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Government Senior Executives' Perceptions of Brain Drain on Leadership in the United States Virgin Islands

Shurla Jeffers-Knight
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Shurla Jeffers-Knight

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Walden University
2015

Abstract

Government Senior Executives' Perceptions of Brain Drain on Leadership in the United
States Virgin Islands

by

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MS, Nova Southeastern University, 1999

BS, Nova Southeastern University, 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Psychology

Walden University

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Abstract

Highly qualified individuals are leaving the Caribbean and relocating to the United States and other developed countries. Researchers describe this resulting flight of human capital, or *brain drain*, from the Caribbean as a problem which has no clear definition or immediate solution. This phenomenological study explored perceptions of government senior executives in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) of the cause and impact of brain drain. Burns' and Bass's transformational and transactional leadership theories were used as the framework for this study. Data were collected through a demographic questionnaire and semistructured interviews with a snowball sample of 10 participants. Data were analyzed using the phenomenological method of thematic coding. Data indicated that leaders perceived a lack of opportunities for educated individuals in the USVI. Government senior executives acknowledged an imbalance in the workforce as the majority of workers are older individuals. Government senior executives recommended an increased budget allotment to educate, retain, and attract younger Virgin Islanders to decrease and prevent brain drain. These results indicate that policymakers and organizational leaders can create positive social change by creating job opportunities and improving the island's physical and social infrastructures, thus, ensuring future organizational success.

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Dedication

My dissertation is dedicated to my family who supported me in fulfilling my goal of furthering my education. A special thank you to my husband, Karl Knight, who made many sacrifices as he adjusted his schedule to be home with our son, survived many nights without dinner, and endured my late nights as I completed my dissertation. I am also grateful for my son, Kimani Knight, for being so patient and understanding, despite his young age, when I explained that I did not have the extra time to play with him because I had to do school work.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my parents, Ermin and Edgar Jeffers, who frequently inquired how I was doing and encouraged me to hang in there until I finished. My mother encouraged me to be patient despite the obstacles I encountered and reminded me that things happen for a reason. She also instilled in me and my five siblings a passion for reading and educating ourselves and others. I am appreciative that my father is proud of my accomplishments and reminded me to have faith in God throughout my educational journey.

In memory of my sister, Karen Suzette Jeffers Prentice, who passed away on July 5, 2014, I am eternally grateful that we reconnected over recent years. Her dedication to her church, teaching children, and her interest in butterflies and other wildlife were inspirational to experience. Thank you to my sister, Carol Jeffers, and brothers, Edgar, Shelburne, and Rudyard Jeffers for being available when needed and coming together in a time of need. I would not have accomplished my goal of obtaining a PhD without the love of my family and I thank each and every one of them for their ongoing support.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Human capital flight, also known as *brain drain*, is a phenomenon that predominantly affects less developed countries. It is the reduction in human capital that occurs when skilled or educated people migrate from their native country to more developed countries (Johnson, 2009). According to Johnson (2009), the loss of highly trained people creates a hardship for organizations that need employees who have pertinent skills and education for crucial positions. Although the migration of large groups of people to more developed countries is not new, increased loss of human capital is more prominent in developing nations (Tessema, 2010). Tessema (2010) reported that as global trade increases, it is necessary for organizations to have employees with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to compete internationally with companies that provide similar services.

Minto-Coy (2011) related that the global economic recession and the inability of local organizations to provide enough jobs for skilled individuals have resulted in high rates of migration from different islands in the Caribbean. In countries with a large population, it is possible for residents to move to areas that have a high demand for skilled and educated employees without negatively impacting the local economy. However, most Small Island Developing States (SIDS), such as St. Lucia, are unable to meet business and educational demands.

A lack of qualified workers means that individuals have to be recruited from around the world (Wellard & Stockhausen, 2010). Recruiting foreign professionals requires higher salaries because individuals are experienced and need to be compensated

for what may likely be challenging conditions and a higher cost of living (Mullei, 2010). While international hiring is necessary at times, the expense is not sustainable for developing countries.

While developed countries continue to flourish by using highly trained and educated human resources from SIDS, SIDS on the other hand are having difficulties filling vacancies that require qualified individuals, such as health, science, and technology positions (Johnson, 2009). This problem has negatively affected Caribbean countries because of the difficulties in filling vacant positions. Effective leadership, specifically the use of transformational and transactional characteristics, are noted to increase employee satisfaction and promote organizational change (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis, Watt, & Piotrowski, 2011; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011; Wiltshire, 2010).

Significant change is needed in the Caribbean to encourage natives, especially those who are highly qualified for critical jobs, to remain in the country. Transformational and transactional leaders have the knowledge, skills, and ability to adapt to circumstances and meet the needs of both the organization and employees (Bass, 1997, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Burns, 1978, 2010). Benefits of transformational and transactional leadership are evident (Bass, 1997, 1999; Burns, 1978, 2010); however, sufficient studies are unavailable about the Caribbean to determine if these approaches will be successful in that region. Specifically, it is unknown if transformational and transactional leadership could reduce or prevent human capital flight in the Caribbean.

Current research on human capital flight in the Caribbean focuses on larger islands, such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (Edmunds, 2012; Greenidge & DaCosta, 2009), which presents a gap in research as only minimal information is provided about the United States Virgin Islands (USVI). The study closed the gap on how human capital flight affects leadership in the Caribbean, by focusing solely on the USVI and its leaders. This study explored if government senior executives in the USVI practice transformational and transactional leadership styles, which could help to decrease human capital flight in the territory.

A theory about human capital flight, or brain drain, is not included in this dissertation as the literature fails to clearly and consistently identify a theoretical approach that was commonly used by researchers. Brain drain has a negative impact on the Caribbean, but articles primarily focused on the reasons migration occurred (Appave & Laczko, 2011; Mishra, 2007; Nurse & Jones, 2009; Parkins, 2011). As human capital flight continues to be a challenge to the workforce in the Caribbean, its impact on leadership was examined.

In this phenomenological study, I explored the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. This study is relevant because results provide scholars with an understanding of the cause and overall impact of human capital flight in the USVI and informed

organizational leaders of recommended ways to decrease or prevent human capital flight, whether there are weaknesses with the leadership styles used by organizational leaders and recommended ways to improve upon those weaknesses which would improve organizational leadership, and it added to the organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean.

In Chapter 1, I include the background of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, nature of the study, definition of terms, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations of the study, significance of the study, and summary. *Human capital flight* is primarily referred to as *brain drain* throughout this dissertation.

Background of the Problem

Migrants leave their home countries for various reasons, including social and economic factors that diminish quality of life expectations (Iravani, 2011). Appave and Laczko (2011) reported that Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Caribbean are regions known for ongoing migration. The authors noted that the primary reason residents leave their country depends on what is happening locally, in addition to events in other parts of the world. According to Iravani (2011), human capital flight or brain drain occurs due to political unrest and economic, social, and cultural influences. Johnson (2009) related that developed countries continue to flourish by using highly trained and educated human resources from SIDS, which is a cost saving measure as they do not have to provide extensive training. As a result, SIDS have difficulty filling vacancies in their own country for health, science, and technology positions when talented employees relocate.

Economic factors that affect SIDS and may cause human capital flight include the small size, isolation, climate change and sea-level rise, and natural and environmental disasters. Due to the small size, SIDS have limited resources, rely on international trade, and have costly public administration and infrastructure (SIDSnet, 2013). SIDSnet (2013) noted that isolation has economic ramifications as it is difficult to reach or be included in the global markets due to its remote location. Climate change and sea-level rise may change, which presents risks to the continued existence of some islands (SIDSnet, 2013). Furthermore, natural and environmental disasters cause high economic, social, and environmental consequences (SIDSnet, 2013).

Social factors that affect human capital flight include education, health, and crime. The education system in SIDS needs reform to compete globally as many individuals of the younger generation are unemployed (Blom & Hobbs, 2008). Furthermore, Blom & Hobbs (2008) stated that training and education were incompatible with existing businesses. Similarly, the Caribbean has a history of poor healthcare in comparison to developed countries (Ligeon, Jolly, & Jolly, 2012). The availability of food and education about health issues are necessary to improve the current situation in SIDS (Ligeon, Jolly, & Jolly, 2012). Crime increased over the past decade in the Caribbean (Edmunds, 2012). There is a need for urgency to reduce crime as the youth are severely injured or die (Baily, 2011), and all socioeconomic communities are affected, including locals and tourists (Kuhns, Spohn, & Wells, 2008).

The local government plays a major role in reducing human capital flight by implementing policies and procedures for economy, business, and industrial

development. Economic development is necessary and many islands streamlined processes so local and global investors could establish businesses (The World Bank, 2012). The cost of living is high in the Caribbean which is affected by rising oil prices (Greenidge & DaCosta, 2009). Consumers buy less when inflation occurs (Sutherland & Craigwell, 2009), but increasing the minimum wage is not a viable solution as governments have to support the unemployment fund (Moore & Browne, 2009). The cost of electricity is a major problem affecting business development and expansion in the Caribbean (Yépez-Garcia, Johnson, & Andrés, 2011) and SIDS cannot continuously sustain high energy costs so collaborating with other islands is essential to reduce costs and create potential for financial growth (Gerner & Hansen, 2011).

The number of highly skilled individuals who migrated from the Caribbean over the years negatively impacts the economy and hinders development (Palmer, 2009). In 2000, 10.4% of low skilled workers migrated from the Caribbean, which was much lower than 43% of high skilled workers (Docquier & Rapoport, 2011). In 2010, the Caribbean had a 6% migration rate in comparison to other countries in the world (Appave & Laczko, 2011). However, Wiltshire (2010) noted that as of 2006, islands like Antigua and Barbuda had a migration rate of 40% over the previous 4 decades. Other SIDS reflect similar migration rates and the numbers are alarming since they “lost more than 50% of tertiary level graduates and more than 30% of secondary graduates collectively over time” (Wiltshire, 2010, p. 64).

According to the Council of the European Union (2010), leaders in various islands have gathered together at summits to generate ideas or learn from each other on

how to resolve problems that affect most of the Caribbean countries. This includes why the Caribbean is experiencing a significant level of brain drain and determining what steps can be taken to resolve the problem. Despite differences on how to identify and resolve brain drain, the research literature indicated that the majority of SIDS acknowledge that brain drain has an effect on their countries' economy (Docquier & Rapoport, 2011; Palmer, 2009). Financial consequences due to the migration of highly qualified people are only one concern of brain drain (Iravani, 2011). Ciomasu (2010) recommended that the focus should change from ending brain drain to encouraging networking, where immigrants use their contacts and knowledge in developed countries to improve situations in their home countries.

Brain drain occurred for years in the Caribbean (Minto-Coy, 2011) and a review of the literature indicated a gap in research that focuses on how brain drain affects government and business leadership. The role of leaders in resolving brain drain is important because they have the power and ability to recommend and implement change (Minto-Coy, 2011). Organizations face many challenges, including globalization and innovative technology, but leaders have skills to influence and motivate employees (Neera & Shoma, 2010).

Neera and Shoma (2010) reported that senior executives have to be aware of local and international employment trends to create growth within organizations. Organizational leaders recognize that brain drain is an issue, but the extent of the problem is unknown. Determining how brain drain affects leadership requires additional research, which will also be beneficial in identifying recommendations. As a result, in this study, I

addressed the gap in research pertaining to the the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. In this study, I explored whether government senior executives in the USVI practice these forms of leadership styles, which could help to decrease human capital flight in the territory.

Statement of the Problem

Highly qualified individuals are leaving the Caribbean and are relocating to developed countries like the United States (Lozano-Ascencio & Gandini, 2012). For the purpose of this study, brain drain was defined as highly qualified individuals leaving their countries of origin to relocate to developed countries (Lozano-Ascencio & Gandini, 2012). These individuals are considered highly qualified because they are skilled or educated to work in specific positions that are in high demand, such as doctors, scientists, information technology technicians, or teachers. This resulting brain drain from the Caribbean is described as a “wicked problem,” which has no clear problem definition, immediate solutions, and resolution date (Logue, 2009, p. 41). Similar terms used to refer to *brain drain* include *human capital flight*, *migration*, *emigration*, *immigration*, and *relocation*.

Statistics on human capital flight are limited and the accuracy of information is unknown. Defoort (2008) stated that there is no accurate tracking system for emigrants from the Caribbean because children, young adults, and older adults might not be

documented, especially if they relocate with a working adult. Most Caribbean emigrants move to the United States due to proximity to their home country (Acosta & de la Cruz, 2011). Acosta and de la Cruz (2011) reported that 18% of Caribbean nationals migrated to the United States in 2010.

Since many U.S. Virgin Islanders and other Caribbean nationals migrate to the United States, an overview is needed to assess why this trend continues. According to Martin (2009), migration to the United States from the Caribbean fluctuates according to economic and political trends in both regions and throughout the world. The author stated that statistics are scarce regarding specific events that trigger large or constant migration from the Caribbean, but political decisions play a significant role as government policies and procedures determine immigration law. A historical overview of immigration in the United States, how the immigrant population expanded, and current issues of Caribbean migrants are discussed further in Chapter 2.

While developed countries continue to flourish by using highly trained and educated human resources from SIDS who do not require extensive training, SIDS are having difficulties filling vacancies that require highly qualified individuals, such as health, science, and technology positions (Johnson, 2009). This problem has negatively affected Caribbean business organizations and countries because of the difficulties in filling these vacant positions. Effective leadership, specifically the combined use of transformational and transactional leadership characteristics, is one key to decreasing and preventing brain drain in the Caribbean; they are noted to increase employee satisfaction

and promote organizational change (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al., 2011; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011; Wiltshire, 2010).

There is a gap in the research literature on the leadership styles of Caribbean leaders. It is unknown if organizational leaders use transformational and transactional leadership styles and how their leadership styles impact employees and their countries. In addition, current research on brain drain in the Caribbean focuses on larger islands, such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (Edmunds, 2012; Greenidge & DaCosta, 2009). A gap also exists in research that focuses on the USVI as only minimal information is provided about the territory.

The USVI was selected for this study because it is a U.S. territory that is also part of the Caribbean, with numerous factors known to affect brain drain, such as high unemployment (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor, 2011), educational challenges (The Office of the Governor, 2010), healthcare issues (Callwood et al., 2012), and high levels of crime (U.S. VI Police Department, 2013). The diverse population is comprised of nationals from surrounding Caribbean islands and former colonial countries (Acevedo-Rodríguez, 1996). Due to the closure of Hovensa Oil Refinery (Hovensa) in 2012, over 2,000 jobs were lost which “reversed the gains in employment as the unemployment rate substantially increased due to layoffs in the manufacturing, service and government sectors” (Office of the Governor, 2013, p. 13). Hovensa was a “major Caribbean export refinery supplying the East Coast” (Energy Information Administration, 2012, p. 1). The diverse population, social challenges, and closure of the largest employer in the territory made USVI the ideal location to conduct a study on brain drain.

Due to the significance of brain drain and lack of research on the subject, in this study, I closed these two gaps by exploring the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause and impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational and transactional leadership styles, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. The findings gained from this study provided scholars with an understanding of the cause and overall impact of brain drain in the USVI and informed organizational leaders of ways to decrease or prevent brain drain. Recommendations were suggested in order to improve upon identified weaknesses to advance organizational leadership. Furthermore, findings from this study added to the organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Brain drain is defined as highly qualified individuals leaving their countries of origin to relocate to developed countries (Lozano-Ascencio & Gandini, 2012). These individuals are considered highly qualified because they are skilled or educated to work in specific positions that are in high demand, such as doctors,

scientists, information technology technicians, and teachers. Similar terms used to refer to *brain drain* include *human capital flight*, *migration*, *emigration*, *immigration*, and *relocation*.

Research Questions

In order to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause and impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational and transactional leadership styles, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain, in this phenomenological study study, I addressed the following research questions:

1. What do government senior executives perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI?
2. What do government senior executives perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI?
3. With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration?
4. With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards?

5. What is the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI?
6. How does brain drain affect the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI?
7. What do government senior executives recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI?

Theoretical Framework

Burns (1978) and Bass's (1985) transformational and transactional leadership theories served as the theoretical frameworks for this phenomenological study.

Leadership is discussed as an important factor in resolving brain drain (Minto-Coy, 2011) and transformational and transactional leadership are two key theories that are reported to increase employee satisfaction and promote organizational change (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al., 2011; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011). Both leadership styles are needed for guiding organizational success (Ingram, 2013) and retaining employees.

A brief overview of each theory is provided in this section with a more detailed explanation provided in Chapter 2. In this section, I include a description of transformational leadership theory, transactional leadership theory, and a comparison of transformational and transactional leadership theories.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The key theorists of transformational leadership are Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Burns and Bass developed the theory of transformational leadership after researching leaders throughout the world. Their definitions of transformational leadership

were important aspects of the theoretical framework for this study on brain drain in the Caribbean.

Bass (1999) further developed Burn's transformational leadership theory by partnering with colleagues to conduct additional research on leadership. Transformational leadership incorporates four different factors (Bass, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1994):

1. Idealized influence or charisma: It describes leaders whose actions speak louder than words. They demonstrate an inclusive vision, exhibit great commitment and persistence in pursuing objectives, express confidence in the vision of the organization, develop trust and confidence among employees, symbolize the goals and mission of the organization, and send the message about doing the right thing.
2. Inspirational motivation: It is descriptive of leaders who excite their followers and share the vision. They inspire others to perform, clarify where the organization will be in the future, create a strong sense of purpose among employees, align individual and organizational needs, help followers achieve more than even they thought was possible, and send the message that if leaders and followers focus together on what the organization stands for, then they can achieve whatever they desire.
3. Intellectual stimulation: It describes leaders who think outside the box. They encourage the imagination of employees, challenge the old ways of doing things, look for better ways to do things, encourage followers not to think like

them, are willing to take risks for potential gain, and send the message about changing assumptions.

4. Individualized consideration: It is representative of compassionate leaders who empathize with their followers' individual needs. They make interpersonal connections with employees, genuinely care and show their compassion in their actions, encourage continuous development and growth of employees, and send the message that they care about their followers and are looking out for their best interests.

According to Bass (1999), transformational leaders ensure that organizations and members share the same goals. Transformational leaders have the ability to facilitate change by encouraging members to adopt the same views of the organization. Members are inspired to perform duties and internalize ideals that transformational leaders introduce and model, which is known as idealized influence. The employees then have the potential to guide others. Additional research is needed on transformational leadership and brain drain in the Caribbean. The current literature indicated that the Caribbean has one of the highest rates of brain drain in the world (Appave & Laczko, 2011; Docquier & Rapoport, 2011; Palmer, 2009;); however, extensive search of the literature yielded only a few research results on the Caribbean and research is limited in the USVI.

Transformational leadership theory will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 2.

Transactional Leadership Theory

Like transformational leadership theory, Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) are also the key theorists for transactional leadership theory, where Burns defined the theory and

Bass further developed it. Burns (2010) suggested that leaders with transformational and transactional leadership styles should work together as they complement each other. Although transformational leadership theory is considered the primary approach to employee satisfaction, transactional leadership also plays a significant role in organizations.

According to Bass (1999), transactional leadership refers to a process between leaders and followers to meet their own self-interests. Leaders clearly articulate what followers need to do and what rewards they will receive once tasks are completed. Depending on the assignment, leaders may provide direction or actively participate. Transactional leadership includes three different leadership behaviors (Bass, 1990; Bass, 1997; Bass & Avolio, 1994):

1. Laissez-Faire: It describes leaders who are hands-off, therefore, there is an absence of leadership. They avoid taking a stand on issues, do not emphasize results, refrain from intervening when issues arise, and are unaware of employee performance.
2. Management-By-Exception: It is descriptive of leaders who take corrective actions; set standards, but wait for problems to arise before doing anything; stress what people are doing wrong; enforce rules and dislike challenges to the status quo; and employees only hear from the leader when something is wrong. Management-By-Exception can be either active, where leaders monitor followers' performance and take corrective action, or it can be passive, where leaders fail to intervene until problems become serious.

3. Contingent rewards: It is representative of leaders who apply constructive transactions, make clear expectations of outcomes and rewards, exchange reward and recognition for accomplishments, and actively monitor employee progress and provide supportive feedback.

The overall success of transactional leaders depend on implemented skills, interactions with employees, and how quickly issues are addressed (Bass, 1999). The majority of the journal articles reviewed discussed transformational leadership alone or in combination with transactional leadership (e.g., Bass, 1999; Guru et al., 2012). In addition to exploring leadership research in the Caribbean, research needs to be determined if transactional leadership is practiced in SIDS, like the USVI. Transactional leadership theory will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 2.

Comparison of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Theories

Ingram (2013) related that both transformational and transactional leadership styles are needed for guiding organizational success. Advantages of transactional leaders are their abilities to address small operational details quickly. These leaders take care of the details that need to be addressed, bring things together, and build strong reputations in the marketplace, while keeping front line employees productive. On the other hand, transformational leaders are important to the strategic development of business as they set ambitious goals and can achieve quick success by using their vision and team building skills.

Ingram (2013) further pointed out that different situations call for different management styles. For instance, front-line supervisors may benefit more from using a

transactional leadership style, while chief executive officers (CEOs) or sales managers can be more effective if they use a transformational leadership style. Executive managers may design and communicate grand strategic missions, and then they pass the missions down to transactional leaders for implementation.

Authors van Eeden, Cilliers, and van Deventer (2008) conducted a study in which they revealed that, although managers demonstrated transformational leadership styles periodically, transactional leadership skills were more prominent. Managers who combine both leadership styles tend to be more directive and both leadership theories can have a successful effect on members. Almayali and Bin Ahmad's (2012) proposed a study that both leadership styles yield positive results for academic performance of Iraqi public universities as they both accomplish the same goals. The authors completed a literature review but the actual study was not initiated. Based on the literature cited above, senior executives in the Caribbean need to improve circumstances for employees and the organization by demonstrating successful leadership skills. Prevailing corporate policies and procedures are insufficient as employees continue to relocate to other countries; thus, significant changes have to be implemented to ensure continued success and growth in the Caribbean.

As related by Minto-Coy (2011), development cannot occur in the Caribbean if employees continue to leave the region and qualified applicants are unavailable. As difficult as the phenomenon of brain drain is to resolve, leaders should assess problems and implement appropriate corrective action to ensure viability of organizations and communities. Although the leadership theory model may change over time,

transformational and transactional leadership theories are currently considered the best approaches for organization development and success (Bass, 2010).

As a result, understanding what defines transformational and transactional leadership and whether government senior executives use similar styles to reduce brain drain are essential components of this study. Previous researchers have conducted studies on the benefits of transformational and transactional leadership; however, additional research was needed to explore the use of both leadership styles among government senior executive in the USVI. Comparison of transformational and transactional leadership theories will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are implemented, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Data were collected for this phenomenological study through the use of a researcher-created demographic questionnaire and in-depth face-to-face semistructured interviews with 10 government senior executives in the USVI. Demographic questionnaires provided additional information about participants in the study. The questionnaire items included age, gender, race, marital status, level of education, and job title. The responses were summarized to provide general background information about the participants. Snowball sampling, which is a subset of purposive

sample, was used to recruit 10 government senior executives for the study. To recruit 10 participants, government senior executives who were initially contacted were asked to recommend other individuals who might be willing to participate and who met the selection criteria for the study.

Government involvement is essential to reducing brain drain in the Caribbean. According to Minto-Coy (2011), establishing partnerships is required to effectively manage brain drain, so effective leaders are needed in both the public and private sectors, but government officials should take initiative. Successful partnership “speaks to the quality of leadership at all levels – in civil service, civil society, the business community and unions – but above all, leadership at the political level” (Minto-Coy, 2011, p. 14). While discussions and planning are necessary aspects of change management, policy creation and revisions are critical to establishing procedures to address brain drain. Ideally, it would not be the sole responsibility of government to create jobs, repair infrastructure, and carry out other developments that promote financial growth (Schoburgh, 2012). Schoburgh (2012) stated that public and private partners would collaborate to expand internationally-based businesses. As this is an exploratory study, the participants were solely government leaders, since the local government of SIDS is expected to initiate change to decrease human capital flight by taking initiative and setting policies. In the USVI, academic administrators are part of the government structure. In this study, my aim was to find out the perceptions of government senior executives about brain drain and their recommendations to reduce it.

Audio recordings of the in-depth interviews were transcribed. The transcriptions were analyzed using NVivo, which facilitated the identification of themes and provided annotation for the codes and categories. The study was conducted in accordance with the parameters established by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the ethical protection of research participants. The nature of the study is discussed in further detail in Chapter 3.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used throughout the study and are defined for purposes of this research study:

Brain drain: For the purpose of this study, brain drain is defined as highly qualified individuals leaving their countries of origin to relocate to developed countries (Lozano-Ascencio & Gandini, 2012). These individuals are considered highly qualified because they are skilled or educated to work in specific positions that are in high demand, such as doctors, scientists, information technology technicians, or teachers. Similar terms used to refer to *brain drain* include *human capital flight*, *migration*, *emigration*, *immigration*, and *relocation*.

Caribbean: The Caribbean is the group of islands along the Caribbean Sea “stretching from Cuba, off the North American coast, and extending to Trinidad, which is situated off the South American coast near Venezuela” (Gore, 2009, p. 1). The area was referred to many names, including the Windward and Leeward Islands. The terms *Caribbean* and *Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)* were used interchangeably in this study.

Government senior executives: Top leaders of government organizations are senior executives. Senior executives include cabinet level employees and managers who make decisions for the entire department or specific division. They motivate members to follow business objectives, create new goals for the company, ensure that the business has the best talent, and continue organization development (Smith & Campbell, 2010).

Human capital: Human capital refers to people, including their knowledge, skills, and abilities (Wright & McMahan, 2011). Businesses focus on the economic potential of human capital, but psychology assesses different components that make people individual beings, such as characteristics and cognitive abilities. Essentially, human capital helps an organization succeed, which makes the business more financially stable. In this study, *human capital* was also referred to as *natives, individuals, people, and employees*.

Leadership: “The process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” (Yukl, George, & Jones, 2009, p. 8).

Migration: The movement of people from one area to another is known as migration. Within the context of brain drain, migration occurs when highly skilled individuals relocate to developed countries (Docquier & Rapoport, 2011). The increased numbers of educated and skilled professionals migrating lead to globalization (Docquier & Rapoport, 2011). Migration was also referred to as immigration.

Migrants: Travelers who move from one region or country to another are migrants. They enter the destination country with proper documentation or illegally.

Individuals who enter developed countries legally tend to stay longer, especially if they are educated (Docquier & Rapoport, 2011). Migrants are also known as immigrants.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries:

The OECD dates back to 1960, when 18 European countries, including the United States and Canada joined forces to create an organization dedicated to global development (OECD, 2013). The OECD (2013) reported that there are currently 34 member countries that span the globe, from North and South America to Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. They include many of the world's most advanced countries, but also emerging countries like Mexico, Chile, and Turkey. The OECD works closely with emerging giants like China, India, and Brazil and developing economies in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, with the goal of building a stronger, cleaner, and fairer world.

Organization: An organization is the combination of the physical structure of a business and the internal processes required for the institution to function successfully (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) noted that organizations have similar components, such as suppliers, consumers, and regulatory agencies. Leadership and human resource management are important factors for organizations, as companies need personnel for daily operations. The term organization is used for both public and private sectors and was also referred to as businesses and employers.

Phenomenology: In order to understand issues of brain drain in the Caribbean and how it affects leadership, in this study, I used the phenomenology approach, focusing on the USVI. Phenomenology is a thorough exploration of lived experiences of a specific event or phenomenon. Through interviews and analysis, the researcher identifies

“structures, logic, and interrelationships that are contained in the phenomenon under investigation” (Conklin, 2007, p. 277). Participants described their experiences through detailed descriptions and stories. Detailed interviews which are audio-taped, analyzed, and coded, contributed to the phenomenology methodology.

Positive social change: Positive social change occurs when individuals, groups, or communities are empowered to improve circumstances (Maton, 2008).

Senior executives: Top leaders of organizations, including cabinet level and department heads, are senior executives. Senior executives motivate members to follow business objectives, create new goals for the company, ensure that the business has the best talent, and continue organization development (Smith & Campbell, 2010). Job titles of senior executives include CEO, executive director, and other leadership positions with administrative authority for the entire department, division, or organization. The CEO chooses members for the senior executive team (Kruyt, Malan, & Tuffield, 2011). As a result, directors and managers who are part of the senior team are also considered senior executives, as their opinions influence the top leader’s decisions.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS): SIDS include 52 territories, 16 of which are Caribbean islands (UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States [UN-OHRRLS], 2013). One of these Caribbean islands is the USVI, which includes St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John (UN-OHRLLS, 2013). SIDS have unique characteristics and vulnerabilities, which impacts their pursuit to sustainable development (SIDSnet, 2013; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013). These characteristics

and vulnerabilities include small size, isolation, climate change and sea-level rise, and natural and environmental disasters (SIDSnet, 2013).

Transactional leadership theory: Transactional leadership is a theoretical approach wherein leaders are focused on immediate results (Mosley & Patrick, 2011). Mosley and Patrick (2011) noted that in this approach, leaders clearly explain goals and expectations to employees. Rewards and consequences are based on employees' performance; however, transactional leadership leads to employee dissatisfaction due to consequences. Transactional leaders assist transformational leaders as they have a direct approach and focus on accomplishing tasks.

Transformational leadership theory: Leaders using this approach inspire employees to continually improve performance and accomplish goals (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008). In addition, leaders motivate employees to think collectively, instead of focusing solely on self-interests (Warrick, 2011). Overall, leaders influence employees to perform according to the vision of the organization.

United States Virgin Islands (USVI): The USVI is located in the Caribbean region and is the unincorporated territory of the United States, and includes St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John (Gore, 2009).

Assumptions

Assumptions made for this study were:

- The in-depth face-to-face interviews were appropriate to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause and impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational and transactional

leadership styles, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain.

- Participants were knowledgeable about brain drain in the territory and were familiar with these issues in the public and private sectors.
- The interview questions answered the research questions.
- The in-depth interview questions were worded so that the participants could accurately interpret the questions being asked.
- The participants honestly and openly answered the interview questions by sharing their perceptions about the questions asked.
- The findings from the study may be generalized to similar populations of government senior executives in the USVI and other Caribbean islands.
- Brain drain exists and negatively affects the USVI.
- Government senior executives were willing to take part in the study because of its significance.
- The responses from government senior executives from the USVI were similar to responses from other government senior executives in other Caribbean islands.
- The result of the study will lead to positive social change.

Scope and Delimitations

The study's participants included 10 government senior executives in the USVI, such as those who work for departments that gather related data on current and potential

personnel. To achieve a total of 10 participants, government senior executives who were initially contacted were asked to recommend other government senior executives who might be willing to participate and who met the selection criteria of being a male or female government senior executive in the USVI. Participants met the selection criteria once they were a part of the senior executive team and were qualified to make decisions for their departments or their suggestions influenced policies and procedures.

In 1996, Water Island was included as part of the USVI, but given its small stature, 2.5 miles long and about 1 mile wide, and its proximity to St. Thomas; it was not discussed in this research study. In this study, I focused on the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause and impact of brain drain and if they used transformational and transactional leadership styles. They also shared the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Research data were limited to demographic questionnaires and semistructured interviews.

Limitations

This study had several limitations. A possible limitation of the study included generalizing the results since a snowball sampling of 10 participants were used and the results of the study may be limited beyond similar populations of government senior executives. As this was an exploratory study, the participants were solely government leaders, since the local government of SIDS is expected to initiate change to decrease human capital flight by taking initiative and setting policies (Minto-Coy, 2011). The

study used a phenomenological study design of 10 government senior executives in the USVI to explore their perceptions, which was a small sample. The themes and codes that emerged from the data gathered were examined and reported. The findings from the study may be generalized to similar populations of government senior executives in the USVI and other Caribbean islands, but the results of the study may not be generalizable to other populations.

In selecting the appropriate research design for the study, access to enough potential participants had to be considered. Due to the USVI being a small territory, the number of senior government executives was limited and was not enough to carry out a quantitative study design. Therefore, I used a phenomenology research design by utilizing in-depth semistructured interviews to explore government senior executives' leadership styles using Bass's (2008) definitions of the four transformational leadership factors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration; and Bass's (1997) definitions of the four transactional leadership behaviors: laissez-faire, active management-by-exception, passive management-by-exception, and contingent rewards. The transformational leadership definitions that I used in this interview guide are based on Forka's (2012) study where the researcher explored transformational leadership in Cameroon, Sub-Saharan Africa, using semistructured interviews. Therefore, content validity of the transformational leadership definitions was previously validated by subject matter experts. In line with the written format of the transformational leadership definitions, Bass's (1997) transactional leadership definitions are used in the interview guide.

However, on larger Caribbean Islands with access to a larger population of government senior executives, future research could assess government senior executives' leadership styles through the use of a valid and reliable quantitative instrument; specifically the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, 3rd edition (MLQ), developed by Avolio and Bass (1985-2004). The MLQ measures individual leadership styles ranging from passive leaders, to transactional leaders who give contingent rewards to followers, to transformational leaders who transform their followers into becoming leaders themselves (Fleenor, 2004).

Self-report or social desirability bias had to be considered as government senior executives may have wanted to be perceived positively so they may not have responded honestly to the interview questions. In addition, there are limitations with self-report data as participants may not accurately or fully self-evaluate themselves. Cable and Judge (2003) reported that managers may be best equipped to report their own personalities, beliefs about their leadership styles, and influence tactics; however, self-report bias is a possibility. However, it is assumed that participants answered the questions honestly.

