity on these processes (Van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, de Windt, & Alkema, 2014). LMX and average leadership style were considered in early research on 48 analysts, computer programmers, and nurses as well as their supervisors. Over time and through experience, researchers noted a distinct relationship between each of the followers and their leaders existed that equalized workflow (Caliskan, 2015). According to Caliskan (2015), LMX theory can be distinguished from the remaining leadership theories based on four factors:

1. a definitive theory determining the high-, mid-, and low-level group contributions to the organization,
2. a vertical dyadic relationship theory that focuses both on the leader and the follower,
3. an emphasis on the importance of effective communication on a relational level, and
4. the theory's ability to produce exceptional organizational results.

Leadership practices such as active listening, sensitivity to others' feelings, and restraint from imposing an organization's views would demonstrate high-quality exchanges between leaders and followers (Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2009). In practice, followers tend to allow higher-level exchanges upon realizing that their leader values them and their contributions (Tyler & Lind, 1992). This would serve to predict the quality of the relationship, initial

expectations, and effective relations between follower and leader. These practices lead to greater organizational commitment, satisfaction with the leadership process, job satisfaction, and internal job promotions (Humphrey, 2013).

Rahn (2010) found that the key phase of developing LMX is when employees become new subordinates to the company. The study included employees from a health care organization with approximately 5,800 employees in various locations. The study used the LMX– Multi-Dimensional Measure (LMX-MDM) scale as a measure for LMX. LMX can best be constructed using dimensions such as trust, respect, and obligation; however, LMX multidimensionality considers abstract values such as effect, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect conform with the dimensions underlying the LMX construct (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1998). The results stated that self-concept cannot have an influence on LMX. However, research by Johnson, Selenta, and Lord (2006) included employed students at Midwestern University who finished a survey for extra credit. Participants in the study included 191 students from a variety of departments (e.g., medicine, accounting, sales). Followers' self-concepts were found to influence interactional justice (i.e., with the supervisor or the leader). Also, the analysis noted the exceptional effect of individual and collective levels of self-identity upon organizational commitment. Furthermore, individuals' self-concepts at a relational level with the supervisor served as a good indicator of the expected and actual results (Johnson et al., 2006).

Graen and Uhl-Bien's (1998) Leader-member exchange model highlighted the potential differences between the leader and follower using the vertical dyad relationship theory. The model perceives leadership as a variable with several relationships that link the followers to the leader. The quality of the association is determined by respect, the extent of trust, obligation, and loyalty.

According to the literature, leaders form varied types of relationships with their groups of followers. As indicated in Figure 5, one group may be favored by the leader, and it is hence referred to as the in-group.

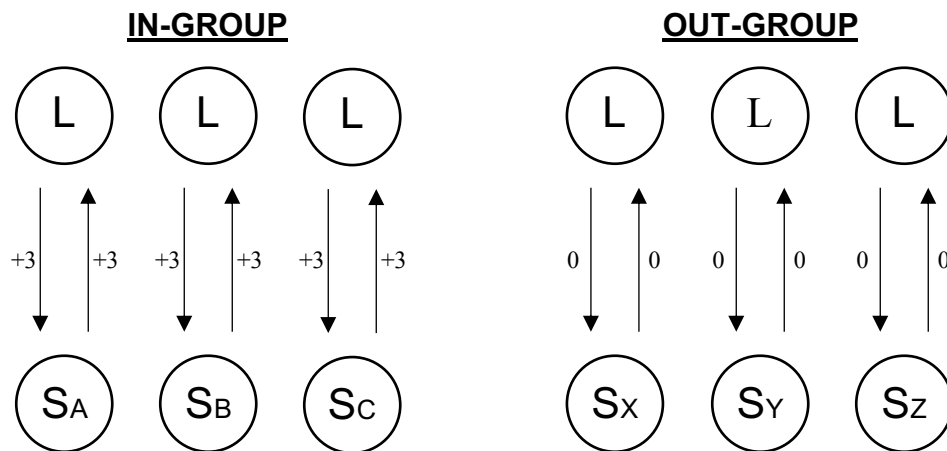


Figure 5. In-Group vs. Out-Group. A leader (L) and the subordinates (S_i) form unique relationships with mutual trust, respect, liking, and reciprocal influence in the in-group; and more formal communication, based upon job descriptions, in the out-group. Plus 3 denotes a high-quality relationship, whereas zero denotes relationships similar to those with a stranger (Northouse, 2015, p. 164).

In the in-group, members command more attention from the leader and are given more time and resources. In contrast, the remaining members belong to the out-group, who are out of favor with the leader and hence are perceived to be entitled to less value and fewer resources (Batten, Oakes, & Alexander,

2014). The in-group and out-group are distinguished by the leader based on their perceived similarity concerning characteristics such as gender, age, disability, and personality. One may be included in the in-group category if the leader views one as competent enough to perform the required tasks. The leader-follower relationship follows two stages (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006):

- Role taking: This is the level where new members join an organization or group. The team leader assesses their abilities and strengths before offering the opportunity to assume their roles.
- Role making: This is the negotiation between the leader and the follower on how to conduct oneself in the team. A member who follows the instructions of the leader is likely to succeed in joining the in-group, whereas one who fails to do so is likely to be relegated to the out-group.

The LMX-7 scale is comprised of seven items that assess the mutual respect between leaders and followers related to their capabilities, trust, and their obligation to each other. The LMX-7 scale also determines the magnitude to which the follower is a part of the in-group or out-group.

Although the performance and attitude of an individual are important in improving LMX, Cogliser, Schriesheim, Scandura, and Gardner (2009) studied 285 matched employees with their supervisors to understand the relationship between leader-follower congruence and job performance and attitude. The survey demonstrated the importance of leader-follower congruence with respect to followers' job performance and self-concepts in developing LMX theory. By understanding the followers' self-concepts, leaders can effectively improve relations with their followers, in turn increasing job performance and therefore relationships (Cogliser et al., 2009).

Furthermore, recent research by Jackson and Johnson (2012) collected questionnaires from 229 employees and their supervisors at a variety of jobs. The results proved that leader-member relationships stand strong when leaders share positive relational identities with their followers. Relational identity (a form of self-identity), between leaders and their followers, should be similar for their relationships to grow stronger (Jackson & Johnson, 2012). These studies have proven that leader-member relations can be effective when followers' self-concepts are identified by their leaders.

Out of the many theories for understanding the phenomenon, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) reveals how a leader can motivate and influence others to become part of an organization's success (Deluga, 1998; Erdogan, Liden, & Kraimer, 2006). LMX may be defined as the quality of exchanges that occur between a leader and an employee and differs from other leadership theories because it centers on the relationship between these pairs (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Initially, LMX was called the vertical dyad linkage (VDL) because it refers to a vertical dyad relationship between two individuals: the leader and the direct follower as indicated in Figure 2. Thus, LMX theory is considered important in the understanding of leadership processes. According to LMX, the leader and follower's relationship quality is predictive of outcomes on three levels, organizational, group, and individual (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

Communication between the leader and followers results in a two-way information flow. Interaction between them produces either of two results: (a) it builds the benefits of the relationship by providing more information to the

followers and obtaining a response from their leader (in-group); or (b) it hinders the relationship, resulting in a situation in which the leader and followers work only to finish the task or the contract that binds them (out-group). A leader may not be compatible with all the followers in a group (Anand, Vidyarthi, & Park, 2014). According to LMX, followers can usually be divided into two groups: the *in-group* and the *out-group*. The group with a high-quality exchange with the leader is called the in-group, whereas a group with a low-quality exchange is referred to as the out-group. The ideal leader should attempt to bring every follower into the in-group (Luo, Wang, Mamburg, & Ogaard, 2016).

Leaders' skill in gaining the trust of their groups is vital to achieving successful work among persons of different cultures and attitudes (LeBlanc & Gonzalez-Roma, 2012). High-quality exchanges between leaders and followers result in the successful completion of projects, improving employee morale, and thus reducing employee turnover (Kauppila, 2015). High-quality exchanges would also promote the employees to higher levels, because they would have a good relationship with superiors, thereby increasing the organization's scope. The most important piece of the leadership puzzle, therefore, lies in understanding and developing skills that build the leader-follower relationship. Properly understanding the leadership process and the leadership relationship, means recognizing the follower's self-identity as a critical and perhaps one of the most effective relationship factors. It is through the follower's self-identity and self-concept that they derive motivation, values, cognitions, and emotions and perceptions of social justice (Lord & Brown, 2003).

Self-Identity and Self-Concept

Self-identity influences followers' reactions to their leader (Lord et al., 1999). Furthermore, Lord et al. (1999) affirmed that leaders could channel their followers' self-identities and self-concepts, and thereby influence their behaviors to align them with the organization's principles and culture. Self-identity may be understood as the convergence of an individual's personal, cognitive, and social identities. It may also be seen as a collection of self-schemas perceived from social communication within a person's environment. Personal identity is self-differentiation based on perceived similarities with and differences from the rest of the followers. On the contrary, social identity is the extent to which individuals may relate to others in their environment. According to Lord and Brown (2004), the person's self-identity could be quantifiable at an individual, interpersonal, or collective level. A leader should understand these levels to maintain an effective medium of communication with followers.

Self-concept indicates how an individual perceives him- or herself in the world. Self is the point at which a person's personality, social nature, and cognitive psychology come together to define a *being* (Varga, 2011). Varga (2011) observed that the self is a comprehensive body that combines both memory and behavior. Thus, self creates structures including trait-like and script-like schemas, which align social behavior, producing social perceptions of the self. These social interactions and self-created perceptions create a self-identity, both personally and socially (Varga, 2011). Researchers have increased their efforts to understand self-identity as a significant moderator of behavior and

as a new theory to explain how it intermediates both interpersonal and intrapersonal processes. Epstein (1973) and Kelly (1991) note the motivation for this research is informed by these factors:

1. Self-concept can no longer be studied as the unitary whole.
2. To comprehend self-identity, knowledge of self-perception and one's reactions to social environments is critical.
3. Understanding and embracing the self involves the incorporation of numerous fields of psychology.

At the individual level, one's traits act as variants in differentiating the self from others, to presume one's worth in one's own community or organization. On an interpersonal level, self-schemas are influenced by one's relationships with others (e.g., professor–student, parent–child, leader–follower). At this level, people may define their experiences by observing the flow of information received through unconscious awareness. It is imperative for leaders to recognize that keeping track of unconscious activities is as important as maintaining effective communication. Passive followers take advantage of group events to express themselves, either to their colleagues or supervisors, and provide an opportunity for a leader to evaluate the group identity of each follower (Lord et al., 1999).

To guide individuals toward the same path as their leader, Lord and Brown (2004) found that an understanding of each person's self-identity and self-concept is crucial. Leaders must be ethical in nature to lead followers successfully, channel their attitudes, and promote their value to an organization. Further, leaders who are considered as moral persons and good managers will benefit from the followers' voluntary acceptance of their leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Many factors serve to gauge the relationship between leaders and

their followers, specifically job satisfaction, low turnover, organizational commitment, and citizenship behavior. It is important that leaders possess an understanding and knowledge of self-identities while demonstrating charisma among followers to gain their trust and build a relationship that exhibits transformational leadership.

Working Self-Concept

Self-identity contains a variety of self-perceptions that are not always active but that affect behaviors, depending on the social interaction. As all the selves present could not be positive, a subset of these selves, termed *working self-concept* (WSC), moderates behavior at any point in time (Kauppila, 2015). Despite the fact that self-identities appear at three levels—individual, interpersonal, and collective—only one will be active and affect a person’s behavior at a given time. Any of the three WSC identities will be initiated, depending on the social interaction. A person may be a student who pursues a psychology course in a college and the chairperson of a student activity center. In the course of learning, the student’s behavior is different from when acting in the capacity of a president of the student activity center. Researchers differentiate these activities depending upon the level of followers’ initiation at peripheral and core self-schemas. Acting as a child is much more salient and will thus be more active (core self-schema) than acting as a student (peripheral self-schema) (Isbell, McCabe, Burns, & Lair, 2013). Thus, Lord et al. (1999) described WSC as a “continually shifting combination of core self-schemas and peripheral aspects of the self-made salient (i.e., activated) by context” (p. 176).

Lord and Brown (2004) emphasized that WSC consist of three components: *self-views*, *current goals*, and *possible selves*.

A self-view is defined as an individual's perception of social standing as it relates to social context. A self-view may demonstrate athletic, intellectual, and social skills. In simple terms, it is the individual's perception of who he or she currently is. It may be influenced by the experiences he or she faces throughout life, whereas possible selves relate to who a person might be. Future goals and fears are also included in possible selves. Motivations for development and empowerment are influenced by possible selves (Uz & Kemmelmeier, 2014). These possible selves combined with self-views can benefit future self-development and factor into motivations accessed by the leader. Finally, current goals focus on short-term results and are characterized by narrow ways of thinking. They are powerful tools to form a structure or a script and therefore a behavior. The self-view also assists in making feedback serve a meaningful purpose. Should leaders provide feedback, followers could compare their current and projected behaviors (Lord & Brown, 2004). Providing feedback, in addition to ensuring effective communication of goals, policies, and expectations also creates a mutually cohesive and relaxed environment that fosters cooperation and unity of purpose. Haslam et al. (2011) concluded that employees across all company strata are more productive and much more motivated working with a leader whose intentions, targets, and aspirations are known and relayed through proper channels.

Leadership is a progression whereby an individual, essentially the leader, alters followers' visions and perceptions (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1998).

Understanding the followers' identities and helping followers understand the importance of channeling their identities to match the organization's goals, leaders often create an exceptional environment beneficial to the organization, institution, or nation. Working on the followers' self-identities, thereby improving their mutual relationships, can significantly benefit a leader. However, research conducted on the importance of recognizing followers' self-identities is limited in published articles and journals. Leaders influence decisions to provide rational outcomes for many events. Much research has been conducted on the required qualities of a leader, such as *Attributes of Successful Leaders in Research* by Willenberg (2014). Qualities of great leaders were observed and noted, over time providing a blueprint of the qualities leaders should possess. This blueprint has led to a one-sided view of leadership, emphasizing traits to be possessed by a leader and overlooking the followers, whose self-identity can be moderated through leadership (Malcher, 2016)

Friedman (2008) conducted an experiment using transformational leadership theories among a selected group of students at Harvard University. The outcomes demonstrated that leaders could create a strong emotional bond with their immediate and circuitous followers, enhancing the indirect followers' functionality. However, the results could not conclude that transformational leadership was the only schema that influenced indirect followers. With little understanding of the leadership processes, it is often difficult to achieve the

expected theoretical results. Another example of leader-focused experiments is the Pygmalion effect experiment conducted by Eden (1992) with his students. The Pygmalion effect is a scenario in which a manager is led to think that a follower's performance is higher than it is, which should result in better performance results. Thus, leaders might develop the idea that their employees are top performers with positive qualities that could easily be cultivated to deliver the expected results. However, manipulating leaders' perception of their followers' capabilities did not yield better performance from the followers (Friedman, 2008). These compelling experiments laid the foundation for a better understanding of leadership; however, they failed to address the followers' self-concepts. After a thorough investigation, unlike the leader-focused processes, the follower's self-concept was found to be instrumental in better understanding leadership (Lapierre, Naidoo, & Bonaccio, 2012).

There are significant reasons for considering the follower's self-identity as a medium to better understand leadership. These reasons cannot be overstated in light of their gravity for employees' morale and job satisfaction. Self-concept, like self-identity, has substantial influence in shaping the perception of the follower toward the leader and the follower's overall performance. Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2011) came to the conclusion that leaders' charisma lies in their ability to influence followers and align them to the organizational growth strategies. The followers' self-concepts allow leaders to understand and influence them. Also, followers must develop from within, and leaders should transform followers' social and cognitive processes by possessing and

distributing accessible knowledge. Eventually, effective leaders must be able to disseminate information to followers, individually or as a group, with a better understanding of their self-concepts. Poor communication between leaders and their followers may lead to dismal performance. Should leaders provide accessibly or easily understood concepts to their followers, this would affect the schemas, attitudes, or other structures that are accessible to followers. Self-identity is a component of an array of psychosocial constructs, and therefore its proper understanding from the leader is useful in making an effective leader (Lord & Brown, 2004).

Social Identity Theory

According to MacKinnon and Heise (2010), self-identification within an organizational setup is often considered an important aspect for the attainment of employee satisfaction and organizational success. The social-psychological perspective of social identity theory (SIT) can be viewed from three perspectives: socialization, role conflict, and intergroup relations (Papacharissi, 2011).

According to SIT, people categorize themselves by organizational membership, religious affiliation, and gender cohort (Mackinnon & Heise, 2010). Social classification affords people two functions. First, it allows them to define others and segment the social environment in which they live. A person may classify others as belonging to particular categories, which is not always reliable. Second, it allows people to define themselves in the social environment in which they live. Self-identity includes personal identification factors such as bodily attributes or social identity, which includes group classifications (Hogg, 2006).

Therefore, social identification can be seen as a process through which self-identity is developed based on in-group identity and perceptions of being a member of a social or cultural group (MacKinnon & Heise, 2010).

