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Adaptive Leadership During Times of Great Change and Opportunity: Building Adaptive
Capacity as Perceived by Community Emergency Response Team Program Managers

A Dissertation by

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Irvine, California

School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

April 2024

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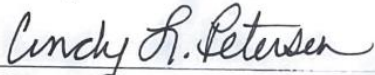
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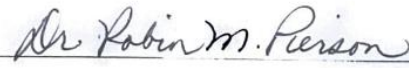
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April 2024

Adaptive Leadership During Times of Great Change and Opportunity: Building Adaptive
Capacity as Perceived by Community Emergency Response Team Program Managers

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IN MEMORY

This dissertation honors those who went before me and those who left too soon. My loving parents, Thomas and Delores, set the foundation for hard work and dedication that helped me to excel to new heights. My sisters, Pamela and Monsita, had a heart of gold. They exemplified the meaning of true queens who fixed the crowns of others to be successful. My brothers Emmanuel, Kelvin, and Timothy. They were known as protectors of their kingdom. They were my backbone and support when I needed them. My son-in-law, aka ‘Chef Alex,’ had a quiet yet beautiful spirit about him. He taught me culinary techniques that wowed guests. I honor the many cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents who departed this life but remained forever in my heart. I stand on the shoulders of my ancestors, who paved the path to reaching my goals and lifted me to higher heights throughout the dissertation journey.

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To the Washington State Community Emergency Response Team program managers, thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to avail yourself to be participants in my study. Your support was the catalyst for my research.

Last but not least, I want to acknowledge my chair, committee members, and the thematic team for their hard work and dedication throughout the dissertation. The

collaborative effort is why we made it as a team. “*Teamwork makes a dream work*” – John Maxwell. Thank you, team, and much success in your future endeavors.

ABSTRACT

Adaptive Leadership During Times of Great Change and Opportunity: Building Adaptive

Capacity as Perceived by Community Emergency Response Team Program Managers

by Ramona Gresham

Purpose: The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009).

Methodology: This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of 10 to build an adaptive capacity. The purposeful, convenience sampling frame was used to identify 10 participants who met the study's criteria. The semistructured, open-ended interview protocol was developed by a thematic research team of nine peers and three faculty advisors. The data collected from interviews and artifacts were evaluated to capture themes related to the study's research questions.

Findings: The analysis of data collected from interviews and artifacts resulted in 955 frequencies across 25 major themes. Five major findings emerged from these themes and key findings.

Conclusions: Seven conclusions were obtained based on the study's major findings and literature. CERT program managers build adaptive capacity by (a) aligning organizational processes to policies, (b) providing access to professional training and development, (c) reflecting on meeting and training practices as a leader, and (d) embracing failure as a learning opportunity.

Recommendations: Further research is recommended to develop a course curriculum that incorporates leadership strategies that align with Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five characteristics of adaptive leadership within the Federal Emergency Management Agency CERT programs and Washington State Leadership Summit. The course provides strategies for CERT program managers at the federal, state, and local municipalities with practical principles for building adaptive capacity within their organizations. The interactive training focuses on enhancing leadership skills and building relationships among CERT program stakeholders across Washington state municipalities.

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PREFACE

Following collaborative discussions regarding adaptive leadership during times of great change and opportunity, nine doctoral students, in collaboration with faculty researchers, developed a common interest in investigating how organizational leaders build an adaptive capacity. This resulted in a thematic study conducted by the research team. This exploratory phenomenological methods study focused on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the strategies used by organizational leaders to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009) as perceived by the community emergency response team (CERT) program managers in Washington state.

Participants were selected by each member of the thematic research team from various organizations to examine what strategies leaders use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics. The five key characteristics are making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. Next, I interviewed 10 CERT program managers to determine what leadership strategies were used to build an organization's adaptive capacity. The team cocreated the purpose statement, research questions, definitions, interview questions, survey, and study procedures to ensure thematic consistency and reliability. Throughout the study, the term *peer researchers* was used to refer to the other researchers who conducted this thematic

study. Each peer researcher studied a different organization with populations in middle school public school principals, community-based nonprofit leaders, public school special education directors, small school district superintendents, community emergency response team (CERT) program managers, Navy command senior enlisted leaders (CSEL), public school superintendents, nurse executives, and on-site multifamily rental property management leaders.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Leadership in times of uncertainty can be challenging. It often requires risks that can be potentially dangerous for leaders and those around them when dealing with hidden conflict and the familiar reality of the people while preventing burnout (Heifetz & Linsky, 2017). These challenges are seen everywhere, and increased disasters and epidemics weigh heavily on communities worldwide. In particular, CERT members are departing the profession because of burnout or retirement (Cerullo, 2020). With the effects of climate change, the dangers of viral pandemics, and unnatural disasters, agencies have shut down, and leaders are finding these departures troubling for the organizations.

Community members have lost lives to the virus, and others perished in harsh blizzards, volcanoes, and flooding locally and abroad. These global events highlighted the significance of community emergency response teams (CERT) members' availability during times of challenge (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2021a). The ability of leaders to refocus using critical thinking that allows them to maintain a broader perspective in their attention and manage teams effectively during uncertainty is key to the organization's viability (E. L. Baker et al., 2020). Leaders are essential to building resilience in disaster response. During challenging times, they must provide direction, protection, and a return to order (Heifetz & Linsky, 2017; Murphy, 2018; Norman & Binka, 2015). Therefore, leaders must rely on crisis management experiences, situational awareness, and leadership skills to transform barriers to resistance into an adaptivity capacity to achieve organizational change (FEMA, 2022b).

Boin et al. (2010) contended that not all decisions are clear, and managers have felt the pressures of political bureaucrats dealing with governance. Similarly, Christensen et al. (2016) suggested that crisis management is considered an essential government responsibility but challenging to discharge. When thinking politically, managers face those who resist change and those who support it (L. Anderson & Anderson, 2010). Dealing with a crisis is a constraint for any agency and requires quick decisions in challenging times. These distractions pose risks for managers to lead and maintain an adaptive capacity for the organization. Therefore, scholarly researchers suggest that managers rely on situational awareness and experiences to effectively make sound decisions that encourage team members to participate in serving the community (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Boin et al., 2010; Woolard, 2018).

Many researchers believe adaptive leadership is not based on a position but on interaction using skills to motivate people through challenging situations that build adaptive capacity for learning and leading change (Bright, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009; Norman & Binka, 2015; Roth, 2022). Leadership skills in a crisis set the tone and possess the capabilities to influence and motivate members to produce adaptive capacity for sustainable organizational change (Heckler, 2011; Queen, 2011). Therefore, leadership skills are necessary for leading, developing, and sharing opportunities with team members. Leaders who provide opportunities to be creative from the bottom up will engage and motivate members to sustain the organization's effectiveness (Cahill, 2021; Stogdill, 1948).

Given these problems, this study explored CERT program managers' strategies to build an organization's adaptive capacity. The analysis identified managers' adaptive

leadership during times of great challenges and opportunities. The strategy used by CERT program managers in Washington provides an understanding of the processes used to build adaptive capacity using Heifetz's adaptive leadership concepts. The next section provides the foundation for the research.

Background

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, emergency response has been challenging for communities across the globe. Many have lost lives to the virus, and others perished in the New York blizzard and volcanoes and flooding in various regions worldwide. During massive disasters, there is a constraint on emergency responders' availability and the value of their services (Bright, 2011; Epps, 2021; FEMA, 2017). Times of great change require leadership that can lead through the challenges and constraints and bring stability to the organization.

In 1994, Ronald Heifetz, Senior Lecturer in Public Leadership and Founding Director of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard Kennedy School, was noted for his seminal works in adaptive leadership (Northouse, 2016). Heifetz's ground-breaking book *Leadership Without Easy Answers* led some researchers (Cojocar, 2008; Heckler, 2011) to suggest a course of action course on developing adaptive leadership as a guide for leaders dealing with challenges to be successful at leading change in today's workplace. In response to leading change, Heifetz's (1994) publications dealt with adaptive capacity in social settings for organizations globally.

Many authors define adaptive leadership as the individuals' ability to influence behaviors while interacting in informal contexts to mobilize people to tackle tough challenges and thrive (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Heckler, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009;

Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). In comparison, Epps (2021) noted that adaptive leadership is not about individuals and how well they are doing but about understanding adaptive pressures to engage people and successfully lead change. Cojocar (2008) commented that Heifetz's adaptive challenges require changes in behavior, innovative learning, and creativity. These ideas led to early and contemporary works on adaptive leadership.

Early and Contemporary Works on Adaptive Leadership

Early 20th Century

In the early 20th century, the concept of leadership began with the "trait approach" (Moore, 1927). However, the study moved to men leading the way. The concept of men leading is known as the "great man" theory (Freud, 1956). The approach focused on the attributes of men from a social-political perspective. According to Northouse (2016), people with these traits possess exceptional leadership skills. However, by the mid-20th century, the theory was contested by scholarly writers.

Mid-20th Century

In the mid-20th century, scholars challenged the leading theory about the trait approach. In contrast, Stogdill's (1948) works did not differentiate leaders from followers. The concept of being born with leadership traits caught the attention of other scholars. Bass and Stogdill (1990) were curious about the difference between leaders and followers. The research between Bass and Stogdill led to the pursuit of different theories on the influence of leadership (Bryman et al., 1992; Greenleaf, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). These studies have evolved in the late 20th and 21st centuries.

Late 20th to 21st Century

Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership set the foundation for leadership in the 21st century. The authors provided theories on adaptive leadership and how this study has evolved using change in leadership strategies. Scholarly writers continue to use Heifetz's study as an instrument for leaders to nurture shared responsibilities using decision-making models and motivational methods for organizational change (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Klonsky, 2010). The following section provides leadership models developed by scholarly writers.

Leadership Models

Servant Leadership

In 1970, Greenleaf espoused servant leadership in his seminal works. The approach was based on two concepts serve "first" and while serving, "do those under the leader's tutelage grow to become servants?" (Greenleaf, 2008, p. 15). Over time, scholarly writers thought of servant leaders as having trait-based behaviors. This concept led researchers to identify 10 characteristics that became the first model for conceptualizing servant leadership (Spears, 2002).

Transformational Leadership

In the mid-1980s, Bass and Riggio (1985) expanded Burns's (1978) and House's (1976) model on transformation. Bass commented that the theory lifts consciousness, peaks self-interest, and addresses the follower's needs (Northouse, 2016). Bass's model provided four factors that conceptualized the definition of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is used to engage and connect with people to enhance the motivation of the follower and the leader (Northouse, 2016). The concept shows the

leader's ability to assist followers in reaching their fullest potential. The author mentioned that transformational leaders influence workers' performance by enhancing engagement and commitment to an interrelationship (Buck, 2018).

Transactional Leadership

The transactional leadership model was determined to be contrary to the transformational model. The writer suggests that transactional leaders are self-absorbed and do not see the needs or development of others (Northouse, 2016), and the transaction model's primary focus is the exchange between the leader and the follower. The three factors for this model focus on short-term outcomes. Scholarly authors suggest that transformational leaders have more effective work outcomes than transactional leaders (Lowe et al., 1996).

Theoretical Foundations

Heifetz provided the foundation for adaptive leadership. Adaptive leadership is an approach that focuses on a leader's ability to effect organizational change (Heifetz et al., 2009). It suggests that adaptive leaders are self-aware and possess situational insights to assess adaptive challenges and resilience to produce opportunities concerning the organization and the people. Multiple scholars have agreed that an adaptive leader uses systems thinking to influence members and promote business growth (Heckler, 2011; Klonsky, 2010; Queen, 2011; Sweetman, 2010). The following approaches provide leaders with insights into an adaptive environment.

Adaptive Challenges

Researchers have suggested that problems leaders experience and need to address are considered adaptive challenges (Heifetz & Linsky, 2017). These challenges create

experiments, discoveries, and adjustments that shift behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs to effective organizational change when leaders ascend to the balcony (Epps, 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009). The change requires adaptation to the new environment, which challenges the status quo and can be emotionally exhausting against resistance to change (L. Anderson & Anderson, 2010) but creates resilience in leaders.

Resilience Theory

According to Northouse (2016), “Resilience is the capacity to recover from and adjust to adverse situations” (p. 204). Leading adaptive change tests one’s resolve. Resilience requires grit during challenging times. Therefore, Northouse suggested that adaptive leaders must have compassion and resilience to bounce back and feel refreshed when developing solutions to problems (Epps, 2021; Northouse, 2016).

Systems Theory

Systems theory allows for an understanding of the connections between various parts of the organization and how they interact with one another (Sridharan, 2023). Organizations are considered an entity of subsystems that interact and interrelate with each other in an organization. Senge and Sterman (1992) suggested that it is a method in which people describe and understand languages and the forces behind the relationships that are shaped by the environment. Systems theory is a valuable tool used to understand the behaviors and development of members within the system that provides opportunities for successful organizational change. This concept is an easy approach to apply; however, should one of the multiple systems falter, there is a domino effect for the other system to fail within the organization.