A limitation of this phenomenological study was the use of only in-depth semistructured interviews and a 3-minute, researcher-created demographic questionnaire. However, the use of in-depth semistructured interviews and the demographic questionnaire were sufficient to capture and communicate participants' perceptions and fully answer the research questions.

Significance of the Study

There is a gap in the research literature regarding the effect of brain drain on leaders in the Caribbean. It is unknown if organizational leaders use transformational and transactional leadership styles and how their leadership styles impact employees, the country, and brain drain. As a result, I explored if government senior executives in the USVI practiced these forms of leadership styles, which would help to decrease brain drain in the territory. In addition, current research on brain drain in the Caribbean focuses on larger islands, such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (Edmunds, 2012; Greenidge & DaCosta, 2009). Therefore, there is a gap in research on the USVI as only minimal information is provided about the territory.

Due to the significance of the problem, using a phenomenological research design, I addressed this gap by exploring the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. The participants' discussed their understanding of the cause and overall impact of brain drain in the USVI and recommended ways to decrease or prevent brain drain. Potential weaknesses with the leadership styles used by organizational leaders and recommendations to improve organizational leadership were discussed. In addition, findings from the study contributed to organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean. Government senior executives can also use the findings

from the study by reflecting on their own leadership styles and determining if they need to make leadership improvements in order to reduce and prevent brain drain.

Role of Organizational Psychology

Organizational psychology is “a branch of psychology that applies the principles of psychology to the workplace” (Aamodt, 2007, p. 2). Specific procedures such as behavioral interviews, incentive plans, and training were developed based on “human behavior and cognition” (Aamodt, 2007, p. 2). Human resources management and similar professions may discuss the same information, but organizational psychology differs as it justifies program development based on empirical data collected from studies on human thoughts, actions, and feelings. The role of organizational psychology in the study of brain drain in the Caribbean is essential as research indicated that residents migrate due to job dissatisfaction and lack of employee engagement (Minto-Coy, 2011).

Organizational psychology is a growing field; however, to remain relevant and further this psychology division, research has to appeal to practitioners, not just academics, and influence “funding agencies, public policymakers (including elected officials), or university administrators who control budgets” (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008, p. 1074). Leaders need to know what research is saying about organizational issues and be aware of solutions. In this study, leaders in the USVI had the opportunity to share pertinent information about brain drain and made recommendations that other leaders can use to decrease or prevent brain drain. Specifically, government senior executives in the USVI shared their perceptions as to the cause of brain drain, its impact on the USVI, and recommendations to decrease or prevent brain drain.

According to Cascio (1995), change is an inevitable aspect of work and organizational psychology can be at the forefront when scholars conduct research that answers crucial questions or resolve complicated problems. Organizational changes occur rapidly due to increased use of technology, global competition, and downsizing. Organizations are now more customer service orientated. Brain drain is a decades-long issue and continuous research is pertinent to identify ways organizations can minimize its negative effects.

Organizational psychology is closely linked to this study as job satisfaction, employee engagement, and related attitudes and beliefs contribute to brain drain. Many cultures coexist in the USVI due to historical practices, being a U.S. territory, and the geographic location in the Caribbean (Acevedo-Rodríguez, 1996). Tung (2008) related that employees in organizations have multiple perspectives due to various races, ethnicities, and nationalities, especially for locations, such as the United States, Hong Kong, and Vancouver, which experience a high volume of brain circulation. Culture steadily changes over a period of time, which impacts the organizational culture. As a result, leaders should constantly update policies, procedures, and leadership styles which ensure progressive organization development.

Impact of brain drain on organization development. In this area, I describe current issues organizations encounter, including the government, and recommendations for leaders to successfully implement changes that meet the needs of employees. Organization development is the ability to improve the performance of a business (Aamodt, 2007). According to Aamodt (2007), there are numerous components to

organization development, including but not limited to job analysis and evaluation, recruiting and interviewing, evaluating employee performance, designing and evaluating training systems, employee motivation, employee satisfaction and commitment, organizational communication, leadership, teams, and stress management. The organization development issues that were focused on in this study, which are directly connected to brain drain, included leadership, change management, and employee satisfaction. Employee engagement incorporates many components that encourage individuals to be happy and committed to their job, such as salary, training, promotion, and leadership (Markos & Sridevi, 2010).

Organization challenges. The focus of organization development constantly changes according to economical, technological, and social factors (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Markos and Sridevi (2010) related that leaders have to be aware of trends in organizations and implement new policies and procedures to compete globally. Senior executives have a challenging responsibility to ensure organization development, which includes change management and employee satisfaction. The chief executive officer (CEO) is typically known as the head of the agency, but he or she may report to a vice president (VP) or be part of a senior management team. Colbert, Kristof-Brown, Bradley, and Barrick (2008) conducted a study on “transformational leadership and shared perceptions about organizational goals” (Colbert, Kristof-Brown, Bradley, & Barrick, 2008, p. 81). Findings of the study indicated that the attitude of a VP was positive when all parties understood the goal. On the other hand, the attitude was low when the VP did not prioritize the same goal as the CEO. Colbert’s et al. (2008) study has important

implications because if a senior executive such as a VP has a low attitude due to differences in goal prioritization, other employees in the organization may disagree with leadership goals, which could affect organization development.

According to Kaiser, Hogan, and Craig (2008), leaders influence individuals, groups, and organization development. Success of an organization requires a team effort, but the leader communicates the vision of the business and motivates employees to meet identified goals. The authors indicated that a team approach using transformational and transactional leadership works well because employees are rewarded individually, but are influenced to think about success for the organization and not only about outcomes for themselves. Furthermore, leaders develop strategic plans, policies, and procedures that improve organizational outcomes. Leadership skills that are effective in managing individuals, groups, and organizations should transfer to identifying solutions for brain drain.

Fugate, Kinicki, and Prussia (2008) reported that organizational change is difficult for employees, but the manner in which the information is imparted contributes to how they react. Leaders should be honest when discussing changes and minimize concerns about job security and other concerns. When possible, employees should be included in the change process. Employees should be notified of potential changes and given the opportunity to make suggestions or select what they perceive as the best option. Negative responses could occur from changes, so managers have to communicate frequently with employees and encourage everyone to voice concerns. Failure to curb negative responses

could lead to decreased productivity or increased absences, hence managers should model appropriate coping strategies for employees.

Recommendations for reducing brain drain. There are multiple views and recommendations about resolving brain drain and organization development requires leaders to change their problem solving approach (Logue, 2009). Logue (2009) stated that brain drain should be considered a “wicked problem” (Logue, 2009, p. 41) where there is no clear definition of the issue, immediate solutions are unavailable, and it is undetermined when the problem could be considered resolved. The author stated that taking the stance that brain drain is a unique and unsolved problem for decades due to changing factors, moves leaders away from identifying the problem to creating policies to address known issues. Funding is a hindrance to solving brain drain as evidence-based research cannot be sustained in developing countries for an extended period of time. Logue emphasized that brain drain is a social problem, but also derives from political and economic instability. Due to this, policies should be innovative and incorporate a variety of identified issues such as “programs that encourage workers to go abroad ... infrastructure to make it easier to send remittances home, [and] programs to develop domestic capacity and work opportunities” (Logue, 2009, p. 48).

As Logue (2009) clearly indicated, brain drain is a problem, but since there are different opinions on how to define and resolve it, innovative solutions are required. Leaders have to initiate organizational change in SIDS wherein multiple and contradicting solutions are implemented for the identified problems. Additional resolutions should be discussed when new issues arise about brain drain. Organization

development affects all employees and leaders have to be creative and responsive or the business may become irrelevant because of inaction. Employee satisfaction is important so addressing the needs of migrants increases the connection to home countries and the productivity of the government and private sectors.

Organizations need human capital to run efficiently, so employee engagement is necessary for organization development (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Markos and Sridevi (2010) noted that employee engagement incorporated many organizational factors, including commitment and job satisfaction. When engaged, employees want their organizations to be successful and willingly fulfill tasks to accomplish goals and objectives. Money is not the primary motivator for engaged employees, as committed leaders influenced followers to go above and beyond duties outlined in job descriptions. Organization practices are directly related to employee engagement as followers developed friendships, advocated for the organization, remained loyal although other employment opportunities are available, take initiative, and dedicate extra time as needed (p. 92). Leaders represent the organization and should engage employees from the first day on the job. Transformational leaders take proactive steps to resolve identified organization development problems (Poutiatine, 2009).

According to Forstenlechner (2010), the rate of migration would decrease if employees are satisfied with their living and work situations. Forstenlechner researched expatriates who were assigned to work in a different country for a few years and later returned to their previous job in their home country. The focus was on individuals who voluntarily expatriate, which is different from migration, but still presents a difficulty for

governments that track these statistics, especially when the type of leave is unknown. Forstenlechner indicated that brain drain does not only affect developing countries, but that the governments of developed countries such as Italy and Spain attempt to recruit expatriates as well. In addition, similar to developing countries, money is a key factor that hinders the success of this practice so most voluntary expatriates have to return home and find employment independently.

Positive Social Change

Positive social change could occur if leaders consider innovation, brain gain, brain circulation, and collaboration. Innovations are essential as they “uncover new solutions to traditional problems” (Grozeva, 2008, p. 26). Issues surrounding brain drain occurred for decades and remains challenging, so it makes sense to assess the phenomenon differently and identify unique objectives. Brain gain occurs when migrants remain in developed countries but share their knowledge or finances with developing countries (UNCTAD, 2012). Brain circulation refers to migrants permanently returning to developing countries or temporarily relocating to developed countries for several years at a time (Blouin & Debnath, 2012). Jackson (2011) related that a collaborative approach is essential to successfully use brain circulation to implement positive social change. The researcher recommended that the private sector, policy makers, and researchers in Jamaica work closely together to engage the scientific diaspora. Collaboration applies to other SIDS and is essential as it benefits the entire community. Additional details about positive social change are provided in Chapter 2.

The potential contributions of the study of brain drain in the Caribbean will advance knowledge in organizational psychology, the practice of organization development, and increase opportunities for positive social change. Organizational change in both public and private sectors has to occur to resolve brain drain. Education is necessary for employee development, as individuals have to learn skills and information to effectively perform complex duties. Government senior executives cannot continue to lose well-trained employees or have key positions vacant for a significant length of time because of the financial impact (Ogden, 2010). Due to the economic recession that began in 2007, immediate action is necessary to prevent additional loss of human capital, which affects the organization's and country's sustainability (Ogden, 2010).

Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Burns (1978) and Bass's (1985) transformational and transactional leadership theories were used as the theoretical frameworks of this study.

For this phenomenological study, I collected data through the use of a researcher-created demographic questionnaire and in-depth face-to-face semistructured interviews with 10 government senior executives in the USVI. Snowball sampling, which is a subset of purposive sample, was used to recruit 10 government senior executives for the study.

To achieve 10 participants, government senior executives who were initially contacted were be asked to recommend other government senior executives who might be willing to participate in study and who met the selection criteria for this study.

Findings from this study revealed the participants' understanding of the cause and overall impact of brain drain in the USVI. Recommendations to decrease or prevent brain drain and improve organizational leadership were shared with senior executives. Results of the study added to the organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean. In addition, government senior executives can use the findings from the study by reflecting on their own leadership styles and determining if they need to make improvements to reduce and prevent brain drain.

In Chapter 1, I included the background of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, nature of the study, definition of terms, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations of the study, significance of the study, and summary. In Chapter 2, I include the literature search strategy, theoretical foundation, history, culture, and commerce in the Caribbean; history, culture, and commerce of the USVI; justification of study on brain drain in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and summary and conclusion. In Chapter 3, I include the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, and summary. In Chapter 4, I include the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary. In Chapter 5, I include the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Highly qualified individuals are leaving the Caribbean and are relocating to developed countries like the United States (Lozano-Ascencio & Gandini, 2012). This resulting brain drain from the Caribbean is described as a “wicked problem” (Logue, 2009, p. 41), which has no clear problem definition, immediate solutions, and resolution date.

While developed countries continue to flourish by using highly trained and educated human resources from SIDS who do not require extensive training, SIDS on the other hand are having difficulties filling vacancies that require highly qualified individuals, such as health, science, and technology positions (Johnson, 2009). This problem has negatively affected Caribbean business organizations and countries because of the difficulties in filling these vacant positions. Effective leadership, specifically the combined use of transformational and transactional leadership characteristics, are noted to be one key to decreasing and preventing brain drain in the Caribbean as they are noted to increase employee satisfaction and promote organizational change (Calloway &

Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al., 2011; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011; Wiltshire, 2010).

There is a gap in the research literature that focuses on the leadership styles of Caribbean leaders so it is unknown if organizational leaders use transformational and transactional leadership styles and how their leadership styles impact employees, brain drain and the country. In addition, current research on brain drain in the Caribbean focuses on larger islands, such as Jamaica Trinidad and Tobago (Edmunds, 2012; Greenidge & DaCosta, 2009). Therefore, there is a gap in research that focuses on the USVI as only minimal information is provided about the territory. The diverse population, social challenges, and closure of the largest employer in the territory make USVI the ideal location to conduct a study on brain drain.

The United States influences the Caribbean trade through investments in gas, oil, and tourism (Palmer, 2009). According to Palmer (2009), these investments benefit both countries as the United States receives a desirable product and the Caribbean financial coffers increase. Failure for the Caribbean to establish steady capital could affect the country's social structure, which potentially leads to increased criminal activities. Caribbean residents attend universities in developed countries and rarely return home because jobs are unavailable. They are hired by developed countries, especially for jobs in science and technology, due to the high demand. Although research and development skills are needed, it is more affordable for students to pursue technology degrees and use their acquired skills to garner the information needed.

Brain drain in the Caribbean is exacerbated by crises, such as the global recession (Johnson, 2009). Johnson (2009) discussed the importance of SIDS having qualified personnel for further development of these countries and a reduction in poverty. The loss of any human capital, whether low or high skill workers, affects the source country, like the USVI. Educated and trained individuals are needed for professions that have existing shortages, such as nursing and teaching. Increased vacancies create a tremendous occupation gap that can be detrimental to communities that lack sufficient skilled human resources. For instance, people in the Caribbean are exposed to life threatening health issues, including communicable diseases such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), which are higher in this region than most countries (Ligeon, Jolly, & Jolly, 2012).

Griffith (2010) emphasized that brain drain continues to be a challenging issue despite awareness of this phenomenon and that government intervention is needed to stimulate the economy. A lack of research on brain drain in the Caribbean indicated that further study is needed to identify current issues and recommendations to resolve this decades' long problem. This phenomenological study revealed the participants' understanding the cause and overall impact of brain drain in the USVI and informed organizational leaders of recommended ways to decrease or prevent brain drain, whether there are weaknesses with the leadership styles used by organizational leaders, and recommended ways to improve upon those weaknesses, which would improve organizational leadership. Findings also added new knowledge to the organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean. In this chapter, I include

the literature search strategy; theoretical foundation; history, culture, and commerce in the Caribbean; history, culture, and commerce of the United States Virgin Islands; justification of study on brain drain in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and summary and conclusions.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search strategies I used included in-depth search in all Walden University Library research databases, which included Thoreau, a multiple database search tool that searches EBSCO databases (e.g., PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, SAGE premier) and ebooks. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database was used to research dissertations in the organizational psychology field. Additional articles, reports, and related data from several organizational websites, including the Centre for International Governance, Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, International Monetary Fund, International Organization for Migration, Rural and Remote Health, and World Health Organization were found. National and international articles were found using Google Scholar.

I searched for terms in the Walden University Library and Google Scholar. Some articles were found on the organization or journal site indicated in the document. Thoreau's peer-reviewed articles on the Caribbean were limited when the search for brain drain began in early 2012, but new articles were added throughout the research process. The phrases *Caribbean and history* and *United States Virgin Islands and history* were entered, as knowledge about past cultures and expectations are important to know in

comparison to situations today. Search phrases pertaining to brain drain included *brain drain*, *brain drain in the Caribbean*, and *remittances and Caribbean*.

Search phrases for employee performance and organizations included *high performance organization*, *job satisfaction*, *organizational change*, and *organizations and globalization*. Additional terms that I searched included *social change*, *positive social change*, *brain drain and social change*, and *brain drain and positive social change*. Leadership search phrases were *crisis management*, *leadership and Caribbean*, *leadership style*, *responsible leadership*, *transformational leaders*, *transformational leadership*, *transactional leaders*, and *transactional leadership*. Key research terms for the methodology included *phenomenological study*; *phenomenological study and brain drain*; and *phenomenological study, brain drain, and the Caribbean*.

If current literature was unavailable, then the year 2008 was added to the end of search terms, which produced articles from that year to the most recent. Likewise, if search terms failed to yield articles or appropriate research material, I added PDF to the search terms, which produced more results. Adding the year and PDF to search terms was extremely beneficial for finding information for the Caribbean, specifically the USVI. It is important to note that many government and organization websites that provided information for the USVI used Google as a search engine.

There are a growing number of research studies in the Caribbean on brain drain, but much of the data are exploratory. Many articles are similar to information presented by organizations, such as IMF, which define and describe brain drain and provide statistics on the estimated number of people who migrate, along with explaining how

SIDS are affected (Mishra, 2007; Nurse & Jones, 2009). A description of brain drain and its statistics are essential to clearly identify existing problems in the Caribbean.

Unfortunately, such detailed information was unavailable when researching brain drain in the USVI; hence, this study explored if leaders recognized brain drain as a problem and their recommendations for resolving this issue.

The lack of peer reviewed journal articles for the USVI led to searches on Google to locate reports that provided information about the history, economy, statistics, and status of the territory. I used Websites documented in reports and articles to conduct additional searches. The USVI government websites' search engine was Google, so that site was used to identify the most recent data. Reports and documents from the federal government about the USVI were also searched in Google. The majority of the peer-reviewed journals; however, were found using Google Scholar. The sources used for this dissertation include over 141 articles, 21 books, and 6 reports, documents, or papers. An 'other' category has a total of 53 websites, dissertations, and related sources.

Theoretical Foundation

Burns (1978) and Bernard Bass's (1985) transformational and transactional leadership theories served as the theoretical foundations for this study. A theory about brain drain is not included in this dissertation as the literature does not consistently or clearly identify theoretical concepts about brain drain. Leadership is discussed as an important factor in resolving brain drain (Minto-Coy, 2011) and transformational and transactional leadership are two key theories that are reported to increase employee satisfaction and promote organizational change (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al.,

2011; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011). Both leadership styles are essential for guiding organizational success (Ingram, 2013), which includes employee retention.

Lower turnovers contribute to minimizing brain drain.

This section is organized in the following subsections: transformational leadership theory and brain drain, transactional leadership theory and brain drain, and comparison of transformational and transactional leadership theories.

Transformational Leadership Theory and Brain Drain

This subsection is organized in the following areas: theory, global application and implications, and Caribbean application and implications.

Theory. The key theorists of transformational leadership are Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Their definitions of transformational leadership were important aspects of the theoretical frameworks for this study on brain drain in the Caribbean.

Burns (2010) initially defined three leadership theories: transactional, transforming, and moral leadership. The author indicated that transforming leadership was “more complex” (Burns, 2010, p. 4) but “more potent” (Burns, 2010, p. 4) than transactional and moral leadership. Transforming leadership was defined as the ability of a leader to assess the needs of the follower and motivating the follower by using a holistic approach, thus addressing the individual’s needs. The individual goals of both the leader and follower merge, wherein they benefit by how the leader engages the follower. As a result, the follower becomes a leader and the leadership skills of both individuals develop over time. Burns (2010) stated that transforming leadership becomes moral as leaders and

followers strive for excellent human and ethical conduct. When this occurs, the leader transforms the follower to achieve a higher level of existence.

Bass (1999) further developed Burn's transformational leadership theory by partnering with colleagues to conduct additional research on leadership. Transformational leadership incorporates four different factors (Bass, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1994):

1. Idealized influence or charisma: It describes leaders whose actions speak louder than words. They demonstrate an inclusive vision, exhibit great commitment and persistence in pursuing objectives, express confidence in the vision of the organization, develop trust and confidence among employees, symbolize the goals and mission of the organization, and send the message about doing the right thing.
2. Inspirational motivation: It is descriptive of leaders who excite their followers and share the vision. They inspire others to perform, clarify where the organization will be in the future, create a strong sense of purpose among employees, align individual and organizational needs, help followers achieve more than even they thought was possible, and send the message that if leaders and followers focus together on what the organization stands for, then they can achieve whatever they desire.
3. Intellectual stimulation: It describes leaders who think outside the box. They encourage the imagination of employees, challenge the old ways of doing things, look for better ways to do things, encourage followers not to think like

them, are willing to take risks for potential gain, and send the message about changing assumptions.

4. Individualized consideration: It is representative of compassionate leaders who empathize with their followers' individual needs. They make interpersonal connections with employees, genuinely care and show their compassion in their actions, encourage continuous development and growth of employees, and send the message that they care about their followers and are looking out for their best interests.

According to Bass (1999), transformational leaders ensure that organizations and members share the same goals. Transformational leaders have the ability to facilitate change by encouraging members to adopt the same views of the organization. Members are inspired to perform duties and internalize ideals that transformational leaders introduce and model, which is known as idealized influence. The employees then have the potential to guide others.

Transforming how members think, feel, and act toward the organization and its vision is a difficult task that requires trust (Bass, 1999). Bass (1999) noted that employees are not as loyal to organizations as in the past, so trust in leadership promotes the willingness to set aside personal interests and values. Intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration occurs when transformational leaders motivate members to be creative and support them as needed. Transformational leaders continuously evolve to meet the needs of the organization. Likewise, leaders in SIDS can adapt to meet the needs

of the local government and private businesses and encourage residents to commit to the vision.

Global. This section includes a discussion on transformational leadership and brain drain on a global level. Transformational leadership was described as a give-and-take approach, wherein leaders influenced and inspired followers, while “considering their intellectual and individual needs” (Ismail et al., 2011, p. 50). Findings in the study indicated that “transformational leadership and followers’ psychological capacity is perceived to be on a moderate level in the organizations of Pakistan” (Ismail et al., 2011, p. 55). Ismail et al. recommended that transformational leadership increase and psychological capacities develop in followers, especially in organizations with a high turnover rate. The authors further stated that employees with the most education and experience were more likely to leave their jobs. Tipu et al. (2012) noted that transformational leadership appears to be more successful in the western hemisphere. Hence, global studies are available on transformational leadership and brain drain, and many of them expressed positive results in organizations as previously discussed; however, additional research is still needed on transformation leadership and brain drain in the Caribbean, especially in the USVI.

The psychological capacities addressed in the study by Ismail et al. (2011) were unique in comparison to other studies on brain drain. Ismail et al. (2011) indicated that the number of professionals who thought about leaving their jobs decreased with “positive leadership and motivation” (Ismail et al., 2011, p. 50). Employees with negative

psychological perceptions were more likely to leave their jobs, and eventually the country, due to social, economic, and political uncertainty.

In this study, brain drain refers to highly skilled and educated residents relocating to another country for better job opportunities. In some situations, individuals leave their home countries to acquire an education but do not return due to employment options that exceed what their home countries can offer. However, migrants are likely to stay in destination countries although financial circumstances are not ideal.

Job satisfaction is important to employees and linked to organizational success (Al-Swidi, Nawawi, & Al-Hosam, 2012). Al-Swidi et al. (2012) related that job satisfaction leads to customer satisfaction. The authors studied bank employees in the developing country of Yemeni to determine if transformational leadership had an effect on psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Employees experienced psychological empowerment when they had control over some aspects of their jobs. Transformational leaders enhanced self-confidence in employees, which is one aspect of job satisfaction.

The country's culture affected how transformational leadership can be implemented (Al-Swidi et al., 2012). Employees in Yemen, including managers, could not implement strategic management skills because it is not a common human resource practice. Nonetheless, results of the researchers' study indicated that transformational leadership had a "significant positive effect on employees' job satisfaction" (Al-Swidi et al., 2012, p. 145). Strengths of transformational leadership included intellectual stimulation, empowerment, and individualized consideration of employees. One

weakness identified was no significance between psychological empowerment and transformational leadership; however, employees were satisfied with their jobs although this connection was not found through the study.

Leaders need to be innovative and facilitate knowledge management to create and maintain a successful organization (Slater, 2008). According to Slater (2009), highly skilled employees leave organizations floundering when they resign and take years of knowledge with them. Employers need to take initiative to document policies and procedures to ensure new employees have access to effectively complete tasks and meet the organization's vision. Mentoring and similar programs further ensure that pertinent information is systematically shared with employees who need to know.

Transformational leaders have the qualities to "create a team-oriented organization" (Slater, 2009, p. 50). Slater related that a team approach by transformational leaders emphasize high standards, optimism, and individual success. A disadvantage is that one member's failure could affect the overall performance of the team.

Transformational leadership is effective in various fields, including health care (Guru et al., 2012; Health Workforce Australia, 2011). In Australia, it was determined that leadership affected organizational success, thus clinical leadership programs were developed (Health Workforce Australia, 2011). According to Health Workforce Australia (2011), with a person-oriented style, transformational leaders valued employees and encouraged collaboration and engagement to enhance the leader-follower relationship. Facilitating change in the health care industry was challenging as employees worked autonomously to meet patient needs and were cautious due to ongoing changes to policies

and procedures. The roles of health care professionals varied between leaders and followers depending on the situation. Transformational leaders had to be aware of alternating dynamics, in addition to motivating employees accordingly.

Health Workforce Australia (2011) reported that a major strength of transformational leadership was developing committed people. Commitment was earned by trust and leaders expressed the value of each individual and were confident that employees would transform organizations. Although change is inevitable, transformational leaders practiced risk management skills by focusing on positive results and minimizing errors. Health care providers have to be innovative and transformational leaders are tasked with building trust with employees to meet organizational goals.

Transformational leadership benefits various professions and organizations in developing countries. In addition to the health care industry, education, engineering, and technology are other professions wherein brain drain is a concern to developing countries. Ismail et al. (2011) studied the reasons for global brain drain, the effect of brain drain in Pakistan, and the role of transformational leadership. Participants were comprised of education, engineering, technology, and health care professionals. The psychological capacities of highly skilled employees (hope, resilience, optimism, and efficacy) were explored and the potential for brain drain to be reduced by transformational leaders was discussed.

Caribbean. Additional research is needed on transformational leadership and brain drain in the Caribbean. The current literature indicated that the Caribbean has one of the highest rates of brain drain in the world (Appave & Laczko, 2011; Docquier &

Rapaport, 2011; Palmer, 2009). In 2000, 10.4% of low skilled workers migrated from the Caribbean, which was much lower than 43% of high skilled workers (Docquier & Rapaport, 2011). At least 38.2 of migrants were college graduates in 2000 (Docquier & Rapaport, 2011). In 2006, at least “15,811 migrants were from CARICOM countries, the seventh largest group, coming primarily from the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago” (Palmer, 2009, p. 156). Palmer (2009) indicated that most of the students from

Individuals from SIDS who pursue advance science degrees in the United States often do not return to source countries. In 2010, the Caribbean was reported to have a 6% migration rate in comparison to other countries in the world (Appave & Laczko, 2011). While the percentage may appear small, it should be noted that migrants are coming from countries with smaller populations.

Frequent migration of highly skilled individuals diminishes economic growth and development (Palmer, 2009) and has greater repercussions over a period of time. Wiltshire (2010) noted that as of 2006, islands like Antigua and Barbuda had a migration rate of 40% during the previous 4 decades. Other SIDS reflect similar migration rates and the numbers are more alarming since SIDS “lost more than 50% of tertiary level graduates and more than 30% of secondary graduates” (Wiltshire, 2010, p. 64). However, an extensive search of the literature yielded only a few research studies on the Caribbean and research is limited in the USVI. Relevant literature on the Caribbean and brain drain is summarized below.

According to Chitolie-Joseph (2011), current laws, policies, and procedures in the Caribbean are insufficient to keep talented employees from migrating to developed

countries. Chitolie-Joseph conducted a study on use of the education management information system in secondary schools in St. Lucia. Systems and resources were underutilized and a multi-perspective approach was needed to support educational staff. From a cultural perspective, transformational leadership was recommended when employees were resistant to change to “transform staff’s beliefs and values” (Chitolie-Joseph, 2011, p. 28). Transformational leadership facilitates change management and is preferred when the goal of the organization is for all employees to work toward a common vision.

Transactional Leadership Theory and Brain Drain

This subsection is organized in the following areas: theory, global, and Caribbean.

Theory. Like transformational leadership theory, Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) are also the key theorists for transactional leadership theory, where Burns defined the theory and Bass further developed it. According to Bass (1999), transactional leadership refers to a process between leaders and followers to meet their own self-interests. Burns (2010) suggested that leaders with transformational and transactional leadership styles should work together as they complement each other. Although transformational leadership theory is considered the primary approach to employee satisfaction, transactional leadership also plays a significant role in organizations.

The transactional leadership approach is simple, wherein immediate needs of leaders and followers are met (Burns, 2010). Burns (2010) explained transactional leadership as exchanges between leaders and followers. Leaders offer followers incentives that appeals to them in exchange for something that benefits the organization.

A relationship does not develop from transactional leadership and followers typically do not go above and beyond expectations. Instead, both parties are aware of the arrangement and do not interact with each other once identified goods, services, or money is exchanged. The interactions between leaders and followers are mutual and all parties are satisfied when expectations are met.

With transactional leadership (Bass, 1999), leaders clearly articulate what followers need to do and what rewards they receive once tasks are completed. Boundaries are reinforced as employees who comply with rules are rewarded and those who violate receive consequences. Depending on the assignment, leaders may provide direction or actively participate, as described below. Transactional leadership includes three different leadership behaviors (Bass, 1990; Bass, 1997; Bass & Avolio, 1994):

1. *Laissez-Faire*: It describes leaders who are hands-off; therefore, there is an absence of leadership. They avoid taking a stand on issues, do not emphasize results, refrain from intervening when issues arise, and are unaware of employee performance.
2. *Management-By-Exception*: It is descriptive of leaders who take corrective actions; set standards, but wait for problems to arise before doing anything; stress what people are doing wrong; enforce rules and dislike challenges to the status quo; and employees only hear from the leader when something is wrong. *Management-By-Exception* can be either active, where leaders monitor followers' performance and take corrective action, or it can be passive, where leaders fail to intervene until problems become serious.

3. Contingent rewards: It is representative of leaders who apply constructive transactions, make clear expectations of outcomes and rewards, exchange reward and recognition for accomplishments, and actively monitor employee progress and provide supportive feedback.

The overall success of transactional leaders depend on implemented skills, interactions with employees, and how quickly issues are addressed (Bass, 1999). There is limited research solely on transactional leadership, which presents a gap in the literature. The majority of the journal articles reviewed discussed transformational leadership alone or in combination with transactional leadership (e.g., Bass, 1999; Guru et al., 2012). In addition to exploring the gap of leadership research in the Caribbean, research results determined if transactional leadership is practiced in SIDS like the USVI.

Global. According to Burkus (2011), the leadership style practiced in organizations is determined by the organizational design; so senior executives determine the style of leadership managers implement with followers. Dahlvig (2013) related that transactional leadership was primarily a male-dominated style, but women leaders imitate it according to the organizational culture, which is typically patriarchal. Female leaders tend to collaborate and develop relationships with followers, while male leaders tend to be directive.

Förster (2009) described transactional leadership as “autocratic and task-oriented leadership” (Förster, 2009, p. 650). This leadership style works well in male dominated organizations, but senior executives are progressively practicing “interpersonally-oriented leadership” (Förster, 2009, p. 650). Although transformational leadership accounts for job

satisfaction in many studies, including bank employees in Yemen, the reasons employees are dissatisfied often include salary (Al-Swidi et al., 2012). Transactional leadership addresses monetary concerns and other self-interests of employees (Burns, 2010). Employees are an asset for organization success and contingent rewards affect whether employees stay or leave their jobs.

Almayali and Bin Ahmad (2012) reported that the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq initiated a strategic plan to decrease brain drain for faculty, staff, and students. The researchers indicated that transactional leadership studies were scarce for academic performance in higher education settings, especially in countries such as Iraq. Based on their literature review, the authors proposed that a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles would work well in higher education organizations. However, the literature indicated transactional leadership was more successful in specific situations due to the relationship between leader and follower. Transactional leaders provided consistency by rewarding good performance, implementing corrective action when employees deviated from the rules, and taking action when standards were not met. The researchers indicated that transactional leadership works well to accomplish short-term goals.

Transactional leadership works in various organizational stages, including mergers (Chipunza, Samuel, & Mariri, 2011). Chipunza et al. (2011) studied a retail bank merger in Zimbabwe and the role of leadership in facilitating change during the transition. Leadership is extremely important during a merger as the senior executives have to identify and encourage employees to meet new organizational goals. Research

findings indicated that there was a “relatively weak but significant positive direct correlation” (Chipunza et al., 2011, p. 8342) between transactional leadership and affective commitment, normative commitment, and motivation. Leaders have to ensure employees are motivated, but also take into account the economic climate of the country.

Pieterse, Van Knippenberg, Schippers, and Stam (2010) conducted a study in the Netherlands that assessed how follower psychological empowerment affected leadership styles and follower innovative behavior. Results indicated that transactional leadership moderately affected follower creativity, but had negative results when psychological empowerment was introduced. The authors suggested that a combination of transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and psychological empowerment yielded positive results. However, additional research is needed as other factors, such as leadership development training, could improve positive results for transactional leadership.