According to Burke and Stets (2009), social identification may be derived from the concept of group identification and is based on four principles. First, identification is seen as an individual's perspective of a person and does not require any group goals; instead, the person's perception of the group must be recognized. Consequences include behaviors or effects on the group. Second, SIT is the person's ability to experience the results as part of the group, not considering success or failure. Third, identification can be distinguished from internalization. *Identification* refers to social terms, such as the perception of self in a group; meanwhile, *internalization* refers to beliefs and values that guide the self as a part of the social process. According to the fourth principle, identification with the group is similar to identification with a person (e.g., wife–husband, father–son). Identification, therefore, refers to recognition of the social referent.

Organizational identification is seen as a form of social identification. Thus, an organization may clarify the question, “Who am I?” Apart from the organization, individuals' social identity may be channeled from their work department, union, and fast-track group. Holographic organizations may differentiate themselves when people share a common identity throughout the organization. According to Ouchi's Theory Z (Ouchi, 1981), management can optimize the productivity of employees by guaranteeing their well-being within

and outside the place of work. In doing so, management would enhance employee loyalty to the company, which is a core component of performance. Although social or group identification constructs have long been defined, little research has connected self-identification with organizations. The perceivable results of SIT, when applied to organizations, can be understood by applying them to the concepts of organizational socialization, role conflict, and intergroup relations (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

1. *Organizational socialization*: This is essential for new entrants in the company because they need to become aligned with the company's goals and culture. Also, they might develop a self-definition that includes social identity as a major part.
2. *Role conflict*: Considering the number of groups to which a person might belong, one's social identity might be influenced by various other identities. Also, personal beliefs and values might conflict with a newly forming identity.
3. *Intergroup relations*: An ideal organization will have subunits in which members share a common social identity unique to that particular subunit.

These principles and theories of SIT provide a profound idea about the differences between organizational identification and organizational commitment or loyalty. Therefore, SIT refers to a person's self-identity as a part of a group and identification as a group experience whether they are a success or a failure

(Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Deaf identity is based in large part on being part of a group that is immersed in a unique culture and language.

Deaf Identity

As defined earlier, identity is the development of cognitive and social abilities with certain structures that allow a person to connect socially (Leigh, 2009). “Despite the oppressed group history of the minority D/deaf community, studies suggest the D/deaf identity is evolving and becoming more empowered” (Sondossi, 2014, p. 2). There is a debate about the nature of identity as categorized into two perspectives: primordialism or essentialism (constructivist or nonessentialism). The essentialism theory states that identity is predetermined, relative, and occurs naturally, resulting in shared traditions, truths, and cultures (Horowitz, 2012). A Deaf child born to Deaf parents has relatively greater Deaf culture and values and would be recognized as having a strong identity in socializing with the group’s culture. On the contrary, the constructivist perspective asserts that identity is not created either by the self or social gatherings. Rather, the cultural environment and social perceptions of self will create an identity (Lindgren et al., 2008). Nikolarazi and Hadjikakou’s (2006) study “indicated that the most critical educational experiences for the participants’ identity concerned their interactions with hearing or deaf peers and their language of communication with their peers at school” (p. 477). A Deaf person’s identity will change depending on the social and economic interactions experienced in life. A Deaf identity may manifest when the person meets other

Deaf individuals at a Deaf Festival, or the individual may embody another identity when meeting a group of Deaf people for the first time (Leigh, 2009).

These interactions with Deaf-cultured people will change the individual's internal identity continuously, forming a fixed identity over time. In turn, the individual will be motivated to follow a certain behavior or social interaction that influences and motivates him or her. Identity is modified from time to time, depending upon interactions, and is a continuous process, enhancing the present perspective to form a new one (Scheetz, 2012). Individuals may run through different identities (e.g., son, student, librarian, employee, father, grandfather) throughout their lives. In the context of deafness, then, the identity the person embodies may include hard-of-hearing or hearing impaired, whichever is suitable (Leigh, 2009). Adolescence is the major time in life during which identity issues should be addressed; otherwise, identity diffusion and problematic psychological actions during the later stages of life may increase (Hardy, 2010).

Self-perception has a major role in modulating one's identity. Research has found that psychosociological interconnections are critical in exposing a person to various social interactions, thereby influencing the construction of an identity, depending upon the self-perception of the individual (Johnson, 2011). To manifest an identity, the individual should possess self-esteem and confidence to be able to manage relationships and consider identity choices. An individual who has participated in many Deaf cultural interactions may have many identity choices to select from, which again depends on the person's self-perception (Leigh, 2009). Self-esteem can drive a person to have a positive

attitude and a positive social identity. Leigh (2009) concluded that self-esteem as a result of a shared culture assisted individuals in developing a sense of self-consciousness. The culture protected them from social groups that tended to belittle them during both childhood and adulthood, which would have resulted in an identity that considered deafness a disability rather than a human variation (Scheetz, 2012). Providing the right opportunities for the deaf to adopt the Deaf culture would create a profound self and social identity (Johnson, 2011), which, in turn, would make the individual feel comfortable enough to move within hearing culture.

Glickman (1993) pioneered research on the development of Deaf identity. His research aim was to develop a model that identifies Deaf culture and an instrument that measures the same. The study classified Deaf identity based on four developmental stages: *culturally hearing*, to refer to individuals whose dominant culture is hinged on hearing; *culturally marginal*, referring to all persons who exhibit confusion and shifting loyalties in their affiliation to the hearing and deaf worlds; *immersion identity*, referring to individuals with a militant radical deaf standpoint; and the *bicultural*, referring to individuals from balanced deaf and hearing cultures. The study also emphasized that people should strive to first recognize that the deaf and the hearing are only different regarding their culture and then identify the Deaf culture as a unique culture just like other minority cultures.

Other studies building on Glickman's (1993) idea of Deaf identity also uncovered improved findings. For instance, Holcomb (1997) developed the

following seven categories that identify the deaf based on their degree of experience of the Deaf community:

- Balanced bicultural: Deaf individuals who are at least comfortable being among both the hearing and the deaf
- Deaf-dominant bicultural: Individuals who identify more with the Deaf community but have no problem relating well with the hearing culture
- Hearing-dominant bicultural: Individuals who have limited engagement with the Deaf community but have no problem in interacting with the deaf
- Culturally isolated: Individuals who are not related to the Deaf culture and who shun involvement with the deaf
- Culturally separate: Individuals who prefer to identify with deaf people so as to minimize their interaction with individuals with normal hearing
- Culturally marginal: Individuals who are uncomfortable in both the hard-of-hearing community and the group that has no hearing difficulties
- Culturally captive: A deaf individual who has never had the chance to meet or interact with other deaf people or learn about their culture (p. 90)

Bat-Chava (2000) used cluster analysis to theorize about the existence of three identities based on mobility strategies and social change among the members of minority groups in achieving a positive social identity. The study classified Deaf identity as culturally hearing, bicultural, and culturally deaf.

The composition of American society has continually evolved into a multicultural one, and the Deaf community has not been left behind in its understanding of its identity and diversity. Theorists have also identified the evident shift from the traditional cultural to the bicultural in the American Deaf community. It is also apparent that multicultural components have become more significant with the incorporation of the hearing community into Deaf culture.

How the relationships between the two groups relate is about their cultures, and the degree of variation requires measurement and specification.

Being bicultural does not mean a state of belonging to two cultures, but rather to a state of tension. Tension emerges when deaf individuals interact with different components of the Deaf community as well as to hearing groups at work, school, restaurants, and social places. Biculturalism should not only involve the development of ability in two cultures but also the capability to handle the tension caused by the clash of values and beliefs between hearing and Deaf cultures. If deaf people are allowed to be bicultural—that is, to be affiliated with both deaf and hearing cultures—this will make them feel loyal to both cultures. Both the DCAS and DAS can be used to measure how deaf individuals develop their cultural identities in the intricate world.

Deaf Identity Development

Classifications of Deaf identity have been devised by several researchers (Bat-Chava, 2000; Chen, 2014; Glickman, 1993; Holcomb, 1997; Maxwell-McCaw, Leigh, & Marcus, 2000). Maxwell-McCaw et al. (2000) assumed that most deaf individuals are raised by hearing parents, and such parents are likely to use speech to communicate with their children as the primary means of communication. There is much negativity about Deaf culture, sign language, and the environment in which deaf children are raised. Deaf people in such an environment are therefore likely to conform to the environment around them.

Improving factors such as the self-awareness of deaf individuals, especially by encouraging their interaction with other deaf people, will likely lead

to a state of dissonance where individuals will prefer to identify with the deaf more than the hearing community (Leigh, 2009). After immersing themselves in the minority Deaf culture, they will change their identity and understand the differences between the hearing and Deaf cultures. This engaging means that at some point in life, most deaf individuals identify themselves with Deaf culture, Deaf identity, and bicultural identity.

Deaf Acculturation Scale

The Deaf Acculturation Scale was developed by Maxwell-McCaw and Zea (2011) to measure a person's Deaf identity and acculturation. The DAS consists of 58 items and uses a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The elements were established to correspond to themes of identity development of deaf individuals (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011). Individual assessment is based on sub-scales. The first three sub-scales: cultural identification, cultural involvement, and cultural preferences measure a deaf individual's identity or psychological degree of acculturation to the Deaf culture (e.g. "I feel part of the Deaf world") and acculturation or behavioral response to being exposed to a new Deaf culture (e.g. "Socializing with hearing people"). The internalization and amalgamation of those values associated with Deaf culture are measured by cultural identification. Cultural involvement measures individual's behaviors and the amount of participation in specific cultural activities. The choices made regarding friends, partners, employment and scholastic settings are measured by cultural events (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011). The other two acculturation scales: cultural knowledge and language

competence, measure other aspects of Deaf and hearing culture competence. For example, “*How well do you know important events in Deaf history.*” measures the degree of knowledge of Deaf and hearing culture. Language competence deals with ASL and the individual’s receptive and expressive skills. Cultural knowledge is related to how well the participant knows *Deaf World Knowledge* and involvement in the *Deaf Experience* (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011). Finally, items such as “How well do you speak English using your voice” are used to measure a deaf individual’s degree of ability to communicate within the Deaf and hearing culture.

Acculturation is determined by averaging participants’ scores within each sub-scale and then averaging the scores within the DASd and DASH scales. An individual could be placed in one of four categories: Hearing acculturated, Deaf acculturated, Marginal acculturated and Bicultural (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011). Each acculturation scale is an indication of the *type* of acculturation possessed by the individual; hearing culture, deaf culture, or a combination of the two cultures.

Deaf Culture

In today’s world of globalization, leaders must deal with multiple cultures and attitudes; it is important to have the cultural intelligence to work with diverse employees and focus them on the organization’s goals. This directed focus is particularly the case in regards to knowledge of Deaf and hard-of-hearing employees and their unique language, culture, and identity.

Culture can be defined as the localized way of doing things, individually or as a group or society (Deal & Kennedy, 2000). People have adopted a system from experience transmitted from generation to generation for the betterment of their community. Society is composed of many cultures, each consisting of very specific behaviors, beliefs, and values shared among members. Culture also includes a common language, norms, rules of social interaction, and institutions. This study focuses on Deaf Culture and Deaf identity in a quest to identify the effects of Deaf identity on the leader-follower relationship (Holcomb, 2013). Deafness can be perceived in two ways: (a) a disability that must be fixed (medical model) or (b) a culture (cultural difference model) whereby Deaf culture has its values and traditions passed on through social interactions and a unique language (Lindgren, DeLuca, & Napoli, 2008).

Individuals born deaf or hard-of-hearing may be born to hearing parents; this situation results in less exposure to Deaf culture and its traditions. Parents of deaf children might assist their children in learning about Deaf culture, thereby helping them to understand that they are not alone. With this support, these children may have social experiences that assist them in obtaining a social identity, which shapes the interpersonal and cognitive skills of an individual. Because most deaf children are born to hearing parents (90%), researchers have observed that most are forced to mingle with Hearing people's culture and that a most commonly observed trait of this culture is to make them learn a spoken language rather than the visual ASL. ASL is a visual language for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals encompassing its grammar structures and syntax.

Individuals' Deaf identity relies on their understanding of their differences, unique culture, and unique language. Lindgren et al. (2008) recommended that parents assist the deaf individual in developing interpersonal skills, fostering a Deaf identity by encouraging Deaf pride, Deaf Culture, and a sense of Deaf community.

Advances in medicinal studies have tried to prevent or cure those conditions termed diseases or disabilities. Alternative approaches, such as providing hearing aids or listening devices, are being developed in the name of technology, and they recognize hearing difference as a disability. Another approach is to encourage deaf persons to use English, to help them feel at ease and able to communicate as many other people do. However, Scheetz (2012) concluded medical inventions are overtaking hearing differences, providing assistance in curing them, and creating problems for people who would like to communicate without any hearing aids or in a different language (Harvey, 2005). The term *disability* can refer to incompetence, powerlessness, a form of burden, or a condition that one must overcome with confidence and motivation. This is exemplified each time deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals try to act similarly to their hearing peers. Deaf people may not consider their lack of hearing as a disability, but rather may assert themselves as people whose communication barriers have not let them down. It is in this perspective that *Deaf* and *deaf* manifest in social schemas and are demystified or accepted as a human variation. As pointed out earlier in this study, deafness arises from several fronts, and society should not discriminate against anyone on such a basis.

Awareness should be encouraged to stop any perception that such challenges amount to disability in any form.

Having a shared language, beliefs, and traditions, people from a culture and cultural identity are influenced by interactions with specific individuals within that shared culture. Deaf culture is a relatively new term in the Deaf community, initially referred to as the *Deaf world* (Papacharissi, 2011). An experiment was conducted on the initial interactions of Deaf people, focusing only on people who could not hear and who did not allow hearing people to join their community, resulting in increased communication barriers between hearing and non-hearing people. Over time, Deaf communities incorporated a variety of individuals, including the oral deaf, the hard-of-hearing, and the hearing, thus moving toward a common goal of reducing language barriers.

Deaf culture became familiar to the world after the publication of *Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture* by Padden and Humphries (1989), which described how Deaf people view the world from a cultural perspective rather than from one of disability. The word *deaf* is used in two ways: deaf and Deaf. Rather than opting for a spoken language or seeking hearing aids or other forms of augmentation, a Deaf person will find other ways to communicate, such as by learning and embracing ASL. Deaf people may, therefore, communicate through body language, eye contact, and genuine meanings of ASL (Leigh, 2009). This communication preference has resulted in a growing culture of shared beliefs, increasing informal communications with Deaf people through organizations or schools. The daily life of a deaf person has been depicted in literature, theater

performances, and visual art. Now the Deaf community is referred to as Deaf culture because of a shift from being defined by Hearing people to one of discovering the Deaf voices and identity that form the culture and better define completeness (Humphries, 2008).

The leader-follower relationship does not exist without the follower and the follower's culture. The follower's self-concept, rooted in culture, plays a major role in the *follower organizational citizenship behavior* and the leader-follower connection (Vondey, 2008, p. 83). Ultimately, understanding and appreciation of the follower's self-concept and culture leads to leader effectiveness (Ehrhart, 2015). Deaf identity and Deaf Culture are connected in that culturally Deaf individuals derive a significant Deaf identity from their culture.

Deaf culture is considered a contrast to, and a defense from, the repressive hearing world for most members of the Deaf community. Apart from offering support, it gives a sense of identity to members and to outsiders who classify themselves in the hearing group and who think that they are the group with the communication problem. Deaf culture incorporates some members of the hearing group (e.g., hearing children of deaf adults) and the deaf, but is also exclusionary because of the special way in which it perceives the world. Thus, there is a negative opinion of the groups and the masses who voice a contrary opinion about the Deaf community.

Deaf culture is rarely open to those in the deaf group who do not resonate with the Deaf identity. Napier (2002) showed that hearing people do not always consider themselves as a part of the Deaf community. They may only become

involved if they are born to deaf parents who are members, or for occupational purposes. This group of people such as American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters are sometimes considered belonging to the Deaf community. The study also states that membership in the Deaf community takes four forms: physical hearing status; social relationship with the Deaf community; support for the Deaf community; and knowledge of ASL with a positive attitude toward the deaf and having a Deaf identity.

Some deaf individuals experience an impaired state of consciousness (Fischer & McWhirter, 2001; Gertz, 2003; Napier, 2002). Though they may distance themselves from the dominant Deaf culture, they still borrow some antithetical practices from that culture (Fischer & McWhirter, 2001). In this respect, such deaf individuals undergo an impaired state of consciousness: a condition commonly known as *dysconscious audism*. This term is used to describe a phenomenon where an individual accepts some dominant privileges and hearing norms (Gertz, 2003). It is an impaired form of consciousness and a partisan way of thinking concerning deaf consciousness, and not merely the absence of consciousness. The theory of dysconscious audism is based on the argument that, because the hearing society is the dominant group, it is more relevant than the Deaf community (Gertz, 2003). This hearing group of people is classified as lacking a deaf consciousness that will connect them to the Deaf identity and therefore causes them to erroneously believe that deaf people need to be incorporated into mainstream culture.