Theoretical Framework

The literature on adaptive leadership (Bright, 2011; Cahill, 2021; Cojocar, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009) has suggested that adaptive leadership explores the leader's ability to identify and address adaptive challenges, to adapt and thrive over time, and to develop adaptive capacity within the organization. Cojocar (2008) and Enchil (2020) stated that an adaptive leader can function in challenging situations by helping others solve their concerns using decision making. Similarly, Heckler (2011) contended that adaptive leadership challenges the status quo to effect organizational change. Epps (2021), Klonsky (2010), and Queen (2011) mentioned the association between adaptive leadership and shared leadership in members' enhancing their relationships and behaviors and promoting growth. Sweetman (2010) suggested that an adaptive leader interacts with members through collaboration and communication, accountability, commitment, and trust attributes. The literature on adaptive leadership provided an in-depth theoretical framework for the research study.

Building an adaptive culture presents challenges and opportunities for leaders. Therefore, the leader must foster the characteristics of an adaptive culture to become an organizational norm. Heifetz et al. (2009) defined these characteristics as making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing self-reflection and continuous learning. When applying and cultivating the following characteristics, they help to assess the organization's adaptive capacity.

Making Naming Elephants in the Room the Norm

When naming the elephant in the room, no question is off-limits. Discussing the undiscussable requires an adaptive leader and alleviates hardships for members of the organization (Klonsky, 2010). However, this does not give members the authority to challenge senior leaders but helps establish norms.

Nurturing Shared Responsibility for the Organization

Many organizations use incentives to motivate members to perform. On the other hand, nurturing shared responsibilities suggests that a high-capacity organization with an adaptability component is bound to work efficiently (Heifetz et al., 2009). Nurturing shared responsibility provides an opportunity for developing new skills and enhanced knowledge of the organization's mission.

Encouraging Independent Judgment

Organizations that encourage decision making value the judgments of the people. Heifetz et al. (2009) contended that encouraging independent judgment values the members and accomplishes the organization's mission. The concept allows members to use critical thinking and initiatives outside the job requirement for adaptive works.

Building Leadership Capacity

Individualized professional development is established when the leader understands the organization's long-term goals. Heifetz et al. (2009) believed that when people take a long-term view, they sense a personal investment in the business. Developing leadership capacity seeks to foster the skills of high-potential employees and prepare them for future leadership positions.

Institutionalization Self-Reflection and Continuous Learning

Organizations with adaptive capacity are capable of reflection and life-long learning in developing norms. Being open to learning is essential to the organization's adaptability (Heifetz et al., 2009). The concept helps leaders who self-reflect provide an opportunity for sharing, learning, development, and growth from experience.

Community Emergency Response Teams

In February 1985, Los Angeles city officials explored Japan's earthquake preparedness plan (Community Emergency Response Team Los Angeles [CERT-LA], 2022). The group identified harmony among the Japanese community because of their extensive training in predisaster preparedness. Later that year, Mexico experienced a devastating earthquake, but the people did not receive preparedness training. However, groups of people came together to conduct search and rescue missions. The lesson learned from the two regions was to formulate training with volunteers to help their community during a disaster.

In 1986, the City of Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) developed a CERT pilot program. The concept of the CERT program was to educate volunteers on preparedness during a national disaster. The increase in disasters has shown a need to expand the program nationally.

In 1993, CERT became a federal function as part of FEMA. FEMA, in conjunction with the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and LAFD, created an all-hazards program and extended the training for teams of community volunteers. The teams conduct training of individuals to meet the needs of family members and the

neighborhood during a disaster. The training includes basic fire suppression, light search and rescue, and first aid.

The CERT program manager oversees the CERT team volunteers and training programs before, during, and after a severe emergency or major disaster (EMI, 2013).

The managers ensure that CERT teams possess the necessary prerequisites and essential tools to train local communities. According to Thomas Menino, Former Mayor of Boston, “Leaders should try to build cores of citizen responders. No city will be able to manage a crisis and rebuild ... without the help of its people” (EMI, 2018, p. 4).

Therefore, CERT program managers reinforce the teams and training programs to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

Adaptive Leadership Functions of CERT Program Manager

CERT program managers are important in providing organization, development, supervision, and direction for their teams and the CERT program. The theoretical framework chosen for this research is a lens through which to study these leaders and their work. The literature informs the field on various aspects of adaptive leadership, from functions to core beliefs to key components and more. Cojocar (2008) explained that the adaptive functions of a leader have three core beliefs. First, leadership can be taught. Several authors acknowledged that positive behaviors and actions effect positive change (Bright, 2011; Epps, 2021; Klonsky, 2010). Next, Cojocar (2008) stated that adaptable organizations contain leadership within the organization through shared leadership. Bright (2011), Buck (2018), and Epps (2021) commented that shared leadership provides an opportunity for greater responsibilities and a feeling of commitment to the organization. Klonsky (2010) suggested that shared leadership

provides opportunities for influential leaders at all levels of the organization to succeed. Several authors commented that these leadership functions are vital in motivating, nurturing shared responsibility, and engaging organization members (Klonsky, 2010; Northouse, 2016; Sweetman, 2010). Finally, Cojocar (2008) noted that adaptive leadership has the potential to encounter resistance to adaptive change. Epps (2021) wrote that inadequate communication and uncertainty produce resistance to change. Therefore, leaders identifying these behaviors can determine the motivation and constraints on members of an organization.

Statement of the Research Problem

There is a significant amount of literature on the global impact of communities in times of crisis. Despite the literature, leaders needed to prepare for the worldwide impact of COVID-19 and the local weather patterns of 2005 Hurricane Katrina; the 2022 blizzard in Buffalo, New York; wildfires; and the 2023 heat wave. The relief efforts blamed CERT program managers for failing to respond (Boin et al., 2010; Disraelly, 2012; Hague, 2016). These disasters caused numerous people to perish. However, Brock Long, the FEMA administrator, contended that the National Incident Management System is current and engages partners and practitioners from various disciplines (FEMA, 2017). In retrospect, there needs to be more knowledge of the CERT program manager's ability to incorporate adaptive leadership during times of great change and opportunity. Roth (2022) and Queen (2011) surmised that organizations with ineffective leadership and collaboration can lead to problems and often fail during a crisis. Epps (2021) believed integrating critical thinking in CERT programs would foster resilience during an emergency. Given these problems, this study explored the adaptive leadership

of local CERT organizations and seeks to answer CERT program managers' strategies to build an organization's adaptive capacity.

Furthermore, the adaptive approach limits the leader's ability to lead change organizations and is perceived as subjective (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Klonsky, 2010). Similarly, Klonsky (2010) and Sweetman (2010) suggested that top-down directives typically fail because they limit organizational creativity and commitment. Limiting CERT program managers in their ability to use shared responsibilities to motivate people can leave members confused and uncertain about the functions of a CERT program manager.

Cahill (2021) suggested that positive behavior is a strategy to motivate members. In contrast, Buck (2018) and Klonsky (2010) noted that emotional behaviors create adaptive challenges for leaders. Therefore, leaders are to focus on a mutual viewpoint regarding adaptive functions. Cojocar (2008) explained that the adaptive functions of a leader have three core beliefs: leadership can be taught, adaptive leaders use shared responsibilities, and leaders encounter resistance to change.

Resistance is common when dealing with transformational change (L. Anderson & Anderson, 2010). CERT program managers are known to deal with bureaucratic challenges in a crisis. Boin et al. (2010) contended that political leaders challenge CERT program managers during large-scale disasters. These challenges require managers to know their leadership roles, political styles, critical thinking, and resilience during uncertainty. In comparison, Cojocar (2008) described Heifetz's adaptive challenges as problems that require new learning, innovation, and new patterns of behavior. The skill set would prove valuable to building adaptive capacity for the organization. Nevertheless,

CERT program managers are limited in policies, aligning the organization to current practices and producing positive outcomes for leading adaptive change (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Enchil, 2020).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009).

Research Questions

Central Research Question

What strategies do community emergency response team (CERT) program managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning)?

Subquestions

1. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through making naming elephants in the room the norm?
2. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through nurturing shared responsibility for the organization?
3. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through encouraging independent judgment?

4. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?
5. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?

Significance of the Problem

The leadership roles of CERT program managers are vital to serving communities before, during, and after an incident (FEMA, 2017). CERT program managers are accountable for overseeing CERT teams and disaster sites during an incident. Boin et al. (2010) suggested that managers are politically challenged during large-scale disasters, which require using political styles and resilience to overcome these constraints to make sound decisions. According to E. L. Baker et al. (2020), "In times of stress, the process of sound decision making can suffer. Leaders tend to be preoccupied with events that can lead to short-term focus and reactive posturing" (p. 378). This environment can lead to burnout for managers and cause their departure. Research has shown that the nonavailability of members constrains the organization and creates a problem in supporting emergency managers and the local community (Bright, 2011; Epps, 2021; FEMA, 2017).

Nevertheless, managers must rely on their leadership skills to effectively make sound decisions in building capacity to serve the members and community (E. L. Baker et al., 2020). An effective organization has the potential to engage members, increase productivity, and enhance satisfaction. Applying the concept of adaptive leadership to internal and external systems can benefit the organization. Organizational change can improve effectiveness and efficiency and enhance relationships (D. Anderson, 2017).

However, leaders must be willing to communicate the change process to their stakeholders. This change process can be challenging yet rewarding for leaders. Roth (2022) stated, “The ability of leaders to navigate their organization during times of crisis and uncertainty has emerged as key factors in how organizations fared, and whether they thrived, survived, or perished” (p. 1).

This topic is essential because it sets the foundation from a historical perspective on leadership in the 21st century (Cojocar, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016). Several researchers have provided theories on leadership and how this study has evolved. The change in early-century strategies allows leaders to nurture shared responsibilities using motivational methods for CERT program managers. This study identified and explored the strategies used by organizational CERT program managers to build an adaptive capacity (Bright, 2011; Ferris et al., 2002; Heifetz et al., 2009; Murphy, 2018; Norman & Binka, 2015; Queen, 2011; Woolard, 2018). The study provides a strong argument for the leadership to make a compelling and committed organization. According to L. Anderson and Anderson (2010), “When the intelligent people we have hired into our organization understand the bigger picture of what is driving change, they are always more likely to commit to it” (p. 31).

This research is important because it explores the CERT program manager’s leadership skills using Heifetz’s five characteristics of adaptive leadership and the ability to build an adaptive capacity that brings stability to the organization during times of challenges and opportunities. Second, the study results provide a foundation for integrating adaptive leadership among CERT program managers. The findings can be useful in future studies and to learn about CERT program managers’ ability to build

adaptive capacity, the constraints leaders face, and the ability to maximize their services to the community. Finally, the research will provide situational awareness to policymakers about needed changes in practices and policies for integrating adaptive leadership for future decision making.

Adaptive Leadership Definitions

The following section defines the terms developed by peer researchers studying the adaptive leader. Heifetz et al. (2009) proposed the five characteristics of adaptive leadership.

Making naming elephants in the room the norm. The act of openly addressing sensitive underlying issues, or undiscussables, to resolve potential barriers that interfere with an organization realizing its full potential (A. C. Baker, 2004; Heifetz et al., 2009; Toegel & Barsoux, 2019).

Nurturing shared responsibility for the organization. The collective ownership across team member roles for the decision making of operational goals and outcomes of the organization's future (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Northouse, 2016; Tremblay et al., 2016).

Encouraging independent judgment. A leader's capacity to provide an opportunity for team members to make choices based on personal and professional experience regardless of the position held within the organization's structure (Casavant et al., 1995; Heifetz et al., 2009; Shanbhag, 2002).

Developing leadership capacity. The systemic focus on expanding competencies and resources and intentionally motivating groups or individuals to increase leadership

potential proactively (Carnoy et al., 2003; Eade, 1997, 2007; Eyben et al., 2006; Harris, 2011; Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009; Sharratt & Fullan, 2009).

Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning are providing a culture conducive to the safe exploration of new ideas and sharing of lessons learned both from an individual and organizational perspective and creating a sustainable learning culture driven by a willingness to overcome engrained mental models across all levels of the organization (Cojocar, 2008; Pearson & Smith, 1986; Ramalingam et al., 2020; Senge et al., 2015; Veldsman & Johnson, 2016; Vera & Crossan, 2004).

Operational Definitions

Adaptive capacity. CERT program managers maintain an organization's ability to adapt and thrive over time by identifying and addressing the challenges they are currently facing.

Adaptive leadership. CERT program managers use practices of mobilizing people to overcome tough challenges and thrive.

CERT program manager(s). CERT program managers oversee and manage the functions of CERT teams. The leader possesses the necessary certifications to serve in the position and is proficient in managing and training volunteer teams in disaster preparedness.

Collaborative. CERT program managers create and sustain a transparent relationship among individuals and organizations to instill trust, create a team environment, build harmony, and establish effective communication.

Comprehensive. CERT program managers consider all spectrums of threats/hazards at all levels, incorporate all stakeholders, and assess the impact of disasters.

Constructive conflict. CERT program managers communicate their desires and interests to others and share the rationales behind those interests.

Coordinated. CERT program managers orchestrate the event with all pertinent stakeholders to achieve common goals.