Caribbean. After an extensive search of transactional leadership and brain drain in the Caribbean, only one relevant article was identified (i.e., Farny, 2012). Therefore, this represents a gap in the research literature. Farny (2012) indicated that transactional leadership embraced honesty, responsibility, and fairness, but immediately labeled these behaviors as “so called modal values” (Farny, 2012, p. 37). The author reported that unlike transactional leadership, transformational leadership was a better fit for social entrepreneurs in Haiti. Farny explained that for transactional leadership, “the means justifies the outcome” (Farny, 2012, p. 37), but that this leadership style would negatively

affect social entrepreneurs because motivation is the social impact or outcome that they strive to achieve.

According to Minto-Coy (2011), changes in leadership styles are necessary for effective human resource management and for organizations to compete globally. If employees are migrating, governments and private businesses have to figure out what has to be done differently. Minto-Coy (2011) evaluated the value of social partnerships as a governance tool for the Commonwealth Caribbean and offered key considerations for SIDS implementing successful social partnerships, which include strong, decisive leadership. The author noted that strong, credible leadership requires both responsiveness and proactivity “in monitoring and identifying conditions that may adversely affect the partnership as it evolves” (Minto-Coy, 2011, p. 14) and dealing with issues as they arise. Credible leaders are therefore willing “to use political capital to secure gains for the country” (Minto-Coy, 2011, p. 14). As a result, government senior executives should adapt leadership styles that are appropriate for the organization’s vision, culture, and success.

Comparison of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Theories

Ingram (2013) related that both transformational and transactional leadership styles are needed for guiding organizational success. Advantages of transactional leaders are their abilities to address small operational details quickly. Transactional leaders take care of the details that need to be addressed, bring things together, and build strong reputations in the marketplace, while keeping front line employees productive. On the other hand, transformational leaders are important to the strategic development of

business as they set ambitious goals and can achieve quick success by using their vision and team building skills.

Ingram (2013) further pointed out that different situations call for different management styles. For instance, front-line supervisors may benefit more from using a transactional leadership style, while chief executive officers (CEOs) or sales managers can be more effective if they use a transformational leadership style. Executive managers may design and communicate grand strategic missions, and then they pass the missions down to transactional leaders for implementation.

Authors van Eeden, Cilliers, and van Deventer (2008) conducted a study which revealed that although managers demonstrated transformational leadership styles periodically, transactional leadership skills were more prominent. Managers who combine both leadership styles tend to be more directive and both leadership theories can have a successful effect on members. Both leadership styles yield positive results as they aim to accomplish the same goals, which are employee satisfaction and organizational success.

There are many elements that affect job success and employee satisfaction, such as education, motivation, and the leadership approach (Riaz & Haider, 2012). According to Riaz and Haider (2012), transactional leadership had relevant results for job success in comparison to transformational leadership. Praise and rewards meant a lot to employees, so their performance improved according to what they received. Likewise, success decreased with low performance as rewards were not given. Leaders have to select which leadership style best fits the organization, employees, and culture. Selecting the most

strategic leadership style is the current organization development trend. Both transformational and transactional leadership are top leadership approaches, but according to the literature, transformational leadership appears to be preferred.

Bass (2010) pointed out that most leaders have characteristics of both transformational and transactional leadership, but one style is more dominant than the other. Bass gathered empirical data that was used to determine which trait was dominant in a group of leaders. Based on the results of the MLQ, transformational leadership factors led to more effectiveness and satisfaction of followers. Transformational leaders encouraged members to develop a caring relationship, work together on team goals, and motivate each other to excel. Transformational leadership skills; however, do not work independently as several other factors assist in developing a well-rounded employee and future leader, including training, education, and organizational policies.

Bennett (2009) conducted a study on management effectiveness for transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidant leadership. Findings indicated that in comparison to the other leadership styles, transformational leadership had the strongest effect on all three variables: extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction. The study differed from most research because it focused specifically on information technology (IT) employees. Although there were some significant results for transactional and passive/avoidant leadership, IT employees preferred managers with transformational characteristics.

Transformational leaders impacted employees by being charismatic and modeled behaviors they wanted employees to exemplify, which resulted in lower employee

turnover and improved customer satisfaction (Caldwell et al., 2012). Caldwell et al. (2012) related that employees imitated leadership characteristics that enhanced their performance and encouraged coworkers to behave similarly. As a result, it was beneficial for leaders to practice behaviors that promoted teamwork and emphasized accomplishment of the organization's objectives. Goals are easily and quickly achieved when everyone cooperates and remains focused. Employees who deviate from the organization's mission and vision create additional challenges. Given financial difficulties and global competition, organizations have to demonstrate unity and creativity to be successful.

Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009) reported that innovative organization developments are results of transformational leaders. Transformational leadership skills were frequently taught and implemented in developed countries, but is also effective in developing regions. Calloway and Awadzi (2008) noted that transformational leaders inspire employees to continually improve performance and accomplish goals.

Organizations cannot survive without effective leaders assessing needs and motivating employees to achieve their vision. Leaders who use a transformational leadership approach motivate employees to think collectively, instead of focusing solely on self-interests (Warrick, 2011). Transformational leaders are prepared to implement positive organizational changes that benefit employees, organizations, and communities.

Transformational and transactional leadership are effective in improving employee performance. In the Caribbean, senior executives need to create better circumstances for employees and the organization by demonstrating successful leadership

skills. Prevailing corporate policies and procedures are insufficient as employees continue to relocate to other countries, thus, significant changes have to be implemented to ensure continued success and growth in the Caribbean.

Burns (2010) reported that leaders who use the transactional leadership approach get the job done, but the relationship between leader and follower does not extend beyond the specific responsibility. On the other hand, transformational leadership encourages both the leader and follower to motivate each other and develop moral values. In addition, performing at a higher level allow leaders and followers to pursue the vision of the organization.

As related by Minto-Coy (2011), development cannot occur in the Caribbean if employees continue to leave the region and qualified applicants are unavailable. As difficult as the phenomenon of brain drain is to resolve, leaders should assess problems and implement appropriate corrective action to ensure viability of organizations and communities. Although the leadership theory model may change over time, transformational and transactional leadership theories are currently considered the best approaches for organization development and success (Bass, 2010).

Understanding what defines transformational and transactional leadership and whether government senior executives use similar styles to reduce brain drain were essential components of this study. Previous researchers conducted studies on the benefits of transformational and transactional leadership; however, additional research is needed to explore the use of both leadership styles among government senior executive in the USVI; thus, this study addressed that gap.

History, Culture, and Commerce of the Caribbean

This section includes a discussion on background information about the Caribbean, which helps to understand how brain drain affects this unique region. This section is organized in the following subsections: Small Island Developing States, Caribbean coalitions, Caribbean education system, health, crime, government, economy and business, industrial development, brain drain statistics in the Caribbean, and Caribbean migration to the United States.

Small Island Developing States

SIDS include 52 territories, 16 of which are Caribbean islands (UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States [UN-OHRLLS], 2013). The USVI, which includes St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, are part of the Caribbean islands (UN-OHRLLS, 2013). SIDS have unique characteristics and vulnerabilities, which impact their pursuit to sustainable development (SIDSnet, 2013; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013). These characteristics and vulnerabilities include the following (SIDSnet, 2013):

Small size: Disadvantages to being a small size include limited resources, which leads to undue specialization, overdependence on international trade, vulnerability to global developments, high population density, overuse of resources and premature depletion, relatively small watersheds and threatened supplies of fresh water, costly

public administration and infrastructure, limited institutional capacities and domestic markets, and limited export volumes (para. 2).

Isolation: Many SIDS are placed at a disadvantage economically due to their geographic dispersion and isolation from markets, due to remote locations, which leads to high freight costs and reduced competitiveness (para. 3).

Climate change and sea-level rise: A characteristic of SIDS are their coastal zone concentration in a limited land area, which presents significant risks due to climate change and rise of the sea-level. This in turn threatens the very existence and viability of some SIDS (para. 4).

Natural and environmental disasters: SIDS face disproportionately high economic, social and environmental consequences due to their locations among the most vulnerable regions in the world, which has intense and frequent natural and environmental disasters, with detrimental impact (para. 5).

Like other developing countries, these special vulnerabilities highlight the challenges that SIDS face, such as trade liberalization and globalization difficulties, a high dependence on coast and marine resources, high dependence on tourism, dependence and access to energy issues, limited freshwater resources, and limited land, which results in land degradation (SIDSnet, 2013). Despite these vulnerabilities, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2013) pointed out that similar to nations around the world, SIDS are making notable gains in some areas of health, education, and gender parity, while other goals continue to prove challenging.

Caribbean Coalitions

Many Caribbean islands joined together to reduce the strain on insufficient resources (Surendra & Ron, 2010). The Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) is a well-known organization comprised of 15 member states and 5 associate members (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 2011). These members share similar historical experiences, are economically vulnerable, depend heavily on tourism, and rely on agriculture and offshore financial services, with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, which mainly uses nonrenewable energy sources (Surendra & Ron, 2010).

Caribbean Education System

According to Blom and Hobbs (2008), the Caribbean education system needs reform to stay abreast of changes occurring throughout the world. Many youth in the Caribbean are unemployed, so pilot programs are implemented to meet global employment expectations. If successful, additional programs will be created according to local and global demands. Universities with 4-year programs are not easily established in the Caribbean due to the size of the country and insufficient demand.

Health

Ligeon, Jolly, and Jolly (2012) reported that the Caribbean has a history of poor health care in comparison to developed countries. The researchers conducted a study in the Caribbean and Latin America to determine how socioeconomic and environmental factors affect health status. Specific attention was made on food availability and dietary considerations. Findings indicated that Latin America had a higher life expectancy than the Caribbean. In addition, higher incomes yielded less health concerns. Education about

healthy lifestyles was recommended, especially about the HIV and AIDS, which are prevalent in the Caribbean. Residents should be aware of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, in addition to where they could get appropriate care.

Medical tourism is a growing trend and Caribbean islands market themselves for this service (Ramirez de Arellano, 2011). According to Ramirez de Arellano (2001), in the past, it was common for people from developing countries to travel to established nations for top-notch health care. The trend; however, has changed wherein wealthy individuals in developed countries want privacy and medical procedures at a low cost. While Caribbean islands create hospitals for affluent patients from abroad, they need to ensure that locals in the low socioeconomic status receive equitable health care as well.

Rodriguez (2010) reported that mental health issues increasingly gained attention in the Caribbean. Nonetheless, at least 60% of mental health cases are untreated, which leads to morbidity and disability. The researcher related that the lack of treatment is a result of limited money and professionals, which are both necessary to provide sufficient services. International conferences were held to brainstorm how to rectify the disparity in care and a plan of action was created. Although challenging, health care continues to improve in the Caribbean.

Crime

Edmunds (2012) reported that over the past decade, there was a rapid increase in organized crime in the Caribbean. While there are numerous reasons for the spike in crime, brain drain is noted to be one of the factors. Edmunds related that the drug trade escalated after large islands such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago received their

independence from colonialism. However, the majority of the policies in Jamaica are governed internationally by International Monetary Fund (IMF), which has a home office in Washington D.C. Furthermore, job cuts led to the departure of majority of the graduates in Jamaica, which left a population of people with low socioeconomic status behind. As a result, a lack of financial control prevents island nations from funding jobs and programs needed to employ residents.

According to Bailey (2011), the urgency of managing crime increased because youth are involved and severe injuries and deaths occur. Adolescent minds are still developing and Bailey (2011) reported that repeated exposure to violence increases the chance that the behavior is normalized or perpetrated on others. Males are reported to be more involved in criminal activities than females, which increase the likelihood that males may be the victims or perpetrators of crime. Bailey (2011) indicated that students reported that marijuana is readily available; therefore he suggested that interventions include drug prevention.

Criminal activities extend beyond lower socioeconomic communities and crime in the Caribbean affects both locals and tourists (Kuhns, Spohn, & Wells, 2008). Kuhns et al. (2008) reported that tourism accounts for a significant portion of income and local jobs are affected if visits to the Caribbean decline. Criminals target places with minimum security, such as villas and small hotels, and tourists who travel to isolated areas. Therefore, developed countries tend to publish warnings to travelers about criminal activities abroad.

Government

The government in the Caribbean islands primarily functions according to policies and procedures established by the most recent ruling developed country (Bishop, 2011). Bishop (2011) reported that as Britain owned numerous islands during colonialism, the majority of the Caribbean uses the *Westminster Model* for democratic governance, where the head of state is the Prime Minister, who has a Cabinet of appointed Ministers. Islands such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines are attempting to change this political structure because it no longer meets current needs. Most islands are unsuccessful in implementing constitutional updates, but at least one island, Trinidad and Tobago, successfully changed their constitutions and governmental procedures.

Economy and Business

Tourism continues to be a major source of revenue in the Caribbean due to its climate and natural environment (Nelson, 2011). Nelson (2011) reported that for many years, the Caribbean collaborated to sell cruises and tours as one product, but now islands are marketing themselves individually. Tourism decreased briefly when the global financial crisis began in 2007, but has rebounded as the economy continues to recover. The funds derived from tourism are essential for government and business development.

The process for establishing a business in the Caribbean is vital for the local economy (The World Bank, 2012). According to The World Bank (2012), in recent years, many islands streamlined processes so locals and global investors alike could establish businesses. Entrepreneurs need to know which factors affect the success of their businesses, such as construction permits, electricity, taxes, and contract enforcements.

Complicated and time consuming processes delay new business establishments and may prevent future investors from further developing the economy with jobs and needed revenues.

Greenidge and DaCosta (2009) reported that the cost of living is high in the Caribbean, which is attributed to rising oil prices. In the 1970s, a food shortage and the rising cost of oil inflated consumer prices significantly which affected living expenses and investments in three of the largest Caribbean islands: Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago. Other factors that affect inflation include import costs, wages, and interest rates. The cost of imports, including oil, impacts the entire Caribbean, as everything that is not produced locally has to be imported.

Inflation reduces the amount of food and other products consumers can afford to purchase (Sutherland and Craigwell, 2009). Sutherland and Craigwell (2009) conducted a study on private consumption expenditure for Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago increased consumption expenditure over the years, which was related to more “income, wealth and real interest rate” (p. 17). On the contrary, findings indicated that consumption expenditure for Jamaica was lower. Results indicated that less wealth for Caribbean islands hinders development as investors want a return for their investment.

Anderson (2010) noted that computer and internet access is difficult in the Caribbean due to lack of resources, such as money, appropriate infrastructure, and qualified employees. Businesses need to use computers to compete globally and students need them to pursue education goals. Unfortunately, students relocate to pursue their

education in countries that use updated technology, which is necessary to be competitive (Anderson, 2010). The inability for the Caribbean to quickly adapt to global trends is a setback because it limits opportunities for growth.

In addition, the cost of electricity is a major problem affecting business development and expansion in the Caribbean (Yépez-Garcia, Johnson, & Andrés, 2011). Yépez-Garcia et al. (2011) reported that extreme demand to supply homes, businesses, and technology creates challenges due to this limited resource. Furthermore, business and consumer costs continue to rise as the Caribbean relies on importing oil to meet energy demands (Gerner, & Hansen, 2011). Gerner and Hansen (2011) pointed out that the Caribbean cannot continuously sustain high energy costs, but it is unable to upgrade or replace energy sources without assistance from other countries. Several Caribbean islands are collaborating to find renewable energy solutions, which is essential to deal with changing climates, recovery from natural disasters, and increasing investments.

Industrial Development

Given how limited resources are in the Caribbean, Millar and Russell (2011) stated that organizations should implement sustainable practices. Millar and Russell conducted a study to determine if manufacturers in the Caribbean were preserving natural resources, reducing waste, and ensuring employee safety. Results indicated that most companies were familiar with sustainable manufacturing but did not adopt procedures due to perceived costs or lack of mandatory regulations. The researchers suggested that the government, universities, and manufacturing associations should assist in creating and enforcing policies, curriculum, and best practices.

According to Kandil (2009), finances are important in order for businesses to run effectively. Latin American and the Caribbean increase imports and exports when the economy is doing well in the United States. Private and public sectors in the Caribbean also need reliable and accurate accounting practices to enable trust from investors and people in the community (Fortin, Barros, & Cutler, 2010). Today, Caribbean people live throughout the world, including in the United States (Schmidt, 2008), and the fate of their homeland is unknown due to fiscal challenges. Schmidt (2008) reported that prior to resolving brain drain, statistics are needed to determine how many people live abroad and how their home country is affected.

Brain Drain Statistics in the Caribbean

There is no accurate tracking system for emigrants from the Caribbean (Defoort, 2008). Defoort (2008) indicated that children, young adults, and older adults might not be documented, especially if they relocate with a working adult. Lower skilled emigrants may not be registered; many relocate to pursue their education, but do not return to their home countries. Most Caribbean emigrants move to the United States due to its proximity to their home country (Acosta & de la Cruz, 2011). Table 1 provides data on foreign born from Latin America and Caribbean (Acosta & de la Cruz, 2011).

Table 1

*Foreign-Born Population from Latin America and the Caribbean by Country of Birth:
2010 (Numbers in thousands)*

Region and Country of Birth	Number		Percent of Total		Percent of Region	
	Estimate	Margin of Error (\pm) ¹	Estimate	Margin of Error (\pm) ^a	Estimate	Margin of Error (\pm) ¹
Total	21,224	90	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)
Caribbean	3,731	42	17.6	0.2	100.0	(X)
Cuba	1,105	27	5.2	0.1	29.6	0.6
Dominican Republic	879	24	4.1	0.1	23.6	0.6
Haiti	587	21	2.8	0.1	15.7	0.6
Jamaica	660	20	3.1	0.1	17.7	0.5
Other Caribbean ^b	500	17	2.4	0.1	13.4	0.4
Central America	14,764	90	69.6	0.2	100.0	(x)
Mexico	11,711	83	55.2	0.3	79.3	0.3
El Salvador	1,214	34	5.7	0.2	8.2	0.2
Guatemala	831	29	3.9	0.1	5.6	0.2
Honduras	523	24	2.5	0.1	3.5	0.2
Other Central America ^c	485	17	2.3	0.1	3.3	0.1
South America	2,730	42	12.9	0.1	100.0	(X)
Brazil	340	15	1.6	0.1	12.4	0.5
Colombia	637	19	3.0	0.1	23.3	0.6
Ecuador	443	20	2.1	0.1	16.2	0.6
Peru	429	18	2.0	0.1	15.7	0.6
Other South America ^d	882	23	4.2	0.1	32.3	0.7

Note. (X) denotes not applicable. Reprinted from “The Foreign Born from Latin America and the Caribbean: 2010,” by Y. D. Acosta and G. P. de la Cruz, 2011, p. 3. Copyright 2011 by the U.S. Census Bureau.

^a Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. ^b Other Caribbean includes Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, the former country of Guadeloupe (including St. Barthélemy and Saint-Martin), Martinique, Montserrat, the former country of the Netherlands Antilles (including Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Saint Eustatius, and Saint Maarten), St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands. ^c Other Central America includes Belize, Costa Rica, Nicaragua,

and Panama. ^dOther South America includes Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Falkland Islands, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www.

Data from Table 1 indicated that 70% of foreign born are from Central America, 18% from the Caribbean, and 13% from South America (Acosta & de la Cruz, 2011). Acosta and de la Cruz (2011) estimated that immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean totaled 21,224, with approximately 3,731 from the Caribbean alone. Unlike most Caribbean migrants, individuals from Latin America are less likely to have a tertiary or postsecondary education. Although 18% of the immigrants were from the Caribbean, this number represents a high number of Caribbean immigrants who left their home countries, which are small islands. This therefore results in brain drain as educated and highly skilled individuals relocate to the United States.

Caribbean Migration to the United States

Since many U.S. Virgin Islanders and other Caribbean nationals migrate to the United States, an overview is needed to assess why this trend continues. According to Martin (2009), migration to the United States from the Caribbean fluctuates according to economic and political trends in both regions and throughout the world. The author stated that statistics are scarce regarding specific events that trigger large or constant migration from the Caribbean, but political decisions play a significant role as government policies and procedures determine immigration law. The following historical overview of immigration in the United States provides a picture of how the immigrant population expanded and current issues of Caribbean migrants are discussed.

The OECD (2013) reported that economic factors influence where large groups of migrants reside. Typically, migrants relocate during economic decline, but it is unclear how many will move to other countries due to the 2008-2009 recession, given that so many OECD countries are not doing well financially. Employment reduced significantly for many careers throughout the world, including construction and manufacturing. Job loss declined in the United States, but continuous economic development is needed to ensure financial stability.

Massey (1995) reported that migration patterns in the United States vary according to global issues and existing laws. The U.S. demographics and immigration policies were transformed considerably throughout the 20th century. Massey noted that during the early 20th century, at least 200,000 immigrants from Europe entered the United States annually. The beginning of mass immigration declined in 1930 and lasted for 40 years. This was attributed to different factors such as stringent immigration laws and economic depression. The decline in migration affects farming and other industries that rely on manual labor.

Massey (1995) further reported that significant population changes occurred in the late 1970s wherein the majority of migrants relocated from Latin America despite immigration changes that limited the maximum number of immigrants that could enter the United States from countries in the Western Hemisphere. The Asian population also rapidly increased, but the immigration focus is on the Latin American population. U.S. residents express concerns about jobs being taken away by unskilled immigrants, but

despite their concerns, they welcomed research and other advances made by educated migrants (Casas & Santo, 2012).

According to Jones (2008), Caribbean migrants make many sacrifices to relocate to the United States. The length of time migrants stay in the United States depends on familial situations and immigrant status. A growing trend is that most migrants are women who are typically heads of household. If relocation is temporary, children and spouses remain in the Caribbean until the contract expires and the family is divided until a permanent solution allows reunification.

History, Culture, and Commerce of the United States Virgin Islands

In this phenomenological research study, I focused on government senior executives in the USVI, so it was important to understand its history, culture, and commerce, which helped in understanding how brain drain affected these three islands. This section is organized in the following subsections: overview, culture, education, religion, health, crime, government, economy and business, industrial development, and brain drain statistics in the United States Virgin Islands.

Overview

The USVI is located in the Caribbean Sea and comprised of three islands: St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). As of July 2013, the total population of the USVI is estimated to be approximately 104,737 (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2013). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2003), St. Croix is the largest island at approximately 84 square miles; St. Thomas is the second largest island at 32 square miles; and St. John is the smallest island at approximately 21 square miles,

with two thirds being a national park. In 1996, Water Island was included as part of the USVI, but given its small stature, 2.5 miles long and about 1 mile wide, and its proximity to St. Thomas; it will not be discussed in this research study.

The USVI is located in the Lesser Antilles, but also borders the Greater Antilles, and is 80 miles from Puerto Rico and 991 miles from Miami, Florida (Acevedo-Rodriguez, 1996). The USVI is close to the Puerto Rico Trench in the Atlantic Ocean, which made it valuable to the United States in the event of war. The United States initially only planned to purchase St. Thomas and St. John from the Danish West Indies, but included St. Croix due to its strategic location in the event of war.

Culture

The USVI is a cultural blend as most residents are descendants of many nationalities from neighboring islands such as Antigua and Dominica, and former colonial countries, such as France and Denmark (Acevedo-Rodríguez, 1996). Gore (2009), a native of Antigua and Barbuda, and a USVI resident, wrote *Garrote: The Illusion of Social Equality and Political Justice in the United States Virgin Islands*, which discussed “Eastern Caribbean Nationals and their experiences as bonded aliens living in the United States Virgin Islands” (Gore, 2009, p. viii). The author related that the history of the USVI also included the struggle for “aliens” to gain similar rights as existing U.S. citizens, especially economic and political equality. Native USVI residents were concerned that “aliens” would exceed their population and take over their jobs and resources.

According to Gore (2009), Eastern Caribbean immigrants of English, French, and Dutch descent were invited to the USVI to work, but were mistreated. After an economic downturn, immigrants were returned to their countries, and individuals who remained had ongoing challenges that still exist today. As per the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives (1981), the Legislature of the Virgin Islands submitted Bill H.R. 3517 to the U.S. Congress, which proposed that Eastern Caribbean Nationals were allowed to become naturalized citizens, which helped to stabilize the workforce. The Bill was a joint effort of the USVI and U.S. legislators, in addition to support from the USVI governor and delegate to Congress. The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives accepted the proposal with revisions that removed limits of how many family members could be naturalized. Living conditions improved for Eastern Caribbean immigrants over time after the bill was passed.

Given the historic inclusion of people from various nationalities, USVI food, music, and literature are diverse (Acevedo-Rodríguez, 1996). Ethnic groups are 76.2% Black, 13.1% White, 1.1% Asian, and the remaining 9.6 % is classified as other or mixed (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). The official language spoken is English, but it is also referred to as English Creole. Spanish and French follow as the second and third most common languages spoken in the USVI (CIA, 2013). Cultures have meshed over the years due to West African, European, and American influences (Office of the Governor, 2012).

Education

The USVI population is approximately 104,737 (CIA, 2013) and statistics indicate high unemployment rates and low education skills (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor, 2011). The unemployment rate as of August 2011 is 10.6% (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor, 2011). The education level of residents is a concern, as 21% to 44% of students are below national reading and math levels, and 15% of all students who drop out by high school are also unemployed (Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, 2010). Organizations have a difficult time filling positions with high education requirements.

The Office of the Governor (2010) reported that due to ongoing educational challenges, the USVI Department of Education (DOE) identified and implemented strategic and performance goals to improve student success. Some of the DOE's accomplishments include accrediting all public high schools by the Middle States Association, instituting a literary program, and revising science and social studies curriculum. The DOE (The Office of the Governor, 2010) also reported that the dropout rate was 4% for the 2009-2010 school year, which decreased by 1% from the previous school year. As part of their continued effort to improve the education system, the DOE continues to assess the needs of the students and the community and establish performance goals accordingly.

Religion

The CIA (2013) reported that religious sectors in the USVI are 59% Protestant (Baptist 42%, Episcopalian 17%), 34% Roman Catholic, and 7% other. Soares (2008)

noted that the church should assist in resolving social ills, especially poverty. The author indicated that poverty existed since slavery by colonists. Religions introduced to the Caribbean during colonialism, such as Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, are still practiced today, but poverty continues to increase despite programs initiated to reduce or eliminate disparities. The church had a historic role in shaping the economy and social expectations of the Caribbean and may be an instrumental resource towards alleviating the island's existing problems, which includes poverty.

Health

According to the Government of the United States Virgin Islands Department of Health (2011), the government of the USVI assists with health care in the territory through hospitals and centers. There are hospitals on St. Thomas and St. Croix and a health center is located on St. John. St. Thomas and St. John are in one district, and the three medical units are under one facility, which is located in St. Thomas. Specialty services, such as diabetes care, are not readily available in both districts, so residents travel to the other districts, Puerto Rico, or the United States for medical care.

The Government of the United States Virgin Islands Department of Health (2011) further reported that health is a major concern in the USVI. Children and adults need to be healthy to thrive in both school and work, but “in 2009, about 29% of the population was uninsured” (The Government of the United States Virgin Islands Department of Health, 2011, p.7). The USVI Department of Health provides medical services to the entire community, but uninsured or underinsured individuals are priority because they do not have resources to seek medical care with private providers.

Since 75.2% of the population in the USVI is Black, health care issues focus primarily on this group of individuals (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Through the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), a 5-year grant was awarded by the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) to continue an exploratory study on health issues in the USVI (Callwood et al., 2012). The purpose of Callwood et al. (2012) study was to determine what residents thought about their health and available health care services. Findings indicated that “the five most important health issues identified by members of the focus groups were diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, asthma, and hypertension” (Callwood et al., 2012, p. 6). In addition, findings from the study found that that people in the USVI were most concerned about access to services for heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and HIV. Participants also expressed concerns about the confidentiality of their personal information. Financial limitations in the USVI prevent many individuals from receiving medical care that they need.

Crime

Crime in the USVI is similar to concerns on other Caribbean islands, particularly in regards to weapons, illegal drugs, and violent acts (Karagiannis & Madjd-Sadjadi, 2012). Karagiannis and Madjd-Sadjadi (2012) reported that crime negatively affects tourism in the Caribbean, including the USVI. The authors noted that a main concern pertain to crimes toward tourists, which may reflect a rift between the locals and visitors as there may be an inadequate distribution of tourism derived income. Another concern was that high profile cases that are violent or unsolved have a lingering effect on tourism; however, the authors related that tourism crimes in the Caribbean are rare.

There is limited statistical data on crime statistics in the USVI in the research database and on the Internet. Crime Stoppers of the U.S. Virgin Islands (2013) reported that as a result of tips, 115 arrests were made and 166 cases were cleared in 2011. In addition, \$106,950 in drugs was seized in the same year. Shea (2012) reported that homicides in the USVI decreased from 66 in 2010 to 48 in 2011. The USVI Police Department (2013) reported that while the numbers are still high, the decline may be due to their commitment to public safety of both residents and visitors. For instance, programs such as Project SAFE Neighborhood, which emphasizes police dedication to reduce gun crime and encourages civilian participation, contribute to decreased criminal activities.

Government

The Office of the Governor (2012) reported that the Organic Act of 1936 allowed for the creation of a senate, which began the political process evolution. The existing governmental organization is based on the Revised Organic Act of 1954, which is the constitution for the USVI. In 1970, the U.S. Virgin Islands elected its first governor, Melvin H. Evans. The governmental structure in the USVI is similar to the United States, except it has fewer branches of government.

According to the CIA (2013), the USVI is a territory of the United States that receives oversight by the Office of Insular Affairs and U.S. Department of the Interior. This unincorporated territory of the United States has no first-order administrative divisions and the legal system is based on the U.S. common law. The suffrage age is 18, but residents are not allowed to vote for the U.S. president, although they are U.S.

citizens. Residents, however, are allowed to vote in the Democratic and Republican presidential primary elections. The executive branch is a combination of national and local elected officials.

The U.S. President is the Chief of State and the head of government is the locally elected governor. The USVI Senate is comprised of 15 seats and elected individuals serve for 2 years. Members of the House of Representative are also elected for 2-year terms but are not allowed to vote. The judicial branch has two sections; the U.S. District Court of the Virgin Islands, which is under the Third Circuit Jurisdiction, and the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands, wherein judges are appointed by the governor. Party affiliations in USVI are Democrat, Republican, Independent Citizen Movement, and Independent. The USVI has international membership with the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Economy and Business

Although the U.S. Virgin Islands is a U.S. territory, it is similar to other Caribbean islands wherein economic development is hindered due to infrastructure expenses (McGillivray, Naudé, & Santos-Paulino, 2008). McGillivray et al. (2008) reported that due to its size, transportation and communication costs are exorbitant and poor public administration fail to improve the economy, which is necessary to efficiently develop the country. Furthermore, natural forces of destruction, such as hurricanes, create economic hardship as buildings and roads have to be repaired. Bueno, Herzfeld, Stanton, and Ackermanet (2008) discussed other challenges SIDS experience due to hurricanes, including technology, impaired health, food, energy, declined agriculture, and loss of tourism. As per the Bureau of Economic Analysis (2012), the gross domestic product

(GDP) in the USVI increased in 2010, following a 2-year decline. Since the GDP is an indication of economic development, it is necessary for USVI to maintain or increase its GDP to meet financial obligations.

The Office of the Governor (2012) related that agriculture and industrial development declined in the USVI after slavery ended in 1848. Tourism in the USVI increased after the United States placed an embargo on Cuba in 1959. The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism (2013) reported that in 1995, the 21st Legislature of the Virgin Islands created the Department of Tourism to stimulate the economy. The Department of Tourism continues to encourage people to visit the territory by outlining the mission, vision, and goals for the territory and post its annual marketing plan on its website. The Fiscal year 2013 Marketing Plan projects revenues for film promotion, product development and enhancement, special events and sponsorships, cruise industry development, airline growth strategy, and packages and seasonal promotions.

Traveling from the United States to the USVI is easier than to other Caribbean islands because a passport is not required for U.S. citizens (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, 2013). According to the CIA (2013), tourism in the USVI accounts for 80% of the GDP, which also includes employment. The CIA also reported that at least 2.4 million people visited the USVI in 2008. By capturing ongoing data from tourists and potential travelers, the Department of Tourism continuously enhance tourism experiences and create optimal marketing strategies, which in turn benefits the territory.

Industrial Development

According to Wedderburn, Cherubin, and Macdougall (2008), the USVI transitioned from trade and sugarcane agriculture to tourism, manufacturing, and industrial businesses. The majority of tourism in the USVI occurs on St. Thomas and St. John and most of the visitors arrive on cruise ships. While there are also opportunities to expand tourism, a survey by Wedderburn et al. (2008) found that there are other business opportunities as well, which include information and technology (e.g., software and system development); maritime (e.g., ship building, repair, and maintenance); and retirement (continual care facility) and second home market (timeshare). In addition, there are advantages to doing business in USVI, such as tax incentives; ideal proximity to the United States, Latin America, and other Caribbean islands; and duty free exports.

To present a holistic picture of the business community, disadvantages also have to be discussed. Shirley, Jones, and Daniel (2012) reported that the cost of electricity, which is a primary concern, continues to rise due to natural disasters and the global economic downturn. Given previously discussed challenges, the USVI cannot afford to continue paying rising costs of electricity due to inflated oil prices. Electricity is needed to run businesses, which affects the cost of necessary services, such as refrigerating food and providing air conditioning in enclosed structures. Likewise, residents are affected by the cost of electricity at home. One of the problems affecting cost of electricity is the age of the Water and Power Authority (WAPA) facility. Nonetheless, repairs and upgrades are in process at WAPA and energy alternatives are explored.