Deaf Culture Competency

Deaf culture in America sprung from the historical treatment of deaf individuals by mainstream society. Historically, deaf people experienced paternalistic treatment, also known as audism, from the hearing population, because of their lack of speech and inability to use English (Hankins, 2015; Stinson & Liu, 1999). Their victimization included negative stereotyping such as a perceived lack of intelligence; wrong institutionalization caused by teaching them alongside hearing students; the use of the same methods used to instruct hearing students; and wrong diagnoses as psychotic or mentally disabled people (Moore & Levitan, 2003). Lessons drawn from these negative experiences led deaf people to seek high-quality medical treatment to make them feel more like those who are not deaf. The hearing group has predominantly held the notion that a deaf person should abandon the use of ASL to be successful (Moore & Levitan, 2003). This concept has caused some individuals in the deaf population to devalue the uniqueness of Deaf culture and join mainstream society. It has also caused deaf children to miss early learning of ASL and culture, which may be the worst handicap for deaf children to experience. At the beginning of the 20th century, deaf people were taught to read lips and even speak, a skill that was determined to be unreliable and very difficult to acquire for most deaf individuals (Schiff & Thayer, 1974).

Additionally, deaf people in America were denied the basic rights of hearing citizens, such as the right to vote or marry. Their children were taken away to learn in special schools in deaf residences. The deaf also had to carry

the burden of handling the communication problems that exist between themselves and the mainstream population, because the latter disregarded Deaf identity and ASL (Moore & Levitan, 2003). The response by the Deaf community to this suffering has been to form deaf organizations, clubs, and schools, which have given them a sense of closeness and identity. According to Peters (2007), the act of identifying deaf people as a special group was brought about by their historical discrimination and their need to live comfortably apart from the hearing population. Today, the Deaf community stands strongly together and prefers the use of ASL over spoken communication. The main factor that limits the access of the deaf population to the mainstream world is the mainstream population's reluctance to understand the former's communication needs (Most, Weisel, & Tur-Kaspa, 1999). A major component of Deaf Culture and Deaf identity is language – American Sign Language.

American Sign Language

People adopting a particular culture may communicate through different channels, one of which is language. Language is closely related to culture, given that languages cannot be fully comprehended without the cultural context in which they exist (Mahadi & Jafari, 2012). Deaf culture emphasizes that no deaf person is impaired and that anyone can use ASL as a primary language to communicate both with the Deaf and Hearing cultures. Before the first school was established in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817, many signed languages prevailed in the United States (Snoddon, 2009). At the beginning of the 17th century, Martha's Vineyard Sign Language was used on the island of Martha's

Vineyard by deaf and hard-of-hearing people. The present-day ASL is a combination of several signed languages, including Martha's Vineyard Sign Language and Old French Sign Language, introduced in the United States by Laurent Clerc, a deaf teacher. Signed language instruction for deaf and hard-of-hearing people is referred to as Methodical Sign Language, which is a combination of the Old French and English sign languages. Its structure resembles spoken English, including signs for prepositions and adjectives to increase comprehension among the hearing population. Instructors found that deaf and hard-of-hearing students did not prefer methodical signing, however, and instead used natural signed language (Snoddon, 2009). From 1834-1835, methodical signing was removed from all Deaf schools, and ASL came into existence. The two primary reasons for this shift were: (a) methodological signing involved too many gestures to sign a single word, and was not always perceptible after the entire sentence was signed; and (b) students never used it for practical purposes, perceiving it as an artificial and challenging language.

ASL then became the emerging language, and analysts and linguists began working to prove that ASL has a grammar and structure. After research completed by Stokoe (2005), ASL was recognized as a legitimate human language. Just as English words can be broken down into consonants and vowels, ASL is similarly an integration of handshapes, locations, movements, and palm orientation. With these breakthroughs, ASL was recommended to be the first language for native ASL students, whereas English should be the second language. The 1988 Gallaudet University *Deaf President Now* movement took

the Deaf world by storm and created exceptional awareness of Deaf culture among the Hearing culture (Greenwald & Vickrey, 2008). Deaf leaders emerged to act as superintendents, and board members came forward to run the schools and increase the importance of ASL recognition as a language compatible with English for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. ASL was then recognized as a foreign language by many universities for hearing students in international universities. A comprehensive survey by the Modern Language Association released in 2006 stated that ASL is the fourth most taught language, and it has seen a significant increase in student enrollment in the United States, from 1,602 in 1990 to 78,829 in 2006 (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2008). The prevalence of ASL means leaders will eventually have to deal with the language differences between themselves and their deaf followers.

Despite significant advancements in ASL and its recognition as a language, debates over ASL literacy and literature have not yet subsided. Because ASL does not provide any written context, it is not considered a literate language by some professionals. Although there is an exceptional awareness that literacy does not include only reading and writing skills, there is still an argument for ASL literacy. To define ASL literacy, the following standards are accepted by the ASL (Snoddon, 2011) regarding the positions of literacy:

1. ASL functional literacy enables a person to communicate effectively with the Deaf world.
2. Cultural literacy includes beliefs and traditions of the Deaf culture that a person needs to understand to recognize ASL literary works and their contribution to the lives of Deaf people.

3. Critical literacy is the ability of sign language to empower the Deaf community and provide them with a medium of interaction with the rest of the community and the world.

Literacy can be defined as the inherent ability to think logically and reason through a maze of ideas, objections, and suggestions to arrive at a satisfactory result. Deaf people, feeling confident about their literacy in at least one language, can actively engage with the Hearing culture and overcome everyday challenges, succeed, and obtain gainful employment. One of the most profound characteristics of any culture is the language used by the members of the cultural group. American Sign Language is the common language of those that identify as members of the Deaf community. Language acquisition must occur before puberty (Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978). Mayberry's (2007) research is consistent "across the studies showing the age of the initial language (L1) acquisition to be a determining factor in the success of both the first language and the second language acquisition" (p. 537). This finding is significant when considering leaders attempt to use written English to communicate with Deaf followers instead of using ASL or an ASL interpreter. The age of onset of hearing loss could indicate the skill level in which the deaf individual can acquire and use English. Mayberry (2007) states:

The mean English reading grade achievement of the group with high ASL grammatical skills was at the post-high school level. By contrast, the mean English reading achievement of the group with low ASL grammatical skills group was between Grades 3 and 4 (p. 547).

Research indicates that many parents do not know how to sign or force their deaf child to only use speech and lip reading (English). Hence language acquisition can be impaired (Ellis, Lieberman, & Dummer, 2014).

In the context of this study and similar studies involving deaf participants, the distinct differences between English and ASL had to be addressed. Deaf participants, many fluent in ASL, were asked to take a survey that was written in English. This language incompatibility involves completing an English to ASL back-translation of the survey instrument.

Interaction between Hearing and Deaf

It is widely known that there are differences in the modes of communication between the Deaf community and the hearing population. The main reason a difference exists between the hearing and deaf populations is that these populations have diverse perceptions regarding what is *good communication*—what is appropriate communication and what is not (Ostrove & Oliva, 2010). A study by Van Gent, Goedhart, and Treffers (2011) showed that deaf people have, on many occasions, pretended to understand the language of the hearing population during interactions, recognizing all aspects of communication, especially when communicating with people with the ability to hear.

Studies and personal observations have shown that deaf people can be successful in every aspect of life, except in situations where other people exhibit negative stereotypes or view them as medically handicapped (Kyle & Pullen, 1988). This phenomenon and how it affects the relationship between the deaf and hearing groups in a leader-follower relationship will be measured in this study. The deaf are often misunderstood and mislabeled for their lack of hearing ability, because their inability to hear is not physically noticeable. Ostrove and

Oliva (2010) affirmed that communication with persons who are deaf could be influenced by the notion that speaking and hearing are preferable to lip-reading and signing. Deaf individuals wish that hearing people would communicate in a way that accommodated the deaf and enabled them to comfortably participate in conversations. Moreover, these deaf individuals also wish that their close family members and people around them (i.e., coworkers and supervisors) would learn ASL to enhance communication and demonstrate their desire to enhance relationships (Stinson & Liu, 1999).

Hearing individuals who intend to associate, or already are associated, with the deaf should learn ASL, because the use of interpreters is perceived as being too impersonal (Ostrove & Oliva, 2010). Moreover, the communication constraints arising from processing information between the hearing and the deaf is due to the idea that auditory information is more important than other forms of communication like lip-reading. However, some deaf people cannot employ the use of spoken words; they can only make sounds, tones, and inflections (Allison, 1995). Therefore, such deaf people employ additional resources to support interaction between them and the hearing group. Body language, facial expressions, and the sharpness of hand movements are often more interactive for differentiating emotions compared to auditory information. The difference in communication and interaction is the leading cause of the disconnect between the deaf and the hearing, because the latter may not understand the message being conveyed by the former, and the former may not be able to hear the latter's inflections and speech (Stinson & Liu, 1999).

There are all sorts of misinterpretations that the two groups can make: viewing the other's body language and facial expressions as too dull or too happy; misreading body language; making prolonged eye contact; and feeling uncomfortable with too much speech. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that deaf people are mostly in close relationships with fellow deaf individuals because they know about their community's difficulties in forming relationships with the hearing group, and communicate effectively with each other. Surprisingly, hearing people, not familiar with Deaf culture, do not subscribe to the notion that deaf people are mostly in a close relationship with fellow deaf individuals (Stinson & Liu, 1999).

Attitudes and Perceptions about Deafness

Studies on the historical treatment of deaf people and medical views of the condition have been overwhelmingly negative. Medical views involve a pathological approach to deafness as something being broken and in need of repair. Some professionals in the field of deafness see the inability to hear as a disease or medical-pathological condition. Kyle and Pullen (1988) stated that it is not possible to enhance the life of a deaf person without considering the major impediment of how society views such a person. The attitude toward deafness among the hearing population varies from study to study (Bat-Chava & Deignan, 2001). For instance, Scheetz (2004) found that the hearing population rated deaf people as slow, more solitary, reserved, dependent, less assertive, less confident, and less prone to making friends. Another study indicated that hearing people often feel irritated, disturbed, embarrassed, and frustrated because of

their unmet expectations in the process of conversing with a deaf person (Cambra, 2000). There is often an abrupt end to such communication because of the discomfort felt by the hearing person, which makes the environment unpleasant for both individuals (Scheetz, 2004). During such encounters, deaf individuals often realize that the hearing group is uncomfortable in engaging in conversations with them, leading to feelings of loneliness, frustration, and isolation. In some cases, feelings of being disadvantaged or handicapped are reinforced by friends and family members of the deaf. Eventually, deaf people's idea of how the hearing group perceives them affects their self-esteem and identity (Yuker, Block, & Albertson, 1966).

Although mainstream society feels that the Deaf community should be helped, Deaf culture calls for the need for respect and understanding as the basis of the interaction between the two. LaBelle, Booth-Butterfield, and Rittenour (2013) used the intergroup communication model, which postulated that communication on one or both sides was based on their perception of the other individual's group rather than of their personality. If the perceived group is different from one's group, the other person is then considered as an out-group (Broesterhuizen, 2005). Based on previous studies, LaBelle et al. (2013) postulated that people from the hearing group would negatively perceive the deaf group as an out-group. Intergroup anxiety is the discomfort in interacting with individuals from the perceived out-group due to preconceived expectations that are mostly negative or due to anxiety caused by the inability to effectively communicate with the out-group. LaBelle et al. (2013) also predicted that

frequent and increased interaction between the two out-groups would lessen the perceived intergroup anxiety, but an increased level of social dominance would breed a negative attitude among the hearing group. Increased contact between deaf people and the hearing group is therefore negatively correlated with negative attitudes toward the deaf (Clymer, 1995). The study concluded that negative attitudes by the hearing group are still common and that intergroup anxiety and the level of interaction between the two are the main causes. There is, therefore, a call for increased levels of contact between hearing and deaf groups to enhance communication and lower negative perceptions (Yuker et al., 1966).

Often, hearing people perceive deaf people as incomplete; however, Deaf people view themselves as achieving a state of completeness. In Snoddon's (2009) opinion, the Deaf-centered perception has emerged to define Deaf people as simply a different form of human normalcy. These shifts in perceptions about Deaf culture have led Humphries (2008) to quote the present goal, moving from "How are we different?" to "How are we being?" (p. 19).

During the *Deaf President Now* movement, Jordan said, "We can do anything but hear" (Jordan, 1998, p. 1). McIlroy and Storbeck (2011) showed the increasing importance of recognizing Deaf culture and developing a Deaf identity for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Acknowledging deafness as a culture with values, traditions, and a common language as well as a community creates a foundation for accepting that deafness is in fact "an individual and collective experience" which contributes to a strong Deaf identity (Carter, 2015, p. 148).

Past studies on the psychological behaviors of deaf people revealed that 40% had suffered mental illness at some point in their lives (Hindley, Hill, McGuigan, & Kitson, 1994). To prevent mental problems, a strong foundation should be laid in the lives of deaf and hard-of-hearing people, to enhance their self-perceptions, create a strong self-identity, and prevent them from becoming socially isolated. Studies have shown that attendance at Deaf events has enormously helped deaf people interact with greater comfort, self-esteem, and sense of belonging.

Emotions and Deafness

Van Gent et al. (2011) investigated whether the degree of deafness and the level of contact between deaf people and the hearing group affect the former's emotional well-being and self-esteem. In the study, the researchers predicted that regular contact between the deaf and the hearing group would be positively associated with emotional problems such as stress, anxiety and anger issues. This hypothesis was formulated based on related studies whose findings indicated that the regular interaction of deaf and hearing individuals is negatively associated with the acceptance of deaf individuals in mainstream society. The findings of the study displayed some unexpected correlations (Heider, 1948). The findings showed no relationship between the level of contact between the deaf and the hearing and the former's emotional and self-esteem problems. The findings were different from other studies that concluded that the degree of interactions between the deaf and the hearing have significant implications for the emotional well-being of the former.

Audism

The leader-follower relationship can be harmed by audism. To identify discrimination against Deaf people, Humphries (2008) coined the term *audism*, which is gaining in prominence, along with other oppression-themed words such as racism, sexism, classism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, and ableism. The term did not gain much salience as a separate concept until recently. Creating awareness among new students who are being taught one of the fastest-growing languages (ASL), this term can be spread through both Deaf and Hearing cultures. Although the long-term goal of identifying audism is to reduce and prevent any oppressive actions against the Deaf, the initial endeavors focused on spreading the term and recognizing audism.

There have been many isolated incidents showing Deaf people being perceived as inferior to hearing people—events characterized by an individual's perception of the Deaf and the hard-of-hearing. History provides examples of the deaf being seen as inferior or inadequate in comparison to those who could hear. Avon (2006) posits Plato assumed “that those without speech showed no evidence of intelligence, and so, he concluded, ‘deaf people must not be capable of ideas or language’” (p. 186). Those ideas have continued through history to present day. The belief that deaf people were inferior is the basis for laws which prohibited deaf persons from owning any property (West, 2008). Coker (2017) reports that the Genetics Clinic at the Louisiana State University Medical Center (LSU-MC) in Shreveport, Louisiana once advised two deaf individuals they

should not be married because they could produce deaf offspring (personal communication, March 17, 2017).

However, we may not know the reasons for these discriminatory incidents until we discover the root of the problem. Audism forms a pool consisting of all these events; upon further analysis, debates and discussions would lead to the source of this discrimination: oppression of Deaf people. Humphries (1975) noted that “audism appears in the class structure of the deaf culture when those at the top are those whose language is that of the hearing culture or closest to it” (p. 35). This analysis has provided a different perspective of audism, which sees it as a form of racism and discrimination. Lane (1992) recognized audism as the corporate way of dealing with Deaf people: a “hearing way of dominating, restructuring, and exercising authority over the deaf community” (p. 13). This analysis has provided an understanding that audism is unlike other forms of oppression.

This definition provides an understanding of audism unlike other forms of oppression; it is not only a personal ideology but rather a structural system involving messages and policies that include the beliefs and behaviors of some individuals. This kind of discrimination allows the expansion of the scope of audism to a system of advantage based on hearing ability (Bauman, 2004, 2008). Specially designed institutions may prevent any such activities against the Deaf; however, the reality is far from theory, as audism is prominent in Deaf institutions where deaf people are the focus. Isolating them from Hearing culture

would never provide them the opportunity to experience life as every other human being does.

Audism Free America is a new group composed of Deaf adults for the purpose of ending audism. Because audism is prevalent mainly in the educational and medicinal fields, Ballenger (2013) provided a few commonplace issues faced by Deaf adults at the educational level, along with strategies to avoid them. Among the issues, Ballenger (2013) identifies the assumption by educators that all deaf students have the same problems with accessibility, life experiences, and communication needs. "People are different; people who have hearing loss are just as different" (Ballenger, 2013, p. 125). Another issue relates to educators feeling that reasonable accommodations are already in place negating the need to make any additional accommodations. *Universal design* is the term for the goal of being fully accessible and contemplating inclusion in the educational setting. Educators can create activities based on universal design which "gives people options in how they access education and learn" (Ballenger, 2013, p. 125). Such awareness among people to recognize audism as a form of oppression toward Deaf people would garner many valuable insights into preventing it. Both Hearing- and Deaf-cultured people need to understand the importance of creating a neutral environment for Deaf people without oppression or discrimination.