Credentialing. CERT program managers provide relevant documentation that authenticates the qualifications for a specific position.

Crisis management. CERT program managers provide relevant crisis management principles specific to mitigating, planning, reacting, and recovering from disasters and other emergencies.

Emergency support function. CERT program managers ensure the convening of governmental and specific private sectors into an organizational structure to provide resources and services to manage national incidents.

Flexible. CERT program managers use innovative approaches to resolve disaster challenges.

Institutionalization. CERT program managers provide a culture conducive to the safe exploring of new ideas and the sharing of lessons learned.

Integrated. CERT program managers ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and community elements.

Professional. CERT program managers understand the significance of the science and knowledge approach used to train and develop skills, ethics, public management, and continuous improvement.

Progressive. CERT program managers foresee future disasters by taking protective, preventative, and preparative methods to develop disaster-resistant and resilient communities.

Response: CERT program managers possess the necessary skills to save people and safeguard property and the environment while meeting basic human needs after a disaster.

Risk driven: CERT program managers use comprehensive risk-management guidance associated with identifying the threat/hazard, risk assessment, and impact in allocating priorities and resources.

Whole community: CERT program managers create an environment that focuses on a diverse group of stakeholders from the private, nonprofit, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the general public sectors, including all levels of government, to enable participation in incident management events and cultivate better harmonization and working relationships.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to 10 CERT program managers in Washington state counties who met four of the six criteria:

- evidence of successful relationships with stakeholders
- evidence of breaking through conflict to achieve organizational success
- five or more years of experience in that profession or field

- evidence of having written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings
- recognition by their peers
- membership in associations of groups focused on their field

Organization of the Study

Chapter I presented the background and purpose of this study, which investigated CERT program managers at the county level in Washington, building adaptive leadership during times of challenges and opportunities to produce extraordinary results. Chapter II reviews the literature, the theoretical background, theoretical foundations, and the leadership experiences and practices of CERT program managers in building adaptive leadership. Chapter III outlines the study's methodology and describes the research questions, population, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter IV presents the major findings of the study, implications for action, and recommendations for further research. Finally, Chapter V examines the conclusion, implications, and recommendations based on the data obtained during the study.

Summary

The background study provided information on historical perspectives, leadership models, theoretical foundations and frameworks, and functions of adaptive leadership. The information contained insights into the adaptive process for building on adaptive capacity. The approach studied CERT program managers in applying the strategies of adaptive works within their organization. The objective is the CERT program manager's ability to build adaptive capacity to lead a changed organization during challenges and opportunities.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

Chapter II provides a comprehensive review of the literature grounded in Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership theory, described in the book, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. Adaptive leadership is the seminal work of Heifetz (1994) that is embedded in a social context to influence behaviors. These principles are guided by five characteristics of adaptive leadership to explore the perceptions of community emergency response team (CERT) program managers building adaptive capacity within the organization. The review of the literature is organized into these main sections: an introduction, a brief history of leadership, theoretical foundations, the theoretical framework, the role of CERT program managers, and the impact of adaptive leadership on CERT program managers. Each section has a context that leads to the fundamentals of adaptive leadership. The chapter concludes with a summary of the theories, framework, and historical context of CERT program managers. The following section introduces the adaptive leadership study as it pertains to CERT program managers.

Introduction

Leadership has been studied for centuries to understand the behaviors and actions of individuals within an organization to effect positive results (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Cojocar, 2008; Northouse, 2016). There is an abundance of literature that outline the roles of managers in a crisis, which continues to evolve in the changing roles of CERT programs during a disaster (Boin et al., 2010; Brooks et al., 2019; Christensen et al., 2016; Naradko, 2017; Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019; Roth, 2022; Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018); however, the limited literature on CERT program managers' perceptions of the use of

adaptive leadership has yet to be revealed. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA, 2022c) implemented CERT programs nationwide to support individuals and communities during disasters. The programs were designed to collaborate, educate, and integrate resources into the local communities during emergencies.

CERT program managers have been challenged with leading CERT programs when faced with people, policies, and politics while managing a crisis (Boin et al., 2010). As disasters evolve, the emergency management field has found it difficult to keep program managers and deal with declining medical personnel and the response of government officials to serve the local communities (Cerullo, 2020; FEMA, 2022c, 2022d; Kapucu & Van Wart, 2006; Pecujlija et al., 2015). The demands placed on program managers are far greater than what was required of them. Many researchers mentioned that human capacity has been stretched beyond thin, and most do not feel their services are valued or appreciated (Bright, 2011; Brooks et al., 2019; Cerullo, 2020; Epps, 2021; FEMA, 2020b). Traversing between federal, state, and local policies including maintaining a team of volunteers to support the mission in a demanding role can be overwhelming (Cerullo, 2020; FEMA, 2022d; Kapucu & Van Wart, 2006; Lorange, 2010). To build an environment conducive to adaptive leadership, CERT program managers must work with the emerging role of public sectors while dealing with catastrophic disasters to build adaptive capacity in and outside of the organization (Kapucu & Van Wart, 2006). This study on adaptive leadership uses leadership models and theories to capture the lived experiences of CERT program managers. This study explores and describes what strategies CERT program managers used to build adaptive

capacity during times of great change and opportunity using the five characteristics of adaptive leadership as presented by Heifetz et al. (2009).

Global Perspective

Crisis Management

The term “crisis management” is widely used; however, it is not clearly defined and has become complicated. A number of authors (Alvintzi & Eder; 2010; Tisdale, 2022; Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018) define crisis management as an intervention process to mitigate or minimize the threat to the organization’s operations, social norms, and core values. Alvintzi and Eder (2010) suggested that a crisis stems from being ill-informed and having limited time and a lack of resources that leaders use to make critical decisions. In contrast, literature from diverse disciplines has communicated that the definitions associated with the crisis have become a negative connotation or dangerous events that require an interagency effort between emergency and crisis to decrease the vulnerability to a hazard (Devitt & Borodzicz, 2008; FEMA, 2011; Kesetovic & Toth, 2012, as cited in Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019; Office of Civil Defense [OCD], n.d.). However, history has shown an increase in crises during various natural and man-made events (Adagba, 2018; FEMA, 2022d; Kapucu & Van Wart, 2006; Naradko, 2017). The conflict with assimilating a crisis first begins in the development of civilization between the threat of nature and humans and how the modern crisis is noticeable when people become powerless and organizational capacity and national preparedness lack sufficiency (FEMA, 2017 Pecujlija et al., 2015).

One such modern crisis was the COVID-19 pandemic. On December 31, 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) was notified of the COVID-19 global outbreak;

however, the director general of the WHO declared COVID-19 an outbreak and a public health emergency of international concern a month later on January 30, 2020 (WHO, 2023b). The WHO's role is vital in its efforts to support countries globally by responding and recovering from emergencies that create public health crises (WHO, 2023a).

Literature has mentioned that in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, countries worldwide enforced lockdown protocols that generated travel restrictions, an economic crisis, and vaccine inequity for vulnerable people; however, the challenges created a learning opportunity from these responses to foster mitigation of a global environmental crisis (Bouman et al., 2021; Ramalingam et al., 2020; WHO, 2023b). These events created a domino effect in which lives were disrupted as people struggled to function worldwide including suspending or canceling CERT program training and exercises (FEMA, 2022d; Johnson & Uwaoma, 2023). Researchers have suggested that government agencies and their leaders are typically blamed for the lack of response to threats, lack of transparency, and relief efforts (Boin et al., 2010; Bouman et al., 2021; Brooks et al., 2019; Christensen et al., 2016; Disraelly, 2012; Pyle, 2014; Ramalingam et al., 2020). At the time, the WHO identified 98 COVID-19 cases, and no country outside of China reported any deaths (WHO, 2023b). The outbreak of the virus was first reported in Wuhan China as the SARS-CoV-2 virus. However, the virus remains a global emergency, and many global leaders face uncertainty on priorities when the disease has spread or there is the risk of new variants and the potential for future surges. Researchers have emphasized that perceptions have the tendency to expose the effectiveness of an organization's planning processes during a crisis (Bell & Martin, 2019; Bouman et al., 2021; Brooks et al., 2019; Christensen et al., 2016; Kantur & Iser-Say, 2012). However,

Christensen et al. (2016) recommended better coordination between the actions and the diverse perceptions of the organization.

In addition, the catastrophic events of floods from storms, earthquakes, terrorist attacks, and the 2023 extreme heat waves and wildfires posed worldwide threats to public health (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010; FEMA, 2020b, 2022d; Wells et al., 2013). Global warming increases frequent windstorms, hurricanes, winter storms, and wildfires in Canada, Hawaii, and the United States (NASA Earth Observatory, 2023; National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration [NOAA], 2022). Experts predict flooding will increase from 2021 to 2051, destroying residential homes and critical infrastructure by 10% and 6%, respectively (FEMA, 2022d; NOAA, 2022). These disasters have a huge effect on society as a whole with the economies' price increase of food, gas, and housing to include job loss and the closing of businesses (Johnson & Uwaoma, 2023). The impact of the disasters caused millions to suffer or perish from diseases, injuries, loss of businesses, and destruction of property (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010; FEMA, 2017, 2022d). Regardless of the type of crisis, the attention toward the issues has provoked emotional responses, fear among people, and the loss of an organization's reputation (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010; Boin et al., 2010; Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019). The opinions of people during a crisis show the overall operation, safety, and character of the business (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010; Brooks et al., 2019; FEMA, 2022d; Hardy, 2022; Roth, 2022).

In response to the pandemic, on March 23, 2020, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee declared a "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order that banned all social, spiritual, and recreational gatherings; the only exception was essential personnel (Washington State Office of the Governor, 2020). CERT program managers struggled through COVID-19,

which impacted engagement between the leadership and volunteers. In the process of social distancing, most of the essential personnel and volunteers departed the organization (Cerullo, 2020; FEMA, 2022d). The lack of communication left members needing to be more informed about the viability of organizations. The literature identified organizations and people trying to mitigate crises by establishing crisis management as a preventive protocol to coordinate and track resources (FEMA, 2017; Naradko; 2017; Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019). Many researchers emphasized crisis management protocols are being used worldwide to mitigate the loss of life and property during a crisis (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010, Brooks et al., 2019; FEMA, 2011, 2017, 2020b; Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019; Roth, 2022; Tisdale, 2022). Despite the intentions of prevention, global crises continue to happen frequently, including earthquakes and hurricanes (FEMA, 2022d). Therefore, CERT program managers' use of leadership skills is essential during a crisis to make sense of increasingly complex situations and make decisions for the best approach to produce positive outcomes (Hardy, 2022).

Leadership Skills in a Crisis

In times of crisis, leaders must act, but many may be inadequately trained, be without experience in the field, or not know how to respond. At the time of this writing for example, the Maui fire occurred leaving over 7,000 residents without homes (Arango & Schell, 2023), and many perished because of a lack of response. According to the Associated Press (2023), the death toll was 97 people, and 31 were missing; however, officials suggested that the numbers could potentially rise.

On August 7, 2023, before 11 p.m., a security camera captured a bright spark in the wood line which was caused by a tree falling on a power line, hitting the dry brush,

and creating a small fire (Alfonseca, 2023). The fire department doused the fire and though it was 100% contained; however, the fire reignited and the heavy winds caused the fire to spread. The fire department could not access water from the fire hydrant because responders were overcome by the fire. During this time, the residents did not receive any warning from the government to evacuate the area, but when the residents did leave they found themselves halted by traffic. Many of the residents believed that this catastrophic disaster could have been avoided had government officials, the electric company, and the fire department leaders heeded the warning from the initial fire early that morning and responded in a timely manner (Lin et al., 2023). However, government officials blamed the electric company, but the Maui Fire exposed weaknesses in the island's disaster mitigation and lack of a fire evacuation plan.

Joseph Pluta, president of the WEST Maui Taxpayers Association., wanted to work with the Maui Emergency Management Agency to create a wildfire plan after the 2018 fire that destroyed 20 homes in Lahaina, but officials turned down his plan (Lin et al., 2023). The Maui officials did not learn from previous wildfires in the area. It appeared that Joseph Pluta was willing to use his leadership skills in response to government officials' missteps. Epps (2021) believed missteps and inadequate and uncertain communication result in resistance to change during a crisis.

A leader implementing an organization's change initiatives during turbulent times can encounter resistance, which can become challenging for any leader and requires adaption to developing situations (L. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Cojocar, 2008; Hayes et al., 2021; Lorange, 2010; S. Mann, 2012; Tisdale, 2022). In her book, *The Purpose of Power*, Garza (2020) mentioned the purpose of power is to use leadership skills to

influence the behaviors of others and create change. Lorange (2010) suggested that leaders should not look at the threats that caused the turbulence but should redirect their attention to opportunities during times of turbulence.