Energy Development in Island Nations (EDIN; 2011) discussed a pilot project that they are conducting in the USVI. EDIN is an international partnership that is focused on developing renewable energy, such as wind and solar, since it is accessible in the Caribbean. The current governor of the Virgin Islands, John P. deJongh, Jr., attended the inaugural workshop for the EDIN-USVI project in Colorado in 2010 and emphasized his goal for the territory to reduce reliance on fossil fuel by 60% by 2025. EDIN may not have a huge impact in larger countries, but it demonstrates that change is possible and return on investment once the project is completed may influence SIDS and other countries with similar infrastructure to implement cost saving measures and preserve the environment. In addition, adopting energy efficiency measures and deploying renewable energy technologies will attract investors.

Brain Drain Statistics in the United States Virgin Islands

Brain drain statistics on the USVI is limited. However, economic catastrophes, such as the closing of the Hovensa on St. Croix in 2012, had immediate and long-term repercussions for the territory, but current statistics were unavailable. Hovensa employed over 2,000 people and many relocated to other countries due to the inability to find work or competitive pay. The closing also affected businesses that were contracted by Hovensa or those that relied on discretionary spending by employees.

The USVI has a history of migration to and from islands, which is reflected in historic and recent trends (Roopnarine, 2008). Roopnarine (2008) chronologically described USVI migration in five categories: (a) arrival of Amerindians in the pre-Columbian era; (b) influx of Europeans and Africans during colonialism; (c) globally

recruited workers after colonialism; (d) exodus of Virgin Islanders to other Caribbean islands; and (e) parallel migration of Virgin Islanders to the United States; and Americans, Middle Easterners, and Asians to the USVI. Parallel migration existed after the United States purchased the USVI in 1917. Migration to the USVI is rare and it is more common for residents from Caribbean nations to leave. Reasons for migration to the USVI vary and it is difficult to assess the benefits of transplanted residents because different populations form their own communities. The crux of the USVI migration issue is that “Virgin Islanders are leaving while Americans, Europeans, Arabs and Asians are entering the territory” (Roopnarine, 2008, p. 147).

Justification of Study on Brain Drain in the U.S. Virgin Islands

A review of literature indicated that transformational and transactional leadership are prominent managerial approaches proven to be successful in various settings, (e.g., Ingram, 2013; Riaz & Haider, 2012; van Eeden et al., 2008). In this study, I explored if government senior executives in the USVI practiced these leadership styles, which would help decrease brain drain in the territory. An exhaustive review of the literature on brain drain and leadership in the Caribbean produced scarce information about the USVI and brain drain, which presented a gap in the research literature.

It is important to explain why this study was needed in the USVI. In this section I discussed how the study contributed to organizational psychology and organization development through positive social change. I identified gaps in the literature for the Caribbean as a whole; specifically the USVI, and the importance of transformational and transactional leaderships are discussed.

Positive Social Change for Small Island Developing States

Maton (2008) described positive social change as the empowerment of individuals, groups, or communities to alter conditions that benefit others. Collaboration is encouraged to successfully reduce brain drain since social change responsibilities apply to both source and recruiting countries. Source countries have to ensure that their work structure is not hindered by the loss of trained professionals and human resources abroad are not exploited by developed countries (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004). This subsection discusses innovation, brain gain, brain circulation, and collaboration as they reflect an optimistic perspective on brain drain.

Innovation. Leaders in developing countries should pursue innovation as a mean of enhancing positive social change (Grozeva, 2008). Innovations are essential as they “uncover new solutions to traditional problems” (Grozeva, 2008, p. 26). Issues surrounding brain drain occurred for decades and remains challenging, so it makes sense to assess the phenomenon differently and identify unique objectives. Grozeva (2008) recommended that the public sector provide financial assistance for innovations if practical, implement policies suitable for the location and economic climate, and support ideas that develop various aspects of the country. It is impossible to implement all ideas simultaneously, so leaders should carefully assess options and prioritize when creating and implementing policies.

Bel (2010) defined innovation as a “marketable invention” (Bel, 2010, p. 47) wherein a business is developed from an idea. Several prominent leaders in the media today, such as Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg, are known for their creative ideas and

business savvy. Innovative leaders develop strategies to compete globally, continuously improve services, and effectively manage employees. To remain competitive, leaders have to recognize opportunities to develop a business and have the knowledge and capabilities to do so. As a result, organizations need a flexible culture to facilitate change management and promote positive social change.

Policy makers have to be aware of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of innovative ideas (Mahroum, 2012). Mahroum (2012) reported that innovative policies are most effective when they are realistic and linked to resolving socioeconomic outcomes. Small and achievable goals allow governments and other organizations to experience success and encourage them to pursue additional social policies.

According to Mhenni, Ben Youssef, Elaheebocus, and Ragni (2013), one innovation gaining popularity in developing countries is science and technology parks. These parks benefit the economy as they create jobs, modernize industrial services, and allow the country to compete. The science and technology parks require partnership from the government, research institutions such as universities, and the private sector (Sanni, Egbetokun, & Siyanbola, 2010). However, establishing a science and technology park is insufficient to guarantee success because as with any technological device, modifications are frequently needed, so developing countries have to invest in research and be prepared to upgrade facilities to remain competitive (Mhenni et al., 2013). As reported by Minto-Coy (2011), SIDS have to be creative to be globally competitive. While the economic recession presents financial challenges, leaders have to keep employees engaged and facilitate innovation so organizations, including governments, are sustainable. Since

current business practices are insufficient to sustain the economy, new ideas are required to keep organizations afloat.

The term diaspora is currently used to redefine migrants (Lin, 2010). Diaspora differs greatly from migrants and immigrants because it encompasses the “dual identity” (Lin, 2010, p. 124) of a group of people. Individuals who migrated are often connected to their home countries and adapt to a new culture to successfully assimilate in their new communities. In addition, diaspora members continue to be involved in business ventures in developing countries. The input diaspora members give to developing countries is invaluable because they are exposed to cutting edge technology, education, innovation, and organization development. Developing countries can use this information to improve their organizations and ultimately their economies.

Improving education is one area wherein SIDS need to be innovative (Marshall & Cunningham, 2008). According to Marshall and Cunningham (2008), many children in the Caribbean lack basic reading, writing, and math skills, which hinder their ability to pursue entry level jobs. In addressing this issue, public and private entities collaborated to support a workshop with the intention of influencing public policies and creating programs to improve literacy, mathematical ability, and entrepreneurial skills. Also, scholarships were given to students to further their education.

The Caribbean Conference on Higher Education (2010) globally addressed education in the Caribbean. The organization emphasizes the importance of education and created a declaration that outlines specific SIDS that need assistance, how islands will be assisted, and agencies responsible for completing these initiatives. The

organization pointed out that basic and tertiary education is necessary, despite economic hardships, for “sustainable development” (Caribbean Conference on Higher Education, 2010, p. 1) of the Caribbean. The organization recommended that collaborators meet regularly, assess accomplishments, and revise outstanding goals to accomplish the social responsibility of educating residents.

Brain gain. Brain gain occurs when migrants remain in developed countries but share their knowledge or finances with developing countries (UNCTAD, 2012). The UNCTAD (2012) reported that research on brain gain is still in its infancy stage, but developing countries receive economic relief from migrants due to increased education, abilities, and remittances. While working in developed countries, migrants can share the technical knowledge acquired through education and remittances contribute to the government of home countries because the money is used to purchase goods and services.

Advancement in technology allows leaders in developing countries to be aware of brain gain and learn how they can benefit from this new phenomenon (Lin, 2010). Lin (2010) reported that the shift in thinking from brain drain to brain gain presents opportunities for positive social change, such as collaborations and development of innovative ideas. For instance, engaging immigrants in business expansion is a creative way to expand the labor market. Migrants are connected to their homeland due to family or the motivation to give back to improve circumstances. Capacity building with immigrants enhances talent management as leaders from developing countries have a group of highly qualified individuals to potentially hire.

Brain circulation. Brain circulation refers to migrants permanently returning to developing countries or temporarily relocating to developed countries for several years at a time (Blouin & Debnath, 2012). Blouin and Debnath (2012) reported that research on brain circulation occurred in the past decade and what is available tends to be negative. There are many factors that affect brain circulation, including the profession of migrants. The researchers found that nurses were more likely to return to developing countries than doctors. In addition, they found that the likelihood of brain circulation was determined by the length of stay abroad, if any immediate family members remained in developing countries, and if conditions had improved at home. The researchers recommended that brain circulation should be encouraged as these talented individuals have skills to enhance organization development.

Collaboration. Jackson (2011) related that a collaborative approach is essential to successfully use brain circulation to implement positive social change. The researcher recommended that the private sector, policy makers, and researchers in Jamaica work closely together to engage the scientific diaspora. He related that the government's involvement is needed to facilitate interactions and provide financial assistance for research. Partnering with developed countries that have a large population of Jamaicans benefits all parties. Jackson (2011) also recommended that other SIDS implement similar practices to benefit from the knowledge and skills of talented migrants. The overall findings from the current review of literature indicated the numerous challenges that brain drain presents.

Summary and Conclusions

Brain drain is a phenomenon that affects many systems, including families, communities, organizations, and countries (Mishra, 2007). Mishra (2007) reported that relocation of highly qualified individuals create talent management challenges in less developed countries as certain skills are difficult to replace. Limited studies have been conducted on brain drain in the Caribbean, particularly on the effect it has on SIDS. Pinpointing why Caribbean residents leave their country and what can be done to decrease or prevent brain drain is essential for determining how to resolve the problem.

As a result, in this phenomenological study, I explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain.

According to Iravani (2011), social, political, and economic situations are some reasons people migrate to developed countries. Senior executives in the USVI were the ideal group to address brain drain as they recognized and interacted with talented individuals in their organizations and were knowledgeable about brain drain and its impact on the businesses and the territory. Transformation and transactional leadership theories served as the theoretical foundations for this study. A review of literature indicated that transformational and transactional leadership are prominent managerial approaches proven to be successful in various settings, (e.g., Ingram, 2013; Riaz &

Haider, 2012; van Eeden et al., 2008), and in this study, I explored if government senior executives in the USVI practiced these forms of leadership styles, which would help to decrease brain drain in the territory. Developing countries are unable to establish themselves or compete effectively in the global arena without the appropriate workforce (Schoburgh, 2012). Leaders have power and influence to make necessary changes in organizations and communities and the results from this study provided recommendations on decreasing and preventing brain drain in the USVI and the Caribbean.

Innovation, brain gain, and brain circulation were discussed as positive social change mechanisms that can be used to alter the effects of brain drain for developing countries. Leaders in developing countries should pursue innovation as a mean of enhancing positive social change (Grozeva, 2008). Innovations are essential as they “uncover new solutions to traditional problems” (Grozeva, 2008, p. 26). In relation to brain gain, developing countries receive economic relief from migrants due to increased education, abilities, and remittances (UNCTAD, 2012). While working in developed countries, migrants can share the technical knowledge acquired through education and remittances contribute to the government of home countries because the money is used to purchase goods and services. Blouin and Debnath (2012) recommended that brain circulation should be encouraged as talented individuals have skills to enhance organization development.

In this chapter, I included the literature search strategy; theoretical foundation; history, culture, and commerce in the Caribbean; history, culture, and commerce of the United States Virgin Islands; justification of study on brain drain in the U.S. Virgin

Islands, and summary and conclusions. In Chapter 3, I include the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, and summary. In Chapter 4, I include the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary. In Chapter 5, I include the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. I collected data for this phenomenological study through the use of a demographic questionnaire and in-depth face-to-face semistructured interviews with 10 government senior executives in the USVI. I transcribed the audio-recordings of the in-depth interviews and analyze transcriptions using NVivo, which facilitated the identification of themes and provided annotation for the codes and categories.

The accuracy of each transcript was verified by participants. I highlighted unclear words or phrases in the transcripts and participants clarified information during member checks, unless they could not verify what was said. The study was conducted in accordance with the parameters established by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the ethical protection of research participants. The approval number is 05-23-14-0025992. In this chapter, I present the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, and summary.

Research Design and Rationale

This section is organized in the following subsections: research questions and phenomenological study design rationale.

Research Questions

In order to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain, in this phenomenological research study, I addressed the following research questions:

1. What do government senior executives perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI?
2. What do government senior executives perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI?
3. With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration?
4. With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards?

5. What is the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI?
6. How does brain drain affect the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI?
7. What do government senior executives recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI?

Phenomenological Study Design Rationale

A phenomenological study design was chosen to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. The phenomenological design provided a rich description of essential structures (University of South Alabama, 2013) of brain drain in the USVI. Burns (1978) and Bass's (1985) transformational and transactional leadership theories served as the theoretical foundations of this study. Snowball sampling was employed to collect local level data through in-depth open-ended interviews from 10 government senior executives in the USVI. Data analysis consisted of thematic analysis and constant comparison from in-depth open-ended interviews, where transcripts were submitted to NVivo, which facilitated the identification of themes and provided annotation for the codes and categories.

The phenomenological study design was chosen after reviewing extensive research literature (e.g., Creswell, 2013; University of South Alabama, 2013) on the five research approaches: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. Each approach has its own advantages and disadvantages. Due to limited research data on brain drain in the USVI, the small population of the USVI, diverse industries, and geographical location of government businesses, the phenomenological study design was chosen as the most appropriate research approach to this study. The purpose of a phenomenological study is to tell the story of the experiences of participants who shared a common phenomenon in such a way that “by the end of the story the reader should feel that she has vicariously experienced the phenomenon under study” (Starks & Trinidad, 2007, p. 1376). By their very nature, phenomenological studies explore the lived experiences of a phenomenon, how it felt to be impacted by it, what it was like, and what the core essence of it is (Creswell, 2013). In this study, I focused on the lived experiences of senior government officials in relation to brain drain.

In order to understand issues of brain drain in the Caribbean and how it affects leadership, a phenomenological research approach, was used to focus on brain drain in the USVI. Phenomenology is a thorough exploration of lived experiences of a specific event or phenomenon. Through interviews and analysis, the researcher identifies “structures, logic, and interrelationships that are contained in the phenomenon under investigation” (Conklin, 2007, p. 277). Participants describe their experiences through detailed descriptions and stories. In-depth interviews are the primary data-collection method for phenomenological research studies (University of South Alabama, 2013).

Role of the Researcher

I served as a participant-observer during the in-depth interviews of this phenomenological research study as a key instrument in the qualitative data collection process. I had direct contact with the participants as I recruited them by telephone; collected demographic and in-depth interview data; and coded, analyzed, and interpreted the data. After the interviews were completed, I transcribed the audio recordings. I established rapport by greeting participants and answered general questions prior to beginning the interviews.

Developing rapport created a cohesive environment that involved trust and honesty for the disclosure of information relating to the in-depth interview questions. The USVI is a small community and I was familiar with some of the government senior executives that I contacted to ask for their participation in this study. Concerns about dual relationships were considered; however, I did not have professional relationships with the 10 executives. Personal interactions with senior executives were indirect through my husband as he is a senior executive in the government of the USVI, but he does not have authority over anyone outside of his department. Due to our personal relationship, my husband and the department he supervises were excluded from the study. However, I was mindful of indirect dual relationships with participants that I knew through my husband.

To avoid bias, no preferential treatment was given to any participants, so all government senior executives were treated the same throughout the research process. Apart from the possibility of some indirect dual relationship, I did not experience any other potential ethical issues and abided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office

of Extramural Research (2013) guidelines and the American Psychological Association's (2003) code of ethics.

Methodology

This section is organized in the following subsections: participant selection and sampling strategy, procedures, instrumentation and data collection, and data analysis plan.

Participant Selection and Sampling Strategy

Using snowball sampling, which is a subset of purposive sample, 10 government senior executives were used in the study. "A purposive sample is a non-representative subset of some larger population, and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose" (University of California, Davis, 2013, para. 10). Snowball sampling was used because the participants were picked along the way by asking each participant to suggest someone who might be willing to participate in the study and who met the selection criteria of being a male or female government senior executive in the USVI. As Groenewald (2004) noted, the sample size in qualitative research is normally small and this allows for in-depth exploration of details within the context of the research topic.

In this study, government senior executives in the USVI were the specific targeted sample. As government senior executives, it was assumed that participants were knowledgeable about brain drain in the territory and were familiar with these issues in the public and private sectors. In addition, their roles required them to interact with migrants who may have considered returning home. Likewise, they interacted with leaders in nearby Caribbean islands and were familiar with their brain drain issues. Participants met

the selection criteria once they were part of the senior executive team and were qualified to make decisions for their departments or their suggestions influenced policies and procedures.

The potential participants who were known that meet the selection criteria were initially recruited by contacting them individually by telephone, introducing myself, and providing them with a brief overview of the study to gauge their interest in being a participant in the study. If these potential participants were interested in learning more about the study, being part of the study, or are interested in recommending someone that met the selection criteria, they were sent a follow-up e-mail invitation to participate and a recommendation request letter. Using the recommendations provided by potential participants, additional participants were recruited using the snowball sample technique until 10 government senior executives agreed to take part in the study.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

The instrumentation for the study included a researcher-created 3-minute, demographic questionnaire, which was used to gather data from the participants (see Appendix C). In addition, a general interview guide was used to obtain the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause and impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational and transactional leadership styles, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain (see Appendix D). Using in-depth semistructured interviews, the study explored government senior executives' leadership styles using Bass's (2008) definitions of the

four transformational leadership factors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration; and Bass's (1997) definitions of the four transactional leadership behaviors: laissez-faire, active management-by-exception, passive management-by-exception, and contingent rewards.

The transformational leadership definitions used in this interview guide are based on the definitions used in Forka's (2012) study on transformational leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the researcher explored transformational leadership in Cameroon, using semistructured interviews. Content validity of the transformational leadership definitions was previously validated by subject matter experts. In line with the written format of the transformational leadership definitions, Bass's (1997) transactional leadership definitions are used in the interview guide. Definitions for the different aspects of transformational and transactional leadership were read to participants during the interview. Participants were also given the opportunity to read the definitions independently if they requested to do so. The interviews were audio-taped and took approximately 1 hour. Completing the demographic questionnaire took approximately 3 minutes.

Procedures

The NIH's Office of Extramural Research (2013) Human Research Protections training was completed prior to data collection (see Appendix G for a copy of the certificate). I also complied with all federal and state regulations, which included informing participants about the level of confidentiality in the study. After receiving approval to conduct the study from the Walden University IRB, I contacted potential

participants who met the selection criteria individually by telephone. Once I introduced who I was and provided them with a brief overview of the study, I inquired if senior executives were willing to be participants in the study. If these potential participants were interested in learning more about the study, being part of the study, or interested in recommending someone that met the selection criteria, they were sent a follow-up e-mail invitation to participate and recommendation request letter (see Appendix A). The e-mail briefly described the research study and the data collection process. Government senior executives who were interested in participating in the study were asked to complete the questions in the e-mail invitation and to send their answers to me in their reply e-mail. They were informed that they could ask questions about the study by e-mail or by telephone.

Using the recommendations provided by potential participants, additional participants were recruited using the snowball sample technique until 10 government senior executives agreed to take part in the study. Each potential participant that was recommended also received the e-mail invitation to participate and recommendation request letter. Once the e-mail responses from government senior executives indicating their willingness to participate in the study were received, I e-mailed each prospective participant the consent form that had my electronic signature and requested their electronic signatures for consent (see Appendix B). Participants again were informed that they could ask questions about the study by e-mail or by telephone.

When the electronically signed consent form was received from each participant, I contacted each person individually by telephone or e-mail to set-up an appointment for

the semistructured interview at a time and place that was convenient for both parties. The interviews took place at nine of the participants' private offices and one interview took place at a private area at a community organization. Prior to beginning the interviews, participants were asked to complete a 3-minute, demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C). Using an interview guide, the interviews were conducted and audio-taped, which took approximately 1 hour to complete (see Appendix D). Before concluding the interviews, participants were asked if they had any other questions or concerns. After addressing any questions or concerns, the interviews were concluded and participants were thanked for their participation.

After I reviewed the tapes and transcribed the interviews, I e-mailed each participant the transcript of their individual interview, and asked that they review it for accuracy. This is called member checks, which is a quality control process that ensures the accuracy, credibility, and validity of what was recorded during the interviews (Harper & Cole, 2012). I discussed the participants' feedback with them by telephone. After the study is approved, a summary report of the research findings will be e-mailed to participants. Data are kept secure in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer where I am the only one who will have access to the records. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by Walden University.

Data Analysis

Demographic questionnaires provide additional information about participants in the study. The questionnaire items for this study included age, gender, race, marital

status, level of education, and job title. A summary of the participants' demographic data are included in the results.

Interviews were transcribed and transcriptions were analyzed using NVivo. The NVivo software allows the researcher to search for words or phrases from the interviews (Schensul, Schensul, & LeCompte 1999). Common words or phrases were grouped and labeled for coding across categories of inquiry, which is described as “dividing data into language analysis units such as sentences or paragraphs” (Schensul et al., 1999, p. 90). Once data were grouped, subsets were compared and contrasted, allowing me to search for related codes and make inferences about connections or patterns. The NVivo software allowed for graphic displays such as tables to represent data and display relationships.

Issues of Trustworthiness

This section is organized in the following subsections: validity and reliability of qualitative data, and informed consent and ethical considerations.

Validity and Reliability of Qualitative Data

In a qualitative research study, such as the phenomenological research approach, establishing validity and reliability is different than in a quantitative study. In this study, validity and reliability were established through credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and intracoder reliability. In qualitative research, trustworthiness is the most important criterion for judging the quality of a research study. Trustworthiness “is established by the use of techniques that provide truth value through credibility, applicability through transferability, consistency through dependability, and neutrality through confirmability” (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993, p. 132). When

establishing trustworthiness, the researcher has to present enough details “so that readers can assess the validity or credibility of the work” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 556).

In this study, credibility was established through the use of member checks, where the researcher will e-mail each participant the transcript of the interview and ask that they review the transcript for accuracy. Member checks, a quality control process, ensures that the accuracy, credibility, and validity of what was recorded during the interviews (Harper & Cole, 2012). The researcher will discuss the participants’ feedback with them by e-mail or telephone. For intrarater reliability, the researcher codes the data in a consistent manner (van den Hoonaard, 2008).

In regards to transferability or external validity, findings from this study might be applicable to similar government business executives and SIDS. However, it is important to note that since findings of phenomenology studies “are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations” (Shenton, 2004, p. 69). In this study, dependability will be established through the use of audit trails, which “consist of a thorough collection of documentation regarding all aspects of the research” (Rodgers, 2008, para. 1). Documentation used in this study will include the tape recorded interviews and the transcriptions of those interviews. Comparing both forms of data will establish authentication.

Confirmability, the degree to which the research results can be confirmed or corroborated by others (Trochim, 2006), was mainly established through the 10 government senior executives who participated in the study. In addition, intracoder

reliability was established through the consistent coding of the data (van den Hoonaard, 2008), where NVivo was utilized.

Informed Consent and Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with the parameters established by Walden University's IRB to ensure the ethical protection of research participants. Due to the USVI being a small territory, I was familiar with some of the government senior executives who were contacted to ask for their participation in this study. Therefore, concerns about dual relationships were considered; however, I did not have professional relationships with the executives and the personal interactions were indirect through my husband, as he is a senior executive in the government of the USVI. Due to our personal relationship, my husband was excluded from this study, and I was mindful of indirect dual relationships with participants that I knew through my husband by maintaining professional boundaries.

After the data were collected, all identifiable data were eliminated. Interviews were numbered or coded to match the participant; thus, protecting participants' identities; however, I knew the identities of the participants. Participants were informed that the interviews would be audio-taped and that a verbatim transcription would be made and analyzed later. I secured all data and only shared the information with my supervising committee.

A consent form was provided to participants by e-mail prior to any data collection (see Appendix B). The consent form outlined participants' protections and the ethical guidelines I followed during the research project. Specific areas outlined in the consent

form included the voluntary nature of the study and that participants could withdraw at any time. In addition, the consent form outlined risks (physical or psychological) that the participants might experience and they were informed that they were not obligated to complete any part of the study if they were uncomfortable. Participants were informed that all data are kept in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer at my residence for at least 5 years, as required by Walden University. I am the only one with access to the data stored in my private office. I only shared data information with my dissertation committee. Participants were provided with my contact information and the contact information for my dissertation chair in case they had any further questions or concerns about the research study. Participants were also provided with the contact information of the Walden University representative with whom they could talk privately about their rights as participants.

Summary

In summary, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Interviews were transcribed and transcriptions were analyzed using NVivo. Common words or phrases were grouped and labeled for coding across categories of inquiry, which is described as “dividing data into language analysis units such as sentences or paragraphs” (Schensul et al., 1999, p. 90).

Once data was grouped, subsets were compared and contrasted, allowing me to search for related codes and make inferences about these connections or patterns.

The study was conducted in accordance with the parameters established by Walden University's IRB to ensure the ethical protection of research participants. Due to the USVI being a small territory, I was mindful of dual relationships with government senior executives I knew by maintaining professional boundaries. My husband, a senior executive in the government of the USVI when I collected data, was excluded from the study.

As the electronically signed consent forms were received, I contacted each participant by telephone or e-mail to set-up an appointment to conduct individual semistructured interviews. Prior to beginning the interviews, participants were asked to complete a 3-minute, demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C). Using an interview guide, the interviews were conducted and audio-taped, which took approximately 1 hour (see Appendix D).

Data are secured in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer where I am the only one with access to the records. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by Walden University. Participants were provided with my contact information and the contact information of the dissertation chair in case they had further questions or concerns about the research study. Participants were also provided with the contact information for the Walden University representative, with whom they could talk privately about their rights as participants.

In this chapter, I included the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, and summary. In Chapter 4, I include the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary. In Chapter 5, I include the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this phenomenological study, I explored the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. In this chapter, I included the data analysis and findings of the seven research questions, which includes the following: (a) government senior executives' perceptions about the cause of brain drain in the USVI, (b) their perceptions about the impact of brain drain on the USVI, (c) their perceptions of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors, (d) their perceptions of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors, (e) their perceptions about the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI, (f) their perceptions of how brain drain affects the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI, and (g) their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI.

I collected data for this study through the use of a 3-minute, researcher-developed demographic questionnaire and in-depth face-to-face 1-hour semistructured interviews with 10 government senior executives in the USVI. Chapter 4 includes the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary. Participants' recurring or relevant comments are included for major themes and important perceptions.

Setting

I employed snowball sampling to collect data through in-depth semistructured interviews with government senior executives in the USVI. The interviews took place from July 22, 2014 to August 20, 2014 at nine of the participants' private offices and one interview took place in a private area at a community organization, as requested by the participant. There were no organizational conditions that influenced participants or their experiences at the time of the study that may influence interpretation of the study results.

Demographics

From the 64 government senior executives in the USVI I initially contacted, 14 individuals responded to the invitation to participate e-mail and 12 completed the consent form. One potential participant did not fully meet the selection criteria and there was a conflict of interest with one potential participant, as the individual was an employee of my spouse. Therefore, 10 government senior executives took part in the study. Prior to the interviews, the participants completed a 3-minute, researcher-created demographic questionnaire, which provided information about their age, gender, race, marital status, highest level of education, and job title. Two participants were between the ages of 30 to 39, four participants were between the ages of 40 to 49; and four participants were between the ages of 50 to 59.

Five participants were males and five participants were females. Eight participants were African American or Black, one participant was White, and one participant was Hispanic. Five participants were married, one participant was divorced, and four participants were never married. One participant had a doctorate degree, eight

participants had master's degrees, and one participant had a bachelor's degree. One participant was a senator, two participants were commissioners, two participants were assistant commissioners, two participants were directors, one participant was an attorney, and two participants were managers. Job titles that could reveal identities were written using general terms with participants' agreement.

Data Collection

The instrumentation I used for the study included a 3-minute, researcher-created demographic questionnaire to gather demographic data from the 10 participants and an interview guide to attain the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI. The interview questions were about: (a) the cause of brain drain, (b) the impact of brain drain, (c) whether they use transformational skills, (d) if transactional leadership traits are used, (e) the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, (f) how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and (g) their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. The interviews were audio-recorded and took approximately 1 hour. Participants participated in member checks, where each participant received the transcript of their individual interview via email and reviewed the transcript for accuracy. Participants' feedback was incorporated in the transcriptions.

Data Analysis

The research methodology that I used to analyze the interviews with the senior government executives in the USVI was a qualitative thematic analysis. This was employed to ensure that the results of the study were valid and reliable. To further strengthen the validity and reliability of the results, utilization of the computer software

program, NVivo, was used for the transcription protection, storage, and encoding of the developed themes. Thematic analysis is the “identification of the main, recurrent, or most important issues or themes arising in a body of evidence” (Pope, Mays, & Popay, 2007, p. 96). It is a process that “produces knowledge that takes the form of themes, built up from descriptive codes, which capture and make sense of the meanings which characterize the phenomenon under investigation” (Willig, 2013, p. 65). Pope et al. and Willig’s characteristics of the thematic analysis approach solidified my decision that this was the most fitting analysis to use. I utilized Weiss’s (1994) four general steps in completing the thematic analysis of qualitative data: (a) coding, (b) sorting, (c) local integration, and (d) inclusive integration. I modified and modelled the four steps as a guide in the major themes or the other most important perceptions formed, which is presented in the results section of the study.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

In this phenomenological research study, I established validity and reliability through credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and intracoder reliability. Credibility was established in the research study by ensuring that the issues discussed and presented were clear throughout the entire study. Steps were taken to ensure that the interviews with the participants were not interrupted or ended prematurely, which prevented miscommunication. In addition, member checks with all participants ensured the rigor and accuracy of the interview transcripts. Transferability was established through note taking on every phase and step of the research process

performed. The notes and logs will be kept secured for a period of at least 5 years as required by Walden University.

I established dependability through the use of audit trails, which consisted of a thorough collection of documentation regarding all aspects of the research to include the use of audio-recorded interviews and their transcriptions. Confirmability, the degree to which the research results can be confirmed or corroborated by others (Trochim, 2006), was mainly established through the 10 senior government executives who participated in the study. Lastly, intracoder reliability was established by coding the data consistently with the major themes and important perceptions discovered during the analysis. Thus, NVivo was used to facilitate the identification of themes and provide annotation for the codes and categories.

Results

This section is organized in the following sections: Research Question 1, Research Question 2, Research Question 3, Research Question 4, Research Question 5, Research Question 6, and Research Question 7. Each research question has an associated major theme. Each major theme has a sub-set of other “important perceptions” related to the major theme. The number of occurrences for each major theme and important perception refer to the total number of interviews wherein the topic is discussed. Occurrences do not always equal to the number of participants as some individuals offered secondary reasons in their responses. Also, a response was considered an important perception even if only one person mentioned it because it was directly related to the question.

Research Question 1

What do government senior executives perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI? This subsection includes Major Theme 1, second important perception, third important perception, fourth important perception, and fifth important perception.

Major Theme 1. Lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI.

The first major theme that emerged about what government senior executives perceived to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI was the lack of opportunity for educated individuals. This theme received the highest number of occurrences with seven out of the 10 total sample population or 70% (see Table 2). The first major theme pertains to what the executives believed to be the main cause for brain drain, which was the lack of proper and suitable opportunities for professionals and individuals in the USVI.

Table 2

Cause of Brain Drain in the USVI

Themes	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI	7	70%
Cultural expectations of Virgin Islanders, which causes issues in the long run	1	10%
Lack of social incentives to develop their skills further	1	10%
Presence of cronyism	1	10%
Job or salary expectations	1	10%

Overall, the first major theme was the lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI. Participant 1 believes that there are several causes and one was the lack of opportunity in the USVI: “I think they’re several causes. First and foremost, opportunity. There’s not that much of it here for entry level work so that’s one of the causes” (Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014).

Participant 3 added that there is a lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI:

Lack of opportunity for educated individuals or individuals with specific technical abilities. There’s no employment opportunities. And also, people are desiring more variety for their families and the Virgin Islands in its current state, there’s a minimum of family oriented activities that keep them interested and can probably improve their quality of life. (Participant 3 interview, July 30, 2014)

Participant 5 noted the lack of opportunities for young people in the USVI, with greater opportunities available in larger countries. Similarly, Participant 6 discussed the lack of opportunities and economic problems in the USVI, with major industries closing, such as Hovensa refinery. Participants 7, 8, and 10 discussed the lack of opportunities and high cost of living.