Summary

The fact that almost 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents is sufficient grounds to invalidate misconceptions about deafness. Thus, it is

important for deaf people to interact with their Deaf community to increase awareness of Deaf culture and language. This awareness would encourage the parents of deaf children to understand Deaf culture and assist them in encouraging a strong Deaf identity. Because self-identity forms an individual's perception of self and social involvement, Deaf identity can be seen as a form of self-identity (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007; Yep, 1998). Thus, influencing the self-identity of an individual would have a profound impact on the individual's Deaf identity, too. Because LMX theory involves both the leader and the follower in analyzing the results, it is important that leaders recognize Deafness as a culture and Deaf identity as a self-identity to successfully work with Deaf employees.

CHAPTER 3

MATERIALS AND RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The present chapter summarizes the research project and its purpose. The research question and hypotheses as well as the research design are provided. The chapter also elucidates information about the target sample, the instruments used, and the method used to collect and analyze the data. The limitations of the study are also discussed.

Current Study

The aim of the present exploratory study was to determine what effects the Deaf identity of the deaf follower participants have on the leader-follower relationship. The study also sought to gain insight on favorable aspects of Deaf culture to which the hearing group can better relate. The researcher attempted to establish the existence of relationship patterns that would help researchers understand the mode of interaction between the two groups and how the relationship could be improved.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Three research questions and associated hypotheses guided this study.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed were:

Q₁: To what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items?

Q₂: To what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the workplace leader-follower relationship?

Q₃: To what extent does each of the subscale scores on the DAS predict the workplace leader-follower relationship?

Hypotheses

The three hypotheses related to Deaf identity and the workplace leader-follower relationship are as follows.

H₁: Participants will significantly endorse Deaf acculturation more than hearing acculturation.

H₂: Overall Deaf identity predicts the quality of the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.

H₃: Each DAS subscale will significantly predict the relationship between the workplace leader and the follower.

Using the DAS, a determination was made concerning the level of participants' Deaf identity. This information was correlated with the participants' perception of their leader-follower relationship as determined by the LMX-7 scale.

Design of the Study

The researcher chose a quantitative, predictive research design. A multiple regression/correlation analysis (MRC) considered as a highly general, and therefore, very flexible data analytic system was determined to be ideally suited for this study design. Standard MRC was used when the dependent variable (LMX Score) was studied as a function of, or in relationship to, the

independent variable (DAS score). The DAS (58 items) and LMX-7 (7 items) was administered to participants recruited through organizations serving deaf individuals and their families across the United States. The survey, including 15 demographic items, was accessed on a website specially designed for this project by Jeremy Abbott, a System Architect, full-stack engineer, and programmer. It was anticipated that the primary language of participants completing the survey would be ASL. This assumption prompted the researcher to provide a button next to each item on the survey designed for participants, when clicked, displayed a video of the item statement being presented in ASL by David Medero, a native ASL user.

Sample Selection

Participants for the current study were recruited from established organizations that provide services for the deaf or represent the deaf. The sample group was self-identified deaf and hearing adults who are currently employed. A total of 302 participants responded to the study. Primarily, participants were recommended by the following organizations: Louisiana Association for the Deaf (LAD), Deaf Grassroots Movement-Louisiana (DGM-L), and the Deaf Action Center of Louisiana (DAC). Participants were also recommended by the Learning Center for the Deaf (Framingham, MA), Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness (GLAD), American School for the Deaf (Hartford, CT), Michigan School for the Deaf (Flint, MI), Florida School for the Deaf (St. Augustine, FL), Maryland School for the Deaf (Frederick, MD), California School for the Deaf (Fremont, CA), Indiana School for the Deaf

(Indianapolis, IN), St. Mary's School for the Deaf (Buffalo, NY), Utah School for the Deaf and the Blind (Ogden, UT), and the Texas School for the Deaf (Austin, TX).

Instrumentation

This study used two instruments to evaluate the deaf identity and the leader-member exchange relationship, respectively: Deaf Acculturation Scale (DAS) and Leader-Member Exchange Scale 7 (LMX-7).

Deaf Acculturation Scale

Maxwell-McCaw and Zea (2011) developed the DAS, a 58-item instrument (Appendix D) which used a 5-point Likert-type scale designed to measure five Deaf identity subscales: Cultural Identity, Cultural Involvement, Cultural Preferences, Cultural Knowledge, and Language Competence. The scale applies to the assessment of whether an individual is hearing or deaf acculturated: DAS hearing (DASh) and DAS deaf (DASd). The total score on the DAS measured the level of Deaf identity for each participant, with possible scores ranging from 1.0 to 5.0. These subscales include feelings of belonging to the deaf world and the behavioral response upon exposure to Deaf culture. The other subscales are language competence and cultural knowledge, which measure the hearing culture and other aspects of Deaf culture. For instance, how well does one know the history of the deaf? Items measuring such as concepts as how well people speak using their voices measure the degree to which the deaf individual communicate with the hearing. Acculturation was calculated by averaging the scores obtained within each subscale followed by

calculating the mean scores for the DASd and DASH scales. After calculating the scores, each respondent can be placed in one of four categories: deaf acculturated, hearing acculturated, marginal acculturated, and bicultural. A hearing acculturated score described persons who prefer hearing values and do not find a sense of value within the Deaf culture. On the one hand, a deaf acculturated individual identified with the attitudes demonstrated by those aligned with Deaf culture. For individuals to be classified as marginal, they must have a score of 2.9 points or below, which identifies the classification for both deaf and hearing cultures. A bicultural acculturated person scored high on both hearing and deaf acculturation subscales. The DAS's validity was determined by evaluating the relationship between deaf individuals and their leaders as well as the acculturation of deaf members based on various subscales (Fischer & McWhirter, 2001).

The survey was comprised of the 58 items in the DAS, 15 demographic items, and seven items in the LMX-7 for a total of 80 items. The DAS uses the acculturation model for assessing deaf/hard-of-hearing (d/hh) identities. To establish the DAS, Maxwell-McCaw and Zea (2011) addressed a number of objectives: first, an acculturation scale just for d/hh individuals that existed in many dimensions and was bilinear was created. Second, the factor structure of the DAS was checked to make sure that every subscale existed in one dimension (and measure one construct); third, it was established if the scale had sufficient internal stability; fourth, validity was determined with regard to parental hearing conditions, school background, and the deaf person's use of self-labels.

Maxwell-McCaw and Zea (2011) provided a comprehensive explanation of each of the five identity subscales.

Under marginal identity, persons with a hearing loss are considered to be ambivalent to the extent of their inability to hear normally. Nonconformity in the deaf or hard-of-hearing person is usually regarded as a negative phenomenon, and it can be considered a short-term phase of life in which one develops a more complex identity (Hoang, La Housse, Nakaji, & Sadler, 2011). The word Deaf, with a capital “D,” is used to embody one’s cultural, social, political, and association with the Deaf community (Fischer & McWhirter, 2001). Initially tested on a sample of 161 deaf and hard-of-hearing people, results showed evidence of reliability and validity for the DAS scale (Fischer & McWhirter, 2001).

In the development of the DAS, Maxwell-McCaw and Zea (2011) adapted the Zea Acculturation Scale and the Birman Acculturation Scale for both hard-of-hearing and deaf individuals. The DAS was chosen for both the hard-of-hearing and deaf communities because its framework allowed the two different cultures to be viewed independently in terms of their diverse dimensions and subscale measures. Moreover, the DAS constitutes two main acculturation scales, including the Acculturation to Hearing Culture scale (DASh) and Acculturation to Deaf culture scale (DASd). These two constituents of the DAS are each made up of different subscales which appraise acculturation across various areas such as cultural involvement, knowledge, identification, preferences, and language competence.

Specific objects acknowledged by both hard-of-hearing and deaf individuals were established to equal paradigms as created by investigators of Deaf culture. The paradigms were established based on the noticeable deaf character and the cultural changes to the hearing world. Thus, specific objects that measured attitudinal and behavioral indicators of Deaf community membership and also deaf world experience and deaf experience were formulated and measured in three main domains: cultural preferences, cultural involvement, and cultural identification. Cultural identification was formulated to gauge the degree of incorporation and internalization of various cultural values that are associated with the hearing and deaf worlds and the feeling of belonging to these different worlds. Next, the cultural involvement domain was implemented to facilitate the measurement of the level of participation in diverse cultural events and cultural behaviors (Schiff & Thayer, 1974). Finally, the cultural preferences domain was formulated to enable an accurate measurement of the different cultural preferences of both deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals with regard to work settings, educational backgrounds, spouses, partners, and even friends (Baker & Cokely, 1980). For this reason, items falling under the language competence domain exclusively measure receptive ability, competence in both written and spoken English, and collective proficiency in ASL. Meanwhile, hearing world knowledge and deaf world knowledge are measured by the cultural knowledge domain.

Leader-Member Exchange-7 Scale

LMX concentrates on the quality of the interchange between followers and their leaders. Leaders treat subordinates diversely and at different degrees and levels. This leader treatment of subordinates is dependent upon whether the subordinates are a segment of “the in-group (high-quality relationship) or out-group (low-quality relationship)” (Graen & Scandura, 1987, p. 18). The hypothesis attests that leaders do not cooperate with followers consistently (Graen and Cashman, 1975) because those directors have restricted time and assets.

The LMX-7 scale was designed to measure the degree to which followers and their leaders have a sense of trust, mutual respect, and sense of obligation toward each other. Putting these dimensions together, one can determine the likelihood of followers belonging to the leaders’ in- or out-group.

In-group members are trusted by the leaders to function as advisors or assistants and are entitled to high-quality personal relationships with the leader compared to the out-group followers. The relationships involve participation in decision-making, personal support, and exclusive benefits (Batten et al., 2014). The LMX-7 is composed of seven different queries that are in the 5-point Likert scale format (Bauer & Erdogan, 2016). The seven items describe different characteristics of the working relationship concerning the affiliation between leader and the follower, in the aspects of trust, respect, and obligation also “including the effectiveness of the working relationship, understanding of job problems and needs, recognition of potential, and willingness to support the

other” (Uhl-Bien & Maslyn, 2003, p. 520). The reliability and validity of the LMX-7 have been verified through a number of studies (Caliskan, 2015). The LMX-7 Scale is scored through the accumulation of responses offered for every question. The total scores are assigned predetermined values based on the overall interpretation of the scores of the leaders and members, with the highest score representing a healthier manager–subordinate relationship (Stringer, 2008). The LMX questionnaire can be found in the Appendix E. The highest scores on the LMX questionnaire are used to evaluate the difference in the results (Stringer, 2008). The participants could score a maximum of 30 points. A score between 25 and 30 represents a stronger and high-quality leader-follower relationship. In the case of this study, for instance, followers who scored between 25 and 30 were viewed as being highly connected to their leaders and other group members. Lower scores indicate a less valued relationship, where the leader and the follower and the rest of the team are in a state of disconnect.

English to ASL Back-Translation

It has been 39 years since Stokoe (2005) first announced that ASL was a distinct language with its grammar and syntax and 37 years since Baker and Cokely (1980) published the first comprehensive ASL grammar book. Educators trying to model English for students have attempted to restructure ASL with devastating effects. Presenting an English based survey in ASL is a complicated process but necessary since the subjects’ native language is likely to be ASL and complicated by the fact that ASL has no written form. Back-translating is the process of translating a source language (English) into a target language (ASL)

and back to the source language (English). “ASL is a distinct language from English, and that translation process is very complex” (Glickman, 1993, p. 134). The procedure of translating survey instruments for cross-cultural inquiry is multifaceted and very complex (Brislin, 1970, 1986; Chapman & Carter, 1979; Cohen & Jones, 1990; Epstein, Osborne, Elsworth, Beaton, & Guillemin, 2015). The back-translation process is “typically done as a quality assurance step to ensure that the forward translation contains no substantive errors, generally called *deviations*” (Klein & Til, 2014, p. 13).

Colonomos and Bienvenu (1991) developed a model for the back-translation process between English text and ASL used by Glickman (1993) and other researchers. This model was also utilized by this researcher in the back-translation of the survey items (DAS and LMX-7) used in this study. Colonomos and Bienvenu point out that “if one wants to create ASL text which will tap into Deaf attitudes, cultural values, and beliefs, or anything related to the Deaf experience, it is best to begin from ASL” (Colonomos & Bienvenu as cited in Glickman, 1993, p. 123).

Survey instruments used in this study (DAS and LMX-7) were first constructed in English. Starting with an English text and the lack of a written form in ASL presents many practical complications that must be considered when attempting to produce an equivalent translation. First, interpreters are aware that two languages are not exact equivalents. In ASL, the challenge is that the way in which a concept is expressed communicates different types of meaning. Second, to present a visual ASL version of written English text, a video

of the translation must be produced (Glickman, 1993). Individuals can read a survey at their own pace, some slow, others at a faster speed. Video translations play at a predetermined speed which can be too slow for some and too fast for others. Third, any instructions or survey items must be presented in the second person (i.e., "You will be asked..."). Otherwise, the interpreter would appear to be referring to him or herself (Glickman, 1993). ASL is a visual, manual language makes the use of space and indexing of pronouns a distinct grammatical feature of the language (Baker & Cokely, 1980). For example, the pronoun *me* or *you* are signed using the pointed index finger, a distinct grammatical feature of ASL. During the back-translation process for English to ASL and back to English the use of *I* for *you* is equally acceptable since both are conceptually equivalent and correct translations (Glickman, 1993). A fourth concern is the experience of taking a survey in ASL. As Glickman (1993) points out:

An even more basic problem is the lack of a cultural equivalent for Deaf people to the experience common to educated Hearing people of responding to a written attitude survey. Deaf people have not usually had the experience of taking such an instrument in their native language, so that even if the translation is excellent, the experience may be at best novel and at worst bizarre and incomprehensible. This may be difficult for educated Hearing researchers, for whom attitude surveys are second nature, to appreciate. (p. 124)

Fifth, linguists, who study ASL, refer to the *sign language continuum* – a representation of language from manually coded English to ASL. In the middle of the continuum are the pidgin forms of the two languages (English and ASL), commonly known as Pidgin Sign English (PSE).

A pidgin is a language which develops naturally when people who do not know each other's language wish to communicate with each other.

Normally, the pidgin is no one's native language. It typically combines certain vocabulary items and structures from the native language of the people in contact with each other and thus has a different grammar than either of the native language. (Baker & Cokely, 1980, p. 73)

Pidgin is not a translation of English to ASL but a combination of various aspects of the two languages. For example, the manual production of a statement could be in English word order using specific ASL signs. This variation of ASL is not generally accepted by culturally Deaf adults.

The sixth concern is that concepts in one language may not exist in another language. Idioms are language specific and tend not to be easily translated from one language to another. This is true of ASL and English. The ASL phrase, *TOUCH+FINISH* can mean *What are you doing?* Alternatively, *you are in an awkward situation and wondering how to get out of it.* Another ASL idiom is interpreted as *SWALLOW FISH* which means *gullible* in English.

Chapman and Carter (1979) noted that,

The most common and highly recommended procedure for verifying the translation of a questionnaire or test is the procedure of back translation. In this procedure, the instrument is rendered into the second language by one translator; the resulting version is then translated back into the original language. Items with apparent discrepancies between the two translations are then modified and a second back translation conducted. (p. 72)

The process of using the back-translation phase is commonly considered best practice and creates an acceptable translation notwithstanding being time-consuming and expensive (Caminiti et al., 2010; Gonçalves et al., 2010).

Paegelow (2008) posits that during the back-translation process those differences (or perceived errors) between the two languages should be those that matter, while differences that do not matter should be ignored. When

implementing instruments to large groups the process of back-translation is worthwhile (Pudas-Tähkä, Axelin, Aantaa, Lund, & Salanterä, 2014).

Inter-rater Reliability

Whenever humans are used in the back-translation process, inter-rater reliability is a consideration. It is critical that two or more raters be consistent in their observations. One way of determining inter-rater reliability is to calculate the percentage of agreement between the raters as an indicator of how much consensus there is between raters. For example, the English sentence, *I am happy*, is translated into ASL as *I HAPPY I*, and back into English as *I am happy*. How many raters watched the ASL translation (*I HAPPY I*) and translated the statement into the English sentence *I am happy*? An acceptable benchmark should be established to determine what is acceptable and not acceptable.

The back-translation (English to ASL to English) was successful in producing corresponding sentences. In 78 instances (98%), an exact word-for-word back-translation was generated by all three interpreters. In two occurrences (2%), a predictable paraphrase was produced by all three interpreters. The complexity and subtlety of the translation process should be evident. Analysis through this process indicated grammatical and cultural accuracy with the ASL translation which did not require any revisions. It should be noted here that ASL is a distinct language, not similar to English. The 98% agreement between the three raters and the accuracy of the translation lead the

researcher to determine there was an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability and the two versions (ASL and English) have been proven to be equivalent.