Another recent misstep in crisis leadership involved the director of the WHO organization. The director's position was to guide regions on the prevention and transmission of the COVID-19 virus by promoting health, keeping the world safe, and helping vulnerable populations (WHO, 2023c). Based on technical guidance to confront the pandemic and strengthen global health, emergency response was challenging for large-scale events (Ramalingam et al., 2020; Wells et al., 2013; WHO, 2023c). The director of WHO faced technical problems in leading global leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic, receiving accurate data from world leaders, and conveying necessary steps to mitigate the crisis (WHO, 2023c). An effective response requires detailed planning and coordination from those involved in the community to mitigate a crisis (FEMA, 2022a, 2022d). Heifetz et al. (2009) mentioned that solutions to technical challenges work in an authoritative position, leaving out stakeholders and creating obstacles to effect global collaboration.

Leading adaptive teams in a crisis requires confidence, openness, inclusion, and culpability of actions (Garibaldi, 2016; Ramalingam et al., 2020). Hayes et al. (2021) mentioned that nontechnical skills for emergency management teams' framework share common skills in communication and collaboration, teamwork, decision making, situational awareness, leadership, and coping with stress and fatigue. Scholarly writers have emphasized the importance of relying on their leadership skills for interacting with members in making sound decisions to gain effective performance, building adaptive

capacity, and building relationships within the organization through training and development (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Bell & Martin, 2019; Heifetz, 1994; Tisdale, 2022). Scholarly literature has mentioned two forms of leadership, assigned and emergent; assigned leadership is based on title or position and emergent is acquiring support from followers (Northouse, 2016). Many researchers believe adaptive leadership is not based on a position but requires competence in a crisis and human behavior skills to interact with members by motivating people through challenging situations and building adaptive capacity for learning and leading change (Bright, 2011; Hayes et al., 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009; Norman & Binka, 2015; Roth, 2022). Cojocar (2008) and Parks (2005) mentioned one of the core beliefs of the adaptive function is that leadership can be taught.

Those who lead CERT programs range in various roles such as CERT contact, sponsoring organization contact, program manager or possess the necessary skills to lead CERT teams (FEMA, 2021a). The prerequisite for the position is Basic CERT Training and Introduction to CERT. The course length is a total of 20 hr in 1 week within a virtual classroom setting. The hours consist of 4 hr per day for 4 days and 4 hr of self-study (EMI, 2020). The sessions are virtual learning; however, students must be present for all sessions (Emergency Management Institute [EMI], 2020; FEMA, 2023b). Upon completion, CERT program managers have obtained skills in establishing and sustaining an active local CERT program (EMI, 2020; FEMA, 2023b). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the required course objectives. The knowledge provided has guided members to pursue continual learning and certification through the EMI 2017 student portal. The course objectives and virtual training give program managers the necessary

skills and abilities to organize teams, provide support, and respond to emergencies within their perspective communities (EMI, 2020; FEMA, n.d.-a, 2020b, 2021a, 2022a, 2023b).

Table 1

CERT Program Manager Course Objectives

CERT program manager course objectives	
Days	Objective
1	Define the purpose and core components of a local CERT program.
1	Use strategic planning to define the mission and goals of a local CERT program.
2	Describe the purpose and strategies for promoting a local CERT program.
2	Establish a process for working with volunteers.
3	Establish a process for working with instructors.
3	Establish a process for acquiring and managing program resources.
4	Build a plan for delivering and managing safe training and exercises.
4	Describe the role of policies and procedures in operating a local CERT program.
5	Develop a process for evaluating a local CERT program.
5	Describe how to sustain a local CERT program.

Note. Adapted from “K0427 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Manager,” by Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2023b, Department of Homeland Security (bit.ly/460f86r).

Organizational Stability in a Crisis

The literature has suggested that leaders face uncertainty about the state of the economy, COVID-19 variants, and unpredictable weather patterns while maintaining the stability of the organization during a crisis (Boin et al., 2010; Brooks et al., 2019; Christensen et al., 2016; Khin Khin Oo & Rakthin, 2022). A crisis exposes the stability of the CERT program to threats, traumas, and loss, which degrade the organization’s stability (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010; FEMA, 2011, 2020b, 2022b). Enchil (2020) cited the

works of Cheon et al. (2009) in which dissatisfaction, frustration, and disagreement occur in a learned environment that does not meet the needs of the people. Khin Khin Oo and Rakthin (2022) recommended resilience as an important aspect of maintaining organizational stability. Scholars have argued that leaders use interpersonal communication skills and inclusivity to create the capacity to build trust, develop relationships, overcome challenges, and restore organizational stability (Bisel, 2018; Brewer & Westerman, 2018; Harvey & Drolet, 2006; Thomas & Woodruff, 1999; Umezurike, 2011; Woods, 2013). Thomas and Woodruff (1999) emphasized that all levels of leadership are challenged with diversity and varying degrees in addressing concerns and trying to resolve them so that personal and organizational objectives are achieved. The leader's communication must be continual to manage mindfulness, engage team members, and be transparent to establish trust based on action (Bisel, 2018; Harvey & Drolet, 2006; Tisdale, 2022). Researchers have argued that success starts with the leader's ability to adapt to the situation and be resourceful in developing, maintaining, and sustaining the organization's overall viability during challenging times (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010; Brooks et al., 2019; EMI, 2020; FEMA, 2020b, 2022b; Roth, 2022).

Buck (2018) noted that leadership plays a crucial role in organizational engagement, inclusivity, shared responsibility, and commitment, which positively impact the social constructs of the organization to motivate volunteers and enhance productivity. Researchers have suggested that engagement and transparency are ways to sustain and build relationships to include resilience with community members (Poulin, 2009; Thomas & Woodruff, 1999; Tisdale, 2022; Wells et al., 2013). However, other authors recognized member engagement as a management approach (Speevak-Sladowski et al., 2013).

Research has suggested that effective communication between leaders and followers creates a profound outcome of respect and compassion to sustain an organization and committed members during a crisis (Enchil, 2020; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Woods, 2013).

Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership style focuses on business systems that explore the interaction and engagement of members to effect change to create an adaptive culture while managing mature diversity self-awareness in an environment that supports leaders to effect change (Thomas & Woodruff, 1999). Scholarly writers have suggested that self-awareness is a continual process that is essential to the self-management of one's emotions to bring stability during challenging situations (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Maxwell, 2021). Many scholars agree that the productive outcomes of an organization are associated with an adaptive leader's ability to influence members and promote business growth and stability within the organization (Heckler, 2011; Klonsky, 2010; Queen, 2011; Sweetman, 2010). Organizational stability is not possible without effective leadership.

Historical Perspectives on Leadership

Brief History of Leadership

Leadership has become a valued commodity, and as society changes, the meaning of leadership has been modified on numerous occasions from a historical perspective to the 21st century (Khan et al., 2016; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016). Leadership began in 1790 B.C. as a form of working together during challenging times in which the individual who had taken charge was bestowed as the leader and the interconnectedness led to current trends (Early, 2017; Leaders Excellence, 2017).

During the Babylonian years under the leadership of Hammurabi, laws were established that brought the people together (Leaders Excellence, 2017; Richardson, 2004). Richardson (2004) wrote that Hammurabi was ordained as king because of his reverence for the gods, he was a descendant of royalty, and he improved the social injustices of the land. Hammurabi's laws are similar to the Ten Commandments, which deal with murder, agriculture, and social injustices in which the people were willing to follow the rule of law established by their leader (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017; Richardson, 2004). Hammurabi's laws covered the treatment of soldiers on and off the battlefield; however, Tzu believed that armies should be used as a last resort (Leaders Excellence, 2017; Richardson, 2004; Tzu, 2012).

In 500 B.C., Sun Tzu, a general and great military leader in the Chinese army wrote the book *Art of War*, which focused on political strategies that would prevent war (Leadership Excellence, 2017; Tzu, 2012). Tzu used leadership strategies to study war as a means to preserve life and survive war or death and not become a ruin (Leadership Excellence, 2017; Tzu, 2012). This concept of politics and human nature is used by today's military leaders. There are many definitions and approaches to leadership by scholars and practitioners that have made it difficult to agree upon which is the best (Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016).

For centuries, there have been numerous attempts to define the complex concepts of leadership (Early, 2017; Khan et al.; 2016; Northouse; 2016). Scholarly researchers worldwide have believed leadership developed from a derivative of world affairs such as politics, the military, and religion (Cojocar, 2008; Leaders Excellence, 2017; Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2011). The strategy has become relevant to the context in which it was applied

from main theories such as the great man theory, servant leadership, trait theory, transactional, and transformational (Early, 2017; Khan et al., 2016; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016).

Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish man who possessed influence over British idealism and was recognized by historians throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, believed in the accomplishments of man and the claim in his “great man theory” in which leaders are born with heroic potential (Jordan, 2021; Early, 2017). The *Sartor Resartus*, literature on heroes and hero worship, and religious pamphlets were the beginning of Carlyle’s ideas on the divine nature of mankind and their character (Jordan, 2021; Khan et al., 2016). At the time, the paradigm focused on the perceptions of what a leader should be (Callahan et al., 2007; Lee, 2018; Rost, 1993). However, the concept led Burns (1978) to challenge Carlyle’s claim. Burns suggested that the great man theory became irrelevant to the dynamics of organizational change, and he focused on the leader’s traits.

Bryman et al. (1992) and Moore (1927) defined leadership traits as the leader’s ability to influence those being led to produce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation (Cojocar, 2008; Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016). However, the traits approach had a different definition of leadership as domination and interaction with individuals who had a specific personality trait that eventually changed the behaviors of the group through influence (Maslanka, 2004; Stogdill, 1948). Scholars believed that the effectiveness of traits was appealing and contingent on the leader’s experience, and qualities in a social environment as an emerging influence (Khan et al. 2016; Northouse, 2016). In contrast, the theory was later questioned by scholarly writers on the differentiation of leaders and followers (Northouse, 2016; Stogdill, 1948).

Until the late 1940s, most theories of leadership focused on the personal traits of leaders but wanted to know about the behaviors and actions of followers (Bass, 2008, as cited in Northouse, 2016). Scholars noted the concept of leadership styles and behaviors continues to evolve because it disregarded prior theories (Khan et al. 2016; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016). A review of scholarly literature emphasized that leadership depended on leaders' abilities and personality characteristics, prompting researchers to further investigate the theory of leadership charisma developed by House (1976) used in sociological and political science to explain the leader's effects on followers. The concept was later characterized by Weber (1947), and it was seen as the followers' behaviors, acts, and dedication to the leader (Cojocar, 2008; Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016). However, the follower leader was modified over time to distinguish leadership from persuasion or coercion based on the leader's qualities (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Burns, 1978; Copeland, 1942; Heifetz, 1994; Hemphill, 1949). During this time, the leadership definition began to emerge as to the role of leaders in a group, their behavior, and their ability to influence others in achieving positive outcomes through interaction with members (Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016; Stogdill, 1948). In a review of the literature, Seeman (1960) described leadership roles and the person's ability to influence another in a shared direction. Researchers led to the pursuit of different theories on the influence of leadership related to transforming organizational behaviors among leaders and followers, leading to the concept of transformational leaders (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Burns, 1978; Ferris et al., 2002). However, Bass and Riggio (1985) recognized the use of rewards as a transactional contingent to obtain follower performance. Researchers differentiated the two concepts of transactional and transformational leadership based on

rewards or nurturing, respectively (Bass & Riggio, 1985; Burns, 1978; Khan et al., 2016; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016). The research of the literature on the history of leadership theories and styles provides the theoretical foundation for adaptive leadership and understanding how leaders practice this approach.

Theoretical Foundation

Adaptive leadership is an approach that focuses on a leader's ability to effect organizational change and suggests that leaders are self-aware and use insights to assess adaptive challenges and resilience to produce optimal outcomes for the organization and people (L. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2009). The theoretical foundation for the study of adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009) was derived from prior theoretical studies such as traits-based approach (Stogdill, 1948), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2008), transactional leadership (Bass & Riggio, 1985), and transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). The theories have evolved to encompass approaches relevant to adaptive leadership in building organizational capacity (Cojocar, 2008; Khan et al., 2016; Ramalingam et al., 2020). The theoretical foundation supports the practice of adaptive leadership.

Traits-Based Approach

In the early 20th century, the concept of leadership began with the trait approach (Moore, 1927). The approach focused on the attributes of men from a social-political perspective that conceived that people with these traits possess exceptional leadership skills (Northouse, 2016). In contrast, Stogdill's (1948) works did not differentiate leaders from followers. The concept of being born with leadership traits caught the attention of other scholars (Bryman et al., 1992; Greenleaf, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Hersey &

Blanchard, 1969). However, by the mid- to late-20th century, the theory was contested by scholarly writers on the leading theory about the trait approach being inaccessible (Bryman et al., 1992; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Stogdill (1948) studied hundreds of surveys to understand how individual traits contributed to leadership. Stogdill identified eight characteristics (intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, initiative, persistence, self-confidence, and sociability) a person serving in a leadership role possesses (Northouse, 2016). However, the results were inconsistent and suggested that people are not required to serve in leadership positions to have certain traits; this led to a new approach to leadership behaviors and situations (Early, 2017; Northouse, 2016).