Second important perception. The second important perception that emerged was the importance of cultural expectations of Virgin Islanders, which causes issues in the long run. This important perception received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. Participant 1 stated that brain drain was related to the cultural expectations of Virgin Islanders that their culture is inferior:

The other cause I think is culture. As a Virgin Islander, you [are] constantly bombarded with stateside culture on TV, on radio, media; everywhere you can. That inherently makes your culture inferior, and theirs better, so there's a natural pull to the mainland. Once you get there, people readily identify on the mainland, talent, and try to take advantage of it. And the most ambitious people take advantage of it. And you get into a lifestyle that does not permit you to return, unless something traumatic happens, like your parents get old, or somebody gets sick, or you run into a situation where you become unemployed, or you have a life changing event like you get divorced or something like that, then you start to look for somewhere where you feel safe and familiar again. (Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014)

Third important perception. The third important perception that emerged was the lack of social incentives to develop their skills further. This important perception received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. Participant 2 explained how the lack of social incentives can also cause brain drain:

The lack of other social incentives for people to remain and work, because people do have a personal life as well as their professional life, and both need to be fulfilling. I think we kind of fall short on the personal lifestyle and quality of life issues for our young people. For example, intellectual activities they can attend. Perhaps I would argue, someone would argue though, that the university tries to provide that to some extent. I feel that if they don't have organizations or clubs, Generation Now tried to do that I think as well, although they leaned more

towards politics. I just think that someone who wants to advance in their area of expertise, whether it's human resources or whether it's engineering, they have to be able to have like professionals that they can talk with and explore. (Participant 2 interview, July 28, 2014)

Fourth important perception. The fourth important perception that emerged was the presence of cronyism. This important perception received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. Participant 4 shared that another cause for brain drain in the USVI was cronyism, where people tend to patronize the powerful groups and parties to get better and high paying jobs:

Another reason is cronyism. People believe that if you do not have a certain name or belong to a certain party, you can't get a high paying job. There's some measure of compromise that women more so than men have to go through to get to senior level positions or high paying jobs. I think those are the reasons why people decide to leave or not return. (Participant 4 interview, August 2, 2014)

Fifth important perception. The fifth important perception that emerged was job or salary expectations. This important perception received just one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. Participant 9 relayed the belief that brain drain is related to people's unrealistic expectations of the type of job or position they can achieve and amount of salary for that position. Often the expected salary is disproportionately higher than the position warrants. There is a mismatch between the salary expectations and the educational capabilities of the professionals in the USVI:

Personally, people who I've known who gone away for college, higher education, when they complete their degree and they realize that they are not going to get the same amount of money working in the field where they are compared to coming back home, they make the choice to stay away. It's happened personally in my family where out of four children, two are on island, and two remained off island for how many years. One in military and he's master's level now and he has committed to staying off island to earn what he feels is comparable to his degree and experience, that's [my] older sibling. Then youngest sibling, again, had the thought of returning home but once things didn't come through, where as she tried to apply for certain grants and scholarships here and that didn't work out. She realized and accepted that if you signed up for those that mean you have to come back and give back. After not being able to complete the application, she realized she might as well stay. She too is master's level and continues to stay on the mainland. (Participant 9 interview, August 14, 2014)

Research Question 2

What do government senior executives perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI? This subsection includes Major Theme 2, second important perception, and third important perception.

Major Theme 2. Imbalance of workforce, majority are older people.

The second major theme that emerged about what government senior executives perceived to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI was the imbalance of workforce, where the majority are older people. This theme received the highest number of

occurrences with seven out of the 10 total sample population or 70% (see Table 3). The second major theme pertains to what officials believe is the main impact of brain drain, which is having imbalance in the workforce, which affects productivity.

Table 3

Impact of Brain Drain on the USVI

Themes	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Imbalance of workforce, majority are older people	7	70%
Influx of outsiders who are professionals	2	20%
Loss of qualified individuals for the job	1	10%

Overall, the second major theme was the imbalance of workforce, where the majority are older people. Participant 1 explained how there are different levels of brain drain impact on the USVI; mainly, the imbalance of the workforce pyramid where more people are older which means a dormant economy is possible in the long run:

You could see it at a lot of different levels. Primarily, right now, when you look at our labor force, under the age of 35, it's very small and it's shrinking. So, contrary to most places who have a pyramid shaped workforce where you have less people who are older, we have the opposite where you have more people who are older. And there's what it does too, it creates an imbalance in the amount of people that we have with college degrees. So right now, the Virgin Islands have like 17% people with college degrees compared to like 27%, 28% on the mainland. And what happens is, people do not return with their college degrees.

They stay in the states, which skews that number even more. And the people who have less education tend to stay, creating a situation where you impact the workforce. Once you impact the workforce like that, it has an effect on economic development now because companies that want to expand can't find talent because there is no talent available. And that stunts our growth in terms of how much companies we can attract. It also stunts our ability to manage because what you see is an older than normal workforce that hasn't adjusted to a technological age that they would have, if we had more young people in the market place using, texting, e-mail, apps, and different things to do their work. So the efficiency is impacted and the government and other agencies, because there is no exposure to new tools to work with so there's a lot of different ways. (Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014)

Similarly, Participant 2 shared that there is no one to pass the torch to or use in succession planning as there is only one young engineer in the organization. Participants 3 and 4 reported that there is a shortage of educated and talented young individuals across agencies and offices, which create major drawbacks in efficiency and productivity. Participants 5, 7, and 9 noted that the country is losing opportunity for new talents and the best and brightest are not returning home to the USVI. This in turn results in stagnation and lack of new developments and growth.

Second important perception. The second important perception that followed was the influx of outsiders who are also professionals. This important perception received

two out of the 10 total sample population or 20%. Participant 6 shared that locals are now being brought in by companies in the USVI to fill certain jobs:

There's going to be the disappearance of the middle class pretty soon here in the Virgin Islands if it continues. We have lost many potential professionals in many levels, in many sectors of our society, to the point that we have to often bring people from the outside to do certain jobs. Jobs that were one time in the past strictly being taken care of by locals. I've seen many companies, both private and in the public sector, who have often time resorted to bringing people from the outside to do jobs, where once again, was basically done by locals in the past.
(Participant 6 interview, August 8, 2014)

Similarly, Participant 10 shared that when Virgin Islanders depart from the USVI, they provide opportunities for others to come to the island and establish themselves. The participant further noted that for the Virgin Islanders who leave, if they stayed longer and worked hard, that many would find employment.

Third important perception. The third important perception that followed was the loss of qualified individuals for the job. This important perception received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. Participant 8 related that there is a loss of qualified and skilled individuals for the job:

A loss of qualified people to do the job. For example, if you have 20 master's level [job title] on the island and everybody decides to leave, then you have 20 experts that are leaving. Even if 10 or five master's level [job title] leave, that will

have an impact because you have less qualified [job title] on the island, with a degree. (Participant 8 interview, August 11, 2014)

Research Question 3

With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration? This subsection includes Major Theme 3, which is organized as follows: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Major Theme 3.

1. Idealized influence: Successful planning and mentorship.
2. Inspirational motivation: Ability to adapt to change and support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members.
3. Intellectual stimulation: Ability to transform followers to be their own leaders.
4. Individualized consideration: Valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members.

The third major theme emerged with regard to government senior executives' leadership and evidence of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. There were different factors the leaders considered in identifying themselves as transformational leaders. The third major theme indicated that based on idealized influence, leaders believe that successful planning and mentorship

programs were most important. For inspirational motivation, the leaders believed that the ability to adapt to change and support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members were the most crucial behaviors. For intellectual stimulation, the ability to transform followers to be their own leaders was found to be the most important. Lastly, for the individualized consideration, valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members was deemed to be the most significant behavior.

Overall, the third major theme had four factors that were presented under transformational leadership. This subsection is organized as follows: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence. This area discusses the idealized influence theme.

Table 4

Transformational Leadership Behaviors Based on Idealized Influence

Theme A	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Successful planning and mentorship programs	6	60%
Idealized influence that will benefit more women and younger individuals	2	20%
Individual ideas of characteristics for leaders	2	20%

The first behavior under idealized influence was the successful planning and mentorship programs, which received six occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 60%. Other behaviors under idealized influence can be seen in Table 4.

Participant 2 shared that her idealized influence attribute was successful planning and mentorship programs:

I would say succession planning, that's one. I actually just start looking it up and called the HR director and told her to send me anything she's got on mentorship programs. I also attend the Society of Human Resource Management conferences, most recently in this year, so I can stay on top of the trends of how to make my style of management more impactful, draw more people to want to work, to move up the ladder, to gain some sense of loyalty to the company, because I think that is sorely lacking in the public sector. And in regard to the mentorship program, I identified three people now that I'm mentoring and one of them is not even a staff person; they are on contract with us. I enjoy her talent and energy so much that I said to her, you need to consider maybe coming on board full-time, and taking on the possibility of in 5 years taking over for me. (Participant 2 interview, July 28, 2014)

Similarly, Participant 3 related that mentorship, by making employees feel that they are needed and capable, is an idealized influence attribute. Participant 4 also noted that he supervised other individuals who can someday follow in his footsteps. Participant 5 related that when leaders create opportunities for staff members, they should take advantage of it. Participant 8 reported that she practiced this leadership attribute through the group that she supervises. Participant 10 shared that he encouraged his staff and employees to do better and develop for the future.

The second behavior was that idealized influence will benefit more women and younger individuals. The third behavior was individual ideas of characteristics for leadership. The corresponding transcriptions for these behaviors can be seen in Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text.

Inspirational motivation. This area discusses the inspirational motivation theme.

Table 5

Transformational Leadership Behaviors Based on Inspirational Motivation

Theme B	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Ability to adapt to change	5	50%
Support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members	4	40%
Experiences of the people they serve	1	10%

The first behavior under inspirational motivation was the ability to adapt to change, which received five occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 50%. The second behaviors under inspirational was the support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members, which received four occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 40%. Other behaviors discovered under inspirational motivation can be seen in Table 5. For the theme of ability to adapt to change, Participant 1 shared that being adaptive to change and being able to adjust to the level of the people was an inspirational motivation attribute:

In terms of being very adaptive to change and taking a position where we can lead, and in terms of workforce development. I think I've been able to sell that to

my staff. I think motivating people towards that end is very difficult. I think that one of the things that I have really had to do, especially in the last 3, 4 years, is to keep people kind of head nose into the wind with the cutbacks and 8% cut. Trying to keep people, give them an assurance that as a leader, yes I want the work done, but my job is to worry about keeping them in their job, and making sure that they're going to be okay. I have found that going to them and really explaining to them from a layman level all the way up to the sophistication that the budget comes from the governor. In the discussion he had, people feel better about it. So, trying to walk around like everything is okay, projecting a positive, always having a vision of a brighter [department]. Making sure our surroundings progressively gets better; because you have to have a haven somewhere. If everywhere is stressful, you will just go nuts. So I think that's a way that I've been able to help that. (Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014)

Participant 3 related that she was inspired by a commissioner to be open to learn; thus, she also inspired staff members and followers. Participant 7 shared that openness to changes is important for leaders and Participant 9 noted that she tries to inspire her staff. Participant 10 highlighted the changes and preparations needed for the employees to move forward and be motivated to learn and develop:

The second behavior under inspirational motivation was support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members. Participant 4 related that he publicly acknowledged his staff members and followers in order to show that they are appreciated and supported:

I publicly thank the team members that report to me in e-mail or group meetings or agency-wide meetings. I also empower one staff member to do what she's doing. I respect her when she says no that's a legal matter and that I should handle it even though I might see it differently, because I believe it is within her job responsibilities. To defer to her, gives her a sense that she has control over her work environment, and I think that will help her feel happy and in control. I do the same thing with the other team members. [Explains job title, duties, and supervision structure]. I am not a [job title of staff he supervises] and I do not have a PhD like [employee's name] so I have to defer due to their numerous years of experience in these respective fields. I think publicly praising them on the one hand and supporting them when they want me to address complaints from their team members and on the other, giving [employee's name] the space and time that she needs to do her technical work, it inspires her to feel I'm supportive.

(Participant 4 interview, August 2, 2014)

Participant 5 shared the importance of having support as an inspirational motivation attribute. Similarly, Participant 6 explained how it is necessary for leaders to be approachable and supportive to their people. Participant 8 noted that he conducts group supervision and staff meetings, and also encourages his staff.

For the third behavior of experiences of the people they serve, Participant 2 shared that inspirational motivation comes from the people they serve as well as the experiences that they share together:

The first thing that comes to mind is when we went to be a part of the carnival parade, because I was right there with them. We all got our costumes, telling our message about keeping the place clean and litter free, and handing out stuff to everybody. And we had a good turnout. First year we were the second prize winner in our category. Next year we were first place winners. So, you know, that was really motivating; being involved with them and out there. The other times would be when we had baseball teams. We all rally together to make sure that I'm inspiring them to do better and win as a team. That's another area of inspiration. Just this morning might be reflective in that I shared with them personal life decisions about things like life insurance. We had a speaker this morning to teach them about preparing for retirement and why life insurance is important, and social security and how social security works. I felt like it's one thing to just tell them, but it's another thing to share your experience. (Participant 2 interview, July 28, 2014)

Intellectual stimulation. This area discusses the intellectual stimulation theme.

Table 6

Transformational Leadership Behaviors Based on Intellectual Stimulation

Theme C	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Ability to transform followers to be their own leaders	6	60%
Creating opportunities and developments for followers	4	40%

The first behavior under intellectual stimulation was the ability to transform followers to be their own leaders, which received six occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 60%. The second behavior discovered under intellectual stimulation was creating opportunities and development for followers, which received 4 out of the 10 total population or 40%. These behaviors can be seen in Table 6 and corresponding transcriptions for these behaviors can be seen in Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text. In regard to the first behavior under intellectual stimulation, Participant 1 shared how intellectual stimulation has evolved with his staff:

When I first came to [department], my staff would hate when I go on vacation. I had so many ideas, I used to tell them I suffer from mental constipation because you guys cannot deliver on the stuff I already spit out fast enough. And one of my staffers came to me and said you really slowed down. You don't have as many ideas. It's more I said, you ever think that the staff has sped up? And they looked at me. I was like yeah, before, the stuff that I used to think about at night, they never thought of. Now, the stuff that I worry about, they've already done. The stuff that I'm thinking about, things are already in place. I still have my moments when I come up with something new like a new hype and hustle thing that we're doing. But just the other day I'm working on this thing. One staffer came to me and she said, you know what would be good if we do something for entrepreneurs for [department]. I said I'm working on it. So, the staff has evolved to a point now where they're ahead of me. They're thinking about the next thing to do; the next logical step. They're thinking about new things. They're coming up to me with

the ideas and I'm supporting them. So that's great. That's what you want. So when I go on vacation, my phone doesn't ring. It's fantastic! (Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014)

Participant 2 discussed the importance of mentoring staff members. Participant 5 related that the willingness to learn and gain new information should come from followers or staff members.

Individualized consideration. This area discusses the individualized consideration theme.

Table 7

Transformational Leadership Behaviors Based on Individualized Consideration

Theme D	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members	8	80%
Honoring staff members for their contributions	2	20%

The first behavior under individualized consideration was valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members, which received eight occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 80%. The second behavior discovered under intellectual stimulation was honoring staff members for their contributions, which received two occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 20%. These behaviors can be seen in Table 7 and corresponding transcriptions for these behaviors can be seen in Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text.

In regard to the first behavior under individualized consideration, Participant 3 shared how she values the differences of her employees and their job performance:

I understand that no two staff members are alike. No two staff members perform alike, work alike, think alike; however, you all may do the same job. Through influence, innovation, intellectual stimulation, I get to give individualized attention to each staff member. So I've trained my managers under me to function like that. If you see you have a staff member that performs this job but puts more notes in her caseload or makes more follow up calls, this is somebody you want to push a little more; introduce them to something else. Now, someone who's not doing it, you want to find out why is it that you can't type well? Is it that you're nervous about writing? I noticed that the reason why they don't do a lot of writing is because they're not good with writing. Maybe you can introduce them to standard templates where they can use and select from. You spend that time, which can be just 30 minutes, find out the problem, that individualized attention can definitely make a difference. That's something that I definitely put in place.
(Participant 3 interview, July 30, 2014)

Participant 4 shared that he had to adjust due to team members' work schedules while making sure that they were still doing their jobs. Participant 5 shared that each staff member or follower reacts differently depending on their situation; therefore, different approaches and supervision is used. Participant 6 discussed the importance of seeking advice and reaching out to everyone. Participant 9 shared the lesson of valuing staff members and giving them the chance to prove themselves as professionals.

Research Question 4

With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards? This subsection includes Major Theme 4, which is organized by three factors: laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards.

Major Theme 4.

1. Laissez-faire: Laissez-faire is not present at all.
2. Management-by-exception: Staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance.
3. Contingent rewards: Advantages received by working in the office.

The fourth major theme emerged with regard to government senior executives' leadership and evidence of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards. I found different factors that these leaders considered in identifying themselves as transactional leaders. The fourth major theme indicated that that laissez-faire leadership behavior is not present at all. The behavior found through management-by-exception was found to be the ability of staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance. Lastly, the behavior found under contingent rewards was the advantages received by working in the office. Overall, the fourth major theme had three factors that were presented under transactional leadership. Therefore, Major Theme 4 is organized as follows: laissez-faire (Theme A), management-by-exception (Theme B), and contingent rewards (Theme C).

Laissez-faire. This area discusses the laissez-faire theme.

Table 8

Transactional Leadership Behaviors Based on Laissez-Faire

Theme A	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Laissez-faire is not present at all	6	60%
Team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group	4	40%

Overall, the fourth major theme had three factors that were presented under transactional leadership. The first behavior under laissez-faire was that laissez-faire is not present at all, which received six occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 60%. The second behavior under laissez-faire was team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group, which received four occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 40%. These behaviors can be seen in Table 8 and corresponding transcriptions for these behaviors can be seen in Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text.

In regard to the first behavior under laissez-faire, Participant 2 related that laissez-faire is not present in her leadership at all: “None” (Participant 2 interview, July 28, 2014). Similarly, Participant 5 stated: “I hope there’s none. I know exactly what that is. I’ve had people who worked for me who naturally liked that and I’ve worked for people who are naturally like that but I don’t believe that” (Participant 5 interview, August 7, 2014). Participant 6, 7, 9, and 10 shared that they are effective leaders and laissez-faire behavior is not present in their leadership style.

Table 9

Transactional Leadership Behaviors Based on Management-by-Exception

Theme B	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Ability of staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance	6	60%
Strict sanctions when deemed needed	3	30%
Two sides of the picture should be considered	1	10%

The first behavior under management-by-exception was the ability of staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance, which received six occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 60%. The second behavior under management-by-exception was strict sanctions when deemed needed, which received three occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 30%. The third behavior was two sides of the picture should be considered, which received one occurrence out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. These behaviors can be seen in Table 9 and corresponding transcriptions for these behaviors can be seen in Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text.

In regard to the first behavior under management-by-exception, Participant 1 noted that each individual should function according to their assigned position:

As the [job title] of a department, the people that report to me are very high functioning. I don't think that I should have to write people up. If I get to the point where I need to write to you about you, you need to be fired. It's too high up in the management. You [are] supposed to be able to understand what it is you're

supposed to be taking care of, and you and I, if there is a problem, we need to have a discussion and then if you don't meet that, you need to get terminated because I can't have so many things to do; you can't have a CEO writing up directors; it doesn't work like that; you're fired. Because now, you're supposed to be my operational arm. I have to manage you. You giving me more work to do; taking me away from what I need to do. (Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014)

Participant 4 related that collaborative effort between the different departments is needed. Participant 6 shared his own style of leadership where he supervises and reviews his staff members' work; however, he noted that he does not micromanage. Participant 7 noted that the staff members whom she provides direct supervision to often changes. Participant 9 shared how she manages her staff and makes sure that they can work independently. Participant 10 reported that he does not have much patience for staff members who do not do their work properly and that they are supposed to be independent and responsible.

Table 10

Transactional Leadership Behaviors Based on Contingent Rewards

Theme C	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Advantages received by working in the office	7	70%
Public and personal acknowledgement of the employees	2	20%
Team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group	1	10%

The first behavior under contingent rewards was the advantages received by working in the office had seven occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 70%. The second behavior was public and personal acknowledgement of employees, which received two occurrences out of the 10 total sample population or 20%. The third behavior was team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group, which received one occurrence out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. These behaviors can be seen in Table 10 and corresponding transcriptions for these behaviors can be seen in Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text.

In regard to the first behavior, Participant 2 related that there were no financial bonuses but perks and advantages are always available for loyal staff members:

The presence of it is that we've always said to the staff and that it's even the senior staff who have been working, as well as me, for the last 9 years without one single raise, you cannot get a raise. We are not giving raises; however, you can get perks. You can get days off, you can get gift certificates, different things like that we can provide. I would even be happy to give bonuses, but we never really got that bonus program designed and approved by the board. Perhaps merit type bonuses and stuff could be given for incentives to do better. I would fully be in support of something like that. They were clear on the fact that they couldn't get certain things, but then, you also try to show them the intangible rewards and benefits that leadership or that incentive. Go out and do this because it's going to make a difference for you and the team. It could save us money and then maybe we'll have money later on to give you as a bonus. There is a constant need to

reinforce to staff that we may not get the reward of money but we get the reward of doing a better job; getting people to see that we can do this. (Participant 2 interview, July 28, 2014)

Participant 3 reported that contingent rewards come through grants from the office to their followers or staff members. Similar to participant 2, Participant 4 explained that financial rewards cannot be granted easily but publicly praising employees can always bring [up] their morale. Participant 5 noted that there has not been pay increases in the past 10 years, which affects staff members' motivation. Participant 6 related that he believes in rewarding his staff financially and in other ways for good performance. Participant 9 noted that there are no monetary rewards for staff members and Participant 10 related that employees' salary is the incentive.

Research Question 5

What is the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI? This subsection includes Major Theme 5, 6, and 7.

Major Theme 5, 6, and 7.

1. Inspiration to the people.
2. Loved by followers or staff members.
3. Development of confidence to be the successor of leaders in the future.

For the fifth research question of the study, which was the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI, I discovered three major themes: (a) inspiration to the people, (b) loved by followers or staff members, and (c) development of confidence to be the successor of leaders in the

future. These three major theme received the highest number of occurrences with three out of the 10 total sample population or 30%, respectively (see Table 11). There was also one other important perception found, which was negative reaction due to strict rules and regulations of the leader, which received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%. This area is organized as follows: Major Theme 5, Major Theme 6, and Major Theme 7.

Table 11

Impact of Government Senior Executives' Leadership Styles on Employees and the USVI

Themes	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Inspiration to the people	3	30%
Loved by followers or staff members	3	30%
Development of confidence to be the successor of leaders in the future	3	30%
Negative reaction due to strict rules and regulations of the leader	1	10%

Major Theme 5. The fifth major theme on the impact of government senior executives' leadership style on employees and the USVI was being an inspiration to the people. Participant 1 noted that he inspires people and Participant 4 related that being pleasant and accessible in the public sector can make a big difference. Participant 6 believed that he is a positive leader to employees and the people he serves:

I see myself as a positive leader. I try to be calm and collect when it comes to crisis. I try to make time for everybody. In terms of being a positive influence, I go out there among the public and I try to understand what is going on. For the

most part, I think I've done a pretty good job. Often times leaders are so engrossed in their job that they stay within their own little cocoon. They understand what the problem is but they don't go out there to see how the problem is affecting the average individual. One of the things I like to do is approach individuals. I like to see what's going on in the community and I think that has been positive. (Participant 6 interview, August 8, 2014)

Major Theme 6. The sixth major theme on the impact of government senior executives' leadership style on employees and the USVI was loved by followers or staff members. Participant 7 noted that being a down to earth leader is the key. Similar to Participant 2, Participant 8 noted the important of team work with her staff members. Participant 2 shared that she is loved by staff members and followers as they protect each other as a team:

I think my employees would all say I'm a good leader. They like me. They love me. I am not being narcissistic or anything. I just know because you get a lot of love and feel a lot of love. I try to make sure that they feel loved and I will continue to lead and struggle and fight the fight for them. I think some may say that I have at times been a little, and I do this sometimes for good reason, but it's not always done appropriately, sometimes I can be a little harsh. There were times when they used to say that I was more harsh than I am now, so I have greatly improved. (Participant 2 interview, July 28, 2014)

Major Theme 7. The seventh major theme on the impact of government senior executives' leadership style on employees and the USVI was development of confidence

to be the successor of leaders in the future. Participant 5 noted how hard work and effort is needed in leadership positions. Participant 9 reported that she has trained staff members to properly represent the office. Participant 3 shared that she trusts her staff members to be future leaders:

Wow, for my 49 staff members, we had a training the other day. I broke them down into managers, team leads, and then line staff. The team leads are people that show management potential, then you have the managers. I assign one team lead to each manager. If you leave, the business never stops. If I leave, I have someone right there, she knows everything I do. It doesn't stop. I am not intimidated to teach her everything because I'm here for a while. When you look at our measures and we were considered an at-risk state for my unit, and they were considering privatizing, and now we are receiving more money than ever before. We completely turn around the program, even to the point where we are looking at becoming solvent. We don't even borrow anymore to pay benefits, we don't. We bring in enough money. (Participant 3 interview, July 30, 2014)

Research Question 6

How does brain drain affect the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI? This subsection includes Major Theme 8, second important perception, and third, fourth, fifth, and sixth important perceptions.

Major Theme 8. Not enough new and energetic support groups due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced.

For the sixth research question of the study, which was how brain affect the leadership styles of senior executives in the USVI, the eighth major theme emerged: Not enough new and energetic support groups due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced. The eighth major theme received the highest number of occurrences with four out of the 10 total sample population or 40% (see Table 12).

Table 12

How Brain Drain Affects the Leadership Styles of Government Senior Executives in the USVI

Themes	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Not enough new and energetic support group due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced	4	40%
Constant aim to reach greater heights	2	20%
Frustration given the lack of respect and belief for the leader	1	10%
Stress from training and skill development	1	10%
Stress from personal and family issues	1	10%
No perceived effects	1	10%

The eighth major theme was not enough new and energetic support groups exist due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced as the main effect of brain drain on leadership styles. Participant 1 related that brain drain affects his leadership style and to be fully effective, he needs a group of people to help reach a higher leadership

level. Thus, given the imbalance in the workforce, there is a shortage of new and energetic young individuals to work with:

I think brain drain affects my leadership style because in order for me to be truly effective, or for any leader to be truly effective, you have to reach critical mass. And critical mass is when you get enough people, that are like-minded and progressive enough, where you going to tip the scale; where the whole organization just goes in that direction. Not having young people, and when I say young people, even people who are not so young, people who seen other things and worked in other places, to come into your environment. Like everywhere you go there's a complainer, there's a doer, there's person who you always go to. They always have the resources. There's somebody in payroll, who always fix up your check. There's one of those everywhere and when you work in multiple places, you know that. So, you're used to different work environments. But when you only been in one, you think, that's the only place like this. Those people are able to move and they bring skills and they bring environment, especially if it's a good working environment or they want to do stuff. And they appreciate the freedom of this environment, because they help people who are just like them.

(Participant 1 interview, July 22, 2014)

Participant 3 shared how losing staff members, families, and other individuals from the USVI is having a negative effect on companies and the island. Participant 5 related that brain drain has resulted in having less qualified individuals to fill job positions as the more qualified individuals have moved to the United States. Participant 6

related that the lack of support from the younger generation results in brain drain as they move away. Therefore, people have to be brought to the island to fill vacancies.

Second important perception. The second important perception that followed was the constant aim to reach greater heights. This important perception received two out of the 10 total sample population or 20% (see Table 12). Participant 7 shared that she strives to increase her level of competence. Participant 8 related that she likes her job, but has higher goals in life. Therefore, in the next few years, she may leave the USVI and move to the United States, which may be beneficial for her young children.

Third, fourth, fifth, and sixth important perceptions. The third, fourth, fifth, and sixth important perceptions that followed received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%, respectively (see Table 12). Participant 2 shared that she was frustrated given the lack of respect and belief for the leader. Participant 4 noted stress from training and skill development. Participant 9 discussed stress from personal and family issues. Participant 10 indicated no perceived effects of brain drain on his leadership style.

Research Question 7

What do government senior executives recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI? This subsection includes Major Theme 9 and second and third important perceptions.

Major Theme 9. Increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses.

The ninth major theme that emerged about government senior executives' recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI was increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses. The ninth and last major theme received the highest number of occurrences with eight out of the 10 total sample population or 80% (see Table 13).

Table 13

Recommendations to Decrease and Prevent Brain Drain in the USVI

Themes	# of occurrences	% of occurrences
Increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses	8	80%
Proper compensation for professionals	1	10%
Promote loyalty and willingness to serve the USVI	1	10%

The ninth theme that emerged was the recommendation of an increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses. The participants shared that:

Participant 1 recommended an increase in budget to send younger people to college and have them major in courses that could help the industry and economy of the country. Similarly, Participant 2 recommended increased focus on young individuals who can make a positive effect in the future. Participants 3 and 4 related that there should be an active recruitment campaign and talent development of young individuals. In addition, Participant 5 discussed that more opportunities should be given to younger individuals:

We have to create more opportunities. All the connectivity, the Internet, the power that we're going to have, is going to help do that. I don't think you have as much young people growing up that say I want to work for the government my whole career. You can't have all the best paying jobs in the government. I don't know salaries as compared to say [interviewer's employment] but I know people here get double for similar type of work and the benefits of course are much greater. (Participant 5 interview, August 7, 2014)

Participant 6 suggested fixing the physical and social infrastructure, which will attract young individuals to return to the USVI after finishing school. Participant 7 noted that Virgin Islanders should value their own pool of local talents and professionals. Participant 9 recommended the increased education of people in the USVI, which in turn will help the island's economy.

Second and third important perceptions. The second and third important perceptions that followed received one out of the 10 total sample population or 10%, respectively (see Table 13). Participants 2 recommended proper compensation for professionals and Participant 10 recommended the promotion of loyalty and willingness to serve the USVI.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the qualitative phenomenological analysis from the data gathered from the 10 government senior executives in the USVI. Participants' perceptions regarding brain drain through their experiences were thoroughly explored and analyzed. Qualitative data analysis of the participants' interviews were employed and

coded accordingly. Nine main themes formed, which all pertained to the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. A table and summary of major themes and important perceptions are listed below in Table 14.

Table 14

Major Themes and Important Perceptions

Research Questions	Major Themes	Important Perceptions
RQ 1. What do government senior executives perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI?	Major Theme 1. Lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI	Cultural expectations of Virgin Islanders, which causes issues in the long run Lack of social incentives to develop their skills further Presence of cronyism Job or salary expectations
RQ 2. What do government senior executives perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI?	Major Theme 2. Imbalance of workforce, majority are older people	Influx of outsiders who are professionals Loss of qualified individuals for the job
RQ 3. With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration?	Major Theme 3. Idealized influence: Successful planning and mentorship.	Idealized influence that will benefit more women and younger individuals Individual ideas of characteristics for leaders
RQ 3 continued	Inspirational motivation: Ability to adapt to change and support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members.	Support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members Experiences of the people they serve
RQ 3 continued	Intellectual stimulation: Ability to transform followers to be their own leaders.	Creating opportunities and developments for followers
RQ 3 continued	Individualized consideration: Valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members.	Honoring staff members for their contributions
RQ 4. With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards?	Major Theme 4. Laissez-faire: Laissez-faire is not present at all.	Team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group

(table continues)

Research Questions	Major Themes	Important Perceptions
RQ 4 continued	Management-by-exception: Staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance.	Strict sanctions when deemed needed Two sides of the picture should be considered
RQ 4 continued	Contingent rewards: Advantages received by working in the office.	Public and personal acknowledgement of the employees Team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group
RQ 5. What is the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI?	Major Theme 5. Inspiration to the people.	
RQ 5 continued	Major Theme 6. Loved by followers or staff members.	
RQ 5 continued	Major Theme 7. Development of confidence to be the successor of leaders in the future.	
RQ 6. How does brain drain affect the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI?	Major Theme 8. Not enough new and energetic support groups due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced	Constant aim to reach greater heights Frustration given the lack of respect and belief for the leader Stress from training and skill development Stress from personal and family issues No perceived effects
RQ 7. What do government senior executives recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI?	Major Theme 9. Increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses	Proper compensation for professionals Promote loyalty and willingness to serve the USVI

Results of the study reflected several major themes from the seven research questions. First, participants' perceptions about the cause of brain drain in the USVI were the lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI. Second, participants' perceptions about the impact of brain drain on the USVI were an imbalance workforce, where the majority of workers are older individuals. Third, with regard to participants' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors, the following themes were found for each of the four factors: (a) idealized influence: Successful planning and mentorship, (b) inspirational motivation: Ability to adapt to change and support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members, (c) intellectual stimulation: Ability to transform followers to be their own leaders, and (d) individualized consideration: Valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members.

Fourth, with regard to participants' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors, the following themes were found for each of the three factors: (a) laissez-faire: Laissez-faire is not present at all; (b) management-by-exception: Staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance; and (c) contingent rewards: Advantages received by working in the office. Fifth, participants' perceptions about the impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI were the following: (a) inspiration to the people, (b) loved by followers or staff members, and (c) development of confidence to be the successor of leaders in the future. Sixth, participants' perceptions about how brain drain affects the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI found that there were not enough new and energetic support groups due to work force imbalance; thus,

effectiveness was reduced. Seventh, participants' recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI was the need for increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses.

Recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI included increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses, proper compensation for professionals, and to promote loyalty and willingness to serve the USVI. In this chapter, I incorporated the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and summary. Chapter 5 includes the interpretation of findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain. Human capital loss or brain drain occurs when highly skilled and educated residents relocate to another country for better job opportunities (Lozano-Ascencio & Gandini, 2012). Understanding why brain drain occurs allows for the development of solutions that can lead to positive social change. The 10 government senior executive leaders who participated in this study shared their experiences and perceptions as well as recommended solutions to reduce and prevent brain drain.

Qualitative data analysis indicated that there is a lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI. In addition, there is an imbalance in the workforce as the majority of workers are older individuals. Findings indicated that participants had transformational leadership attributes as they noted the importance of succession planning and mentorship programs, the ability to adapt to change, and support and acknowledgement for staff members.

Government senior executives believe that their behaviors are worth emulating by others and that they can inspire people to rally behind a common and shared organizational vision (Bass & Bass, 2008). As transformational leaders, government

senior executives consider and value followers' contributions and help them to become more effective and productive, which may reduce brain drain. Participants also discussed the importance of transforming staff members to be their own leaders and valuing their differences and capabilities.