Translation Process for English to ASL

When he developed the Deaf Identity Development Scale (DIDS), Glickman (1993) utilized a precise method of validating the translation from English to ASL, developed by Betty Colonomos, Ph.D., director of The Bilingual Mediation Center. This researcher used the Colonomos and Bienvenu (1991) process, same as Glickman (1993), for the basis for developing the video translations of the DAS and LMX-7 items on the survey website. To validate the translation of the survey items, the researcher employed the following steps:

1. Jay Isch, native ASL user, who is fluent in written English and familiar with *hearing styles* of an English text, was provided a list of items for the DAS and LMX-7 in English text.
2. David Medero, a native ASL user, created the original ASL text. Medero, along with Isch, created the ASL interpretation of each item in the survey.
3. The ASL interpretation of each item was recorded on video.
4. Three native ASL and English speakers, Kenny David, Shari Bernius, and Cynthia Pace, were provided the video translation of each item into ASL and asked to translate the videos into English text.
5. A comparison was made of the English text translations from the ASL videos back to the original English text (back-translation) for content and accuracy.

6. A comparison was drawn between each of the interpreters (*raters*). A calculation of the percent of agreement between the interpreters was done by comparing each interpreter's English text translation from the ASL videos. A comparison of the three native ASL and English speakers indicated a 98% agreement as to the accuracy of the English to ASL translation.

Collection of Data

The collection of data for this study followed four main steps.

Step 1: Obtaining Ethical Approval for the Study

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Louisiana State University Shreveport (Appendix A). The 80-item survey, which included the Deaf Acculturation Scale and the LMX-7 Scale (Appendices D and E, respectively) was provided online. The surveys included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study (Appendix B). Each participant was required to electronically sign a letter of consent (Appendix C) before completing the survey. Since the survey was available online, an electronic signature sufficed.

Step 2: Data Collection

Even though the primary method of data collection was electronic and online, participants were notified that a printed version was also available that could be completed and mailed to the researcher. None of the participants opted for the paper copy. A website was created for the purpose of the study, and the DAS, LMX-7 scales, and demographic items were provided through the website.

An invitation to take part in the study, along with informed consent letters, were placed on the website for 30 days.

Step 3: Sending E-mails to Respondents

E-mails were sent to 423 potential participants who had been recommended by the LAD, the DGM-L, the Deaf Action Center of Louisiana, and a few other state service organizations (see Appendix M). E-mails were also sent to institutional administrators requesting them to allow the deaf and hard-of-hearing staff and clients to participate in the study. The introductory letter was provided in written English and ASL, via a YouTube video uploaded to the website. Even though the study focused on Deaf identity, the participants were from different educational levels and ethnic backgrounds and had different extents of self-reported hearing loss and modes of communication. (See Appendix F and Tables 1 and 2 in the following chapter).

Step 4: Securing Participants' Responses

Participants' responses were gathered on a secure encrypted server and retrieved by the researcher. The security of the server and the participants' responses were enhanced through Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption. Sensitive data was safeguarded as it moved along communication channels between the receiver's computer and server. Additionally, the researcher achieved anonymity for the survey participants by disabling IP address tracking. Each set of responses was assigned a random code for additional confidentiality.

Treatment of Data

The objective of this study was to predict the scores for the leader-follower relationship (measured by the LMX-7) using the scores for Deaf identity (measured by the DAS).

Data collected through an online survey of 302 individuals were retrieved from a secure encrypted server and processed using SPSS v. 23 software and 2016 Microsoft Excel. Demographic information was processed in Excel which provided totals, percentages, standard deviations, means, modes, and medians. No encoding errors were present. Therefore, data analyses proceeded.

The relationship between Deaf identity and the leader-follower relationship was tested by a Pearson's correlation between the DASd scale and the LMX-7 scale. The relationship between the LMX-7 scale and the five sub-scales of the DASd was tested by multiple regression.

A Pearson correlation analysis was run to test the hypothesis that higher scores on the DAS-d would be associated with higher scores on the LMX-7. This correlation was statistically significant; this indicated that stronger Deaf identity is indeed associated with a stronger relationship between the leader and the follower.

Next, a multiple regression analysis was used to determine which combination of sub-scales from the DAS-d provided the best prediction of scores on the LMX-7. The predictor variables were the five subscales of DAS: cultural knowledge, cultural identification, cultural preferences, cultural involvement, and language competence.

Summary

This quantitative study used a correlational methodology to determine if a relationship existed between the level of a deaf participant's Deaf identity and the quality of the leader-follower relationship. Participants were recruited from Deaf-centric organizations located within the United States and directed to an online website designed specifically for this study. Individual items were presented in English and American Sign Language by a native signer. Participants completed the DAS, LMX-7, and 15 demographic items. Anonymous results were provided the researcher in an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed using Excel formulas and SPSS v. 23.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the predictability of a deaf individual's Deaf identity (DAS scores) on their leader-follower relationship (LMX-7 scores). This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire presented to 302 self-identified deaf or hard-of-hearing participants who reported they were currently employed. It explores three, related research questions. First, to what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items? Second, to what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the workplace leader-follower relationship? Third, to what extent does each of the subscale scores on the DAS predict the workplace leader-follower relationship?

The relationship between participants and their leaders was measured by the Leader-Member Exchange Scale (LMX-7). The LMX-7 was used because it “assesses the degree to which leaders and followers have respect for each other's capabilities, feel a deepening sense of trust, and have a sense of strong obligation to one another” (Management Study Guide [MSG], 2017, p. 1).

Deaf identity was measured by the Deaf Acculturation Scale (DAS).

Results of Maxwell-McCaw and Zea's (2011) study

indicated strong internal reliabilities for all the subscales, and construct validity was established by demonstrating that the DAS could discriminate groups based on parental hearing status, school background, and use of self-labels. Construct validity was further demonstrated through factorial analyses, and findings. (p. 325)

The DAS was chosen because it is “a measure of cultural identity for Deaf and hard-of-hearing populations” (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011, p. 325). As noted earlier, the DAS consists of five subscales that measure empirically distinct aspects of participants’ deaf identity, and five comparable subscales that measure participants’ hearing identity. Scores on the five deaf subscales can be combined to assess participants’ total deaf identification score (DASd); similarly, the five hearing subscales can be combined to determine participants’ total hearing identification score (DASh).

By comparing participants’ scores on the DASd and DASh, it is possible to determine whether they identify more strongly as deaf or hearing. By analyzing the relationship between the LMX and the five subscales of the DASd it is possible to determine which aspect of deaf identity are the best predictors of the leader-member relationship.

The chapter begins by presenting the demographic characteristics of the sample and the descriptive statistics for the measures. It then presents the statistical findings.

In total, 423 employed deaf participants were invited to participate in the study via email to the Louisiana Association of the Deaf, the Deaf Grassroots Movement of Louisiana, the Deaf Action Center of Louisiana and state schools for the Deaf. A complete list is provided in Appendix M. A total of 302 responded to the invitation with a response rate of 71.4%. All of the organizations approached were Deaf-centric in nature. These organizations were contacted because they were aware of the identity of employed Deaf

people, knowledgeable of Deaf culture, and were conscious of the identities and locations of employed deaf individuals.

Included in the email was a video link, in American Sign Language, that invited participants to participate in an online survey and directed them to the website. Once they arrived at the website, they were presented with a cover letter that explained the study, and a consent form, that required an electronic signature, before beginning the survey. Participants were provided contact information regarding the researcher and LSU's graduate school IRB administration. They were also afforded an explanation of their rights as participants. Responses were recorded by the researcher in a 2016 Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 software.

Demographic Variables

The sample was comprised of self-identified deaf or hard-of-hearing participants ($n = 302$) who responded to a request to participate. To determine whether this sample ($n = 302$) was sufficient for the planned multiple regression analysis, a posthoc power analysis was conducted using G*Power software to determine the likelihood of finding statistically significant results with a sample of 300 participants, five predictor variables, and a moderate effect size ($R^2 = .15$, $p < .001$). The analysis indicated that the likelihood of finding statistically significant results was greater than 99%.

All of the participants (100%) reported they were employed. Through a review of the email domains of the participants, it was determined the majority of

the respondents; 82% ($n = 248$) were employed by organizations in Deaf-centric categories (i.e., schools for the deaf, deaf job placement programs, deaf social service agencies). While it was not the intent of the researcher, the results are a demonstration of a microcosm of organizations that are knowledgeable of Deaf culture and ASL. These organizations have an unusual sensitivity to the needs of Deaf people as consumers and employees.

There was approximately the same number of females 51% ($n = 153$) as males 49% ($n = 149$). Participants ranged in age from 20 to 78 years, with a mean age of 44 years ($SD = 11.4$). A majority of participants self-identified as White 83% ($n = 251$) 17% ($n = 51$) self-identified as non-White.

The majority of participants, 53% ($n = 163$), attended an education program which used American Sign Language for instruction. Participants were asked to indicate their highest degree earned. The majority of participants 72% ($n = 217$) reported that they graduated with a college degree. Thirty-four participants (11%) reported having earned a high school diploma. Additional information regarding the participants' education is available in Appendix N.

Table 1 provides information regarding the hearing status and use of sign language by participants' families. The majority of participants, 57% ($n = 173$), indicated their parents used sign language at home indicating there was a history of sign language use. The prominent role ASL plays in Deaf culture along with these results indicate there is a strong probability that a majority of the participants were raised with an awareness of a Deaf identity. Also, 33% of the participants ($n = 98$) reported their siblings had some type of hearing loss.

Table 1

Participants' Family Hearing Status (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
Parents' Hearing Status		
Both of my parents are hearing	205	68%
One or both of my parents are deaf	97	32%
Parents Use of Sign Language		
Parents use Sign Language	173	57%
Parents do not use Sign Language	129	43%
Siblings' Hearing Status		
Deaf	42	14%
Hearing	189	63%
Hard-of-hearing	11	4%
Both Hearing and Deaf	27	9%
Both Hearing and Hard-of-hearing	12	4%
Both Deaf and Hard-of-hearing	6	2%
I do not have siblings	15	5%
Spouse's Hearing Status		
Deaf	112	37%
Hard-of-hearing	8	3%
Hearing	111	37%
I am single	71	24%

Appendix G provides information regarding the language used by the participants to respond to survey items. Other socioeconomic characteristics of the participants, such as ethnic group, hearing status, the onset of hearing loss, and communication preference, are indicated in Table 2. Table 2 also indicates that a majority of participants were born deaf indicating that they are pre-lingual deaf. Charrow and Wilbur (1975) note that:

Most pre-lingual deaf persons do not learn an auditory-vocal language as their native language. Pre-lingual deaf American children learn English in school, laboriously, as though it were a foreign language. (p. 2)

The age of the onset of deafness, along with the majority of participant's ($n = 221$) preference for ASL, and parent's use of ASL while the participants were growing up could mean a strong Deaf identity began early in the participants' lives.

Table 2

Participants' Demographics (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Female	153	51%
Male	149	49%
Ethnic Group		
White	251	83%
Black	9	3%
Hispanic (non-White)	14	5%
Asian	22	7%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
Other	6	2%
Hearing Status		
Deaf	254	84%
Hard-of-hearing	48	16%
Onset of Hearing Loss		
I was born deaf	226	75%
Born hearing. Lost my hearing before age 5	54	18%
Lost my hearing between age 6 and 10	7	2%
Lost my hearing between age 11 and 20	4	1%
Lost my hearing after age 21	3	1%
I don't know	8	3%
Communication Preference		
Oral (speech and lip reading)	12	4%
Sign language and speech at the same time	67	22%
American Sign Language	221	73%
Sign English	2	1%

Table 2

Participants' Demographics (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
Marital Status		
Single, never married	75	25%
Married or domestic partnership	169	56%
Widowed	3	1%
Divorced	51	17%
Separated	4	1%
Single, never married	75	25%
Employment Status		
Employed	302	100%
Unemployed	0	0%

Results

The results for this study as shared below highlight the identity of the sample, the overall acculturation scale scores, LMX-7 scores, deaf identify of the leader-follower relationship, and the DAS subscale prediction of the leader-follower relationship.

Identity of Sample (deaf or hearing)

To what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items? People who are deaf or hard-of-hearing vary considerably in how they regard themselves; therefore, a preliminary question for this study is the extent to which participants identify as deaf or hearing. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the participants' scores on the DASd and the DASH. The results indicated that participants scored significantly higher on the DASd ($M = 4.16$, $SD = .62$) than they did on the

DASh ($M = 3.1$, $SD = .60$); this indicates that they identify more as Deaf than as hearing, $t(301) = 19.88$, $p < .001$.

Table 3

Identity of Sample (deaf or hearing) (N = 302)

	M	SD
DASh	3.1	.60
DASd	4.2	.62

Note: $t(301) = 19.88$, $p < .001$

Overall Acculturation Scale

An overall acculturation scale score was determined for each participant by combining the DASd and DASh scores. Table 4 shows how participants scored on the DAS, including the number of participants and percentages of the sample in each of four categories: Hearing acculturated, Deaf acculturated, Marginal, and Bicultural. A Hearing acculturated score described a deaf individual who preferred *hearing* values and did not find a sense of identity within Deaf culture or Deaf values.

Table 4

Percentage of Participants in Four DAS Acculturation Categories (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
Hearing acculturated	7	2%
Marginal	18	6%
Deaf acculturated	139	46%
Bicultural	138	46%

In contrast, a Deaf acculturated individual identified with Deaf culture and attitudes. An individual who was assessed as Marginal had low acculturation scores (2.9 or below) for both Deaf and hearing cultures, whereas a Bicultural acculturated individual's scores were high on both the Deaf acculturated and Hearing acculturated subscales. A majority of the sample, 92% ($n = 277$), scored as Deaf acculturated or Bicultural as indicated in Table 4.

LMX-7 Scores

The LMX-7 scale measured how much the participants indicated respect for their leader's abilities, experienced a developing feeling of trust, and reported feelings of solid commitment to the leader, thereby, indicating which followers were grouped in the leader's in-group or out-group (MSG, 2017). Scoring of the LMX-7 fell into five different categories: very high (30-35), high (25-29), moderate (20-24); low (15-19), and very low (7-14). Scores in the upper ranges demonstrated more grounded and stronger, high-quality relationships (i.e., in-group); scores in the lower ranges showed lower-quality relationships (i.e., out-group) (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1998). It is worth noting that a majority of the participants ($n = 199$; 65%) indicated a more grounded and stronger, high-quality relationship with their leader. Table 4 indicates the number and percentage of each LMX-7 rating.

As noted above, 82% ($n = 248$) of participants were employed in Deaf-centric organizations and agencies. Of the 18% ($n = 54$) of participants employed in hearing-centric organizations, 59% ($n = 32$) rated their leader-follower relationship as *very low* or *low*.

Table 5

Number and Percentage of LMX-7 Ratings (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
Very high (30 – 35)	95	31%
High (25 – 29)	104	34%
Moderate (20 – 24)	47	16%
Low (15 – 19)	44	15%
Very low	12	4%

Deaf Identity Prediction of the Leader-Follower Relationship

To what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the leader-follower relationship? The central premise of this exploratory study is that participants who have a stronger Deaf identity will also report a stronger relationship with a workplace leader. The results of a Pearson *r* correlation analysis supported a significant positive correlation between the DASd score and the LMX-7 score, $r(300) = .29, p < .001$. These findings indicated that participants who had a stronger Deaf identity also had a stronger leader-follower relationship.

A linear regression analysis was conducted with the LMX score (leader-follower relationship) as the criterion variable and DAS score (Deaf identity) as the predictor. Deaf identity was a significant predictor of the leader-follower relationship, $\beta = .29, t(300) = 5.24, p < .001$, and accounted for 8% ($R^2 = .08$) of the variance in the leader-follower relationship. These findings indicate that Deaf identity is a significant predictor of the leader-follower relationship as hypothesized.

DAS Subscale Prediction of the Leader-Follower Relationship

To what extent does each of the subscale scores on the DAS predict the relationship with a workplace leader? Deaf identity, as measured by the DASd scale, includes five distinct subscales; therefore, the final question involves, which of these are the best predictors of participants' relationship with their leaders?

A multiple regression was conducted predicting the leader-follower relationship (LMX score, criterion variable) from the predictor variables: cultural identification, cultural involvement, cultural preferences, cultural knowledge, and language competency. As Table 6 indicates, the regression was significant, $F(5, 296) = 24.123$, $p < .001$, with an $R^2 = .29$.

Table 6

Multiple Regression: Relationship Between the LMX Scale and Subscales (N = 302)

Predictor Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Correlation With LMX	β	<i>t</i>	Sig
Cultural Identification	4.23	.47	.205	-.060	-.810	.418
Cultural Involvement	4.45	.64	.326	.240	3.75	<.001
Preferences	3.80	.84	-.002	-.380	-5.49	<.001
Cultural Knowledge	3.42	1.13	.282	.167	2.20	<.001
Language Competence	4.50	.73	.416	.422	6.15	<.001

Of the predictors investigated, cultural involvement ($\beta = .22$, $t(296) = 3.70$, $p < .001$), cultural preferences ($\beta = -.40$, $t(296) = 6.16$, $p < .001$), cultural knowledge ($\beta = .17$, $t(296) = 2.24$, $p < .001$), and language competence ($\beta = .40$, $t(296) = 6.28$, $p < .001$) were significant. Cultural identification was not a

significant predictor of LMX, ($\beta = .02$, $t(296) = -.373$, $p > .05$). Language Competence was the most significant predictor of scores on the LMX scale; cultural involvement and (to a somewhat lesser extent) cultural knowledge are also statistically significant predictors of LMX.