Consequently, scholarly writers were not convinced because the traits-based study suggested that leadership was determined by a situation and not the leader's traits (Cojocar, 2008; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Northouse, 2016). Stogdill's (1974) second survey revealed that traits and situational circumstances were elements of leadership. The concept identified the following 10 characteristics related to leadership (Northouse, 2016):

- drive for responsibility and task completion,
- vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals,
- risk-taking and originality in problem solving,
- drive to exercise initiative in social situations,
- self-confidence and sense of personal identity,
- willingness to accept consequences of decision and action,
- readiness to absorb interpersonal stress,
- willingness to tolerate frustration and delay,

- ability to influence other people's behavior, and
- capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand.

R. D. Mann (1959) used a similar study of over a thousand participants to examine the traits and leadership of small groups. Mann's study focused on the traits and not the situation, and he mentioned that certain traits differentiated leaders from followers who possess six traits. These traits were intelligence, masculinity, adjustment, dominance, extraversion, and conservatism (Northouse, 2016). These studies have since evolved in the late 20th and 21st centuries; the studies placed emphasis on the leader's personality traits as being visionary and charismatic (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Early, 2017). Scholarly writers conceived that the attributes of a charismatic leader are an unrealistic influence that entails the perception that the leader is charismatic, confident, ethical, idealistic, and trustworthy (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) were curious about the difference between leaders and followers but believed in the importance of six leadership traits: drive, motivation, integrity, confidence, cognitive ability, and task skills. Kirkpatrick and Locke concluded that individuals are born with traits, can learn them, or there can be a combination of both inherent and learned traits, which led to the pursuit of different theories on the influence of leadership. Many scholars have written that leadership traits are connected to behaviors, intellect, and decision-making attributes, which are key traits to effective leaders (Bryman et al., 1992; Greenleaf, 2008; Hague, 2016; Heifetz et al., 2009; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). In all their models, it is evident that intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability were the foremost leadership traits (Northouse, 2016). Leaders who acknowledge these attributes increase self-awareness of attitudes,

social awareness, and behaviors to engage members and respond to situations (Avila, 2019; Bridges, 2004; Hayes et al., 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2017).

The study on the traits-based approach focused mainly on the leader in certain situations, not the follower, thus giving credence to the leader but creating difficulty in isolating specific traits (Cojocar, 2008; Northouse, 2016). Scholarly literature has suggested that leadership traits can be subjective and lack the framework to organize, work better in managerial positions, and provide an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses to improve leadership effectiveness (Hemphill, 1949; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Northouse, 2016). The traits-based approach mentioned that leaders and nonleaders can be taught; however, this can be ineffective in the training and development of leadership and engagement with followers given that personal traits are not flexible to change (Early, 2017; Northouse, 2016). Organizations were known to use assessments to determine the best fit of the leader based on their traits (Hayes et al., 2021; Hemphill, 1949; Northouse, 2016). Similarly, the traits are limited in addressing relationships among group members and organizational outcomes associated with growth and job satisfaction (Northouse, 2016).

Servant Leadership

Robert K. Greenleaf (1970) introduced servant leadership as his seminal work. The origins of servant leadership were established in Hess's (1956) novel *The Journey to the East* in which the traveler was unable to move forward without the servant's presence during the journey. The leader-follower concept identifies the moral and social obligations of leaders and the behaviors used toward their followers (Early, 2017; Greenleaf, 2008; Northouse, 2016). The theory was that servant leaders have a moral and

ethical responsibility to nurture their followers and organization by placing them first, empowering them, and developing their fullest potential (Greenleaf, 2008; Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016). Literature has suggested that servant leaders provide opportunities for the follower by enhancing autonomy in knowledge and skills and interdependency and sharing roles in decision making, building community, and recognizing members as equals (Greenleaf, 2008; Handy, 1996; Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016; Spears, 2002).

In contrast, Graham (1991) believed that servant leadership was loosely defined and contradicted the title, which had less power, transferred authority to subordinates, and possessed charismatic overtones. However, Spears (2002) conceptualized Greenleaf's servant leadership model as having 10 characteristics to identify the theory's complexities. Over time, scholarly writers built on the model of servant leadership, moving from a traits approach to interacting and building relationships among group members to improve personal and organizational goals (Greenleaf, 2008; Khan et al., 2016; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016). The following list is adapted from Spears (2002):

1. Listening. Servant leaders listening intently to others is an interactive process between leader and follower;
2. Empathy. Servant leaders are skilled empathic listeners and see others' points of view;
3. Healing. Servant leaders make others whole and care about the well-being of others' emotional hurts;

4. Awareness. Servant leaders possess self-awareness of the physical, political, and social environment;
5. Persuasion. Servant leaders are effective at building a consensus and convincing others to change;
6. Conceptualization. Servant leaders are visionaries and possess an intuition to look at problems from different perspectives;
7. Foresight. Servant leaders understand lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the consequences of the decisions for the future;
8. Stewardship. Servant leaders take responsibility for their roles using openness and persuasion to support the people;
9. Commitment to the growth of people. Servant leaders believe in the intrinsic values of the people by providing opportunities for development; and
10. Building community. Servant leaders demonstrate their own unlimited liability for specific community-related groups who have shared interests.

Original Conditions

Scholarly studies have identified three components of the servant leadership model, which were the original conditions, leaders' behaviors, and outcomes (Greenleaf, 2008; Northouse, 2016). The first component deals with the original conditions of organizational culture norms associated with leadership processes, their traits, and the openness of followers (Greenleaf, 2008; Northouse, 2016; V. E. Williams, 2009). Norms are those behaviors that are accepted by people in an organization, whether explicit or implicit (Harvey & Drolet, 2006). Cultural norms have the potential to shape the servant leader's power in which leading can be distant or equally shared at every level of

leadership (Northouse, 2016). The influences identify the traits of servant leaders and their interaction with followers (V. E. Williams, 2009). These traits demonstrate the followers' openness to the servant leader's influence on personal and organizational career performance (Greenleaf, 2008; Northouse, 2016).

Leader Behaviors

Greenleaf (2008) mentioned that servant leadership behaviors are the core of the leadership process. First, leaders must conceptualize the organization by using their abilities, competency, and value to understand the challenges and use creative solutions to address the problem to the overall business goals (Northouse, 2016). Second, a servant leader's use of emotional intelligence becomes sensitive to the needs of the followers by placing them first and helping them grow personally and professionally (Greenleaf, 2008). Next, servant leaders are ethically sound, open, and honest without compromise to obtain change management success (Stauffer & Maxwell, 2020). The growth process empowers followers to have autonomy in decision making. Northouse (2016) contended that empowering followers builds their confidence in their capacity to think and act in challenging situations. Finally, servant leaders understand the value of community by connecting the goals of the organization to the needs of the local community (Northouse, 2016; V. E. Williams, 2009).

Outcomes

The central goal of servant leadership is the organization's ability to nurture followers' growth, strengthen the organization's performance, and produce a positive impact within the community (Greenleaf, 2008). The outcome of the servant leader is to visualize the servant first, listen to others, and provide support for growth. The results

produce effective leaders, change individual behaviors, create a healthier organization, and corporate social responsibilities within the community effect change (Northouse, 2016; Stauffer & Maxwell, 2020). Ultimately, the servant leader's behavior produces positive change strategies globally.

Gergen (2006) mentioned that the servant leader's behavior is more cognitive than conceptualized, leading other scholars to disagree with the formulation of the theories models. Northouse (2016) stated that conceptualizing as a characteristic should be well defined for servant leaders. Despite the disagreement about the models, Northouse (2016) and Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) suggested that the concept of servant leadership provides low-quality leadership impact and creates a transactional obligation among followers.

Transactional Leadership

James MacGregor Burns's (1978) composition on leadership discussed transforming rather than transactional leadership (Early, 2017; Northouse, 2016). Prior to Bass and Riggio (1985), the concept of the transactional leadership model was determined to be contrary, suggesting that transactional leaders' traits are self-absorbed. Scholarly authors identified the leadership theory as the inability to manage challenges, make changes, and not see the needs or development of others (Enchil, 2020; Northouse, 2016; Schwartz, 1999). The transaction model's primary focus is the exchange between the leader and the follower using extrinsic rewards and contractual agreements to motivate members to perform (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Enchil, 2020; Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016). Khan et al. (2016) mentioned that rewards give an implication of appreciation, promotions, performance, and support. However, the leadership theory

creates contingent rewards and management by exception and focuses on job satisfaction rather than understanding the overall behaviors of members and realigning the organization's culture (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Khan et al., 2016).

Scholarly authors have suggested transactional leadership deviated to contingent rewards that focus on the exchange between leaders and followers to produce expected work results (Cojocar, 2008; Early, 2017; Enchil, 2020; Khan et al., 2016; Northouse, 2016). The management-by-exception consists of active and passive leadership styles. The transactional leader uses discipline and rewards to motivate members' performance. The active leader is seen as a micromanager looking for mistakes and violations of policies (Enchil, 2020; Northouse, 2016). This type of leader acquires the minimum standard focusing on the standards and not the behavior (Hayes et al., 2021). The passive leader exists after a mistake or problem arises in the organization to address the concern (Northouse, 2016). The leadership style sends conflicting messages as to positive or negative reinforcement and their impact on effectiveness to strategically transforming behaviors (Lowe et al., 1996; Northouse, 2016).

Transformational Leadership

Burns's (1978) framework on transformational leadership theory provided an approach to changing individual behaviors and social systems. Burns emphasized the common goal and identified the concept as being central to his theory on transformational leadership by acknowledging the differences between leading and managing change organizations. The transformational leader model identified changes in behavior that were beneficial to the stakeholders of the organization (Buck, 2018; Cojocar, 2008; Enchil, 2020). Transactional leaders focus on the tasks and policies of the organization

(Buck, 2018; Enchil, 2020; Northouse, 2016). Transformational leaders seek to change the culture, and transactional leaders possess managerial skills (Buck, 2018; Cojocar, 2008; Northouse, 2016).

Bass (1985) expanded the works of Burns's (1978) and House's (1976) models on transformational leadership suggesting the theory lifts consciousness, peaks self-interest, and addresses the follower's needs by identifying the strong characteristics of the leader (Bass, 2008, as cited in Northouse, 2016; Early, 2017; Enchil, 2020). Transformational leadership uses engagement and connection with people to enhance the motivation of the follower and the leader (Northouse, 2016). The concept shows the leader's ability to assist followers in reaching their fullest potential during times of uncertainty (Schwartz, 1999). Buck (2018) stated that transformational leaders influence workers' performance by enhancing engagement and commitment to an interrelationship. Bass's model provided four factors that conceptualized the definition of transformational leadership as being influential, inspirational, intellectual, and Individualized.

Influential

Buck (2018) suggested that transformational leaders are influential and respected by their followers. The follower measures the leader by observing their attributes and behavior, and leadership practices can fail because of a lack of member engagement (Crowley, 2011; Northouse, 2016). The influential leader is seen as being visionary and personifying charismatic attributes, loyalty, and trust that inspire people to follow (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Buck, 2018; Northouse, 2016).

Inspirational

The transformational leader inspires followers through motivation and commitment to a shared vision (Buck, 2018; Northouse, 2016). The leader takes the risk of failing along with success by using emotional charm to expand the capacity of members to achieve above and beyond standard goals (Enchil, 2020; Schwartz, 1999). Transformational leaders use eloquent words of encouragement to show followers their value in the future growth of the organization (Buck, 2018).

Intellectual

Transformational leaders use their intellect to encourage followers to be creative and innovative by challenging the status quo within themselves, their leaders, and the organization to enhance their vision of the future (O'Reilly & Chatman., 2020). The leader supports new ideals associated with organizational issues by having a sense of foreseeing unknown challenges (Schwartz, 1999). The leader encourages self-reflection in solving problems and rewards individual efforts for developing solutions (Buck, 2018; Northouse, 2016).

Individualized

The transformational leader possesses effective communication skills by creating an environment that listens to and supports the individual needs of the followers (Buck, 2018; Schwartz, 1999). Transformational leaders are seen as coaches, mentors, and advisors while developing the followers' full potential. These leaders give the work back to the followers to help expand the capacity of their personal challenges (Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016).

Transformational leaders engage and connect with people to enhance the motivation of the follower (Buck, 2018; Greenleaf, 2008; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016). The concept shows the leader's ability to assist followers in reaching their fullest potential. Bass (2008, as cited in Northouse, 2016) suggested a leader–follower relationship should be acquired, have a connection, possess knowledge, and circumvent hardships. Several authors mentioned that transformational leaders are crucial to minimizing problems and influencing workers' performance by enhancing engagement and commitment to an interrelationship (Buck, 2018; Maslanka, 2004; Northouse, 2016). In contrast, transformational leadership deals with the individual follower versus a group effort; however, transformational leaders have more effective work outcomes than transactional leaders (Bass & Riggio, 1985; Early, 2017; Northouse, 2016).

Adaptive Leadership

A Brief Introduction to the Work of Ronald Heifetz

In 1994, Ronald Heifetz, Senior Lecturer in Public Leadership and Founding Director of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard Kennedy School, was noted for his seminal works in adaptive leadership (Northouse, 2016). Heifetz's ground-breaking book *Leadership Without Easy Answers* led some researchers (Cojocar, 2008; Heckler, 2011) to suggest a course of action on developing adaptive leadership as a guide for leaders dealing with challenges to be successful at leading change in the current workplace. In response to leading change, Heifetz's (1994) publications dealt with adaptive capacity in social settings for organizations globally. Heifetz's works use practical approaches to gain insights into the relationship between leadership, adaptive systems, behaviors, and human life (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009).