In regard to transactional leadership attributes, finding indicated that participants did not use laissez-faire leadership. However, in regard to how they monitor staff members' performance, government senior executives noted the importance of staff members being able to function according to their roles without guidance. Contingency rewards were the advantages received by working in the office. Furthermore, findings indicated that participants perceived that they were inspiration to others and loved by staff members.

Participants noted the need for the development of confidence in staff members to be successors of current leaders in the future. Participants were concerned that there are not enough new and energetic support groups due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced. Finally, government senior executives recommended increased budget allotment and effort to be placed on sending young individuals to college to take part in developing and fast-rising courses. In this chapter, I included the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

I explored the lived experiences of government senior executives regarding brain drain, in this phenomenological research study using seven research questions. This

section is organized in the following subsections: Research Question 1, Research Question 2, Research Question 3, Research Question 4, Research Question 5, Research Question 6, and Research Question 7.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was as follows: What do government senior executives perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI? The results of Research Question 1 indicated that participants perceived there is a lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI. In addition, participants indicated the cultural expectations of Virgin Islanders results in future issues, such as individuals not returning to the island. Participants noted the lack of social incentives to develop people's skills and concern about the presence of cronyism. Furthermore, participants stated due to job and salary expectations, many Virgin Islanders stay in the United States after college instead of returning home to the island.

The theme and important perceptions from Research Question 1 revealed that economic catastrophes, such as the closing of the Hovensa on St. Croix in 2012, resulted in immediate and long-term repercussions for the territory and the people. For instance, Hovensa employed over 2,000 people and many relocated to other countries due to the inability to find work or similar pay. The closing also affected businesses that were contracted by Hovensa or those that relied on discretionary spending by employees.

In addition, a current system is not available to track where migrants from the USVI are located, but all participants made references to family and coworkers relocating to the United States. Acosta and de la Cruz (2011) reported that individuals from the

Caribbean tend to relocate to the United States due to its proximity to their home country. Given that the USVI is a territory of the United States, it is likely to be the most popular destination for residents due to the convenience of travel (Acosta & de la Cruz, 2011) and similar governing policies and procedures (CIA, 2013).

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was as follows: What do government senior executives perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI? The results of Research Question 2 indicated participants perceived an imbalance workforce, where the majority of workers are older individuals. In addition, participants said due to the loss of many professionals at different levels, individuals outside of the Virgin Islands have to be recruited to fill professional positions on the island.

The theme and important perceptions from Research Question revealed that organizations have difficulty filling positions that require applicants to have higher education. Therefore, the education level of residents in the USVI is a concern, as 21% to 44% of students are below national reading and math levels, and 15% of all students who drop out by high school are also unemployed (Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, 2010). Many of the younger individuals are also leaving the island to pursue their education in the United States and other countries and do not return to the island.

Participants expressed that an aging workforce is a serious concern, as successors are needed for organizational development and continued productivity. Secondary concerns included an influx of migrants who are professionals due to a loss of qualified individuals from the island for fill professional job positions. “Virgin Islanders are

leaving while Americans, Europeans, Arabs, and Asians are entering the territory” (Roopnarine, 2008, p. 147). However, the benefits of new USVI residents are unknown as they tend to form their own communities.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was as follows: With regard to government senior executives’ leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration? The results of Research Question 3 indicated that participants had transformational leadership attributes as they noted the importance of successful planning and mentorship programs, the ability to adapt to change, and support and acknowledgement for staff members. Participants also discussed the importance of transforming staff members to be their own leaders and valuing their differences and capabilities.

The themes and important perceptions from Research Question 3 revealed the importance of government senior executives being transformational leaders in order to develop committed staff members, which in turn could decrease brain drain. According to Health Workforce Australia (2011), a major strength of transformational leadership is developing committed people. Therefore, leadership is an important component of brain drain and transformational leaders enhance self-confidence in employee, which increases employees’ job satisfaction and promote organizational change (Al-Swidi et al., 2012; Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al., 2011; Minto-Coy, 2011; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011).

Bass (1999) stated that transforming how members think, feel, and act toward the organization and its vision is a difficult task that requires trust. Trust allows employees to set aside their personal interests. Government senior executives believe that they have the ability to transform employees so that they focus on organizational goals. Along with transforming staff members through their actions, transformation leaders, such as government senior executives believe that their behaviors are worth emulating by others (Bass & Bass, 2008). Bass and Bass (2008) further noted that they also believe that they can inspire people to rally behind a common and shared organizational vision. In addition, they are able to use the capacity and creative capabilities of staff members and followers in order to improve their lives and improve society. Furthermore, as transformational leaders, government senior executives consider and value followers' contributions and help them to become more effective and productive.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 was as follows: With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards? The results of Research Question 4 indicated that participants also had transactional leadership attributes, but they did not use laissez-faire leadership. Responses from participants regarding laissez-faire leadership may be bias as some participants were hesitant to respond to the question and one participant indicated that he was uncomfortable saying anything about himself that could be perceived as negative.

Participants believed that each employee is essential to the success of the organization. Thus, the failure of one employee can affect the whole team. In regard to how they monitor staff members' performance, government senior executives noted the importance of staff members being able to function according to their roles without guidance. Some participants also noted the need for disciplinary actions when staff members' actions have deviated from company rules, such as drugs and substance abuse. Participants noted that contingency rewards for staff members included the advantages received by working in the office, public and personal acknowledgement of employees, and being part of a team that works together.

The theme and important perceptions from Research Question 4 revealed the importance of government senior executives using transactional leadership behaviors as Almayali and Bin Ahmad (2012) proposed that a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles works well in organizations. By using the transactional leadership style, government senior executives are able to provide consistency by rewarding good performance, implementing corrective action when employees deviated from the rules, and taking action when standards are not met. The transactional leadership style works well to accomplish short-term goals and to address monetary concerns and other self-interests of employees (Burns, 2010). Employees are an asset for organization success and contingent rewards affect whether employees stay or leave their jobs.

Research Question 5

Research Question 5 was as follows: What is the perceived impact of government senior executives' leadership styles on employees and the USVI? The results of Research

Question 5 indicated that participants believed themselves to be inspiration to others and loved by staff members. Participants noted the need for the development of confidence in staff members to be successors of current leaders in the future.

The theme and important perceptions from Research Question 5 revealed the positive effect of government senior executives' transformational attributes on staff members. By exhibiting idealized influence or charisma, these leaders developed trust and confidence among employees and demonstrated an inclusive vision. By mentoring employees to be future leaders, these leaders inspire others to perform, create a strong sense of purpose among employees, align individual and organizational needs, and clarify where they want the organization to go in the future. In addition, these leaders are able to make interpersonal connections with employees where they genuinely care and show compassion in their actions, which encourages continuous development and growth of employees, and send the message that they care about their staff members and are looking out for their best interests.

Research Question 6

Research Question 6 was as follows: How does brain drain affect the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI? The results of Research Question 6 indicated that brain drain affects participants' leadership style to be fully effective as there is an imbalance in the workforce, which results in a shortage of new and energetic young individuals to work with.

The theme and important perceptions from Research Question 6 revealed the need for innovative ways to educate and retain the younger Virgin Islanders as many are

unable to find work or competitive pay. Grozeva (2008) recommended that the public sector provide financial assistance for innovations if practical, implement policies suitable for the location and economic climate, and support ideas that develop various aspects of the country. It is impossible to implement all ideas simultaneously, so leaders should carefully assess options and prioritize when creating and implementing policies. Mhenni et al. (2013) recommended the creation of science and technology parks. These parks benefit the economy as they create jobs, modernize industrial services, and allow the country to compete. The science and technology parks require partnership from the government, research institutions such as universities, and the private sector (Sanni et al., 2010).

Research Question 7

Research Question 7 was as follows: What do government senior executives recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI? The results of Research Question 6 indicated that government senior executives recommended increased budget allotment and effort to be placed on sending young individuals to college to take part in developing and fast-rising courses. The request to increase the budget is unique for the USVI due to the closure of Hovensa Oil Refinery (Hovensa) in 2012. Over 2,000 jobs were lost, which “reversed the gains in employment as the unemployment rate substantially increased due to layoffs in the manufacturing, service and government sectors” (Office of the Governor, 2013, p. 13).

The unemployment rate as of August 2011 was 10.6% (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor, 2011). In addition, the education level of residents is a concern, as

21% to 44% of students are below national reading and math levels, and 15% of all students who drop out by high school are also unemployed (Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, 2010). Other recommendations by government senior executives included fixing the physical and social infrastructure, which will attract young individuals to return to the USVI after finishing school and the increased education of people in the USVI, which in turn will help the island's economy.

The theme and important perceptions from Research Question 7 revealed the need for education reform in the USVI. As similarly noted by the participants, Defoort (2008) related that many people relocate to other countries to pursue their education, but do not return to their home countries. Blom and Hobbs (2008) reported that the Caribbean education system needs reform to stay abreast of changes occurring throughout the world. Many youth in the USVI are unemployed, so pilot programs should be implemented to meet global employment expectations, as recommended by Blom and Hobbs (2008). If successful, additional programs can be created according to local and global demands.

Limitations of the Study

As discussed in Chapter 1, there are several limitations to the generalizability or trustworthiness of this study. The first limitation was being unable to generalize the results. I used a snowball sample of 10 government senior executives in the USVI in this phenomenological study used; the results may not be representative of the experiences of all government senior executives in other islands and countries in relation to brain drain. Therefore, future study could expand the sample population across islands and countries to achieve a broader understanding of government senior executive brain

drain experiences. A different sampling strategy could also be used, such as purposive sampling.

The second limitation was the sample size of 10 government senior executives. The study could be replicated on larger Caribbean Islands with access to a larger population of government senior executives and future research could assess government senior executives' leadership styles through the use of a valid and reliable quantitative instrument, specifically, the MLQ, which measures individual leadership styles ranging from passive leaders, to transactional leaders who give contingent rewards to followers, to transformational leaders who transform their followers into becoming leaders themselves (Fleenor, 2004).

The third limitation is self-report or social desirability bias as government senior executives may not have responded honestly to the interview questions so they could be perceived positively, including responses about laissez-faire leadership. However, it was assumed that participants honestly and openly answered the interview questions by sharing their perceptions about the questions asked. Fourth, there are also limitations with self-report data for both the interviews and demographic questionnaire as participants may not accurately or fully self-evaluate themselves. For the demographic questionnaire, the use of a closed-ended category format, addressed this bias issue as participants were not allowed the freedom to include additional information that they may have thought were important.

Recommendations

Several recommendations for further research are discussed in this section. The recommendations are grounded in the strengths and limitations of the current study as well as the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Leaders of organizations are primarily responsible for implementing changes and their management styles affect productivity and trust of employees (Bass, 1999). Most participants mentioned that the interview prompted them to think about learning more about leadership.

Since the results of this study may not be generalized to other islands and countries, future studies should be conducted within other Caribbean islands and countries. Results from these studies can be compared and findings can be used to help decrease and prevent brain drain. Thus, public sector leaders in the USVI should collaborate with heads of state in SIDS to share innovative ideas and create solutions as both human and financial resources are limited.

Implications

The results of this study may lead to positive social change at the individual, family, organizational, policy and societal levels. At the individual level, the participants noted that the questions asked during the face-to-face interviews were thought provoking and prompted them to further think about leadership and how they could improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Self-development by government senior executives would positively affect employees and possibly help decrease and prevent brain drain. As the participants indicated in their interviews, mentoring and grooming staff members to be future leaders are instrumental to reducing and preventing brain drain. Thus, at the

policy and organizational levels, the results of this study underscored the need for increased funding in order to train and educate Virgin Islanders. Consequently, there is a need to reform the USVI's education system in order prevent citizens from migrating.

At the organizational level, leaders should continue to positively influence employees, which increases employees' job satisfaction and improve customer service. Findings from this study may encourage other leaders to reflect on steps that can be taken to improve their organization. This may include increasing staff meetings to solicit and receive direct input about strengths and weaknesses of the organization, exposing staff members to leadership experiences, and implementing policies and procedures to train and develop employees to effectively perform complex duties.

Furthermore, the Government of the Virgin Islands and the University of the Virgin Islands could collaborate to provide annual training for leaders. The training could consist of transformational and transactional leadership styles, since they are found to be beneficial, and have a positive effect on employees' job satisfaction (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al., 2011; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011; Wiltshire, 2010). Transformational leaders impacted employees by being charismatic and modeled behaviors they wanted employees to exemplify, which resulted in lower employee turnover and improved customer satisfaction (Caldwell et al., 2012). Similarly, government senior executives need to increase trust, commitment, and employee satisfaction, which may decrease brain drain.

Jackson (2011) stated that it best for both the public and private sectors to have partnerships in resolving brain drain. However, it is expected that the public sector would

take the lead and this is why it was important to first conduct the study with government senior executives. Future research should be conducted with the private sector executives to gain an understanding of their concerns in relation to brain drain.

It is necessary for policy changes to be made at the government level to affect positive social change for the entire community. Individuals at the legislative level in the USVI should determine how best to develop jobs, increase education and training opportunities for individuals living at home, and prepare an easy transition for the younger population who want to return home to the island. Qualified and willing employees are essential for the economy and sustainability of the USVI. Given that there is an aging workforce, failure to recruit younger individuals who have experience abroad and can introduce innovative ideas to improve the economy, could lead to further brain drain. One concern is that significant projects will remain stagnant if knowledgeable people are unavailable to fill positions when older and more experienced individuals retire. Returning home also allow people to reconnect to family members and friends who remained on island.

The results of this study add further knowledge to organizational psychology literature by filling a gap on research about brain drain and leadership styles of Caribbean leaders. Minimal information was provided about the territory of the USVI, which is a small island developing state. This study closed the gap on how human capital flight affects leadership in the Caribbean, by focusing solely on the USVI and its leaders. This study explored if government senior executives in the USVI practiced transformational and transactional leadership styles, which could help to decrease human capital flight in

the territory. Findings from this study may be used towards organizational, leadership, and staff development throughout the territory and other SIDS.

In order to effect positive social change, a summary report of the findings will be given to participants after the dissertation is approved. Findings will also be shared with the Virgin Islands Legislature and the University of the Virgin Islands. In addition, if requested, findings will be shared with other individuals in the USVI and other islands and countries.

In order to decrease and prevent brain drain, the recommendations to conduct further studies in the private sector and in other islands would add further insight on this common issue that plagues SIDS. In addition, it is important that further research is conducted with USVI residents who relocated to the United States or other countries in order to understand their perceptions about why they left and what it would take for them to permanently return to the island.

Conclusion

This phenomenological study explored the perceptions of 10 government senior executives in the U.S. Virgin Islands about the cause of brain drain, the impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational skills, if transactional leadership traits are used, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and culture of the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain.

Although the phenomenon of brain drain was not evident in all departments supervised by the participants, everyone gave examples of highly qualified individuals

relocating from the USVI to the United States or unable to return due to the lack of employment opportunities and low salaries. Participants discussed the negative impact of brain drain on work, families, and friends. Innovative ideas, such as the government of the USVI providing paid experience for a year for new graduates and housing for key positions to develop neighborhoods and the economy were suggested by participants.

Human capital loss, also known as brain drain, has affected SIDS for decades. Globalization increases this phenomenon due to modern technology, ease of travel, and media; thus, brain drain is a relevant concern. Specifically for the USVI, an aging workforce and the inability or lack of motivation to recruit skilled and qualified individuals to return to the island is a major concern as failure to implement new and creative ideas may hinder financial and social growth, which is necessary for a sustainable government. Awareness of brain drain and identifying ways to decrease and prevent this phenomenon benefits employers in both the public and private sectors and allows close bonds to be maintained among family, friends, and communities. It is recommended that leaders combine transformational and transactional leadership skills to meet the needs of employees (Calloway & Awadzi, 2008; Hargis et al., 2011; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Mosley & Patrick, 2011; Warrick, 2011; Wiltshire, 2010). In addition, it is imperative that current leaders continue to mentor and train their employees to become future leaders in order to maintain organizational success.

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Appendix A: E-mail Invitation to Participate and Recommendation Request

Date Will Be Inserted Here

Dear **Name Will Be Inserted Here**,

My name is Shurla Jeffers-Knight and I am currently a doctoral student at Walden University, earning my degree in organizational psychology. I am currently working on my dissertation entitled “Impact of Brain Drain on Leadership in the Caribbean: United States Virgin Islands Phenomenology Study.” Brain drain is defined as highly qualified individuals leaving their countries of origin to relocate to developed countries. This project is attempting to understand the cause and overall impact of brain drain in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) and inform organizational leaders of recommended ways to decrease or prevent brain drain. Also, the study will identify if there are weaknesses with the leadership styles used by organizational leaders, and discuss ways to improve organizational leadership, and it will add to the organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean.

You are being sent this e-mail because you are a government senior executive in the USVI who has valuable insight about brain drain. I would greatly appreciate your input and I am asking for your participation. The data collection process involves: (a) a demographic questionnaire that will take approximately 3 minutes to complete and (b) a semistructured interview that will take approximately 1 hour.

The interviews will be audio-taped and later transcribed to analyze common themes. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time. Before data collection begins, you will be provided with a consent form by e-mail that asks you to provide your consent to participate in the study. Any information you provide will be kept confidential. I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports.

I have obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board at Walden University. This board reviews all research to ensure that the study will be conducted in an ethical manner and that the rights of the participants are protected. The outcomes of this study are important to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI. Upon your request, I am happy to share the results of the study with you.

If you are interested in participating in the study and/or would like to recommend another government senior executive to be a participant in this study, please complete the questions below in a reply e-mail to me. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to e-mail me [**insert e-mail address**] or give me a call at [**insert telephone number**].

Thank you in advance for your consideration and assistance with this important research project.

Sincerely,
Shurla Jeffers-Knight

If you are interested in participating in the study and/or would like to recommend another government senior executive to be a participant in the study, please complete the questions below in a reply e-mail to me at [insert e-mail address]:

1. What is your name?
2. What is your contact information?
3. What is your gender?
4. Would be willing to complete a demographic questionnaire that will take approximately 3 minutes.
5. Would be willing to share your perceptions about the cause and impact of brain drain, your leadership styles, the perceived impact of your leadership styles on employees and the USVI, how brain drain affects your leadership styles, and your recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain, which will take approximately 1 hour in a face-to-face interview?
6. If you participate in the study, would you be willing to verify the accuracy on your interview transcript that would be e-mailed to you at a later date after the interview has been completed and the interview has been transcribed?
7. Are there other government senior executives that you would like to recommend to be participants in this study? If so, what are their names, gender, and contact information?

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their e-mail address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

Appendix B: Consent Form for Government Senior Executives

You are invited to take part in a research study on the impact of brain drain on leadership in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI). The researcher is inviting government senior executives to be in the study. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Shurla Jeffers-Knight who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the USVI about the cause and impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational and transactional leadership styles, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and the USVI, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a demographic questionnaire, which will take approximately 3 minutes.
- Take part in an in-depth face-to-face interview, which will take approximately 1 hour.
- Participate in a validity process called member checks, where you will verify the accuracy on your interview transcript that will be e-mailed to you at a later date after the interview has been completed and the interview has been transcribed, and provide your feedback by e-mail or telephone.

Here are some sample questions:

1. What do you perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the United States Virgin Islands?
2. What do you perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the United States Virgin Islands?
3. **Idealized influence:** This transformational leadership factor focuses on charismatic leadership or idealized influence: To assess how a leader can transform the people, private or public sector through his or her actions and behaviors worth emulating by others (Bass & Bass, 2008, pp. 602-620).
 Question 3a: Based on the provided definition of idealized influence, what evidence is there of the presence of idealized influence attributes with regard to your leadership?
 Question 3b: Based on the provided definition of idealized influence, what evidence is there of the absence of idealized influence attributes with regard to your leadership?

Audio Recording:

The interviews will be audio-taped and later transcribed to analyze common themes.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as emotional upset due to the sensitive nature of the questions asked on the surveys. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

Anticipated benefits include understanding the cause and overall impact of brain drain in the USVI and informing organizational leaders of recommended ways to decrease or prevent brain drain, whether there are weaknesses with the leadership styles used by organizational leaders and recommend ways to improve upon those weaknesses to enhance organizational leadership, and it will add to the organizational psychology research literature on brain drain in the Caribbean.

Payment:

No compensation is offered to participants.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer where only the researcher will have access to the records. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions about the research or want to know the results, you may contact the researcher, Shurla Jeffers-Knight, via [**insert telephone number**] or [**insert e-mail address**]. The researcher's dissertation chair is Dr. Mary O'Brien who can be reached at [**insert telephone number**] or by e-mail at [**insert e-mail address**]. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **05-23-14-0025992** and it expires on **May 22, 2015**.

Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By electronically signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Shurla Jeffers-Knight

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their e-mail address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

Directions: Please answer the following demographic questions below.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
3. What is your race?
 - a. African American or Black
 - b. White
 - c. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
 - d. Asian
 - e. Other _____
4. What is your marital status?
 - a. Married
 - b. Widowed
 - c. Divorced
 - d. Separated
 - e. Never Married
5. What is your highest level of education? _____
6. What is your job title? _____

Appendix D: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Each interview session will begin with greetings from the researcher. If no further questions or concerns are raised by the participant, the researcher will announce the beginning of the interview by turning on the tape recorder. The following script will be followed during the interview.

RESEARCH TOPIC

Impact of Brain Drain on Leadership in the Caribbean:
United States Virgin Islands Phenomenology Study

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Interview instructions to be read by the researcher to all participants:

1. This interview is being conducted as part of my doctoral research at Walden University. The interview is intended to explore the perceptions of government senior executives in the United States Virgin Islands about the cause and impact of brain drain, whether they use transformational and transactional leadership styles, the perceived impact of their leadership styles on employees and the United States Virgin Islands, how brain drain affects their leadership styles, and their recommendations to decrease and prevent brain drain.
2. As a participant in this study, you have been explained the purpose of this study. You freely signed and returned an Informed Consent Form in which you gave permission for this interview to be tape recorded for the purpose of this study only. Your electronic signature attests to your willingness to freely participate in this interview.
3. Before I begin the interview questions, do you have any objections or any comments? Thank you for participating in this study.

NOTICE TO PARTICIPANTS

Please provide specific details and examples as necessary for the questions that will be asked. Where applicable, definitions will be read to you so that you understand the leadership terminologies used in the interview.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the United States Virgin Islands?

2. What do you perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the United States Virgin Islands?

3. **Idealized influence:** This transformational leadership factor focuses on charismatic leadership or idealized influence: To assess how a leader can transform the people, private or public sector through his or her actions and behaviors worth emulating by others (Bass & Bass, 2008, pp. 602-620).

Question 3a: Based on the provided definition of idealized influence, what evidence is there of the presence of idealized influence attributes with regard to your leadership?

Question 3b. Based on the provided definition of idealized influence, what evidence is there of the absence of idealized influence attributes with regard to your leadership?

4. **Inspirational motivation:** This transformational leadership factor focuses on inspirational motivation: To assess how the leader can inspire people in the private or public sector to rally behind a common and shared organizational vision (Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 620).

Question 4a. Based on the provided definition of inspirational motivation, what is the evidence of the presence of inspirational motivation with regard to your leadership?

Question 4b. Based on the provided definition of inspirational motivation, what is the evidence of the absence of inspirational motivation with regard to your leadership?

5. **Intellectual Stimulation:** This transformational leadership factor focuses on intellectual stimulation: To assess how the leader uses the capacity and creative capabilities of followers to improve their lives and the society (Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 620).

Question 5a. Based on the provided definition of intellectual stimulation, what is the evidence of the presence of intellectual stimulation with regard to your leadership?

Question 5b. Based on the provided definition of intellectual stimulation, what is the evidence of the absence of intellectual stimulation with regard to your leadership?

6. **Individualized consideration:** This transformational leadership factor focuses on individual consideration: To assess how the leader considers and values followers

contributions and helps them to become more effective and productive (Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 622).

Question 6a. Based on the provided definition of individualized consideration, what is the evidence of the presence of individualized consideration with regard to your leadership?

Question 6b. Based on the provided definition of individualized consideration, what is the evidence of the absence of individualized consideration with regard to your leadership?

7. **Laissez-Faire leadership:** This transactional leadership behavior focuses on laissez-faire leadership: To assess how the leader avoids accepting their responsibility, are absent when needed, fail to follow up requests for assistance, and resist expressing his or her views on important issues (Bass, 1997).

Question 7a. Based on the provided definition of laissez-faire leadership, what is the evidence of the presence of laissez-faire leadership with regards to your leadership?

Question 7b. Based on the provided definition of laissez-faire leadership, what is the evidence of the absence of laissez-faire leadership with regards to your leadership?

8. **Active management-by-exception:** This transactional leadership behavior focuses on active management-by-exception: To assess how the leader monitors followers' performance and take corrective action if deviations from standards occur, and enforce rules to avoid mistakes (Bass, 1997).

Question 8a. Based on the provided definition of active management-by-exception, what is the evidence of the presence of active management-by-exception with regards to your leadership?

Question 8b. Based on the provided definition of active management-by-exception, what is the evidence of the absence of active management-by-exception with regards to your leadership?

9. **Passive management-by-exception:** This transactional leadership behavior focuses on passive management-by-exception: To assess how the leader fail to intervene until problems become serious and fail to take action until mistakes are brought to their attention (Bass, 1997).

Question 9a. Based on the provided definition of passive management-by-exception, what is the evidence of the presence of passive management-by-exception with regards to your leadership?

Question 9b. Based on the provided definition of passive management-by-exception, what is the evidence of the absence of passive management-by-exception with regards to your leadership?

10. **Contingent reward:** This transactional leadership behavior focuses on contingent reward: To assess how the leader engage in a constructive path-goal transaction of reward or performance by clarifying expectations, exchanging promises and resources for support of the leader, arranges mutually satisfactory agreements, negotiate for resources, exchange assistance for effort, and provide commendations for successful follower performance (Bass, 1997).

Question 10a. Based on the provided definition of contingent reward, what is the evidence of the presence of contingent reward with regards to your leadership?

Question 10b. Based on the provided definition of contingent reward, what is the evidence of the absence of contingent reward with regards to your leadership?

11. What do you perceive to be the impact of your leadership styles on employees and the United States Virgin Islands?
12. How does brain drain affect your leadership styles?
13. What do you recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the United States Virgin Islands?

CONCLUSION STATEMENT

Before I conclude this interview are there any other questions or concerns you would like to address? If yes, what are they? If no, thank you so much for your time and consideration for participating in this study. This concludes the interview. Thank you!

Appendix E: Thematic Analysis Step 1 or Categorization of Text

Research Question 1: What do government senior executives perceive to be the cause of brain drain in the USVI?

Theme A: Lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI.

Participant 1 believes that there are several causes and one would be the lack of opportunity in the USVI:

I think they're several causes. First and foremost, opportunity. There's not that much of it here for entry level work so that's one of the causes.

Participant 3 added that there is a lack of opportunity for educated individuals in the USVI:

Lack of opportunity for educated individuals or individuals with specific technical abilities. There's no employment opportunities. And also, people are desiring more variety for their families and the Virgin Islands in its current state, there's a minimum of family oriented activities that keep them interested and that can probably improve their quality of life.

Participant 5 admitted that the lack of opportunities cause young people to come to USVI without any assurance that they would get a proper job for them:

More than anything, it is the lack of opportunities for those young people that have the opportunity to be educated and be able to go to any direction that they want. There are just so many other opportunities in bigger places. We're going to be limited both in the scope of what's available here because there are just some professions that simply are no jobs here. And even those professions that are repeated here the availability of what is here and then quite often the earning potential. This is a place that tend to have low wages but high cost of living which nets out to a lower level of living than they can achieve with the same set of skills and degrees that's elsewhere.

Participant 6 even explained the changes that has occurred over the last few years because of the lack of opportunities:

Presently, it's the economy. We have had, unfortunately, high cost of living in terms of electricity. Also, several of our major industries, for example, Hovensa, has closed. Many individuals have left the islands and gone to either the mainland or to other countries. Other countries are also benefitting from us. The main culprit of the brain drain is our economy.

Participant 7 stated that there indeed a lack of opportunity and the other practicalities that stem from it:

A perceived lack of opportunity, lower wages than other jurisdictions, and the high cost of living.

Participant 8:

Economics. If I am highly qualified and skilled, and I can't find a job or I was dismissed from my job, then I need to find another job, especially if I have a family or just to take care of myself. I would leave for that purpose. The second part would be if the current job that I have, if I can find something somewhere else and I can get paid a higher rate, then it may be time for me to go. I might decide to leave the Virgin Islands.

Participant 10 added the idea of lack of employment which can also be attributed to the lack of opportunities available:

I think the primary cause is lack of employment. I also think the underlying cause is persons wanting to get experience, outside experience, before returning to the Virgin Islands. I think primarily it is lack of employment.

Theme B: Cultural expectations of Virgin Islanders, which causes issues in the long run.**Participant 1 also stated that another cause of brain drain would be the culture of the Virgin Islanders:**

Another cause I think is culture. As a Virgin Islander you constantly bombarded with stateside culture on TV, on radio, media; everywhere you can. That inherently makes your culture inferior, and theirs better, so there's a natural pull to the mainland. Once you get there, people readily identify on the mainland, talent, and try to take advantage of it. And the most ambitious people take advantage of it. And you get into a life style that does not permit you to return, unless something traumatic happens like your parents get old or somebody gets sick or you run into a situation where you become unemployed or you have a life changing event like you get divorced or something like that, then you start to look for somewhere where you feel safe and familiar again.

Theme C: Lack of social incentives to develop their skills further.**Participant 2 explained how the lack of social incentives can also cause brain drain:**

The lack of other social incentives for people to remain and work, because people do have a personal life as well as their professional life, and both need to be fulfilling. I think we kind of fall short on the personal lifestyle and quality of life issues for our young people.

For example, intellectual activities they can attend. Perhaps I would argue, someone would argue though, that the university tries to provide that to some extent. I feel that if they don't have organizations or clubs. Generation Now tried to do that I think as well, although they leaned more towards politics. I just think that someone who wants to advance in their area of expertise, whether it's human resources or whether it's engineering, they have to be able to have like professionals that they can talk with and explore.

Theme D: Presence of cronyism.

Participant 4 stated that another reason would be cronyism wherein people tend to patronize the powerful groups and parties to get better and high paying jobs:

Another reason is cronyism. People believe that if you do not have a certain name or belong to a certain party you can't get a high paying job. There's some measure of compromise that women more so than men have to go through to get to senior level positions or high paying jobs. I think those are the reasons why people decide to leave or not return.

Theme E: Job or salary expectations.

Participant 9 stated that there is a mismatch between the salary expectations and he educational capabilities of the professionals in the USVI:

Personally, people who I've known who gone away for college, higher education, when they complete their degree and they realize that they are not going to get the same amount of money working in the field where they are compared to coming back home, they make the choice to stay away. It's happened personally in my family where out of four children, two are off island, and two remained off island for how many years. One in military and he's master's level now and he has committed to staying off island to earn what he feels is comparable to his degree and experience; that's [my] older sibling. Then youngest sibling, again, had the thought of returning home but once things didn't come through, where as she tried to apply for certain grants and scholarships here and that didn't work out. She realized and accepted that if you signed up for those that mean you have to come back and give back. After not being able to complete the application, she realized she might as well stay. She too is master's level and continues to stay on the mainland.

Research Question 2: What do government senior executives perceive to be the impact of brain drain on the USVI?

Theme A: Imbalance of workforce, majority are older people.

Participant 1 explained how there are different levels of brain drain impact on the USVI, mainly the imbalance of the workforce pyramid wherein more people are older which means a dormant economy is possible in the long run:

You could see it at a lot of different levels. Primarily, right now, when you look at our labor force, under the age of 35, it's very small and it's shrinking. So, contrary to most places who have a pyramid shaped workforce where you have less people who are older, we have the opposite where you have more people who are older. And there's what it does too, it creates an imbalance in the amount of people that we have with college degrees. So right now, the Virgin Islands have like 17% people with college degrees compared to like 27, 28% on the mainland. And what happens is, people do not return

with their college degrees. They stay in the states, which skews that number even more. And the people who have less education tend to stay, creating a situation where you impact the workforce. Once you impact the workforce like that, it has an effect on economic development now because companies that want to expand can't find talent because there is no talent available. And that stunts us as growth, in terms of how much companies we can attract. It also stunts our ability to manage because what you see is a older than normal workforce that hasn't adjusted to a technological age that they would have, if we had more young people in the market place using, texting, e-mail, apps and different things to do their work. So the efficiency is impacted and the government and other agencies, because there is no exposure to new tools to work with so there's a lot of different ways.

Participant 2 shared the same sentiments, as he believes that there is no one to pass the torch to anymore given that younger people are not given the chance:

Well, I think one of the things is that, again, there's no one to pass the torch to. When you're starting to see your career coming to an end, looking around for someone to use in a succession planning way, and you don't see that many. I have one young engineer, and then I have some others who aren't engineers, so with or without a degree, I have to start molding people to take over. I happen to be an engineer so I kind of focus on that. Also I think the impact also is that you don't get newer ideas. I'm not staying on top of things all the time, but I'll go out to a conference or something so I'll learn the state of the art in the industry. Sometimes I'd be like, wow, that really made sense but there's no one younger here that stays upon the industry trends. I was constantly looking at that and couldn't find anyone that could filter information up to me.