Summary

Taken together, these findings support the central premise of this exploratory study. In a sample of participants who identify primarily as deaf, those with a stronger deaf identity report stronger relationships with their workplace leaders. Among the various components of deaf identity, deaf language competence is by far the best predictor of a strong relationship with a workplace leader. The next chapter will explore how these results can be understood, and what implications they have for workplace leaders who hope to have strong working relationships with their deaf employees.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Identity is a multifaceted, intricate, and complex issue that involves culture, language, and a sense of belonging – personally and in the workplace. In the context of people who are deaf, identity is critical to socialization, acceptance, well-being, and interpersonal success. “Those with stronger deaf identities (culturally Deaf and bicultural individuals) have a somewhat higher self-esteem than those with weaker deaf identities (culturally hearing and negative identities)” (Bat-Chava, 2000, p. 426). Three research questions, to what extent did participants endorse hearing acculturation items as compared to deaf acculturation items; to what extent does overall Deaf identity predict the workplace leader-follower relationship; and, to what extent does each of the subscale scores on the DAS predict the workplace leader-follower relationship. A total of 302 participants completed two survey instruments to determine their level of Deaf identity (DAS) and their rating of their leader-follower relationship (LMX-7). The DAS and LMX-7 scores were analyzed using the Pearson r to determine if a relationship existed. A multiple regression was used to establish which of the five DAS subcategories (cultural identification, cultural involvement, cultural preferences, cultural knowledge, and language competence) had the greatest impact on the leader-follower relationship.

Deaf Identity versus Hearing Identity

Addressing the issue of participants' endorsement of hearing or deaf acculturation, results indicated there was a significant difference in the scores for DASd and DASH indicating participants scored significantly higher on the DASd than they did on the DASH. These outcomes suggest that the sample group significantly acknowledged they possessed a Deaf identity more than a hearing identity. When considering the role ASL plays in Deaf culture and the development of Deaf identity these results are not unexpected. The majority of participants ($n = 221$; 73%) preferred ASL over oral communication and Sign English. Also, the sample was from predominately Deaf-centric areas of employment (e.g., Schools for the Deaf, Deaf Associations, Deaf Social Service Organizations) which are likely to be proponents of ASL. Also, it is possible that Deaf identity is supported by the Deaf-centric employers by providing ASL language services and a level of accessibility and cultural understanding that endears the Deaf follower to the organization and ultimately the leader. The majority of the sample from these Deaf-centric occupational areas having a strong Deaf identity is consistent with Mackinnon and Heise's (2010) findings that people categorize themselves by organizational membership. Hogg (2006) concurs that self-identity is developed based on in-group identity and perceptions of being a member of a social or cultural group. There are two possible implications here. One possibility is that participants' development of a strong Deaf identity was supported by Deaf-centric workplaces providing an inordinate amount of support and understanding of the importance of a Deaf identity in

comparison to hearing-centric workplaces. The second possibility would be people with a strong Deaf identity seek out Deaf-centric organizations for employment.

A majority of the sample scored as Deaf acculturated ($n = 139$; 46%) or Bicultural ($n = 138$; 46%) for a combined total of 277 or 92% of the sample. There are a few ways of explaining the bicultural result considering there is a social appeal to express a bicultural aspect in environments involving a large number of hearing people (Leigh, Marcus, Dobosh, & Allen, 1998). This conclusion is also consistent with Nelson Schmitt and Leigh's, (2015) findings, that biculturalism may "reflect the increased integration of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals into the mainstream workplace" (p. 43). By necessity, deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may sense they have to acquire and demonstrate skills with cultural variability to succeed in most occupational stadia that are majority hearing (Nelson Schmitt & Leigh, 2015). It is possible this finding may also suggest an increased integration of Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals into the workplace due to their being Deaf-centric organizations or their compliance with accessibility laws (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act).

Deaf Identity Predictability of the Leader-Member Relationship

Regarding the research question, *Does Deaf identity predict the leader-follower relationship?* The correlation between the participants' scores on the DASd and LMX-7 was analyzed. The Pearson r correlation analysis supported a significant positive relationship between the DASd score and the LMX-7 score.

These findings support the hypothesis that Deaf identity is a predictor of the leader-follower relationship.

This conclusion could be relevant to workplace constructs when considering that identity within an organization is often regarded an important aspect for the attainment of a positive leader-follower relationship, employee satisfaction, and organization success (MacKinnon & Heise, 2010). It is possible these findings could support the premise that Deaf followers with a strong Deaf-identity will benefit the organization in three areas: “organizational socialization, role conflict, and intergroup relations” (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 20). Workplace socialization is important for new Deaf followers coming into the organization because, as with all followers, they need to become aligned with the company’s goals and culture. It is likely workplace support for a strong Deaf identity would have a positive effect on the Deaf follower’s socialization with coworkers and enduring them to their work environment. Increased communication and cultural awareness being two areas of support. As for role conflict, considering the number of groups to which a person might belong, one’s social identity will be influenced by various other identities (i.e., Deaf identity) (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Also, personal beliefs and values are likely to be solidified with a strong Deaf identity. Intergroup relations are a critical part of an ideal organization which has subunits in which members share a common social identity unique to that particular subunit (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). A Deaf follower’s self-identity affects all areas of life, particularly, employment (Leigh, 2009). The Deaf follower’s self-identity is the perception of who he or she is and, in some instances, indicates

exactly what the individual can accomplish, manage, and sustain. Regarding employment, the Deaf follower's self-identity is linked to work identity and their belief in their capabilities. In contrast to a negative self-identity, a positive Deaf identity could mean the follower can negotiate and overcome whatever challenges may arise.

LMX Ratings

According to the LMX theory, the leadership process is conceptualized by members' (followers) and leaders' interactions. The leader-follower interactions are in the context of followers being a part of the in-group or out-group. LMX scores indicate the majority of participants (199; 65%) with a high Deaf identity rated the quality of their relationship with their leader as being *very high* or *high*. These results could support the LMX theory that these participants feel they are a part of the leader's in-group and are provided with high-quality exchanges with their leader, favored by the leader, given more attention and resources, and are most likely to be promoted above the out-group (Kauppila, 2015). These findings are significant when considering the relationship between the leader and follower in all occupations, trades, and vocations is an intricate component in the growth and evolution of a person's self-image and identity and add to one's sense of individualism (Poudel, 2014).

The out-group being those followers not having a mutually beneficial relationship with the leader. The literature describes the out-group as being those followers who simply show up, do their job, and leave. They typically are not promoted, have bad attitudes, do not contribute as much as others, do not

communicate effectively, and get much less support from their supervisor. An interesting component of these findings is the ratings of the leader-follower relationship by the 18% of those that appear to work for hearing-centric organizations. The majority (59%) of these participants rated their relationship as *very low* or *low*. One possible inference here is the 59% is a part of the leader's out-group. Further research should be done to determine if this is the result of a lack of language competence on the part of the leader or a lack of support for Deaf identity.

The findings of this study indicate that those Deaf individuals with a strong Deaf identity rated their relationship with their leader as *high* and *very high*. LMX theory states that these followers, by their ratings of their relationship, do more for the leader and the leader does more for them. "These in-group members communicate and work well with the leader who creates an opportunity for positive outcomes for them both and the organization as a whole" (PennState, 2013, p. 1). When it comes to the personalities of the followers and leaders within the context of the in-group, they seem to connect with one another and this leads them to work diligently toward a common goal of satisfying each other (Northouse, 2015).

Communication is a noteworthy aspect of the leader-follower dyad by PennState (2013). Members of the in-group are more reliable, more highly labyrinthine, and more unrestrained than out-group subordinates" (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). Northouse (2015) goes further by stating:

The high-quality exchanges advocated in LMX theory are inextricably bound to effective communication. Communication is the vehicle through

which leaders and subordinates create, nurture, and sustain useful exchanges. Effective leadership occurs when the communication of leaders and subordinates is characterized by mutual trust, respect, and commitment. (pp. 169-170)

It should be pointed out that the findings of this study indicate the language competence subscale was the largest predictor of the leader-follower relationship. Effective communication with Deaf followers involves ASL either in direct one-on-one communication with the leader or through the use of a sign language interpreter. These findings are discussed later in this chapter.

Deaf Acculturation Scale Subscales

The final research question dealt with the predictability of each of the DAS subscales on the leader-follower relationship. The DAS assessment is based on five subscales. The first three sub-scales: cultural identification, cultural involvement, and cultural preferences measure a deaf individual's identity or psychological degree of acculturation to the Deaf culture (e.g. "I feel part of the Deaf world"). The internalization and amalgamation of those values associated with Deaf culture are measured by cultural identification. Cultural involvement measures the individual's behaviors and the amount of participation in specific cultural activities. The choices made regarding friends, partners, employment and scholastic settings are measured by cultural events (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011). The other two acculturation scales: cultural knowledge and language competence, measure other aspects of Deaf and hearing culture competence. Cultural knowledge is related to how well the participant knows *Deaf World Knowledge* and involvement in the *Deaf Experience* (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011). For example, "How well do you know important events in Deaf history"

measures the degree of knowledge of Deaf or hearing culture. Language competence deals with ASL and the individual's receptive and expressive communication skills. Items such as "How well do you speak English using your voice" are used to measure a deaf individual's degree of ability to communicate within the Deaf or hearing culture.

The final question raised is, which of these subscales are the best predictors of the participant's relationship with their leaders? Results of a multiple regression analysis indicated that four of the five subscales had a significant correlation with the LMX scale. Those four were cultural involvement, preferences, cultural knowledge, and language competence. The only sub-scale that did not correlate significantly with the LMX scale was cultural identification.

Cultural Identification

Cultural identification was not a significant predictor of the leader-follower relationship. The cultural identity subscale addresses the participant's "psychological identification with deaf people, use of self-labels, and level of comfort within each culture" (Leigh, 2009, p. 36). This finding might be explained by Triandis' (1989) definition of culture and self-identity. Triandis posits that shared language and perceptions of the *self* help define cultural identification. Group identity and a common language are fundamental components of self-identity (Segall, Dasen, Berry, & Poortinga, 1999). Should the Deaf follower not share a common language with their leader or share a group identity (since the leader belongs to a hearing group and the follower belongs to a deaf group) it is possible the Deaf follower does not identify with hearing culture. In this case, the

individual's self-defined cultural identity may be different from the cultural identity perceived by their leader (Sussman, 2000). Therefore, there is no cultural identity link or predictor associated with their relationship. The Deaf follower simply views themselves as a Deaf individual with a very distinct culture, separate and not a part of the hearing world.

Cultural Involvement

Cultural involvement was a significant predictor of the leader-follower relationship ($\beta = .24$, $t(296) = 3.75$, $p < .000$). "Cultural involvement subscales were designed to measure *cultural behaviors* and the degree of participation in various cultural activities (e.g., 'How much do you enjoy attending deaf or hearing parties, gatherings, and events')" (Maxwell-McCaw & Zea, 2011, p. 330). This finding would suggest the development of a strong Deaf identity involves the follower modeling specific behaviors that are associated with Deaf culture. Participation, by the Deaf follower, in Deaf-centric activities would reinforce cultural behaviors. Gertz (2003) posits, "Entry into the Deaf culture requires one to acquire a set of attitudes and a way of behaving in addition to the attributes of self-recognition and awareness for members" (p. 27). The leader, demonstrating support and encouragement, could model these same behaviors endearing the Deaf follower to the development of a positive relationship. For example, making eye contact is essential for effective communication. Eye contact also allows the Deaf person to "read the nuances of facial expressions and body language for additional information" (MDHS, 2013, p. 1). Another example, within Deaf culture, is there are common behaviors used to get attention which include hand

waving, tapping the shoulder or arm of another person, turning the “lights on and off, tapping a table or stomping a foot on the floor, or using a third person to relay attention in a crowded room” (MDHS, 2013, p.1). A third behavior that could be modeled by the leader involves the greeting of others within the Deaf community. Instead of shaking hands at greetings the members of the Deaf community often hug. Normal exchanges are inclined to incorporate detailed explanations about lives and daily activities and are unprotected and direct. Usually, introductions include how the individual is associated with the Deaf community (e.g., attended the school for the deaf) (MDHS, 2013). Leaders that model these behaviors or integrate these behaviors in the workplace could explain why this acceptance is a predictor. Since the majority of the followers are in Deaf-centric organizations, these findings suggest the leader understands and supports Deaf cultural involvement by exhibiting these cultural behaviors.

Cultural Preferences

The cultural preferences subscale was a significant predictor of the leader-follower relationship ($\beta = -.38$, $t(296) = -5.49$, $p < .000$) however, results indicate that as participants scored higher on this subscale, their LMX score decreased. The cultural preferences subscale was designed to measure the deaf individual's preferences for spouses, lovers, friends, co-workers, and educational settings to be either deaf or hearing. “Deaf people's enduring concerns have been these,” writes Tom Humphries (1993) “finding each other and staying together; preserving their language, and maintaining lines of transmittal of their culture” (p. 217). These findings are in agreement with Schein (1989) regarding socialization,

like the individuals from numerous ethnic groups, culturally Deaf individuals like to associate with and to wed individuals from their Deaf social group. It should be noted that the Deaf community has “one of the highest endogamous marriage rates of any ethnic group – an estimated 90%” (Schein, 1989, p. 107). It is not unusual or unexpected

that Deaf people want Deaf spouses, welcome Deaf children, and prefer to be together with other culturally Deaf people – in clubs, in school, at work if possible, in leisure activities, in political action, in sports, and so on – in short, they see being Deaf as an inherent good. (Lane, 2005, p. 298)

Understandably, the leaders may not be deaf and as such are not socially preferred over Deaf members of the group possibly indicating that cultural preferences do not contribute to the leader-follower relationship in the same way as other subscales.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural Knowledge was also a significant predictor of the leader-follower relationship ($\beta = .17$, $t(296) = 2.20$, $p < .001$). This finding suggests the follower was familiar with information related to the Deaf World, which includes knowing the leaders within the Deaf community, important events (e.g., *Deaf President Now* Campaign), national Deaf heroes, and famous Deaf actors. The follower, with a strong Deaf identity, would be familiar with Deaf political leaders and organizations run by and for Deaf people. The follower would also have knowledge of the unique traditions and customs of the Deaf community. These include a strong devotion to community clubs, events, alumni events, religious activities, and sporting events (MDHS, 2013). According to MDHS (2013), “events are frequently filled with entertainment such as Deaf folklore, arts,

history, ASL poetry, songs, and joke-telling” (p. 1). Again, the large number of participants working within a Deaf-centric organization could explain the leader’s knowledge and support of various aspects of Deaf culture. This *interest* by the leader could endear the Deaf follower to the leader.

Language Competency

Language competency deals with ASL and the follower’s receptive and expressive communication skills. The language competency subscale was the largest predictor of the leader-follower relationship ($\beta = .42$, $t(296) = 6.15$, $p < .001$). Northouse (2015) posits that “effective leader-follower relationships are marked by high-quality communication in which leaders and followers demonstrate a high degree of mutual trust, respect, and obligation toward each other” (p. 260). Communication with Deaf followers is of utmost concern for leaders with deaf employees (Hicks & Gilmore, 2012). Likewise, being able to understand the directives of and ability to communicate effectively and directly with the leader is of great importance to the Deaf follower (Watson, 2016).

Effective communication involves language competency. Northouse (2015) makes an important distinction between *directive behaviors* and *supportive behaviors* involving communication which is central to the Deaf follower and leader’s interaction. Northouse (2015) states that one-way communication is clarifying and involves, “*what is to be done, how it is to be done, and who is responsible for doing it*” (p. 101). Whereas, two-way communication helps “group members feel comfortable about themselves, their coworkers, and the situation” (Northouse, 2015, p. 101). He continues, that two-

way communication shows social and emotional support to others. This two-way communication involves “asking for input, solving problems, praising, sharing information about oneself, and listening” (Northouse, 2015, p. 101). The key to this type of effective communication involving a Deaf follower is ASL through a direct exchange with the leader or the use of a qualified sign language interpreter.

Kurz, Hauser, and Listman (2016) report in their study that a significant number of Deaf followers reported incidents of audism and linguicism in the workplace. While all deaf followers have a variety of communication preferences, those with a strong Deaf identity and a feeling of group identity within the Deaf community prefer ASL as their language of choice because it is a visual and gestural language (Gertz, 2003). This finding is supported by Watson’s (2016) study which found that Deaf followers reported a Deaf-centric work environment provided direct communication with supervisors in ASL, accessibility of communication, and readily available accommodations. The majority of participants being from a Deaf-centric workplace could explain the positive communication experience of Deaf followers and the reinforcement of the importance of language competency and why it is the largest predictor.

Recommendations for Leaders

Employers desire a happy employee, which translates to a more productive employee (Achor, 2012; Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Oswald, Proto, & Sgroi, 2015; Sgroi, 2015; Zelenski, Murphy, & Jenkins, 2008). The results of this exploratory study could support the embracing of a Deaf identity (cultural

knowledge, involvement, and language competence) by the leader which contributes significantly to a better leader-follower relationship. Findings would suggest that hearing-centric organizations should follow the example of Deaf-centric organizations by supporting and embracing the development of a strong Deaf identity.