Adaptive Leadership Theory Development

Heifetz provided a theoretical foundation behind the practices of adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009). Scholarly writers have suggested that adaptive leadership is an approach that focuses on a leader's ability to make sound decisions in the midst of chaos, which promotes organizational change, maintains the capacity to thrive, and engages members through inclusivity (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Heifetz et al., 2009). Heifetz et al. (2009) suggested that adaptive leaders understand the relationships between the leadership role, organizational systems, and change process by assessing challenges, and that enables the organization's capacity to thrive. Multiple scholars agreed that an adaptive leader uses leadership skills to influence members' behavior and promote business growth (Epps, 2021; Heckler, 2011; Klonsky, 2010; Queen, 2011; Sweetman, 2010). Moreover, Drennan (2020), Hague (2016), and Jayne (2018) believed that adaptive leadership is significant and has expanded globally using attitudes and behavior as an approach to grasp the leaders' self-efficacy to engage in adaptive works. Bandura (2000) suggested that perceived self-efficacy contains human agency, which provides leaders the ability to examine their motivations, behavior, and social setting toward achieving performance goals.

Buck (2008) and Cahill (2021) suggested that the theoretical framework of adaptive leadership explores the leader's ability to persuade nonprofit volunteers' perceptions of engagement and commitment within the organization. Cojocar (2008) and Enchil (2020) stated that an adaptive leader possesses the capacity to function in challenging situations by helping others solve their concerns using decision making. Similarly, Heckler (2011) contended that adaptive leadership challenges the status quo to

effect organizational change. Epps (2021), Klonsky (2010), and Queen (2011) mentioned the association between adaptive leadership and shared leadership in members enhancing their relationships and behaviors and promoting growth. Sweetman (2010) suggested that an adaptive leader interacts with members through collaboration and communication, accountability, commitment, and trust attributes.

Adaptive Leadership Defined

Many authors have defined adaptive leadership as the individuals' ability to influence behaviors while interacting in informal contexts to mobilize people to tackle tough challenges to change and thrive (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Heckler, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). In comparison, Epps (2021) noted that adaptive leadership is not about individuals and how well they are doing but about understanding adaptive pressures to engage people and successfully lead change. Cojocar (2008) commented that Heifetz's adaptive challenges require changes in behavior, innovative learning, and creativity. These ideas led to early and contemporary works on adaptive leadership. Adaptive leadership looks at the way new strategies and perspectives thrive by achieving organizational goals in challenging situations (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Northouse (2016) explored the concept of Heifetz's adaptive leadership model by suggesting adaptive leadership deals with technical and adaptive challenges that can lead to failure if not dealt with appropriately (Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016). Most problems are a combination of technical and adaptive challenges. However, leaders tend to fail to distinguish the difference between the two by viewing technical problems as adaptive challenges. Technical problems are resolved through experience, policies, and procedures, but adaptive challenges are addressed through changes in behavior (Heifetz

et al., 2009). Heifetz et al.'s (2009) works were used to identify the theoretical framework for adaptive leadership used in this study.

Theoretical Framework

Heifetz et al. (2009) developed a framework in which leaders possess the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership. Leaders who use adaptive leadership create an atmosphere for making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five characteristics are the theoretical framework used to explore CERT program managers' lived experiences in building adaptive capacity.

Making Naming Elephants in the Room the Norm

Naming the elephant in the room is the act of openly addressing sensitive underlying issues, or undiscussables, to resolve potential barriers that interfere with an organization realizing its full potential (A. C. Baker, 2004; Heifetz et al., 2009; Toegel & Barsoux, 2019). Toegel and Barsoux (2019) mentioned that sensitive and undiscussed conversations exist to avoid conflicts, and they create challenges and dysfunctions of the team and inhibit the performance of the organization. Klonsky (2010) suggested that undiscussables create a decreasing confidence in leaders, lack of loyalty, and turnover rates in organizations. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) emphasized that organizations with disequilibrium see technical problems as adaptive challenges. Klonsky (2010) and Lencioni (2002) conceived that dysfunctional organizations are associated with a lack of trust, fear of conflict, inability to commit, lack of accountability, and inattentiveness. Scholarly writers have mentioned that addressing the elephant in the room is an effective

intervention process to mobilize teams to surface and address challenging issues that create opportunities for adaptive solutions (Bright, 2011; Heifetz et al. 2009; Klonsky, 2010). The approach provides an opportunity for leaders to identify the one leading the conflict, establish open conversations, and create avenues of interconnectedness and interdependence for questioning voices to be heard in a complex adaptive system by placing the people at the forefront of the collaborative effort (Brook et al., 2019; Hardy, 2022; Toegel & Barsoux, 2019).

In addition, leaders become effective in diagnosing team challenges and protecting and engaging the voices of resisters while providing the appropriate course of action (Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016). Scholarly literature has suggested that adaptive leaders are experienced in their communication skills by encouraging members to speak freely and feel valued (Bisel, 2018; Bright, 2011; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Klonsky, 2010). Similarly, scholarly writers have suggested that seizing the moment to have crucial conversations about difficult topics is essential when opinions vary, stakes are high, and emotions run strong when leading a change organization (D. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; A. C. Baker, 2004; Grenny et al., 2022; Kegan & Lahey, 2001). Klonsky (2010) mentioned that courageous leaders can identify their role in problems that create undiscussables, address the issue, and respond as adaptive leaders. The idea of applying adaptive leadership is a courageous act by the leader who shifts the thoughts, perceptions, and beliefs of team members, which promotes complex learning opportunities (A. C. Baker, 2004; Bright, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009).

Nurturing a Shared Responsibility for the Organization

Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization establishes collective ownership across team member roles for the decision making of operational goals and outcomes of the organization's future (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Northouse, 2016; Tremblay et al., 2016). Nurturing a shared responsibility is a system in which team members have a common interest in engaging each other to produce prompt results on complex issues (Klonsky, 2010; Northouse 2016). Harris and Spillman (2008) suggested that shared responsibility is a form of distributed leadership in which the activities and influences of leaders are shared internally and externally among organizations. Several authors have agreed that adaptive leaders use engagement strategies to interact with members of the organization to have a sense of shared responsibilities (Epps, 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009; Klonsky, 2010). In addition, researchers identified relationship strategies by noting communication and collaboration among team members to create shared responsibilities (Buck, 2018; Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Heckler, 2011; Queen, 2011). Moreover, the shared leadership perspective is to work horizontally and laterally, regardless of position, to integrate interdependency and coordinating efforts with those who contribute to the decision-making processes (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Tremblay et al., 2016). The strategy of shared responsibilities is to create growth, share ideas, and develop teams as emerging leaders across diverse entities of the organizational landscape (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Tremblay et al., 2016). Heifetz et al.'s (2009) study on shared responsibilities provided a greater understanding to incorporate ideas from all citizens when it comes to crisis management (Burke, 2007).

Encouraging Independent Judgment

Encouraging independent judgment gives leaders the capacity to provide an opportunity for team members to make choices based on personal and professional experience regardless of the position held within the organization (Andre, 2020; Heifetz et al., 2009). Buck (2018) and Heifetz et al. (2009) believed organizations in which leaders encourage independent judgment provide an opportunity for members to take the initiative to expand their capacity for critical thinking and decision making. Godzyk (2008) conceived a critical thinker as someone who is habitually well-informed, trustworthy, open-minded, fair, unbiased, honest, prudent in judgment, willing to reconsider, concise, methodical in complex matters, meticulous in seeking relevant information, rational in criteria selection, focused on inquiry, and persistent in seeking results that are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit. Epps (2021) mentioned that critical thinkers have the ability to evaluate information and make a reasonable judgment.

The mutual dialogue between leader and follower opens avenues for decision making at the lowest level, and the collective support of the people and their judgment strengthens the organization's mission (Buck, 2018; Epps, 2021; Garibaldi; 2016). Eade (1997) emphasized that building capacity in a crisis avoids dependency, which enables people to make decisions for themselves. Leaders who invest in lean management that encourages critical thinking and decision making establish an environment of creativity and innovation for the organization's success (Beerel, 2009; Murphy, 2018). The role of an adaptive leader is to be dispensable and encourage critical thinking about the

governance of the organization and the change process for adaptive work (Buck, 2018; Heifetz et al., 2009; Murphy, 2018).

Scholarly studies emphasized that leaders are placed in stressful situations when faced with complex challenges that require critical thinking and good judgment during a full-scale crisis (Brooks et al., 2019; Murphy, 2018). Scheid (2015) suggested that critical thinking at the management level limits effectiveness and requires the integration of models to encourage judgment from members at all levels. In comparison, decision making in an emergency requires restraints and independent judgment when dealing with the demands of the community and organizational compliance (Brooks et al., 2019). Studies have identified critical thinking as a recommendation for integration into the CERT team's training programs and to improve the effectiveness of the organization (Epps, 2021; Scheid, 2015). Epps (2021) believed integrating critical thinking in CERT programs will foster resilience during a crisis.

Developing Leadership Capacity

Developing leadership capacity creates a systemic focus on expanding competencies and resources and intentionally motivating groups or individuals to increase leadership potential proactively (Carnoy et al., 2003; Eade, 1997, 2007; Eyben et al., 2006; Harris, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009; Sharratt & Fullan, 2009). Eade (1997) contended that capacity building improves the development of people to identify their own worth and priorities that are acted upon. DeForest (2021) and Khin Khin Oo and Rakthin (2022) mentioned organizations that enable leaders to develop adaptive capacity and enhance the knowledge and skills of future leaders through professional development. Scholars have mentioned that capacity is seen as power, and cognitive

competence identifies the leader's ability to enhance skills and apply the knowledge essential to long-term adaptability for understanding and solving problems (Eyben et al., 2006; Heifetz et al., 2009; Murphy, 2018). Organizations that invest in the training and development of people create an approach to capacity building and provide members with a sense of their potential through succession planning (Eade, 1997; Heifetz et al., 2009). In comparison, scholarly writers expressed that elements of adaptive leaders foster an environment accountable for shaping professional capital to erudition, ingenuity, and adaptive capacity creating a knowledge base organization for an emerging generation of leaders (Eyben et al., 2006; Lindsay-Law, 2019; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007; McKegney, 2014). However, Harris (2011) mentioned the challenges for leaders building collective capacity in an entire change management system. Those leaders who lack capacity building place constraints on the people to voice opinions, expose vulnerability and competence, and backfire in the development of members' capacities, implying the leader's behaviors are egocentric, there is disloyalty among members, and they avoid accountability (Eade, 1997, 2007; Klonsky, 2010; Roth, 2022). Lindsay-Law (2019) suggested that sustaining collaboration requires organizational competencies to enhance collective knowledge of individual members' capacity, engagement, and shared decision making among team members through institutionalized reflection and continuous learning.

Institutionalizing Reflection and Continuous Learning

Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning provide a culture conducive to the safe exploration of new ideas and sharing of lessons learned both from an individual and organizational perspective and creating a sustainable learning culture

driven by a willingness to overcome engrained mental models across all levels of the organization (Cojocar, 2008; Ramalingam et al., 2020; Senge et al., 2015; Vera & Crossan, 2004). Ramalingam et al. (2020) suggested that adaptive leadership requires placing social learning and adaptation at the forefront of a response as members learn from their actions and course correct for future disasters. Scholarly writers have suggested creating institutional reflections gives leaders a better perspective of themselves and those they lead, their values, and their skills while encouraging engagement around challenges to strengthen the organization's effectiveness (Drennan, 2020; FEMA, 2022a; Heifetz et al., 2009; Jayne, 2018; Northouse, 2016; Tisdale, 2022). Some researchers asserted that members can collectively work together by fostering a learning environment that uses systematic reflection, communication, and collaboration to resolve adaptive challenges through continuous improvement, and is critical to adaptability (Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Jayne, 2018; Lindsay-Law; 2019).

The continuous learning and creativity of an adaptive culture can be challenging but essential to engaging behavior and improving communications with members of the team (Bridges, 2004; Heifetz et al., 2009; Pink, 2006; Senge et al., 2004). Leadership can be taught; however, it is about leaders acknowledging behaviors and actions and adapting to new skills and experiences while being open and committed to training and developing team members, which is a critical capacity of an adaptive organization (Cojocar, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive organizations creating a continuous learning environment require approaches to collective experiences for improving the practice of becoming silent (Mitleton-Kelly, 2011). However, leaders who are self-aware and confident and

maintain emotional intelligence are able to take a risk to reflect on themselves, be authentic, and validate the needs of others (Klonsky, 2010; Northouse, 2016). Risk-taking is a process to help leaders identify and reflect on challenges within the organization (Heifetz et al., 2009). Scholars have conceived organizations that practice risk create shared patterns of shifting behaviors that enhance reflection and continuous learning and nurture a shared system that is open to meaning and understanding (Heifetz et al., 2009; Mitleton-Kelly, 2011; Senge et al., 2004). Therefore, scholarly researchers have suggested that managers rely on institutional reflection and continuous learning experiences to effectively make sound decisions that encourage team members to participate in serving change organizations (Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016).