Participant 3 shared that there is indeed a shortage on educated and talented young individuals across agencies and offices:

The impact is evident. We have several key people who are educated, working on various projects across agencies. We have the same people, doing the same work, all the time. Whether it's a change in administration, it's literally a move of people from one office to the next and it happens because we don't have enough talent here or a pool set aside to pick from.

Participant 4 echoed that having a workforce imbalance of younger people creates a major drawback in efficiency and productivity:

There's less criticism of the inaction locally when we don't have people that are feeling free to express themselves about something that the governor might be doing or something that the legislature might be doing. You already have that happening at the top. If you had letter writing campaigns, articles in the papers; that would be a reflection of the level of education that people have attained. When you do get PhDs, master's degrees, college degrees, technical training, you have a certain level of exposure to the world and they teach you about these kind of things. I think that's a major drawback to not having educated people here.

Participant 5 again explained that the country is losing opportunity for new talents:

We lose the opportunity for new talent. At times, when there are needs to be filled, you are not able to have the breadth of applicants that you would have somewhere else. Very often you are either choosing between people who might have the background but no experience in the Virgin Islands or people who have a lot of experience in the Virgin Islands but no background in that particular work – that's a very common hiring dilemma. And there are people who you know that are both, Virgin Islanders who have this background but they are not here; they're somewhere else. You lose that talent. You lose that vitality. In organizations, you can get to where majority of people are very comfortable with the way things are and there's not the younger people coming in that are pushing for change and pushing for improvement, which can also change the tenure inside the organization. You get into well, we've always done things this way. I'm not comfortable doing things this way. I've only got 3 years, or 5 years, or 13 years until retirement and I don't really want things to change. If you think about a community as the young grow up, if the best and your brightest among your young, which is essentially what the brain drain refers to right?, are always leaving, and the ones who don't have the opportunities elsewhere are the ones who are staying, that's not a recipe for moving your system forward, or moving your whole country, island, territory forward. It then creates a scenario for a lot of the very specialized skills, you're bringing in people from the states. You're either bringing in people for short term basis for consultants or whatever for a high amount of money. Our people who have chosen to move here, take those positions.

Participant 7 had the perception and observation of:

I think that our best and brightest citizens, especially the younger ones, are not coming back home so they're not able to lend their expertise or their innovative ideas to our community, and to move our community forward.

Participant 9 stated that there would be stagnation and no new developments and growth will occur:

Impact number one would be stagnation. If you have the same people doing the same thing over and over, you're not having new ideas come in. If all the people that we're educating leave, get new ideas, get new experiences, then they're not bringing that back. That's where I see an impact would be. You have some people that you see in higher management. You figure, you're not going to get promoted unless they die or retire if they're doing 30 years. You look at some people in education, some of them are working up to 40, so if some people don't die, you may not get promoted. A feeling of being stuck is not a good feeling. It kills morale. It kills your spirit. That would be an impact because you think I'm going to be here forever so it doesn't make any sense to do anything else, to think outside the box, to want to excel because I'm just going to be in this position until I retire. That's one impact that I would see that those who leave and go away would leave behind for us.

Theme B: Influx of outsiders who are professionals.

Participant 6 explained that locals are now being taken over by outsiders in the USVI:

There's going to be the disappearance of the middle class pretty soon here in the Virgin Islands if it continues. We have lost many potential professionals in many levels, in many sectors of our society, to the point that we have to often bring people from the outside to do certain jobs. Jobs that were one time in the past strictly being taken care of by locals. I've seen many companies, both private and in the public sector, who have often time resorted to bringing people from the outside to do jobs, where once again, was basically done by locals in the past.

Participant 10 also shared the same sentiments and example as Participant 6:

One, and I've seen it in the area of [department] where because jobs are not available, residents of the Virgin Islands tend to depart and move to the mainland where many of them are not really-, it appears to me that they struggle more than when they were home. In addition to that, what I see is that we have then an influx of people coming from the mainland to fill positions which persons have left here. A good example, at the [department] at UVI, there are very few residents from the Virgin Islands that work there. Most of the persons that work there come from the outside. When persons depart, they provide openings for others to come in and establish themselves. I'm not saying anything is wrong with that but I think that if some of us could stick around a little longer and work hard at it, I think many of us could find employment here in the territory.

Theme C: Loss of qualified individuals for the job.

Participant 8 stated that there is a loss of qualified and skilled individuals for the job:

A loss of qualified people to do the job. For example, if you have 20 master's level [job title] on the island and everybody decides to leave, then you have 20 experts that are leaving. Even if 10 or 5 master's level [job title] leave, that will have an impact because you have less qualified [job title] on the island, with a degree.

Research Question 3: With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transformational leadership behaviors based on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration?

Idealized Influence.

Theme A1: Idealized influence that will benefit more women and younger individuals.

Participant 1 stated two things that will comprise the idealized influence through transformational leadership:

Two things that I recognize early: that we don't have enough resources to attract and keep talent. You have no money resources so our salaries are unattractive because of the antiquated classification system that we have and the government's failure to negotiate with the unions. So, when you look at who our professionals are, it's predominantly women. Why is it predominantly women? Because the government offers flexibility in terms of time to spend with their kids; so if their kids are sick or if they have to stay home from school, or they need to go and pick them up after school or drop them to school in the morning. The environment and the work culture of the government is really amenable to that kind of lifestyle. You have more women, so now what you have is a workforce that values time more than money. So you work with them like that. You allow them to work from home, you allow them to have flex hours so they can come early, leave late or come late, leave early, depending on what they need to do. And, so that's a way of attracting them.

The other thing is when you find really ambitious young people, you give them the tools and the freedom to do what they want to do. You don't have to give them direct money, but what you can give them is a new Apple iPad, or a laptop, or you can give them access to new software that they want to play with in order to do something, so their job becomes exciting and you get buy in from them. The other thing that I've been trying to do is education. You try to send them away to training and get them exposure. You also try to subsidize any move for them to get more education, because that's monetary as well too, and I think it ties them to the job. And then the constant stroking. You have to be able to recognize that this is a person with talent and let them know that you know that they're doing well.

Participant 6 also explained how young individuals are needed by the economy at present and how it is ideal for leaders to have them:

It's very hard to answer that question because on a personal level, I look at what's happening around the territory, especially on the island and I don't see how we can turn this around in less than a decade. One of the things we're trying to do is revitalize the economy. We're trying to bring down our electrical cost. It's going to be a struggle. Often times, the problem we are facing, high power of energy, contributes to other problems we are facing here in the community, that is, crime of course, poverty, individuals not being able to take care of themselves or their families, which cause social issues. Domestic violence is on the up rise. We have to look at this from a holistic point of view. We have to look at all angles and resolve many of the issues that we're facing now. I truly believe it's going to take a while before we come up to par.

Theme A2: Successful planning and mentorship programs.

Participant 2 shared that his idealized influence would be having successful planning and mentorship programs:

I would say succession planning; that's one. I actually just start looking it up and called the HR director and told her to send me anything she's got on mentorship programs. I also attend the Society of Human Resource Management conferences, most recently in this year, so I can stay on top of the trends of how to make my style of management more impactful, draw more people to want to work, to move up the ladder, to gain some sense of loyalty to the company, because I think that is sorely lacking in the public sector. And in regard to the mentorship program, I identified three people now that I'm mentoring and one of them is not even a staff person; they are on contract with us. I enjoy her talent and energy so much that I said to her, you need to consider maybe coming on board full time, and taking on the possibility of in five years taking over for me.

Participant 3 added that mentorship through making the employees feel that they are needed and capable helps in having an idealized influence as well:

I am a person; inherently, I'm considered a life coach. Because I understand the dynamics of the Virgin Islands, I don't expect that everybody on my staff will have a master's degree. However, they may have a specific skill set that I can capitalize on, so I work with them. I encourage them to take a class. I encourage them to do research and I open their eyes to other areas within our unit where they can be used. Since I became the [job title], the loss of employees has decreased. Employee morale has increased. And it all has to do with me seeing them and making them feel as though they are needed, capable, and to help them develop a sense of purpose. By using that style, I have found that the staff has been performing extremely well because it's no longer just a day to day standardized job, but it's an opportunity to contribute to the Virgin Islands and this is a stepping stone to something better.

Participant 4 also added that he supervises other individuals who can someday follow his footsteps:

I have a follow and lead approach to leadership. At my job, I supervise four individuals, who then supervise a team of individuals. What I would do is ask them, what am I doing wrong, which is not something that most leaders do. I do it on a one on one basis or in a small team setting because I read recently that that's a way to inspire confidence in a team and at the same time, change behaviors that are not becoming or productive.

Participant 5:

My job is not my life and don't, but it's there for people to take advantage of it. I don't think to a certain extent that when you are in very trying and stressful and the work is never ever close to being done type environments, if you are self-motivated, internally motivated, and you see that when you work it gets rewarded, at least you get recognized or work for people who are the same, those people will bloom. Other people may look around and say to protect myself, I have to build walls around myself – this is when I

leave; this is when I turn my phone off; I don't answer e-mails on weekends. I don't believe that leading by example has a big impact on those folks. The question is whether you allow them to stay and do that or whether you try to get rid of them and say I want to put somebody in here who's going to take advantage of the fact that if we open doors you're supposed to walk through them.

Participant 8 added that he practices this ideal leadership through the group that he supervises at present:

The staff that I supervise at this point, they were hired and given a job description and know what they have to do. In reference to me, I supervise and make sure that the job gets done in a manner that I allow them to do their work and I monitor it. I have supervisions; I think it's important. I have weekly supervisions with my staff; we sit down and discuss the cases for an hour; that's group supervision. If individual supervision is needed, then I do that one on one. My office door is open all day, 8 to 5, Monday to Friday. We do not have scheduled individual sessions frequently because supervision happens on an ongoing basis. You walk in and tell me you need to discuss this client, if I'm busy I tell you I can't do it at this time but let's make an appointment for this time.

Participant 10 shared that he always encourages his staff and employees to do better and develop for the future:

In reference to my leadership, I always encourage others to do better. I try to show them how they could improve themselves in terms of education, training; attending workshops so that they can be more employable and be in a better position to qualify for positions that are available. Not only to encourage them when positions are open, even though they may not qualify, still go ahead and apply for those positions. Those are some of the things that I do in my employment to encourage others to move up.

Theme A3: Individual ideas of characteristics for leaders.

Participant 7 stated that people have different ideas of what they want to be their leaders like:

People tend to view leaders who are charismatic, in terms of their personality and likeability, to be like the poster child for who is an idealized leader, if you want to say that. People also are drawn to competence and consistency and honesty. Sometimes even if the leader is not necessarily charismatic, not necessarily the leader that everyone likes, they still tend to be a leader that people idealize and want to be like.

Participant 9 stated that commitment and dedication for the job is important:

I guess for me it's what I have seen in my time is what I emulate and hopefully it would pass on to the staff in reference to commitment and dedication and loyalty to the department. I always tell them about airing dirty laundry. If we have a problem, we discuss it; fix it internally before we go out to our colleagues or anyone else. I hope that is what I would instill.

Inspirational Motivation.

Theme B1: Ability to adapt to change.

Participant 1 shared that being adaptive to change and able to adjust to the level of the people is an inspirational motivation as a leader:

In terms of being very adaptive to change and taking a position where we can lead, and in terms of workforce development. I think I've been able to sell that to my staff. I think motivating people towards that end is very difficult. I think that one of the things that I have really had to do, especially in the last three, four years, is to keep people kind of head nose into the wind with the cutbacks and 8% cut. Trying to keep people, give them an assurance that as a leader, yes I want the work done but my job is to worry about keeping them in their job, and making sure that they're going to be okay. I have found that going to them and really explaining to them from a layman level all the way up to the sophistication that the budget comes from the governor. In the discussion he had, people feel better about it. So, trying to walk around like everything is okay projecting a positive, always having a vision of a brighter [department]. Making sure our surroundings progressively get better; because you have to have a haven somewhere. If everywhere is stressful you will just go nuts so I think that's a way that I've been able to help that.

Participant 3 stated that he has been inspired by a commissioner to be open in learning thus he also inspired his own staff members and followers:

I report to a commissioner. I report to a commissioner and he inspires me. Because he inspires me, I inspire my team. I have presented myself as someone who wants to learn and I'm open to that type of influence. Had I not been, I would not have been inspired. I think it exists but it is only able to have a positive influence if the person or the team is open to such influence. If your attitude is bad and you really don't want to be here, and this is just a job, I can read the bible, I can give you the best speeches in the world to motivate you, nothing is going to happen. If there is no innate passion, we can't move you.

Participant 7 shared that openness to changes is important for leaders:

I am passionate about what I do and I do not view leadership necessarily in terms of title or position. I demonstrate that I am willing to do whatever it takes. I wouldn't ask anyone to do anything that I wouldn't do. A lot of the times I would actually jump in and do what needs to be done. If folks see that you are willing to get in there and do the work and go out on a case at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning and you're willing to be there with them and you're willing to do exactly what you're asking of them, because you actually believe in whatever the cause is and whatever change you're trying to make happen. They're also willing to come on board and that motivates them to also take the risk and be vulnerable and go for it.

Participant 9:

You may be procrastinating on something but it may be that you need to get it done now because something else is waiting for you. I try to inspire but I don't know how much gets through because sometimes you look at the community and you think is it worth it? This political year you're thinking politics is playing a lot into it. Does it matter what I do or does it matter who I know? Sometimes that gets you in that stuck factor. You think you're struggling and doing this and other people based on what you see from the outside, you could also think they must have an easy slide. You think to yourself, maybe they had everything in a row that they needed to get that opportunity that was there. It's hard to answer; hard to put into words.

Participant 10 highlighted the changes and preparations needed for the employees to move forward and be motivated to learn and develop:

I think I might have covered that in the previous question. In terms of letting others know that they too can obtain and attain positions that, they could be in my position. Upward mobility; I try to impart to them that they have to have the zeal, the desire, the caring, and the preparation to obtain those positions, especially younger ones.

Theme B2: Experiences of the people they serve.**Participant 2 stated that inspirational motivation comes from the people they serve as well as the experiences that they share together:**

The first thing that comes to mind is when we went to be a part of the carnival parade, cause I was right there with them. We all got our costumes. Telling our message about keeping the place clean and litter free and handing out stuff to everybody. And we had a good turnout. First year we were the second prize winner in our category. Next year we were first place winners. So, you know, that was really motivating, being involved with them and out there. The other times would be when we had baseball teams. We all rally together to make sure that I'm inspiring them to do better and win as a team. That's another area of inspiration. Just this morning might be reflective in that I shared with them personal life decisions about things like life insurance. We had a speaker this morning to teach them about preparing for retirement and why life insurance is important, and social security and how social security works. I felt like it's one thing to just tell them, but it's another thing to share your experience.

Theme B3: Support and acknowledgement for employees and staff members.**Participant 4 stated that he publicly acknowledges his staff members and followers in order to show that they are appreciated and supported:**

I publicly thank the team members that report to me in e-mail or group meetings or agency-wide meetings. I also empower one staff member to do what she's doing. I respect her when she says no that's a legal matter and that I should handle it even though I might see it differently, because I believe it is within her job responsibilities. To defer to her, gives her a sense that she has control over her work environment and I think that will

help her feel happy and in control. I do the same thing with the other team members (explains job title, duties, and supervision structure) I am not a [job title of staff he supervises] and I do not have a PhD like [employee's name] so I have to defer due to their numerous years of experience in these respective fields. I think publicly praising them on the one hand and supporting them when they want me to address complaints from their team members and on the other, giving [employee's name] the space and time that she needs to do her technical work, it inspires her to feel I'm supportive.

Participant 5 shared the importance of having support as an inspirational motivation:

Everything else you will be frustrated. If the public think it's important but you don't have the capacity to do it, you're not going to do a very good job of it. If you have a lot of capacity to do something but the public doesn't think it's important, you're not going to get the support to keep doing it. That's an important lesson.

Participant 6 also explained how significant it is for leaders to be approachable and supportive to their people:

I come here with an open mind. I come in here with the mentality that all of us can come together as one, no matter your educational background, no matter where you come from. It's a matter of accepting you for who you are. One of the things people often tell me is I'm very approachable. I talk to everybody. I listen to people. A leader just doesn't talk, he listen, and to me that's very important. I see it. I try to portray a positive image and I think especially here in my office, we have that, even through hard times. We come here to work and we have one purpose in this office; to make other people's life better. Even if on a personal level I might be depressed or something bad happen to me on a personal level, when I enter my office, it's all about being professional and I have to portray that. I think that influences my people, my staff, to work harder.

Participant 8:

Having group supervision. My reason for doing group supervision is that we're all on the same team. It might be that one [job title] has something to do with a client and another [job title] can give guidance as far as what to do. We work as a team. In that sense, we have one vision. Also, to reinforce the motto of the agency, [department name], is working together to make a difference. I would add, in the lives of our clients. Doing supervision is a part of it, but I think also staff meetings. Encouraging the staff; positive motivation, giving them props when it's due.

Intellectual Stimulation.

Theme C1: Ability to transform followers to be their own leaders.

Participant 1 shared how intellectual stimulation has evolved in his staff's case:

When I first came to [department] my staff would hate when I go on vacation. I had so many ideas I used to tell them I suffer from mental constipation because you guys cannot

deliver on the stuff I already spit out fast enough. And one of my staffers came to me and said you really slowed down. You don't have as many ideas. It's more I said, you ever think that the staff has sped up? And they looked at me. I was like yeah, before, the stuff that I used to think about at night, they never thought of. Now, the stuff that I worry about, they've already done. The stuff that I'm thinking about, things are already in place. I still have my moments when I come up with something new like a new hype and hustle thing that we're doing. But just the other day I'm working on this thing. I-, staffer came to me and she said, you know what would be good if we do something for entrepreneurs for [department]. I said I'm working on it. So, the staff has evolved to a point now where they're ahead of me. They're thinking about the next thing to do; the next logical step. They're thinking about new things. They're coming up to me with the ideas and I'm supporting them. So that's great. That's what you want. So when I go on vacation, my phone doesn't ring. It's fantastic.

Participant 2 shared his mentorship program and how and why he implemented an intellectual stimulation to his mentees:

I have three people I'm mentoring. And what I did with one of them, is I brought them to the board retreat and expected them to participate, not just to watch. And they did. I also took that same person with me to a senior executive seminar of one of our industry association, the largest industry association. And we went into breakout sessions. She was at a different break out table. She participated fully. She got an opportunity to be in the role of a senior executive, not just seeing me or me telling her, but she actually had to play it out in those settings with other executives. The other person, I let her represent me in a meeting with Governor deJongh that I couldn't attend. This develops and fosters the intellectual stimulation in my opinion. And she went. And she actually sat in the room with two other commissioners and the governor; this was on Central High. So you had my rep in there with the governor. She came back out; gave me the report. So, I'm mentoring her and I gave her the opportunity to stand up and represent me in a challenging setting. I think the last person I will demonstrate my leadership style in this area is someone who was invited to join executive management team in board meetings, to participate and inform the Board on procurement matters. I believe that this was another example that allowed me to lead in a way that supports intellectual stimulation.

Participant 5 stated that willingness should come from the followers or staff members to learn:

I tend to believe that this is also something that is internal. The ability to learn and gain information has never been greater in the history of the world. It is getting greater every moment. Almost everyone has access to the internet. When you sit in the food stamps waiting room, people are on their smart phones. Almost everyone has, no matter the income level, in America at least, I know that's not true worldwide. The ability to learn and stay current in almost anything is already there and for free. It wasn't that way when I was a kid.

Theme C2: Creating opportunities and developments for the followers.

Participant 3 stated how he had found new ways to get his staff members involved and their knowledge always current and updated:

Recently, I applied for a grant for administrative use and I was awarded it. I am in the process of purchasing Kindle Fires for their personal use for my staff. The reason why, is because a lot of information is now electronic so I have also signed them up for what's called [business program name]. They can't tell me now they didn't know, they don't understand, because I've found a creative way to stimulate them intellectually. Now they have this tool, they're excited to use it. I did a trial run. They said [participant's name], I read so and so. Did you know this? They're informing me now. When you find a way to wake up that intellectual sense, as a leader, you see the benefits. Now your staff is making more informed decisions and they're not just pushing paper.

Participant 4 shared that he has started to seek training for his staff members but some are refusing to do so:

Requests for them to seek training, which in one case they didn't do and are now doing it because it's voluntary. I could mandate it but that would be the heavy handed approach. Another individual just jumped at the opportunity. I kept on encouraging all of them request, apply for training. There is a budget set aside for all staff and I am talking about mainland, for a week.

Participant 6 shared that even up to today, he portrays a characteristic as a leader open to new ideas and learning:

One of the things that I pride myself in doing when I create legislation is that I seek assistance. I often go to experts in that field and I seek their input. I tell a lot of individuals, my mantra is there's no such thing as a perfect bill. When I put together legislation, I make a lot of phone calls, I do my research, and there are times when I find out that the legislation is not going to go nowhere. It's not effective and I drop it. In my profession, you have to seek professional help at all times. There is no such thing as a one man army. You have to surround yourself with individuals that are experts in their field and work together as one.

Participant 7 shared that assessments are given importance to develop and create opportunities for his followers:

Respect everyone's expertise, experience, [and] training. I often say to [job title] you are the expert in your field. You are the ones who are out there with the clients. Your expertise and recommendation is what's going to have life changing effects for children and families and collectively on our community. I often try to empower them to believe in the strength of and to feel validated and confident in the fact that they have what it takes to make the decisions – make the changes that need to happen. I don't really subscribe to the hierarchy when it comes to getting the work done. I understand the reason for it and I do think that in terms of decision making and case analysis I do believe that I have a level of competence that is befitting my position in terms of being a

supervisor of [job title]. At the same time, I think it's important to recognize that we all have been trained to do this and everybody's assessment and input needs to be given value. That's what I try to do to empower them to utilize the skills and expertise they have. They have to believe in it and trust it in order for others to be able to do that. If they do that, they will be able to effect change.

Participant 8:

For me, I think it is more writing, in working with the staff to improve their writing skills, to do it consistently. The way any document that you sign off on to leave the office, once you put your signature, this is a reflection of who you are. In this office, I'm always trying to help the staff to improve their writing skills and I think that's the biggest part of it. We also go to court so we discuss our court cases. Before we go to court, you have an idea in case you're called to answer questions. There'll be times when you'll be asked questions that you didn't think of. Discussing the case before it goes to court we have an idea of what the possibilities of questions that might be asked, then you know what's coming out of your mouth. It's trying to improve your writing skills and your speaking skills when you go to court.

Participant 9 added that he makes sure that his staff members are well trained and updated with the latest in the industry and field they are in:

We look at whether formal education such as going back to school or individual trainings. One thing that we've been fighting for, and that's my fight with upper management, is off island training. People look at it as spending money off island but they don't realize the stimulation and networking possibilities that it creates when you have that off island travel you're meeting with people. When I process with my supervisor, when I went for my master's-; I'm a person I don't want busy work. If you give me busy work, that's just annoying. If you give me something to do for a purpose, I get it done.

Participant 10:

I kind of alluded to that somehow in some of the previous questions. One of the things that we do, again, is encourage employees to get a higher education. Very few persons in the department have advanced degrees. It is totally evident that many of them, I don't know what's the right words to use, but I'm going to use some words, are envious, jealous, upset that someone else has prepared themselves and obtained an advanced degree and are in a particular position. They are very taken by that. I would say to them, you too could be in a position. You have to educate yourself. You have to make sacrifices, which those of us have made to better yourself, so you could get a better position; a better salary.

Individualized Consideration.

Theme D1: Honoring staff members for their contributions.

Participant 1 described how he manages to apply individualized consideration by always honoring his staff for their contributions:

What I think we try to do every year, we don't run successful. Every year we try to do something honoring the employees and their contribution. I make sure that every time I have an opportunity, whether public, in the legislature, radio, TV, ad, I always thank my staff because they're really awesome. They never let me down. It's been 8 years and they've been really phenomenal and I think I do support them in that way. I know people always think that you could do more, I'm sure, but I think that individually recognizing them. Like one of the things that I really do is learn people's names. Because I know they're shocked when I call their names. If I try to learn everybody's names in the [department] and I walk the floor to say hello. Now, they complain because I don't sit down to their desk and chit chat with them. I don't really have that kind of time but I think it makes people's day when you say their name because when you say Hi [employee's name]; you call them by name. If I was really good, I would know their kids names too, but I think that's an investment.

Participant 2 shared how building relationships and connecting with the staff members allow or open up individualized consideration:

I wanted to make sure I connected it because when you do talk to them, that's how you stimulate their intellect. I wanted to say that because I just remembered that I met with [job title], the supervisors, and the rank and file. Told them we need to raise money so we could reduce costs. And the ideas were like, instead of us going to pick up bulk waste [participant's name] from around the bin site, why don't we just charge people to pick it up at their house? We paying for it anyway. And so it brings out their intellect as well when you simply ask for their input. That's something I want to do more of because they have good ideas because they're all out there in the field. We've done a little bit of it but we could do more. And I just want to go back to make the connection.

Theme D2: Valuing the differences and capabilities of staff members.

Participant 3 shared how he values the differences of his employees and their job performance:

I understand that no two staff members are alike. No two staff members perform alike, work alike, think alike; however, you all may do the same job. Through influence, innovation, intellectual stimulation, I get to give individualized attention to each staff member. So I've trained my managers under me to function like that. If you see you have a staff member that performs this job but puts more notes in her caseload or makes more follow up calls, this is somebody you want to push a little more; introduce them to something else. Now, someone who's not doing it, you want to find out why is it that you can't type well? Is it that you're nervous about writing? I noticed that the reason why

they don't do a lot of writing is because they're not good with writing. Maybe you can introduce them to standard templates where they can use and select from. You spend that time, which can be just 30 minutes, find out the problem, that individualized attention can definitely make a difference. That's something that I definitely put in place.

Participant 4 shared a case when he had to adjust for certain team members while making sure that they are still doing their jobs:

Yes, I work with a [job title] and she can leave to handle emergencies with her family or children at any time so long as it doesn't go over a 2-hour period. I won't ask for her to take it out of annual or sick leave. I had that approach at [previous government department]. If you work under me, as long as you tell me where you're going and you make an attempt to come back in a 2-hour time frame, I won't ask you to document that.

Participant 5 shared a good example where each staff member or follower reacts depending on their situation:

For the people who are my direct reports, particularly the higher level managers, I react to each one of them on a very individual basis because over the years I've been doing this, I have learned that each of them react better to slightly different approaches and supervision. I try to individualize that quite a bit. I have managers who do not want people beneath them and their chain of command to discuss things directly with the [job title] without them being involved and knowing everything that's going on. For those people, I'm not going to send them an e-mail without copying them or have a meeting with someone below them without including them in that meeting. I have other managers, because of personality differences, are really fine, you mean you're taking work off my plate, knock yourself out.

Participant 6 again stated the importance of seeking advice and reaching out to everybody:

When it comes to my leadership, I seek advice from everybody. I talk to everybody. You have to be open minded. Because I may have the label as a senator, doesn't mean that somebody who is a maintenance worker doesn't have an opinion, a valuable opinion, about certain topics or issues that are affecting us. I have a tendency to talk to everybody, to get input from everybody. I'm not afraid to admit that I'm wrong. I'm not afraid to change my way of thinking. You have to be accessible to everybody and just listen. Everybody has something to contribute when it comes to this type of job that I'm doing. One of the things that help me out is that I do have good listening skills. I do listen to people and I'm not afraid to admit when I'm wrong.

Participant 7:

I make a diligent effort to give value to everyone's experience and expertise and contribution. I often say it literally, you are the expert. You tell me what your assessment is. You tell me what needs to happen here. There's a misperception about leadership. Although we talk about it in terms or jargon or give lip service to the fact that being a leader has nothing to do with a position or title, I think we believe it anyway. So

sometimes individuals are reluctant to exercise their individual abilities because they still feel like, it's like one of the, say the boots and the suits, unless the suits give the stamp of approval, nothing's going to happen anyway.

Participant 8:

As far as their contributions, one thing I've done is in December we have the children's party. After we have the children's party, we have a staff breakfast. There's [job profession] month in March; there's a [job duty] luncheon for everybody but I give my staff a special gift. I also give them a gift on their birthdays. Those are specific occasions that I show appreciation and value for my staff.

Participant 9 shared a very important lesson of valuing and giving the employees the chance to prove themselves as professionals:

I think that would relate to staffing and allowing the workers to process what is happening with a particular case and letting them come up with possible options and seeing how those options would play out. As a leader, and I've said it before to someone else, I don't believe in that I am boss, this is what happens, and this is what you do. How can you create an individual? How can someone develop as an individual and a [job title] if you are just being told do this, do this, do this, do this. You have to be able to look at the client, look at the aspects, look at this, that's what case conferencing would be, look at the individual, what's going on, what do you see? Maybe offer a little, do you see this? They may say yes, they may say no. You might be on the wrong path but they're working with the client every day so give them that opportunity.

Participant 10:

Each person that I work with have their own strengths and weaknesses. A good example is a couple of individuals working with me and I realize it's so clear that some will take initiative to get things done and others you have to tell them every single thing. Some of them have been working here for 7, 8 years; you still have to give them assignments while others take it upon themselves to get things done. I think that's one area that I need help too.

Research Question 4: With regard to government senior executives' leadership, what evidence is there of the presence of transactional leadership behaviors based on laissez-faire, management-by-exception, and contingent rewards?

Laissez-faire.

Theme A1: Team effort, failure of one is the failure of the whole group.

Participant 1 shared how each employee essential to being successful and that the failure of one can affect the whole team:

One of the things we talked about before we started the interview was perfect people. Just like perfect, I have an employee that everybody complain about. They so aggressive, but

everything in this person, every trait that this person has that drives them, their control, is the best thing about 'em because their job occupation requires control. And because of that control we're able to excel when a lot of departments fail. So all of our stuff is paid; our cars are paid for. We always have a surplus. We're well managed because this person is a control freak. However, it impinges upon other people space sometimes because they're a little aggressive. And, people say that I laissez-faire. Well this individual think that I does be hard on them.

Participant 3 stated that the overall effect of laissez-faire for a leader affects the whole team and the people around them:

I think it definitely affects my leadership because I am a go-getter. I am on it. I am responding to everything. I am thinking about it before you think about it because I don't like to be blind-sided. I work in an environment-, I am specifically speaking about all agencies where I'm like a horse and there's a bunch of turtles, moving slowly, slowly. It's draining. I've questioned many times; is this where I belong? Maybe it takes persons like me to set the trend or to stir up the pot to decrease that form of leadership because we definitely need more responsiveness. We definitely need people who are critical thinkers. We need people who are more proactive because I think if we had those attributes in a lot of our leaders, we would not be dealing with brain drain or a lot of the issues that we're dealing with now across the gamut.

Participant 4 shared an experience where:

I don't know because there was one incident in which I trusted that the team members would deal with an issue that their team members were responsible for and that wasn't done. I felt that not getting involved I was not going to micromanage. I don't know how to answer that question. Outside of that example, I generally do respond to their request for equipment, training, [and] supplies. I do tell them when they're right about me being wrong about a policy decision or directive that I've issued. I do show that they have an opinion that matters but I think that my style may not be called laissez-faire but I deal with them like they're on my level. I feel that that's important. I think people should feel that they're as important as me. I don't want them to feel like I'm coming down to them.

Participant 8 also explained that:

Not that I'm aware of because in my opinion as a leader, how can you lead when you don't really pay much attention to what's going on in your department. We work as a team. If I am [job title] and my supervisor calls and says A, B, C, and D, if I don't know what's going on in my unit then I can only give an account for what happen. I don't think that not following up on any action works. I don't do it; I need to know what's going on especially for the fact that we are responsible for minors. It's going to be the court involved, Department of Education, lawyers, everybody that's involved. If I don't know what's going on with my staff as it pertains to them and the cases, then I can't give an account for what's going on. That don't make no sense because in my opinion you shouldn't get paid.

Theme A2: Laissez-faire is not present at all.

Participant 2 stated that laissez-faire is not present in his leadership at all:

None.

Participant 5 also said that:

I hope there's none. I know exactly what that is. I've had people who worked for me who naturally liked that and I've worked for people who are naturally like that but I don't believe that.

Participant 6 shared that he is an effective leader and laissez-faire is not present:

From an overall point of view, I think I'm an effective leader. I do listen. I do try to analyze. I do try to look at it from different people view point. So that question sort of denounce the fact that, there are leaders of course that are Machiavellian in though, I'm not. I do not believe I have all the solutions so I'm pretty fairly open minded. I try to do my research. I also try to verify. There's a saying from a famous president, trust but verify; President Reagan. I try to do that. Even though I will listen to you and get the information, I do have a tendency to verify everything just in case.

Participant 7 said that this kind of style is non-existent for him:

That is nonexistent. I probably need some.

Participant 9 explained how laissez-faire is not present in his leadership:

No. I tell them I don't like surprises. Let me know what's going on and I will back you 100%. There is no, oh, I'm not going to, uh uh. I'm a woman of my word. I say what I say and do what I do. We have meetings. If you come to me I'm going to do my part to help.

Participant # 10 also stated that laissez-faire leadership does not exist for him:

I would say it doesn't exist, for me, at least. I am one who feel that if it has to be done, it has to get done. It has to get done in a timely manner. It has to be done properly. I don't make excuses for not getting stuff done. No, I don't think that exist with me at all; not at all. I am a workaholic. I am one who think that it must get done; it must get done properly. It must get done in a timely manner. Nah, it doesn't exist with me, no.

Management by exception.