In contrast, despite the realization of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, deaf adults are underemployed and underpaid and do not feel they have as many chances for advancement or opportunities to accept greater responsibility in workplaces (Dakota, 2013; Kelly, 2013; Newman et al., 2011). Gertz (2012) attributes this problem to hearing people's lack of support for a strong Deaf identity and their dictation of the many facets of deaf people's lives in the manner of audism. Deaf people struggled to combat the paternalism and implied superiority of hearing people.

As deaf people grow up and believe what hearing people say about them, they internalize the 'deficit thinking' practice, laden with audistic values which in turn breeds a form of audism within themselves. They do not realize they are actually perpetuating oppressive behavior, which perpetuates a negative leader-follower relationship (Gertz, 2012, p. 55).

There are some ways the leader can support the development and growth of a strong Deaf identity and combat audism and the development of internal audism – *dysconscious audism*.

Communication

Language competency was the largest predictor of the leader-follower relationship. Typically, the most important issue for employers in the context of

deaf employees is communication (Hicks & Gilmore, 2012). The leader can acknowledge that methods of communication are a unique aspect of all deaf employees by asking the follower what preferred means of communication he or she favors. The varying degrees of hearing loss contribute significantly to this variety of communication preferences. However, those with a strong Deaf identity communicate most effectively in ASL; the leader should make an attempt to learn ASL and use the services of a certified Sign Language interpreter for meetings, gatherings, and the dissemination of relevant information.

The ADA of 1990 mandates the use of Sign Language interpreters by companies with 15 or more employees. This mandate states that interpreters are considered a reasonable accommodation “that enable qualified individuals with disabilities to enjoy equal employment opportunities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship (i.e., significant difficulty or expense to the employer)” (Hicks & Gilmore, 2012, p. 1). Leaders can support a strong Deaf identity and embrace the dignity of the Deaf follower by scheduling interpreters for assemblies, using email or texting (visually communicating) with Deaf employees, and learn ASL. Leaders can also utilize the services of a video relay service when engaged in teleconferences, have group discussions transcribed, and install visual alert systems (e.g., fire alarms).

Cultural Awareness

Cultural knowledge and involvement were positive factors in predicting the leader-follower relationship and could support the leader’s understanding, support, and appreciation for the uniqueness of Deaf culture. This support can

be accomplished by the leader learning about Deaf culture, allowing Deaf followers time to participate in Deaf-centric events, and providing staff with in-service training in the areas of Deaf culture and psychosocial aspects of deafness. Training of hearing coworkers could include very specific Deaf culture topics (e.g., How to Communicate Effectively with Deaf Coworkers, Cultural Uniqueness of Deaf Culture, Psychosocial Aspects of Deafness, How to Work with an Interpreter, and Myths and Facts Concerning Deafness).

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While the present research study is among the initial quantitative examinations of the predictability Deaf identity plays in the leader-follower relationship, certain limitations were noteworthy. First, in this study, the sample had obtained more college degrees than the Deaf populace overall. As indicated by Marschark, Lang, and Albertini (2002) by and large, 30% of hard-of-hearing and deaf students who attend post-secondary four-year schools will graduate, even though 70% of their hearing peers who enlist in four-year universities will graduate. This finding is a sharp difference between the 72% of the participants in the sample that disclosed having graduated with an advanced education (40% of the present example finished a graduate or expert program).

Second, while it was not the intent of the researcher, the majority of participants were employed by Deaf-centric organizations. These organizations would be much more familiar with the unique culture and language of Deaf followers. They would also be more aware of typical accommodations needed by

Deaf followers. Future research should include a cross section of deaf followers from both hearing-centric and Deaf-centric organizations.

Third, the two instruments (DAS and LMX-7) were web-based preventing people who do not have access to a personal computer or the web. Despite the fact that paper versions of the two studies were offered, no one asked for a copy or chose to utilize them. Future research should include those deaf individuals that do not have access to computers, subsequently making the outcomes more generalizable to and illustrative of the general deaf population.

Fourth, participants ranged in age from 20 to 78 years, with a mean of 44 years ($SD = 11.4$). Since younger people were underrepresented in the sample, future research should focus on a younger sample. Points of view regarding the leader-follower relationship and Deaf identity may vary among those people in younger generations.

Fifth, the current study focused on the predictability of Deaf identity on the Leader-follower relationship. The role of the leader was any person who influences an individual or group of people towards the achievement of a common goal without regard to their hearing status. Future research should consider demographic information of the leader (e.g., hearing status or ethnicity)

Last, in regards to ethnic and racial identity, future research should examine the connection between ethnic identity, Deaf identity, and the leader-follower relationship. Acceptance or rejection of ethnic constructs along with the varying degrees of internalization of a person's ethnic identity along with a person's conceivable negative thoughts regarding White majority populations

(identity and culture) could affect Deaf identity scores and leader-follower relationship scores.

The following recommendations for related research in the field of leadership studies and deafness are presented in a research question format.

1. What is the impact of school language programs on the development of Deaf identity?
2. What employment training activities positively influences the development of Deaf identity in the workplace?
3. What is the possible impact of Deaf identity on leader-follower pairs?

Conclusion

An important component of LMX theory states leaders should be respectful and construct trusting relationships with all followers, acknowledging that each member (follower) is unique and desires a special relationship. Oppression is a relationship killer. Even though acts of oppression are sometimes grounded in a desire to be helpful, nonetheless the roots of oppression are real. "It is important not to overstate or exaggerate the prevalence of (the) oppression of deaf people by hearing people.

Oppression...implies intent" (Harvey, 2003, p. 208). Leaders (employers) ought not to neglect the undiscovered group of capable and competent people who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing. The central premise of this exploratory study is that a Deaf follower with a strong Deaf identity reports a strong positive relationship with a hearing workplace leader. The implication is that leaders should support and encourage the development of a strong Deaf identity.

Abundant resources are accessible to businesses to provide education and training in the area of working with Deaf or hard-of-hearing followers. There are tremendous benefits for the company when they include people who are Deaf in their diverse workforce. “Leaders who include deaf employees within their recruiting initiatives ultimately strengthen the overall diversity among the workforce” (Hicks & Gilmore, 2012, p. 1).

This study supports the predictability of a strong Deaf identity on the leader-follower relationship and addresses specific methods that leaders can use to encourage Deaf followers to develop a stronger Deaf identity. Deaf followers convey a distinctive viewpoint to the workplace team. The Deaf follower may propose amenities, features, or marketing concepts that other workers would never have considered. Our society is increasingly celebrating the unique diversity of companies. Deaf followers can play a significant role in the company’s bottom line by being encouraged to be themselves and celebrate their uniqueness.

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APPENDICES: ARTIFICIAL STRUCTURES

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

20600004

**Project Summary
for the
Institutional Review Board**

Project Title Leader-Member Exchange and the Effect of Deaf Identity on Relationship Quality

This is a (check one): **New Project** **Renewal** **Revised Project Summary**

Principal Investigator David W Hylan Jr **Title** Student **Phone No.** 318-344-5 130

Other Investigators _____ **Title** _____ **Phone No.** _____

_____ **Title** _____ **Phone No.** _____

Funding Agency (if appropriate) _____

Project starting date July 1, 2016

Duration of project 12 months

Objectives:

The proposed study seeks to determine the impact of Deaf Identity on the leader-follower relationship.

How will humans or animals be used?

After obtaining their consent to participate, Deaf followers will complete the Deaf Acculturation Scale (DAS) developed by Deborah Maxwell-McCaw and the Leader-Member Exchange – 7 Scale. Hearing leaders will complete the Deaf Culture Scale (DCS) developed by Rebecca Hankins which was based on the Attitudes Towards Disabled Persons Scale and the Beliefs About Obese Persons Scale.

How many subjects will be used?

Approximately 150 subjects will be involved in the study.

How much time will be required of each human subject?

Study participants will be asked to complete the scales with a total of 80 items, taking approximately 30-45 minutes.

How will human subjects be selected?

Subjects will be randomly selected from member lists of the Louisiana Association of the Deaf, Deaf Grassroots Movement – Louisiana, and the Deaf Action Center of Louisiana.

Name the sources of animal or human subjects.

Are there any deceptive, threatening, or objectionable aspects to the project? If so, describe in detail.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. There are no known deceptive, threatening, or objectionable aspects of this study.

In projects using human subjects, how will confidentiality be maintained?

Confidentiality of subjects will be a major priority for this study. All participants will be told they may withdraw at any time. All information related to this study, including the identity of participants will be securely locked in a file cabinet in the principal investigator's office until completion of the study. The principal investigator's office is also locked providing a "double-lock" security situation. The website used to disseminate the surveys and collect data will be encrypted. Participants names will be coded using a numerical coding system. A master list of numerical identification codes will be secured in the same locked file cabinet. Only the principal investigator will have access to the numerical identification codes. Any reference to individual participants in case report forms will be by participant number only. All written material related to, or publications resulting from, the protocol, participant data will be grouped. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of participant database records.

Attach the following, if used: Consent form, all response sheets to be used by human subjects, debriefing sheets.

If the proposed project (1) includes provisions for maintaining confidentiality and (2) poses no threat of mental or physical harm to its human or animal participants, the project may be approved upon review by the Chair of the IRB. If deemed necessary by the Chair, the project will be forwarded to the IRB for review. Upon approval, the IRB reserves the right for further review of the project at any time.

Signatures Paul W. Hyland, Jr. Patricia F. Owen
Principal Investigator Department Chair

Dates:
Received by Chair of IRB 6/22/16
Submitted to IRB (if needed) _____
Reviewed by IRB (if needed) _____

Unconditional Approval _____

Recommendations _____

Conditional Approval _____

Required Changes _____

Patricia F. Owen 6/22/16
Approval of Chair of the IRB Date

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

Cover Letter for Anonymous Survey

January 13, 2017

Dear Potential Participant,

I am a doctoral student in the Education Department at Louisiana State University in Shreveport, Louisiana and I am conducting a study of Deaf identity and its effect on the leader-follower relationship. The objective of this research project is to attempt to understand if a person's Deaf identity predicts the quality of the leader-follower relationship involving people who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing.

The questionnaire is internet based and follows this letter. The brief questionnaire asks a variety of questions about your attitudes toward your current job, Deaf people, hearing people, sign language, and discrimination. I am asking you to look over the questionnaire and, if you choose to do so, complete the questionnaire and click on the "submit" button. This will send the questionnaire results to my secure email.

If you choose to participate, you will have the option to include your name and email address. I do not need to know who you are and no one else will know you participated in this study. Your responses will not be identified with you personally, nor will anyone be able to determine which company you work for. Nothing you say on the questionnaire will in any way influence your present or future employment with your company.

I hope you will take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Without the help of people like you, research on Deaf identity and the leader-follower relationship could not be conducted. Your participation is voluntary and there is no penalty if you do not participate. You may withdraw at any time!

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me via vp at (318) 524-7636 or by cell at (318) 344-5130 or at hyland13@lsus.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Louisiana State University Shreveport Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at One University Place, Shreveport, Louisiana, 71115, by phone at (318) 797-5000, or by e-mail at sanjay.menon@lsus.edu. This study was approved by the IRB on June 22, 2016.

Sincerely,

David W. Hylan, Jr

Doctoral Student

Department of Education and Business

Louisiana State University – Shreveport

APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Consent to Participate in Anonymous Survey

Study of Leader-Member Exchange and the Effect of Deaf identity on Relationship Quality

January 14, 2017

You are being invited to participate in a research study about Deaf identity and its effect on the leader-follower relationship. The objective of this research project is to attempt to understand if a person's Deaf identity predicts the quality of the leader-follower relationship involving people who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing. It is being conducted across the United States via the internet.

There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study, nor are there any costs for participating in the study. The information you provide will help me understand how best to address employer and Deaf employee relationships, as well as, how to satisfy the needs of companies and the needs of Deaf employees. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but what I learn from this study should provide general benefits to employees, companies, and researchers.

This survey is anonymous. If you choose to participate, you do not have to provide your name. No one will be able to identify you; nor will anyone be able to determine which company you work for. No one will know if you participated in this study. Nothing you say on the questionnaire will in any way influence your present or future employment with your company.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any penalty. If you choose to participate, please complete the following questionnaire and click the "submit" button. If you prefer, you may print and mail the survey and mail to: David W. Hylan, Jr., MS, 906 Kirby Pl, Shreveport, LA 71104 or send by email to hyland13@lsus.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about being in this study, you may contact me via VP at (318) 317-4578 or by cell at (318) 344-5130 or at hyland13@lsus.edu.

The Louisiana State University Shreveport Institutional Review Board has reviewed my request to conduct this project. If you have any concerns about your rights in this study, please contact Dr. Sanjay Menon of the LSUS-IRB at 318-797-5000 or email sanjay.menon@lsus.edu.

Clicking the "Next" button below indicates that you are 18 years of age or older, and indicates your consent to participate in this survey.

APPENDIX D
DEAF ACCULTURATION SCALE

Deaf Follower Survey Questions

The following section contains questions about your involvement in the deaf and hearing world. Please check the response that best represents your answer.

CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION

1. **I call myself Deaf.**
 - A - Strongly Agree
 - B - Agree
 - C - Agree Sometimes
 - D - Disagree
 - E - Strongly Disagree

2. **I feel that I am part of the hearing world.**
 - A - Strongly Agree
 - B - Agree
 - C - Agree Sometimes
 - D - Disagree
 - E - Strongly Disagree

3. **I call myself hard-of-hearing or hearing-impaired.**
 - A - Strongly Agree
 - B - Agree
 - C - Agree Sometimes
 - D - Disagree
 - E - Strongly Disagree

4. **I am comfortable with deaf people.**
 - A - Strongly Agree
 - B - Agree
 - C - Agree Sometimes
 - D - Disagree
 - E - Strongly Disagree

5. **Being involved in the hearing world (and with hearing people) is an important part of my life.**
 - A - Strongly Agree
 - B - Agree
 - C - Agree Sometimes
 - D - Disagree
 - E - Strongly Disagree

- 6. I feel that I am part of the deaf world**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 7. I am comfortable with hearing people.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 8. I often wish I could hear better or become hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 9. My Deaf identity is an important part of who I am.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 10. Being involved in the deaf world (and with deaf people) is an important part of my life.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

ENJOYMENT/LIKING

- 11. How much do you enjoy going to deaf parties/gatherings?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all

- 12. How much do you enjoy socializing with hearing people?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 13. How much do you enjoy attending hearing events/parties/gatherings?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 14. How much do you enjoy reading magazines/books written by deaf authors?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 15. How much do you enjoy going to theater events with hearing actresses/actors?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 16. How much do you enjoy participating in hearing political activities?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 17. How much do you enjoy watching ASL video-tapes by deaf storytellers or deaf poets?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 18. How much do you enjoy attending professional workshops in the hearing world?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 19. How much do you enjoy going to theater events with deaf actresses/actors?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all

- 20. How much do you enjoy participating in political activities that promote the rights of deaf people?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 21. How much do you enjoy participating in or attending hearing athletic competitions?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all
- 22. How much do you enjoy attending Deaf-related workshops/conferences (e.g., workshops on Deaf culture or linguistics in ASL)?**
A - A great deal
B - Somewhat
C - Not at all

CULTURAL PREFERENCES

- 23. I would prefer my education to be at a deaf school.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 24. I would prefer it if my roommate was deaf.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 25. I would prefer my children to be hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

- 26. I would prefer my work environment to be hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 27. I would prefer that my church/temple is mostly deaf.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 28. I would prefer my partner/spouse to be deaf.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 29. I would prefer to attend a hearing school or mainstreamed program.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 30. I would prefer my roommate to be hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 31. I would prefer my closest friends to be hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

- 32. I would prefer my partner/spouse to be hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 33. I would prefer my closest friends to be deaf.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 34. I would prefer that my church/temple to be mostly hearing.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 35. I would prefer my children be deaf.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
- 36. I would prefer my work environment to be deaf.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree

CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

- 37. How well do you know important events in American/world history?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all

- 38. How well do you know names of national heroes (hearing)?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 39. How well do you know names of popular hearing newspapers and magazines?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 40. How well do you know names of famous hearing actors and actresses?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 41. How well do you know names of famous hearing political leaders?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 42. How well do you know traditions and customs of deaf schools?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 43. How well do you know names of deaf heroes or well-known deaf people?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all

- 44. How well do you know important events in Deaf history?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 45. How well do you know well-known political leaders in the Deaf community?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 46. How well do you know organizations run by and for Deaf people?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all

LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

- 47. How well do you sign using ASL?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 48. How well do you understand other people signing in ASL?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 49. When you use ASL, how well do other deaf people understand you?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all

- 50. How well do you finger-spell?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 51. How well can you read other people's finger-spelling?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 52. How well do you know current ASL slang or popular expressions in ASL?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 53. How well do you speak English using your voice?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 54. In general, how well do hearing people understand your speech?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 55. How well do you understand other people when they are speaking in English (i.e., how well do you lip-read?)?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all

- 56. How well do you read English?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 57. How well do you write in English?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all
- 58. How well do you know English idioms or English expressions?**
A - Excellent/Like a Native
B - Very Good
C - Pretty Good/Average
D - A Little
E - Not at all

APPENDIX E

LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE – 7 SCALE

LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE – 7

Instructions: This questionnaire contains items that ask you to describe your relationship with your leader. For each of the items, indicate the degree to which you think the item is true for you by checking one of the responses that appear below the item.