CERT Background

The CERT program manager oversees the CERT team volunteers and training programs before, during, and after a severe emergency or major disaster (EMI, 2013). The managers ensure that CERT teams possess the necessary prerequisites and essential tools to train local communities. Thomas Menino, Former Mayor of Boston, stated, “Leaders should try to build cores of citizen responders. No city will be able to manage a crisis and rebuild ... without the help of its people” (EMI, 2018, p. 4). Literature has shown that after major incidents, CERT volunteers have increased in most regions in the United States since September 11, 2001, at the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. (Fernandez, 2007; Simpson, 2001). There were over 40,000 volunteers with no strategic planning or training who supported the effort (Fernandez, 2007; Sauer et al., 2014). Similarly, during the devastating Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the COVID-19 pandemic first reported in 2019, thousands of volunteers

supported their local communities (Brooks et al., 2019; FEMA, 2022a; NOAA, 2022; WHO, 2023b). It was after Hurricane Katrina, the COVID-19 pandemic, and other catastrophic events that FEMA granted additional funds to support CERT programs (Carr, 2014; Goss, 2017, FEMA, 2017, 2020b, 2022a). Despite FEMA efforts, the agency was heavily criticized for its slow response, lack of leadership, and inability to coordinate efforts with other government agencies in the aftermath of catastrophic hurricanes and natural disasters (Brooks et al., 2019). In comparison, the WHO and National Institutes of Health (NIH) were criticized for their lack of timely notification to the public and transparency during the COVID-19 pandemic (Brooks et al., 2019). E. L. Baker et al. (2020) recommended that leaders communicating with the public can meet the needs by being credible and trustworthy. Johnson and Uwaoma (2023) suggested the best way to address the concerns is to reengage the public for those faced with setbacks during the pandemic. Therefore, CERT program managers are charged with ensuring training programs that maintain continuous learning through preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters to support and educate their respective communities at risk (Adagba, 2018; EMI, 2020; FEMA, 2011, 2021a, 2022a; Goss, 2017; NOAA, 2022; Simpson, 2001).

CERT and Adaptive Leadership Connections

Critical Thinking in a Crisis

Epps (2021) identified adaptive leadership and critical thinking as models for organizational outcomes by using critical thinking to substitute for decision making. However, not all agree with Epps's theory because it implies a top-down approach to solving complex challenges. Avila (2019) mentioned the role of a leader is the ability to

think critically and provide timely and accurate information during a crisis. Many authors suggested that Epps's critical thinking substitution limits the adaptability approach, and the leader is perceived as subjective (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Klonsky, 2010). Similarly, Bright (2011), Klonsky (2010) and Sweetman (2010) emphasized that a bureaucratic top-down approach to directives typically fails because it limits creativity, is suitable for technical problems, and does not allow commitment to the organization. Scholars asserted that technical problems are challenging and short term when applying existing protocols, but adaptive problems resist these situations by changing the behavior that created the problem (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). However, Boin et al. (2010) believed effective crisis leadership identifies potential threats, performs mitigation protocols, and establishes a sense of stability within the organization.

Scheid's (2015) and Epp's (2021) research on critical thinking identified methods to integrate suggestions that support the decision-making process. In comparison, Brooks et al. (2019) suggested that CERT program managers use a different approach to thinking, preparing, and responding to large-scale disasters. As disasters increase, so does the need for communities to seek a better response and greater support from CERT program teams before, during, and after a catastrophic event (Kapucu & Van Wart, 2006; Pecujlija et al., 2015). Brooks et al. (2019) believed that in a crisis, emergency managers' use of higher cognitive and creative thinking skills was conducive to overcoming resistance. Several authors mentioned the competence of leaders in applying critical thinking skills to be effective and efficient at resolving problems during a crisis by engaging teams and improving disaster resilience within the community (Epps, 2021; FEMA, 2022a; Magsino, 2009; Norman & Binka, 2015; Wells et al. 2013).

Resilience to Resistance

Many researchers have suggested leadership requires resilience and grit during challenging times to create change, which is advantageous for future emergency response situations (Epps, 2021; Kantur & Iseri-Say, 2012; Norman & Binka, 2015; Wells et al., 2013). Resistance is common in organizations experiencing transformation change (D. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Erwin & Garman, 2010). Resistance is a behavioral expression, and not addressing the people's resistance can be time consuming and exhausting for the organization (Klaus & Blanton, 2010; K. B. Williams, 2019). However, resilience provides the ability to recover from or adapt to changing conditions (Beerel, 2009; FEMA, 2022d). Leading adaptive change for CERT program managers has the potential to test one's resolve; however, Northouse (2016) and Wells et al. (2013) contended that resilience provides the capacity to recover from and adjust to challenges. CERT programs have become key to building community preparedness and resilience among the members (Epps, 2021). In contrast, Raetze et al. (2022) emphasized that literature on resilience contains different meanings in various disciplines, which can lead to confusion. In building resilience among the team in CERT programs, many researchers contend that managers having tough conversations to discuss the undiscussable to resolve impediments to resistance impedes the organization's full potential (Grenny et al., 2022; Heifetz et al., 2009; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Klonsky; 2010; K. B. Williams, 2019).

The Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8 provided guidelines on national preparedness goals using systematic preparations to mitigate potential threats and to build the resilience of the United States requiring all levels of government, private, nonprofit, and public capabilities (FEMA, 2011, 2017, 2022d). The literature has suggested that

adaptive leaders must have compassion and resilience to bounce back and maintain a level of capacity in the organization when developing solutions to problems (Epps, 2021; Northouse, 2016; FEMA, 2011).

Scholars' use of the adaptive leadership approach in emergency management cultivates resilience and enhances the CERT program manager's skills when preparing and responding to future disasters (Adagba, 2018; Avila, 2019; Carr, 2014; Collins, 2017; Epps, 2021; FEMA, 2022b). The recommended changes by researchers require adaptation to the new environment and critical variables, which challenge the status quo and can be emotionally exhausting against resistance to change but create resilience in leaders during a crisis (D. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2009; K. B. Williams, 2019). Applying community engagement and resilience creates opportunities for shared responsibilities among stakeholders and alleviates barriers to knowledge exchange (Wells et al., 2013).

Shared Responsibility

Cojocar (2008) suggested a strategic plan to get members to assume shared responsibility and be committed to ensuring volunteers are not overwhelmed while not being stagnant in their volunteer functions. Using the Cojocar strategy, Bright (2011) and Buck (2018) commented that the outcome would support shared problem-solving responsibilities using decision-making models to enhance adaptive skills and increase productivity. An adaptive climate creates a relationship in which leaders reinforce shared responsibilities to engage team members.

Heifetz et al. (2009) noted that engagement is a two-dimensional strategy that requires leadership skills above and below the organizational structure. Bright (2011)

suggested that adaptive leaders create a workplace where members engage one another. A culture of adaptability and engagement is essential for attracting and retaining volunteers.

Multiple studies have shown the impact of adaptive leadership on team members' engagement and commitment is limited and traditional forms of leadership were unsuccessful (Bright, 2011; Buck, 2018; Epps, 2021). Given this narrow view of adaptive leadership for nonprofit organizations like CERT, Buck (2018) explored the phenomenon of leadership on nonprofit volunteers' engagement and commitment. In contrast, Klonsky (2010) argued that engaging members provides connection, personal development, and social skills.

Several researchers have considered the level at which adaptive leadership influences members' commitment to the organization. Multiple scholars have contended that organizations are mission focused and value having a voice in decision making (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Queen, 2011). Enchil (2020) commented on the impact of adaptive leaders effectively motivating the workforce to fulfill the organization's mission. Subsequently, Enchil contended that committed members are willing to provide service to local communities, thus satisfying internal and external stakeholder interests.

History of CERT

The design of the CERT program can be traced to World War II under the leadership of former President Franklin Roosevelt (Winkler, 2012). The research mentioned air raids and bombings over Europe created panic among U.S. citizens of an emanating threat against the country and local territories (OCD, n.d.; Winkler, 2012).

Several researchers contended that government agencies from every echelon agreed that a large-scale attack on the United States cannot be accomplished by one entity of leadership; therefore, government levels solicited guidance from the Civil Defense Department (Carr, 2014; OCD, n.d.; Winkler, 2012). In 1942, Roosevelt established the Office of Civil Defense (OCD; (Winkler, 2012). The function of OCD was to protect citizens from emergencies related to war by recruiting and training volunteers on essential tasks (OCD, n.d.; Winkler, 2012). The OCD handbook, *The United States Citizen Defense Corps*, provided information on the duties and responsibilities of various positions, including who should join, how to join, and what qualifications were required as well as information about continuous learning, duties, insignia, equipment, and coordination of the group (OCD, n.d.). The criteria at the time were similar to today's CERT programs established by EMI, FEMA, and the National CERT Association (EMI, 2020; FEMA, 2021a, 2022c, 2023b).

United States and CERT

The CERT program first appeared in Los Angeles, California in 1985 (FEMA, 2022c). Several researchers mentioned the CERT program was designed by the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) to educate and provide citizens with a set of fundamental skills in disaster preparedness and recovery (Adagba, 2018; Carr, 2014; FEMA, 2022c; Franke & Simpson, 2004). The strategic planning for the CERT program was in response to the 1987 Whittier Narrows earthquake (FEMA, 2022c; R. Mann, 2021). The earthquake occurred in the San Gabriel Valley and communities in Southern California. The earthquake's 5.9 magnitude destroyed homes, businesses, and roadways causing over 200 injuries, nine fatalities, and displacement of over 9,000 people (R.

Mann, 2021). The earthquake identified the threat of a major disaster for Californians. The drills in predisaster training by the Japanese including the search and rescue by the Mexican community prompted local officials to empower the citizens with knowledge and skills for future disaster preparedness (Carr, 2014; FEMA, 2022c; Simpson, 2001). FEMA, the EMI, and the LAFD together created an all-hazard program to train communities on emergency preparedness (FEMA, 2022c). The training consists of nine core components (Table 2), which teach basic fire suppression, first aid, search, and recovery. The objective of the CERT program is to educate the volunteers on disaster preparedness to mitigate hazards, work as a team, and encourage resilience in the local communities (FEMA, n.d.-a, 2020a, 2021a, 2022a, 2022c; Frank & Simpson, 2004).

Table 2

CERT Basic Training 9 Core Units

Units	Training
1	Disaster preparedness
2	CERT organization
3	Disaster medical operations - Part 1
4	Disaster medical operations - Part 2
5	Disaster psychology
6	Fire safety and utility control
7	Light search and rescue operations
8	Terrorism and CERT
9	Course review, final exam, and disaster simulation

Note. Adapted from *National Incident Management System [NIMS]* (4th ed), by Federal Emergency Management Agency, n.d., 2020b, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

In 1993, CERT became a national program that encompasses all 50 states including tribal nations and U.S. territories (FEMA, 2020b, 2022c). There are over 2,700 CERT programs throughout the nation and over 600,000 people have been certified in

CERT since the inception of the program (FEMA, 2020b, 2022d). CERT instructors have conducted training for various organizations such as all levels of government, private and public organizations, nonprofits, hospitals, faith-based organizations, assisted living facilities, schools, and colleges (Serve Washington [Serve WA], 2022). The program provides a nationwide approach to training volunteers and organizations during a disaster on basic response skills focusing on fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and medical operations (CERT-LA, 2022; FEMA, 2022b; National Community Emergency Response Team Association, n.d.). The training helps to prepare communities before, during, and after a disaster and to be self-sufficient while first responders focus on more complex tasks (FEMA, n.d.-a, 2020b, 2022a).

Washington State and CERT

In 1979, President Carter established FEMA along with 21 other organizations as a dual civil defense and emergency management through executive orders and later under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2003 (DHS; FEMA, 2021b). During a disaster, FEMA is called upon to partner with state and regional emergency responders to provide support and disaster relief assistance (FEMA, 2011, 2021b). The goal of FEMA is to provide a whole community approach by engaging citizens and partner government agencies at the state, local, tribal, territorial, and federal levels through communication and collaboration (FEMA, 2021b, 2022b). Similarly, the purpose of CERT is to “Do the greatest good for the greatest number in the shortest amount of time” (National CERT Association, 2020, p. 3).

FEMA supports 10 regions in the United States and territories. Region 10 is designated for Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington states to include 271 federally

recognized regional tribes under the leadership of an administrator and deputy administrator located in Bothell, Washington (FEMA, 2023a). Bothell is a suburb of King County, which is approximately 25 miles from Seattle. The state FEMA agency is conveniently located to respond to assist local emergency managers and provide disaster assistance for the local region (FEMA, 2022b, 2022d).