Theme B1: Ability of staff members to function according to their roles, without guidance.

Participant 1 strictly imposes this characteristic that each individual should function according to their assigned position:

As the [job title] of a department, the people that report to me are very high functioning. I don't think that I should have to write people up. If I get to the point where I need to

write to you about you, you need to be fired. It's too high up in the management. You supposed to be able to understand what it is you're supposed to be taking care of, and you and I-, if there is a problem, we need to have a discussion and then if you don't meet that, you need to get terminated because I can't have so many things to do; you can't have a CEO writing up directors; it doesn't work like that; you're fired. Because now, you're supposed to be my operational arm. I have to manage you. You giving me more work to do; taking me away from what I need to do.

Participant 4 stated how a collaborative effort is needed from each and every staff member:

It was a collaborative effort; the technical and [business function] end work together. I said well, this happened, do you know who did it? Do you know why? I said in the future you have to understand how this reflects negatively on you and the [department] if people believe they can skirt the law by just telling you please give me a break. I hope that corrects that and I think it did because another day an [job title] came to me with a enforcement action or ticket, depending on what the division is.

Participant 6 shared his own style of leadership wherein:

I have a tendency to supervise and review my staff's work; however, I don't micromanage. Each one of my staff has a specialty, be it office manager, be it legal researcher, be it chief of staff. Yes, I do review their work, but often times my review is on a one on one basis. We sit down, we go over it. If there is a mistake or something that I think needs to be changed, I discuss it with them. I don't immediately assume that it is wrong. I might be the one that's wrong. I'll be looking at it from their point of view. I try not to micromanage, which is pretty hard.

Participant 7:

Specifically, I'm referring to staffing. In my particular position, I'm a [job title] but certain divisions, I supervise [job title]. For other divisions, I am the [job title]. For other divisions, when the [job title] is not there, I'm the [job title]. (Refers to three different positions). On any given day, who I am providing direct supervision to, changes. Sometimes, people who should be actually be doing the corrective things and giving the guidance and making sure things don't go awry aren't willing to do that. They're willing to abdicate that responsibility to you because they don't want to be the bad guy. Sometimes that is very much present and I have to tell myself, okay, this is not for you. Call the supervisor and let the supervisor deal with it. This should not be your call.

Participant 9 shared how he manages his staff and makes sure that they can work independently:

I can only think of if things are really busy. I may not be updated as quickly as I would like. I think it'll be me staying on top of what's going on with the client and the workers. In terms of making sure, I guess reminding. It would have situations, something may come up or a question may be asked from the higher up. If I don't know, that would be a

reminder. I wasn't aware of this, I need to answer this so please next time make sure that I'm aware of it. That's a work in progress.

Participant 10 added that he has a short patience for people who do not do their work properly and that they are supposed to be independent and responsible:

I have a short fuse when it comes to getting things done or taking actions against persons who are not doing what they're supposed to do. As I said before, I'm about speed and accuracy and getting it done. If you come here and you're paid a particular salary to get something done, then I think you should get it done. I have no patience for that type of activities. It wouldn't take me long to recommend actions be taken against persons who are not living up to their standard.

Theme B2: Strict sanctions when deemed needed.

Participant 2 stated how he strictly enforces the proper and just actions and sanctions when his staff members are deemed to have not acted accordingly:

I think I've done some of that. I think that goes back to when I say understanding that they are overwhelmed so a lot of times I would overlook disciplinary action. Sometimes I don't think it's warranted because they do a lot of good hard work. They make a mistake in another area, you just feel like you need to be balancing it. Maybe a few warning letters, but I've never suspended upper management or middle management. There may be one case of a termination. I've done a few terminations, well other than the ones I had to let go because of funding. In terms of performance, letting people go because they didn't do a good job or deviated from the norm. Now, I signed off on any number of them that have to go out for one reason or another, but they're not under my direct report. Maybe drug, substance abuse, founded in their system because we do random drug testing, I sign off. They might have been arguing, fighting, I sign off. My team is not doing what they're supposed to do.

Participant 3 added that through policies and procedures, his employees or staff members are guided:

When I came on the job, it was a mess, but I never one time said to my staff, to my boss, anybody, this happen before me. No, I'm on the job now and it's my job to fix it. Since I've been here, I've drafted at least 19 policies and procedures and we enforce them. That's why, since I've been on board as well, all of our audits have been seamless. We have passed every audit since I've been here. We had audit appeals standing, in process, we won them simply because I revamped the entire policy and procedure process from my unit. It's because I'm active and I accept that issues happen, problems happen, but we have to solve it. If we standardize certain tasks, and put it in writing, and hold the people accountable we should have no issues. Yes, through the policies and procedures.

Participant 8 believes that there should be fair judgment and process if there are issues present with the employees:

We have supervisions and if there is something to be corrected, I usually give verbal warnings. I'm not quick to write somebody up. I do verbal warnings then I have a conversation with the employee and my supervisor. I hope that, okay. I talked about it with you and you didn't do anything about it. Hopefully by the time it gets to me, you, and my supervisor, you do something about it. I do that given the fact that we're working with adults, people make mistakes. I think everybody should be given an opportunity to correct it before we start doing progressive discipline. You document it and you send it up.

Theme B3: Two sides of the picture should be considered.

Participant 5 had a different view of management by exception and explained that there can be two things that should be considered:

So much of what we're doing at this level doesn't lend itself to that type of thinking. It actually almost speaks to being safe, if you manage that you simply want to be safe, you can kind of keep doing what you've been doing and you won't ever get in trouble. You never grow or improve your organization. The penalty for mistakes equals the amount of creativity and innovation you're going to get. The more mistakes or failures are punished, the less creativity or innovation you're going to get. The more mistakes are tolerated, when someone was trying to do their best, trying to do something new, or trying to improve something, the more motivation and creativity you're going to get. I believe in that.

Contingent Rewards.

Theme C1. Connections and networking built through the office.

Participant 1 shared how contingent rewards work in his office, mainly through the connections and networking that they build:

This is what I talked about earlier, about trying to help people do their flex time. About allowing them to continue their education by exposing them to trips to go here and there; to expand their specific topic of interest. Also trying to find slots in the organizational chart where we could constantly move them forward so that their being rewarded monetarily. Looking for ways to get them even in other agencies. I write letters of recommendation. And one of the things that I did for one of my staffers, she was trying to get a house and she was having problems so I just call somebody. She told me why they disqualified her basically and I said that didn't sound right. So I call somebody for her and they actually re-evaluated her application. It turned out it was done wrong and she ended up getting back into the program. So, all those little ancillary services, introducing them to people when I go out. Sometimes if I tell staffers, you coming to this with me. Introducing them to people; telling people about them so that they have more exposure in

the community and they know more leaders. So when people think about people, it's all about networking [and] connections.

Theme C2. Advantages received by working in the office.

Participant 2 admitted that there are no financial bonuses but perks and advantages are always available for loyal staff members:

The presence of it is that we've always said to the staff and that it's even the senior staff who have been working, as well as me, for the last nine years without one single raise – you cannot get a raise. We are not giving raises; however, you can get perks. You can get days off, you can get gift certificates, different things like that we can provide. I would even be happy to give bonuses, but we never really got that bonus program designed and approved by the board. Perhaps merit type bonuses and stuff could be given for incentives to do better. I would fully be in support of something like that. They were clear on the fact that they couldn't get certain things, but then, you also try to show them the intangible rewards and benefits that leadership or that incentive. Go out and do this because it's going to make a difference for you and the team. It could save us money and then maybe we'll have money later on to give you as a bonus. There is a constant need to reinforce to staff that we may not get the reward of money but we get the reward of doing a better job; getting people to see that we can do this.

Participant 3 also stated that the contingent rewards come through grants from the office to their followers or staff members:

I'm territorial. I'm a grant writer by heart so I am always writing grants. I got a grant to do a training and I'm taking the entire staff to St. Thomas from the 13th to the 16th to give them professional development training outside of their roles, cross-functional training to open their minds and to reward them for doing well on their job. It's like, okay, you've done this, you're good at this, now next. They're excited. This is the second year we're doing it. That's all they're talking about right now. I reward them through, like I said, with the technology, I do comp Fridays, I do a lot of different things to let them see they're appreciated. Number two, well, what could be number one is that they're needed. Look, we need you, but I don't need you with a bad attitude. I don't need you in this state; I need you like this and I know it's there. What can I do to help you get there? Once they get there, I reward them because they want to do more and I show that.

Participant 4 again explained that financial rewards cannot be granted easily but publicly praising employees can always bring their morale:

Publicly praising employees in senior staff meetings, much to their surprise. Try to give them raises or hire them staff, but I can't because of budgetary constraints and request by the [job title of supervisor] that if any raises will be done, anything, first to the rank and file, people out in the field, before any senior level or executive level person get a raise, which I like because they don't get much. A lot of them have poor spending habits. I try to publicly praise, get them what they need as staff, but I have to communicate back to them that the CFO said no because there is no money to support the hiring of these

employees so these salaries can be paid. I try to help them see the benefit of going on training. They're paying for everything and the per diem is sweet; 75 bucks a day? Who eats that much in a day? You can lump your vacation into that, but you have to pay for the difference in your ticket. They can call me or e-mail me at any time and I will always answer; always.

Participant 5:

We have a workforce that have not gotten pay increases in 10 years. Some people's been 8, 6, 14, but probably close to average or they've been very, very minimal increases. That's the Virgin Islands government, that's not just [department name]. On the one hand, the presence of unions and so much of the workforce, the unions have insisted they're not buying bonuses, differential pay, or what not because their job is to bring everybody along. You lose that as motivation. Even with the exempt employees, it's been almost impossible, with extraordinarily few exceptions, to reward specific people. Some have taken on huge, extra roles and responsibilities. One thing that has been very common here, and I guess other government leaders I've talked to, someone in a higher management leaves, someone belows them gets promoted into that position but the position they're leaving never gets filled so they have to do both jobs.

Participant 6 comes up with his own ways of rewarding his staff:

I'm pretty good at that. One of the things I pride myself in is I do reward for good performance. In my office, not just with my staff but with other senators, we work together, come together as one. Often times, I go out of my way to help individuals. For my staff, what I do is that if I see that they are going beyond the call of duty, I come up with ways of rewarding them, not just financially. It's just a matter of being a servant, seeing what they're doing. One of the things, and this will probably be addressed in the next question and I should hold on, but that a leader often do is sometimes neglect or forget that individuals go beyond their scope of duty, because they take it for granted. That's something people must stop doing. In my office here, my senate office, my staff are the best paid staff in the entire legislation. For the most part, I do believe in performance rewarding; I strongly believe in that. I tell my staff, you keep doing your best; I will try to do the best for you.

Participant 9:

We don't have the luxury of having any monetary rewards for staff. Leadership wise, they know that it's not tangible, because it's not that I can give you this bonus or I can give you that. That's not an option. The attitude of the office is important. I've never been in that kind of workplace so I don't really know how that would work; that's why I'm not stuffy. Meaning that I don't expect you sitting at your desk all day being tense. There is no you can't have conversations in the hallway. I know sometimes you have to process and vent.

Participant 10 straightforwardly answered that the salary and other small advantages that the employees receive are not enough as the “reward or rewards” for them:

Yes. Well, some. In terms of rewards such as though we’re obligated to provide a Christmas party and that type of stuff, I think that’s too far, too demanding, and expecting too much. I don’t think the department is required to provide that type of incentive. You come to work and you employed. To me, the salary that you get for 2 weeks is enough incentive; enough reward.

Theme C3. Public and personal acknowledgement of the employees.

Participant 7 shared how he personally rewards his employees or staff members, by taking and praising them for hard work:

There is only so much you can do in government in terms of what people first think of in regards to reward. One of the things that I do more and more is offer thanks and praise. Acknowledge work well done. Say encouraging things. I don’t try to hold a specific employee or supervisor or [job title] up as an example to other [job title] because that really does not go over well. I try to say thanks and recognize work well done and try to make everyone feel appreciated and value their contribution and time. I have a reputation of being really severe. If you can get the document gone without sending it to me, you’ll probably do that because if you send it to [participant’s name] she [is] going [to] probably find a comma that’s missing. When I do get stuff with all the commas and everything in the right place, I make a big deal; woo-hoo!

Participant 8 shared the give and take on contingent rewards:

As I mentioned before, there is once a year when we do evaluation but in reference to rewards, I do birthdays, special gifts for [job function] month, which is in March, and Christmas, the breakfast. At times I do good job; praise is one. I also do give and take.

Research Question 5: What is the perceived impact of government senior executives’ leadership styles on employees and the USVI?

Theme A: Inspiration to the people.

Participant 1 described how he believes that he positively raises the vibration of the room or the mood of the office whenever he is around as is inspires them as their leader:

I think I inspire people. One of the things that I do is I practice raising the vibration of the room. It sounds strange but wherever I go, people naturally smile when they see me. That’s power. Because you bring good vibes all the time. Your ability to go in front of people and to speak and project energy. Knowing you walk around in the morning and you see-, and I learn this because I had two supervisors who used to put work in front of me. And the one supervisor, when she came in the morning, she walked through the office saying morning. Good morning everyone, she’s categorically late. That was her

thing. But when she get to work, she to work. She walks through, good morning. And by the time she was done, everybody in the room was charged up and ready to go. The other supervisor walk in late too. Dark sunglasses on. Grumbling morning. You can see, the mood of the whole building go down when she walked to her desk. And it really show me about how much energy really affects your employees and environment you work in. Like, this whole floor, right, the mood up here is different than if you go downstairs. That's projection, that's the vibration you try to keep all the time.

Participant 4 stated how being pleasant and accessible in the public sector can make a huge difference:

That they find that it's okay to be pleasant. It's okay to be accessible and that's important in the public sector but just life in general. At the same time, people have seen my warrior side where I meet with a contractor or potential contractor. Everyone has a side to them when pushed, you push back. That shows there's a side to them, a balance. I'm not so out of touch with reality. There comes a time when I have to get pointed with people, including my boss, and she gets it. She knows that generally I'm like this but if I'm being pushed in the wrong direction, I will say, I need you to know and I'll change my tone and slow my pace down, if need be I will raise my voice, but I'll try to keep it in check. I will try to end the conversation quickly or look the person in the eye and let them know this is what I'm saying. I think that's important. Knowing that being pleasant and accessible doesn't take away from your ability to be a person that plays by the books. That's important.

Participant 6 believes that he is a positive leader to his employees and to the people he serves:

I see myself as a positive leader. I try to be calm and collect when it comes to crisis. I try to make time for everybody. In terms of being a positive influence, I go out there among the public and I try to understand what is going on. For the most part, I think I've done a pretty good job. Often times leaders are so engrossed in their job that they stay within their own little cocoon. They understand what the problem is but they don't go out there to see how the problem is affecting the average individual. One of the things I like to do is approach individuals. I like to see what's going on in the community and I think that has been positive.

Theme B: Loved by the followers or staff members.

Participant 2 confidently shared that he is loved by his staff members and followers as they fight and protect each other as a team:

I think my employees would all say I'm a good leader. They like me. They love me. I am not being narcissistic or anything. I just know because you get a lot of love and feel a lot of love. I try to make sure that they feel loved? And I will continue to lead and struggle and fight the fight for them. I think some may say that I have at times been a little, and I do this sometimes for good reason, but it's not always done appropriately, sometimes I

can be a little harsh. There were times when they used to say that I was more harsh than I am now, so I have greatly improved.

Participant 7 believes that being a down to earth leader is the key:

On the employees, for the ones who I am close enough to, for them to recognize that I am consistent and I'm down to earth. I think they know there's a level of excellence, not perfection that I expect. Don't send me a document, this may sound superficial and detail oriented, that's not properly written or looks crazy on the paper or that's copied crooked. Don't send me a document where you don't provide a proper justification based on what the statutes are. My effect on the employees who I come into contact with they have to raise the level of whatever it is they do. You can't just do it any ol' way. On the Virgin Islands, I don't think it has any effect on the Virgin Islands. On a certain level some folks view me as a nuisance; she's always upset about something. What is her trouble? Why don't you just let it slide? Isn't it easier to just let it slide? In my corner of the world, I try to make as much difference as I can in terms of insuring if it's going to leave the department, it's going to be something of excellence. If it's going to leave the department with my signature on it, even worse, but I am aware enough to know that I don't make that much of a difference. If I'm here today, not here tomorrow, give them maybe a couple days to miss me or my influence or my effect. I really don't think I have any effect on the Virgin Islands.

Participant 8 shared how his leadership style has evolved to working as a team:

As far as my leadership style goes, I think the impact is working my staff as a team. There is five of us in the [job duty] unit and we're all equally valuable. We all have different roles but we need to work together as a team. That's something to teach the staff, even when you're not at work, work as a team wherever you go.

Theme C: Development of confidence to be the successor of leaders in the future.

Participant 3 shared how he has developed enough confidence to trust his staff members and be their successors in the future:

Wow, for my 49 staff members, we had a training the other day. I broke them down into managers, team leads, and then line staff. The team leads are people that show management potential, then you have the managers. I assign one team lead to each manager. If you leave, the business never stops. If I leave, I have someone right there – she knows everything I do. It doesn't stop. I am not intimidated to teach her everything because I'm here for a while. When you look at our measures, and we were considered an at-risk state for my unit, and they were considering privatizing, and now we are receiving more money than ever before. We completely turn around the program, even to the point where we are looking at becoming solvent. We don't even borrow anymore to pay benefits; we don't. We bring in enough money.

Participant 5 stated how hard work and effort is needed in leadership positions and must be seen by the other aspiring leaders as well:

There's no break. The very first day I tried to take a day off, after I had this job for a while, I got called by both the governor and his wife for work. There's been a bar-, even though I don't think that's the general public perception of us right now. I think the general public's perception is that they can't wait for us to go but there has been this idea that government is supposed to work for the people and supposed to work hard and take those tasks seriously. I hope that gets seen. I know when I came to this job, I left a position I could have comfortably stayed in for the rest of my working life and where I was very liked both in the agency and the general public.

Participant 9 also shared how he has trained his members enough for him to be confident to have them lead in the future:

I have no question or no doubt that any worker could leave here in the office and represent the U.S. Virgin Islands and have the most level of professionalism. They know what is expected. I know how they carry themselves. There wouldn't be a question of oh my God they put her up there to talk, that's not good. Like I said, you can air your dirty laundry in house, process then get it off your chest, but you know when you go out the door how to represent the office so I'm confident in that.

Theme D: Negative reaction due to the strict rules and regulations of the leader.

Participant 10 admitted that given his strict leadership practices, he believes that negative impact has also emerged through the reaction of his employees and staff members:

My leadership style, the impact is, I don't know if it is accepted or liked. The impact of my leadership style is folks know where I stand. I am not here for foolishness. Let's get it done; that's always my bottom line. It has to be done; let's get it done. Some may not like that so the impact may be employees not liking me. I have no problem with that because I'm here to get the work done. I don't think the impact would affect productivity. It all has to go with personality as to whether someone likes you or not. The only thing I can think of the impact is negativity towards the individual who is setting down strict rules and regulations. You know as well as I do, when they work for the government folks figure this is the government I can do what I want, however I want and I could be laid back.

Research Question 6: How does brain drain affect the leadership styles of government senior executives in the USVI?

Theme A: Not enough new and energetic support group due to work force imbalance; thus, effectiveness was reduced.

Participant 1 stated that brain drain affects his leadership style as for him to be fully effective, he needs a group of people to help him and reach that high level. However, given the imbalance in the workforce, there is a shortage in the new and energetic young individuals to work with:

I think brain drain affects my leadership style because in order for me to be truly effective, or for any leader to be truly effective, you have to reach critical mass. And critical mass is when you get enough people, that are like-minded and progressive enough, where you going to tip the scale; where the whole organization just goes in that direction. Not having young people, and when I say young people, even people who are not so young, people who seen other things and worked in other places, to come into your environment. Like everywhere you go there's a complainer, there's a doer, there's person who you always go to. They always have the resources. There's somebody in payroll, who always fix up your check. There's one of those everywhere and when you work in multiple places, you know that. So, you're used to different work environments. But when you only been in one, you think, that's the only place like this. Those people are able to move and they bring skills and they bring environment, especially if it's a good working environment or they want to do stuff. And they appreciate the freedom of this environment because they help people who are just like them.

Participant 3 shared how losing more people has caused him negative effects as these are his trusted and most efficient members:

I had some good people that left. Yes, Hovensa closed. I had one that got a degree and said, you know, I can't stay here. What am I really going to do here? It affected my staff from an emotional standpoint. I have some of my best friends that are away and they want to come back home but there's no opportunity. I see when the people come in here and they change their addresses cause they relocating to the states, to transfer their benefits. This is a real problem. Not only that people who have experience under their belt moving, but those that are fresh out of school, that we can personally influence are leaving. That means our culture is becoming watered down because when they leave, they adapt the other culture. It affects me all around. Personally, with my own family and friends, all of my sisters are away. They're like, to work in the government, are you kidding me? My family is away. My brother is leaving in the next few weeks. I will be the only sibling here. It hurts. I feel like if we put our heads together we can create so much more opportunity. I lose staff members that I've put so much into. People at church-, my church went down in size. Certain people you used to see, you don't see them anymore. I teach at my church. I see the students, it's cut in half. Friends and little kids that played together, they're not there anymore. It's affecting all around. I don't know when it's going to stop. It's a very serious issue and I don't think we pay enough attention to it.

Participant 5 also added that that there is a lack of skilled individuals nowadays which further causes brain drain:

Before you hire any kind [of] significant position, you should think through, what am I looking for? What would the ideal candidate bring to this job? So often in the Virgin

Islands, the combination of experience, the right attitude-, experience that shows you the person can do the job, that they can function in that environment, and then the right attitude. You often don't get all three. It's not that there aren't talented people out there that could do all those three because sometimes that part is really missing is the knowledge of the community. Those folks who have that are now living in the states now. The answer is it can sometimes affect you if you're not able to get the candidate with all the attributes you want.

Participant 6 echoed how the lack of support from the younger group causes brain drain and affect greater issues:

It's hard when you don't have the necessary personnel resource. As the [position in department] it is hard to find individuals to fill in certain vacancy. Right now we have several vacancies. Many individuals left for economic reasons; left the territory. Throughout the entire territory we are coming up to a serious brain drain which is requiring us to bring people from the outside, which is not cost effective at all.

Theme B: Frustration given the lack of respect and belief for the leader.

Participant 2 admitted that she gets frustrated with the lack of respect and belief for her capabilities as a leader:

The first thought, I think I might have touched on it earlier, I think it's a positive and a negative for me as a leader because I came back home. I could have stayed in the states. I worked in the states for a while. I came back home and I expected to be respected but often times you're not. When people talk to me about brain drain, and the children them ain't coming home, and we need to create an environment for them to come home, I say yeah, but there's a flip side to that. You create an environment to come home and then you disrespect me and then want to get some other expert's opinion because I can't be that smart. My leadership has been fighting against the tide all the time. I know my stuff. At the same time, it can either foster brain drain, because I'm sick of this, I'm out of here. You guys don't want to listen to what I have to say. I went to school to get all this knowledge and I know people who respect it more, want it more so I won't be here. I'm gone. I need to bring more people home so how do I mentor them? How do I create an environment so they feel like they should come home? I try to simplify that by how I act, what I do, and how I present myself so I could mentor certain people who are here and hope they don't take flight as well. I think a lot of times they don't take flight cause there's not a role for them to play in this particular area, but it's about that social issue. I think I try to lead in a manner that encourages them to come, but at the same time I'm very sensitive as to the reason why they leave. I try to demonstrate my leadership, my knowledge, and my skills in a manner where people will start to respect more, the talent that we have, that we need to pull back home.

Theme C: Stress from training and skill development.

Participant 4 admitted that too much training can be draining for a leader:

I don't know how it does because I'm getting so much training, which I think happens in part because I'm the only [job title] there and I hope it's because I work really hard. They want to reward me as much as they can. For example, I would at the last minute put in a request to go to St. Thomas and they'll approve it. Then again, it's only for airfare so it's not a big deal.

Theme D: Constant aim to reach greater heights.

Participant 7 shared that he indeed wants to achieve more and more as time passes by:

I take seriously being competent. I have not yet gotten to the point where I think I know enough or have learned enough or have enough initials behind my name although that's not the goal. I'm always striving to learn more, to be able to do better, to raise the level of competence, and I'm here; I'm not trying to leave. I think that's important.

Participant 8 stated that he has an aim for greater things but knows when he should stop so as not to get affected much by brain drain and stress:

I keep my options open. I like my job and I like what I do but I also have aspirations of what I want to do later on in life. I am not planning to work for [department name] for the next 30 years or until I retire at the age-, I think you need to put in 30 years in order to retire and get full benefits. I'm not planning to do that because I want to do something else. I'm not planning to leave the Virgin Islands next year or within the next 3 years and a part of that is because I have young children. That factors into whether or not I can just get up and leave the island with my family. As far as leaving the Virgin Islands for a little while, I'm keeping my options open, knowing that in a couple years, I want to do something else. It's also good experience to live in different places. At this point I'm not ready to leave the Virgin Islands and go to the mainland or any other country.

Theme E: Stress from personal and family issues.

Participant 9 shared how her personal and family issues have been causing brain drain but has not affected her work as much:

No. I can honestly say no because I can do me until the point where I leave. I'm not the oh, whatever happens, happens, I may be out of here. No, that's not my thought. I'm going to do what I have to do and continue to be a professional, cause that's just the person that I am. Continue to do the job and try to think outside the box, brainstorm, look at different opportunities, try and see what we can do to make things different for the population that we work with cause this population I've worked with for the majority of my career. But if I do plan on leaving, then, according to my mother, you never want them to be happy to see you leave. You always want to make sure you leave on a good

end. I will definitely continue to do all that I've been doing even if I make a decision to move.

Theme F: No perceived effects.

Participant 10:

The work is getting done despite some pulling and tugging. There's so little in this department; maybe four or five people did post high school work. A lot of the positions do not require highly qualified individuals. Brain drain does not necessarily mean advanced degrees too because you have persons who might just have a 12th grade education but they have superb skills. It's not affecting my leadership style.

Research Question 7: What do government senior executives recommend to decrease and prevent brain drain in the USVI?

Theme A: Increased budget allotment and effort for young individuals to go to college with developing and fast-rising courses.

Participant 1 shared how he believes it is important to allot more budget to sending younger people to college and majoring in courses that could help the industry and economy of the country:

There's two things I think we should do is every [job title], every year, should hire two people. They should pay them 40 grand, two college grads. Pay them 40 grand a year, every year. You work for a year with a [job title] on specific projects, doing real work within your field. After that year, during the year you get together and you do other things, you meet other people when working. You can work on group projects and whatever, but after the year, now, you have a year to find a new job. So, either you get slotted in that department or you go someplace else to work. And you; so no matter what, your resume now says you been in the [department] as a special assistant for a year. So you already have something. And the other thing we can do is, even if we don't do it in every department, we organize a program where we subsidize it in the specific growth industries that we want to see. Like aviation, finance and accounting. Now listen, the government is going to say, we're going to put up 20 grand for 10 people, \$200,000, to study in these fields. Now, places like social work and education, and healthcare, we already have the need there. There's no need to do that. But the growth industries that we want to see, aviation, marine, [and] financial services, we could do that. We could start doing that and getting people moving along those lines. That's one way, and if we do 20 people a year, in four years that's 80 people. That's 80 college grads with good work experience that supplanted to the Virgin Islands. And it don't cost us that much money, you know.

Participant 2 also added how an increased focus on the young intellectual individuals can take a positive effect in the long run:

First of all, it's an economic development issue that lies at the bottom of everything. You talk about energy and all these other kind of things, they affect economic investment and development but you don't create the pool or the need for resources some of these children have. The other thing is we're not critically looking at those who stay and what their skill level is because they have brains. So the brain drain is always in reference to the intellectual ones who went to college/grad school and got a degree but you have a bunch of them here that are creative. They have sports, cuisine, arts, or some other kind of skills. How can we then package that so they help to develop this economy so they don't leave, because they leave too. You have wonderful chefs all over the world that come from the Virgin Islands. You have dancers that come from the Virgin Islands. Why can't we be the premier place for food or dance. It's outside of my chosen field but I think that's another way to look at brain drain; don't just look at it as your college educated engineers, lawyers, doctors, and that type of people. What about that high school or vocational technology training kid that can do more here for us as well? That's what I would say to improve the brain drain. Consider how we can create opportunity and reasons for those who are here, but contemplating moving away, to stay.

Participant 3 stated how he believes that there should be an active recruitment campaign and development for the talents of the young individuals:

I think that we need to have an active recruiting campaign. Meaning, we need to really look at the jobs. Change and upgrade the job description. Recruit people that can truly do the job. By that I mean, the same Department of Personnel, they can do a whole thing on their website, where they put a bunch of jobs out there, that when people retire out of, they update it, upgrade the job description, make it more current. Encourage people from away to have first preference for those jobs. I'm not saying that the locals can't apply, they can apply, but first preference go to bring those back home. Give them some type of incentive, to move back home.

Participant 4 again emphasized on the need to fully develop a sector that would focus on training and honing skills of the younger generation for better productivity:

We would have to develop a sector or an industry that would necessitate a highly skilled, and trained, and educated work force. That's the only thing. With Hovensa you had a lot of engineers. In Silicon Valley you've got the tech industry. You have to have a sector or industry that would pull them back. I'm not in favor of an industry that has a negative impact on the environment. Hovensa was great for a lot of us but it comes with some drawbacks. Even with a company like Hovensa, you had a reason to come back as an engineer, permit writer, even in HR, all the divisions, because they hired local. It is the industry that drives the skill set of the people. Outside of that, they need to improve our public school system.

Participant 5 also discussed that more opportunities should be given to younger individuals:

We have to create more opportunities. All the connectivity, the internet, the power that we're going to have, is going to help do that. I don't think you have as much young people growing up that say I want to work for the government my whole career. You can't have all the best paying jobs in the government. I don't know salaries as compared to say [interviewer's employment] but I know people here get double for similar type of work and the benefits of course are much greater.

Participant 6 suggested fixing the social infrastructure:

We have to fix our infrastructure right away. When I say fix our infrastructure, not just our physical infrastructure, but our social infrastructure. We have to ensure that locals, our people, when they finish school, they have something to come back to. We have not been doing a good job. We also have to fulfill the recreational aspect of their lives, and we're not doing that. You have to look at it from all different points of view. You have someone that go to the mainland and they do 2, 4, 6 years of school and they live out there for a while. When they come back here just to visit, they often miss certain commodities that they are already used to. Somehow we have to fill that gap. It's not always financial. It's not always about ensuring that they have the best paying jobs, but it's the simple things that when we live in the mainland we take for granted that's being provided here. Take a look at our roads, that's one thing. We have to maintain our road

Participant 7 also added that USVI should value their own pool of local talents and professionals:

I think we need to start to value our own. When Virgin Islanders come back home and they're willing to lend their talents and knowledge and their skills they developed, we need to value it and value them. I don't know what to say in terms of government, other than we need to probably change the mentality that government needs to be the employer of everyone because there's a bottleneck that's created at the top and unless the people on the top move, the people on the bottom can't move up. The income level is something that's not easily fixed. Even if you are not making a lot of money but you feel valued or you are treated as though you're valuable, your input or expertise is valuable, you're respected, it balances it out. Those two things will go a long way to reducing brain drain, valuing people who come back, who contribute, and creating opportunities for those who do come home. Hopefully that will have a multiplying effect and create more opportunities for more people to come home rather than having them leave.

Participant 9 stated that there is a need for people to get educated to keep the economy going:

That can help you get your people educated and get them to invest or bring back what they know into the government and get it where it needs to go. Even the private sector will benefit because they also have government loans. Workers can transition if their private sector economy is on the up and up. They may not stay in government forever but they may do it to keep the economy going.

Theme B: Proper compensation for the professionals.**Participant 8 suggested that there should be enough and proper compensation for the employees in order to repay their hard work and decrease or prevent brain drain:**

Higher pay. The pay rate for [job title] in the Virgin Islands is low. Quite frankly, if I'm a [job title] and I'm getting \$40,000 in the Virgin Islands and I know that I can go to Texas and get, based on my experience and what's available, whether my job title changes or not, I can get \$60,000 or \$80,000, I'm going to leave. That person has to make the determination as far as housing, whether it balances out, you have to pay rent, now that they have to pay tax and different things based on the amount that their getting paid. I would leave. The pay rate is low for a lot of jobs in the Virgin Islands. Opportunities to grow, in reference to your career, I think that's limited, to be promoted to higher levels. A part of it has to do with the fact that the Virgin Islands is surrounded by water. If I was living in New York, I could get a job in a neighboring state and so I just drive over. You can't drive anywhere here; we're not connected to anything. That lack of mobility, from one state to the next, also contributes to people leaving. If St. Croix and St. Thomas was connected I could still live in St. Croix, where I would be spending my money but I could have a job in St. Thomas. It would be less likely that I would leave St. Croix. If you need to get a job somewhere else or get a promotion or a higher paid job, you would have to go off island to get it.

Theme C: Promote loyalty and willingness to serve the USVI.**Participant 10:**

We need to, but I don't know who needs to do it, promote a sense of home, nationality, [and] community. Let me give you a good example. I went to school in Florida. I finish college I think June 2nd and in less than 24 hours I was back home. If there was a flight leaving from Miami the same day I would have come back home the same day. We drove down to Miami; there were no flights so I was on the plane the first thing the next morning. That's how badly I want to come home and make my contribution here.

Appendix G: NIH Protecting Human Rights Certificate