- 1. Do you know where you stand with your leader... and do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?**
 - A - Very often
 - B - Fairly often
 - C - Sometimes
 - D - Occasionally
 - E - Rarely

- 2. How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?**
 - A - A great deal
 - B - Quite a bit
 - C - A fair amount
 - D - A little
 - E - Not a bit

- 3. How well does your leader recognize your potential?**
 - A - Fully
 - B - Mostly
 - C - Moderately
 - D - A little
 - E - Not at all

- 4. Regardless of how much formal authority your leader has built into his or her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his or her power to help you solve problems in your work?**
 - A - Very High
 - B - High
 - C - Moderately
 - D - Small
 - E - None

5. **Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your leader has, what are the chances that he or she would “bail you out” at his or her expense?**
A - Very High
B - High
C - Moderately
D - Small
E - None
6. **I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his or her decision if he or she were not present to do so.**
A - Strongly Agree
B - Agree
C - Agree Sometimes
D - Disagree
E - Strongly Disagree
7. **How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?**
A - Extremely effective
B - Better than average
C - Average
D - Worse than average
E - Extremely ineffective

APPENDIX F
DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. **I am**
 1. Employed
 2. Unemployed

2. **I self-identify as . . .**
 - A - White
 - B - Black
 - C - Hispanic (nonwhite)
 - D - Asian
 - E - Pacific Islander
 - F - Other

3. **My age is _____.**

4. **I self-identify as . . .**
 - A - Deaf
 - B - Hard-of-hearing
 - C - Hearing

5. **At what age did you become deaf?**
 - A - I was born deaf
 - B - Born hearing. Lost my hearing before age 5
 - C - Lost my hearing between age 6 and 10
 - D - Lost my hearing between age 11 and 20
 - E - Lost my hearing after age 21
 - F - I don't know

6. **I self-identify as . . .**
 - A - Male
 - B - Female
 - C - Other

7. **Which best describes your parents . . .**
 - A - Both of my parents are hearing
 - B - One or both of my parents are deaf

8. **How do you prefer to communicate?**
 - A - Orally (speech and lip-reading, using what hearing I have)
 - B - Sign language and speech at the same time
 - C - American Sign Language
 - D - Sign English

- 9. Can your mother or father sign?**
A - Yes
B - No
- 10. My siblings self-identify as . . .**
A - Deaf
B - Hearing
C - Hard-of-hearing
D - Both Hearing and Deaf
E - Both Hearing and Hard-of-hearing
F - Both Deaf and Hard-of-hearing
G - I have no siblings
- 11. My marital status is . . .**
A - Single, never married
B - Married or domestic partnership
C - Widowed
D - Divorced
E - Separated
- 12. My spouse or partner self-identifies as**
A - Deaf
B - Hard-of-hearing
C - Hearing
- 13. What kind of school program did you attend most of the time through high school?**
A - An oral school for the deaf
B - A signing school for the deaf
C - A classroom for deaf children in a hearing school
D - Attended a hearing school with no deaf program.
E - Other
- 14. My highest level or degree of education completed**
A - No schooling completed
B - Nursery school to 8th grade
C - Some high school, no diploma
D - High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
E - Some college credit, no degree
F - Trade/technical/vocational training
G - Associate degree
H - Bachelor's degree
I - Master's degree
J - Professional degree
K - Doctorate degree

- 15. When you answered these questions, which was true?**
- A - I relied mostly upon the English sentences
 - B - I relied mostly upon the ASL videos
 - C - I used both the English and ASL versions

APPENDIX G
LANGUAGE USED WITH SURVEY

Table 7

Language Used with Survey (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
I relied mostly upon the English sentences	46	15%
I relied mostly upon the ASL videos	7	2%
I used both the English and ASL versions	249	82%

APPENDIX H

DEAF ACCULTURATION SCALE – deaf

(DASd)

Deaf Acculturation Scale – deaf (DASd) Items

List of specific items dealing with Deaf Acculturation.

1. I call myself Deaf.
4. I am comfortable with deaf people.
6. I feel that I am part of the deaf world.
9. My Deaf identity is an important part of who I am.
10. Being involved in the deaf world (and with deaf people) is an important part of my life.

11. How much do you enjoy going to deaf parties/gatherings?
14. How much do you enjoy reading magazines/books written by deaf authors?
17. How much do you enjoy watching ASL video-tapes by deaf story-tellers or deaf poets?
19. How much do you enjoy going to theater events with deaf actresses/actors?
20. How much do you enjoy participating in political activities that promote the rights of deaf people?
22. How much do you enjoy attending Deaf-related workshops/conferences (e.g., workshops on Deaf culture or linguistics in ASL)?

23. I would prefer my education to be at a deaf school.
24. I would prefer it if my roommate was deaf.
27. I would prefer that my church/temple is mostly deaf.
28. I would prefer my partner/spouse to be deaf.
33. I would prefer my closest friends to be deaf.
35. I would prefer my children to be deaf.
36. I would prefer my work environment to be deaf.

42. How well do you know traditions and customs of deaf schools?
43. How well do you know names of deaf heroes or well-known deaf people?
44. How well do you know important events in Deaf history?
45. How well do you know well-known political leaders in the Deaf community?
46. How well do you know organizations run by and for Deaf people?
47. How well do you sign using ASL?
48. How well do you understand other people signing in ASL?
49. When you sign using ASL, how well do other deaf people understand you?
50. How well do you finger-spell?
51. How well can you read other people's finger spelling?
52. How well do you know current ASL slang or popular expressions in ASL?

APPENDIX I
DEAF ACCULTURATION SCALE – hearing
(DASh)

Deaf Acculturation Scale – hearing (DASh)

List of specific items dealing with hearing Acculturation.

2. I feel that I am part of the hearing world.
3. I call myself hard-of-hearing or hearing-impaired.
5. Being involved in the hearing world (and with hearing people) is an important part of my life.
7. I am comfortable with hearing people.
8. I often wish I could hear better or become hearing.

12. How much do you enjoy socializing with hearing people?
13. How much do you enjoy attending hearing events/parties/gatherings?
15. How much do you enjoy going to theater events with hearing actresses/actors?
16. How much do you enjoy participating in hearing political activities?
18. How much do you enjoy attending professional workshops in the hearing world?
21. How much do you enjoy participating in or attending hearing athletic competitions?

25. I would prefer my children to be hearing.
26. I would prefer my work environment to be hearing.
29. I would prefer to attend to hearing school or mainstreamed program.
30. I would prefer my roommate to be hearing.
31. I would prefer my closest friends to be hearing.
32. I would prefer my partner/spouse to be hearing.
34. I would prefer that my church/temple to be mostly hearing.

37. How well do you know important events in American/world history?
38. How well do you know names of national heroes (hearing)?
39. How well do you know names of popular hearing newspapers and magazines?
40. How well do you know names of famous hearing actors and actresses?
41. How well do you know names of famous hearing political leaders?

53. How well do you speak English using your voice?
54. In general, how well do hearing people understand your speech?
55. How well do you understand other people when they are speaking in English? (i.e., how well do you lip-read?)?
56. How well do you understand other people when they are speaking in English?
57. How well do you write in English?
58. How well do you know English idioms or English expressions?

APPENDIX J

DEAF ACCULTURATION SCALE SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

Deaf Acculturation Scale Scoring Instructions

1. Total your scores from the following items and divide by 29 (This is your Deaf Acculturation Score - deaf).

Table 8

Deaf Acculturation Scale Scoring Instructions for DASd

Item	Score
1	_____
4	_____
6	_____
9	_____
10	_____
11	_____
14	_____
17	_____
19	_____
20	_____
22	_____
23	_____
24	_____
27	_____
28	_____
33	_____
35	_____
36	_____
42	_____
43	_____
44	_____
45	_____
46	_____
47	_____
48	_____
49	_____
50	_____
51	_____
52	_____

Deaf Acculturation Scale Scoring Instructions

- Total your scores from the following items and divide by 29 (This is your Deaf Acculturation Score - hearing).

Table 9

Deaf Acculturation Scale Scoring Instructions for DASH

Item	Score
2	_____
3	_____
5	_____
7	_____
8	_____
12	_____
13	_____
15	_____
16	_____
18	_____
21	_____
25	_____
26	_____
29	_____
30	_____
31	_____
32	_____
34	_____
37	_____
38	_____
39	_____
40	_____
41	_____
53	_____
54	_____
55	_____
56	_____
57	_____
58	_____

APPENDIX K
DEAF ACCULTURATION SCALE SCORING INSTRUCTIONS FOR
OVERALL ACCULTURATION STYLE

**Deaf Acculturation Scale Scoring Instructions For
Overall Acculturation Style**

Check the option that matches the final scores on the DASd and DASH

_____ If mean DASd is < 3 and DASH is ≥ 3 (Hearing Acculturated)

_____ If mean DASd is < 3 and DASH is < 3 (Marginal)

_____ If mean DASd is ≥ 3 and DASH is < 3 (Deaf Acculturated)

_____ If mean DASd is ≥ 3 and DASH is ≥ 3 (BiCultural)

APPENDIX L
DEAF ACCULTURATION SCALE SCORING INSTRUCTIONS
FOR SUBSCALES

Deaf Acculturation Scale Scoring Instructions for Subscales

1. **Cultural ID (deaf):** add scores on das1 + das4 + das6 + das9 + das10, divided by 5
2. **Cultural Involvement (deaf):** add scores on das11 + das14 + das17 + das19 + das20 + das22, divided by 6
3. **Cultural Preferences (deaf):** add scores on das23 + das24 + das27 + das28 + das33 + das35 + das36, divided by 7
4. **Cultural Knowledge (deaf):** add scores on das42 + das43 + das44 + das45 + das46, divide by 5
5. **Language competence (deaf):** add scores on das47 + das48 + das49 + das50 + das51 + das52, divide by 6
6. **Cultural ID (hearing):** add scores on das2 + das3 + das5 + das7 + das8, divided by 5
7. **Cultural Involvement (hearing):** add scores on das12 + das13 + das15 + das16 + das18 + das21, divided by 6
8. **Cultural Preferences (hearing):** add scores on das25 + das26 + das29 + das30 + das31 + das32 + das34, divided by 7
9. **Cultural Knowledge (hearing):** add scores on das37 + das38 + das39 + das40 + das41, divide by 5
10. **Language competence (hearing):** add scores on das53 + das54 + das55 + das56 + das57 + das58, divide by 6

APPENDIX M

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Participating Organizations

The Deaf Grassroots Movement of Louisiana

The DGM-L is an IRS-designated 501(c)3 organization and a national advocacy movement with a Louisiana presence that was established in 2015. The purpose of DGM-L is to form a coalition with other organizations serving the deaf within Louisiana and work together to raise the living standards of the deaf, deaf blind, and hard-of-hearing (DDBHH) community.

Louisiana Association of the Deaf

The LAD, an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) designated 501(c)3 organization, “is the oldest and largest consumer organization of Deaf and hard-of-hearing in the state of Louisiana. LAD was founded in 1908 by alumni of the Louisiana School of the Deaf” (LAD, 2009).

The Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center of Louisiana

The Deaf Action Center, also an IRS-designated 501(c)3 organization, was established in 1982 and functions as an advocacy, education, and sign language interpreter referral agency.

The Learning Center for the Deaf (Framingham, MA)

The Learning Center for the Deaf (TLC) is a nationally recognized leader in educational, therapeutic, and community services for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and adults. Established in 1970 and headquartered in Framingham, Massachusetts, The Learning Center for the Deaf is a multi-service organization that provides a broad range of services for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and adults.

Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness

The mission of the Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness, Inc. (GLAD) is to ensure equal access of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community to the same opportunities afforded their hearing counterparts. The organization’s general purposes and powers are directed around the promotion of the social, recreational, cultural, educational, and vocational well-being of its deaf and hard-of-hearing constituents.

American School for the Deaf (Hartford, CT)

Founded in 1817, The American School for the Deaf is dedicated to serving deaf and hard-of-hearing infants, youth and their families in development of intellect and the enhancement of quality of life utilizing specially designed instruction through an American Sign Language and English Bilingual Approach, empowering them to become educated and self-directed, lifelong learners.

Michigan School for the Deaf (Flint, MI)

MSD graduates students empowered with a positive Deaf identity and who demonstrate the knowledge confidence and leadership to become contributing citizens in a diverse, technological and democratic society. Their mission is to provide academics and social excellence - rich in ASL and English literacy for all students from infancy to graduation, to be the leader in educating Deaf and Hard-of-hearing children in Michigan, and to provide services to their families and the community.

Florida School for the Deaf (St. Augustine, FL)

Established in 1885 and bordered by Florida's Intracoastal Waterway and historic neighborhoods, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) is located in the nation's oldest city of St. Augustine. White stucco buildings with Spanish tiled roofs, graceful palm trees and majestic live oaks create a serene setting for students who are deaf/hard-of-hearing or blind/visually impaired to learn, live and play.

Maryland School for the Deaf (Frederick, MD)

The Maryland School for the Deaf is a school that provides free public education to deaf and hard-of-hearing Maryland residents, from birth to age 21. The school was established at Frederick, Maryland in 1868 (Chapter 247, Acts of 1867; Chapter 409, Acts of 1868). The original buildings for the school were the Hessian Barracks, used during the Revolutionary War to detain Hessian mercenaries who were hired by the British. The buildings were used by Lewis and Clark to store supplies before their famous expedition began.

California School for the Deaf (Fremont, CA)

CSD celebrated its 150th Anniversary in 2010, and has a rich and storied history in its current location in Fremont and on its previous campuses in Berkeley and San Francisco. On the 91-acre Fremont campus, you will find student-made murals decorating the buildings, and "The Bear Hunt" sculpture by alumnus Douglas Tilden.

Indiana School for the Deaf (Indianapolis, IN)

The Indiana School for the Deaf (ISD) is a fully accredited school for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in nursery school through high school. The Indiana School for the Deaf is accredited by AdvancED Indiana and the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD). It provides services to approximately 342 students enrolled on campus. About 60 percent of the students live on campus during the academic year. ISD offers a full range of social activities, including sports, clubs, and organizations.

St. Mary's School for the Deaf (Buffalo, NY)

Established in 1853 as the LeCouteulx St. Mary's Benevolent Society for the Deaf and Dumb, St. Mary's School for the Deaf is committed to providing equitable access to exemplary educational programs that prepare deaf students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who are productive members of society.

Utah School for the Deaf and the Blind (Ogden, UT)

The Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) has been serving students with sensory impairments throughout Utah for over 100 years! The schools began in 1884 by the Territorial Legislature after a message from Governor Eli Murray which emphasized the need for a school for the deaf. Twelve years later in 1896, as Utah attained statehood, the members of the Constitutional Convention created the school for the blind. Recognizing the appropriateness of services for both visually and hearing impaired individuals

Texas School for the Deaf (Austin, TX)

Texas School for the Deaf is established as a state agency to provide a continuum of direct educational services to students, ages zero through twenty-one, who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and who may have multiple disabilities. TSD is also directed to serve as a statewide educational resource center on deafness, providing a variety of educational services to families, students, programs and professionals throughout the state working with persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

APPENDIX N

PARTICIPANTS' EDUCATION

Table 10

Participants' Education (N = 302)

Category	<i>n</i>	%
School Program Attended		
An oral school for the Deaf	5	2%
A signing school for the Deaf	130	43%
A classroom for deaf children in a hearing school	30	10%
Attended a hearing school with no deaf program	104	34%
Other	33	11%
Highest Degree Obtained		
No Schooling completed	0	0%
Nursery school to 8 th grade	0	0%
Some high school, no diploma	24	8%
High school graduate, diploma or GED	34	11%
Some college credit, no degree	26	9%
Trade/technical/vocational training	2	1%
Associate degree	17	6%
Bachelor's degree	80	26%
Master's degree	74	25%
Professional degree	40	13%
Doctorate degree	5	2%

VITA

David W. Hylan, Jr., MS, has earned a Master of Science degree in Deaf Education and a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech, both from Lamar University. As a member of the inaugural cohort of the LSUS Leadership Studies Doctorate of Education program, David is completing his terminal degree, with a supporting area in Nonprofit Administration. David has been employed as the executive director of the Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center for the past 31 years. He has provided over 35 years of professional services as an educator, interpreter, and mentor in medical, legal, higher education, and governmental situations. David has conducted workshops on the national, state and local level in the areas of leadership, sign language interpreter training, ethics, and American Sign Language training.

David is one of the founding members of People Acting for Change and Equality (PACE) and the Louisiana Coalition of Service Providers. He holds RID Certifications, Certificate of Interpreting (CI) and a Certificate of Transliteration (CT), serves as an RID Local Test Administrator (LTA) and holds a State of Louisiana Level V certificate issued by the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf. He is a member of the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, The Louisiana Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, The Louisiana Association of the Deaf and the International Leadership Association.

David W. Hylan, Jr.
906 Kirby Pl • Shreveport, LA 71104
Phone: 318-344-5130
Fax: 318-226-1299
E-mail: neptunestwin@gmail.com