The Washington CERT program falls under the state's larger Citizens Corps. The state CERT coordinator does not run local CERT programs but works with CERT program managers to ensure their programs meet and maintain credentialing and other state requirements, including support for individuals starting a CERT program at the county, city, and tribal levels (Serve WA, 2022). To become a volunteer in Washington state, individuals must complete the CERT basic class. All CERT classes are free to anyone living in Washington state. Eligibility for the training has three tiers: (a) volunteers at least 18 years old and above; (b) teens 13-17 years old and require parent/guardian permission; and (c) youths 11 and 12 years old with parent/guardian permission and must accompany the youth to training sessions (Serve WA, 2022). The three tiers incorporate a diverse group of youth volunteers to develop skills, become leaders, and obtain perspectives on preparedness within their local communities (FEMA, 2022e, 2023d). However, CERT program managers in Washington state oversee volunteers ages 18 and above.

As of August 2023, Washington state had 71 active CERT programs (FEMA, n.d.-a). The data identified that the number of CERT program managers is limited in Washington state, which requires managers to perform dual services between county and city operations (Serve WA, 2022). The problem presented challenges in burnout and

maintaining human resources capacity for the CERT program and the community in Washington state (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Cerullo, 2020; FEMA, 2022b).

Impact of Adaptive Leadership

Authors such as Buck (2018) and Enchil (2020) reported that adaptive leadership theories significantly impact leading people within the organization. Scholarly writers Bright (2011), Buck (2018), and Heifetz et al. (2009) noted that leaders who engage members create an atmosphere conducive to adaptive functions; however, organizational systems can be a challenge in obtaining desired results (Bright, 2011; Buck, 2018; Cahill, 2021; Cojocar, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009). These characteristics of an adaptive leader are instrumental in positively impacting social changes by applying the system's diagnosis of an organization (Heifetz et al., 2009; Klonsky, 2010; Queen, 2011; Sweetman, 2010). However, leaders continue to face obstacles associated with applying the systems approach to situational challenges in motivation and constraint behaviors and the political landscape of the organization.

Systems Diagnosis

Adaptive leadership uses the systems approach to incorporate the ideas from various members of the organization (Heifetz, 1994). Several authors agreed that adaptive leaders use engagement strategies to interact with members of the organization (Epps, 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009; Klonsky, 2010). Queen (2011) mentioned that engagement strategies enhance communication and collaboration among team members to create shared responsibilities. These characteristics are instrumental in positively impacting social changes by applying the system's diagnosis of an organization (Heifetz et al., 2009; Klonsky, 2010; Queen, 2011; Sweetman, 2010). Queen (2011) suggested that

organizations with ineffective collaboration within a system can lead to problems and often fail during a crisis. In a diagnosis capacity, the mutual component of adaptive failure was not the resistance to change but the resistance to loss (Heifetz et al. 2009). The system diagnosis places the adaptive leader in a precarious position to identify the loss and move people through the loss and into a new place of organizational adaptability to thrive in changing environments (Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2017; Queen, 2011; Roth, 2022).

Adaptive Challenges in Times of Great Change

Researchers have suggested problems leaders experience and need to address are considered adaptive challenges (Heifetz & Linsky, 2017; S. Mann, 2012; Tisdale, 2022). The failures are associated with treating adaptive challenges as technical problems (Heifetz et al., 2009). Heifetz et al.'s (2009) model of adaptive challenges identifies a mixture of technical and adaptive encounters creating barriers to collaboration and organizational productivity. When leaders ascend above the challenges, known as the balcony experience, it creates opportunities to go beyond their capacity by creating experiments, discoveries, and adjustments that shift behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs to effect organizational change (Epps, 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009). Table 3 illustrates the difference between technical problems and adaptive challenges.

Motivation and Constraints on Behaviors

Cahill (2021) explored the motivations and constraints of members and noted that behaviors influence motivation on organizational commitment. Several researchers argued that adaptive leadership is not based on a position but on interaction using skills to motivate people through challenging situations that build adaptive capacity for learning

and leading change (Bright, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009; Norman & Binka, 2015; Roth, 2022). Umezurike (2011) noted that the behaviors of leaders determine whether their skills attract, motivate, and retain members during a crisis. Several researchers stated that leaders who acknowledge these attributes increase self-awareness of their attitudes and behaviors creating a change organization and learning environment through experience (Avila, 2019; Heifetz et al., 2009; Maxwell, 2021). Based on Heifetz's works, Buck (2018) contended that self-reflection is a skill set that changes the leader's mindset and ultimately the organization's culture. Maxwell (2021) suggested that self-aware leaders examine strengths and weaknesses to be confident in their leadership attributes and possess the ability to develop the strength of their team.

Table 3

Distinguishing Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges

Kind of challenge	Problem definition	Solution	Locus of work
Technical	Clear	Clear	Authority
Technical and adaptive	Clear	Requires learning	Authority and stakeholders
Adaptive	Requires learning	Requires learning	Stakeholders

Note. Adapted from *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*, by R. A. Heifetz, A. Grashow, and M. Linsky, 2009, Harvard Business Press.

Bright (2011), Buck (2018), and Heckler (2010) identified these behaviors as creativity, open communication, engagement, and ambition. Harvey and Drolet (2006) wrote that behaviors of members are guided by norms that are agreed upon and accepted and achieve goals to hold together an organization. These behaviors are necessary for obtaining committed members. Cahill (2021) suggested that positive behavior is a

strategy for retaining relationships among members. Buck (2018) and Klonsky (2010) emphasized emotional behaviors of team members produce adaptive challenges for leaders to establish positive outcomes for the organization. Bright (2011) commented that leaders shift their focus from egocentric to mutual viewpoints. In a similar manner, several authors recommend having a diagnostic mindset that addresses the social framework for engaging behaviors and improving communications that impact the organization (Cahill, 2021; Epps, 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009).

Political Landscape

Managing a team of volunteers during a crisis to protect citizens and infrastructure is part of a governmental system requiring political and administrative support (Boin et al., 2010). The design of an organization tends to be seen as a political operation under a complex system of different opinions and preferences that requires reframing (Boin et al., 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2013; Fairholm, 2009; Moline et al., 2019). Scholarly authors emphasize that leaders continue to debate over the constraint on the powers of public laws in an emergency situation (Boin et al., 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2013; Karin, 2015; Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019). Fairholm (2009) and Karin (2015) wrote that political power is in the hands of a few elites in social systems whereby decision making in the structure of public laws, policies, or politics creates challenges to adaptive responses for their community. Leaders attempting to make changes to the adaptive structure of the organization are met with frustration among stakeholders who expect their demands to be met (Boin et al., 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2013; Riscica, 2022). The leader's ability to navigate these challenges is essential to building an adaptive capacity in a bureaucratic system (Riscica, 2022).

Several researchers have recommended that leaders think politically by creating a framework to understand awareness of authority, political skills, relationships, and concerns of the organization in mitigating bureaucratic procedures that may interfere with community resilience to mobilize adaptive works (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Fairholm, 2009; Heifetz et al., 2009; Riscica, 2022). Burke (2007) and Klonsky (2010) mentioned that adaptive leadership establishes mutual accountability between the citizens and political leadership; therefore, businesses, government, and citizens work together to establish shared responsibility for strategic policies that produce growth. Queen (2011) suggested the use of a collaborative effort to complex social problems when bureaucratic and market-based solutions prove to be unsuccessful. Karin (2015) believed that in certain situations there should be an opportunity to centralize response power by suspending legal and institutional laws. Bolman and Deal (2013) and Heifetz et al. (2009) believed that managers should master the skills of a politician to determine the formal and informal use of power and influence of members of the organization.

Heifetz et al. (2009) provided six guidelines for leaders to act politically using informal and formal probes. First, adaptive leaders must look at expanding informal authority when facing an adaptive challenge and leading a change organization by strengthening relationships and addressing the issue to building allies (D. Anderson, 2017; Bell & Martin, 2019; Heifetz et al., 2009; Ramalingam et al., 2020). Second, the political landscape can be complex, but finding allies to support and work across various levels of the organization creates competing commitments; however, leaders must protect their loyalty (Bass, 2008, as cited in Northouse, 2016; Boin et al., 2019; Heifetz et al., 2009). Third, creating a connection with the opposition provides an opportunity for

leaders to study the strategies to prevent barriers to adaptive works, which allows leaders to spend time and understand the perspectives of those who resist change (D. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Beerel, 2009; Enchil, 2020; Heifetz et al., 2009). Fourth, managing authority in leading change is essential to obtain followers' support and beneficial to those leading adaptive change by providing senior leaders with a broader scope of the change initiative (D. Anderson, 2017; D. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Bell & Martin, 2019; Heifetz et al., 2009; Ramalingam et al., 2020). Next, during the adaptive change, leaders must take responsibility for their actions that create casualties who feel as though they lose their value in the organization (Heifetz et al. 2009). It is important for leaders to engage and communicate with those casualties and their allies to create a harmonious environment and encourage accountability of actions (Avila, 2019; Beerel, 2009; Heifetz et al., 2009; Tisdale, 2022). Finally, adaptive leaders must protect and engage the voice of skeptics by demonstrating openness to subversive questions, listening, and learning the perspectives of the team's values to nurture the voice and inclusivity of members (A. C. Baker, 2004; Bright, 2011; Heifetz, 1994). Heifetz et al. (2009) identified the growth and productivity among organizations using adaptive leadership to navigate members through a crisis and mobilize the people for adaptive work.

Summary

This review explored existing literature on leadership, the behaviors of members, and the leaders' ability to apply adaptive works to effect change. A synthesis matrix (Appendix A) was completed and used by the researchers in the formation of the literature review. The history of leadership theories has helped to identify the constraints placed on today's leaders. The various approaches help to focus on the traits and

behaviors that constitute successful leadership such as the nature of the leader–follower relationship and the type of influence using transactional versus transformational leadership. The adaptive leadership theories suggest leaders being in a position of authority versus shared responsibilities creates the potential for technical and adaptive problems that have the potential for failure when technical issues are treated as adaptive challenges by inexperienced leaders (Bright, 2011; Heifetz et al. 2009). However, an experienced leader can identify the difference between technical and adaptive concerns (Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016). Scholars suggest that Heifetz was the first to address traditional leadership theories by using adaptive leadership to challenge the top-down leadership style to distribute creativity and innovation from the bottom up (Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008).

This review described the characteristics of adaptive leadership from different perspectives of scholarly authors by suggesting the concept is more of a practice of situational awareness and making sound decisions versus a theory (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Bright, 2011; Cojocar, 2008; Northouse, 2016). Heifetz’s (1994) work on adaptive leaders was viewed from a business system process within organizations. The system processes examine the mindset of the leader’s attributes that lead to adaptive change. Heifetz et al.’s (2009) diagnostic mindset theory suggests adaptive leaders possess the skill, creativity, innovation, and productivity to adapt to changes.

Finally, the review presented adaptive leadership’s systems diagnosis and the impact on the political landscape of the organization. The literature on adaptive leadership provides insights into social systems in which policies and politics have an effect on establishing adaptive change within various industries (Heifetz et al., 2009;

Northouse, 2016). Scholarly writers mentioned a social dampening regarding rules and policies can be helpful or can hinder the productivity of adaptive works; therefore, leaders must look to alternative solutions by thinking and acting politically during challenging times to effect change (Bright, 2011; Buck, 2018; Heifetz et al., 2009).

The review of research on adaptive leadership is limited. Some specific study has occurred related to team perspectives of engagement and commitment (Bright, 2011; Buck, 2018; Cahill, 2021; Heckler, 2011; Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Klonsky, 2010; Northouse, 2016; Queen, 2011; Sweetman, 2010). Research exists on nonprofit leaders and adaptive leadership related to employee retainment (Armstrong, 2021; Cahill, 2021; Egsegian, 2013; Enchil, 2020; Smith, 2019; Traylor, 2022; Umezurike, 2011; VanOverschelde, 2017). The literature review of this study identified clear gaps associated with CERT program managers' leadership in general and the use of adaptive leadership to build capacity during times of great change and opportunities specifically. It is vital for key crisis personnel such as CERT program managers to learn and practice strategies of adaptive leadership to build the organization's adaptive capacity and improve processes to maintain, sustain, and thrive during times of great change and opportunity.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

A qualitative phenomenological study was conducted based on the interest of three faculty and nine peer researchers to identify and describe how leaders build organizational adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al. (2009) five key characteristics of adaptive leadership. Specifically, I explored strategies used by community emergency response team (CERT) program managers within municipalities in Washington state.

I used a qualitative inquiry created by faculty members and peer researchers to identify and describe CERT program managers' perceptions of adaptive leadership being used to build adaptive capacity during times of great change. Understanding the CERT program manager's perspective of leadership and best practices for adaptive capacity can be used to help other CERT programs experiencing similar challenges. The findings may identify strengths and weaknesses in the organization's ability to integrate adaptive leadership to engage members using five key characteristics by Heifetz et al. (2009).

The concern is the CERT program manager's ability to use adaptive leadership during great change. If leaders properly prepare and build adaptive capacity during challenging times, it creates an environment in which members are willing to stay in the organization (Cerullo, 2020). Given these problems, how can leaders use adaptive works to engage stakeholders in times of challenge and produce positive outcomes? Chapter III discusses the purpose and design of the study, including methodology, population, instruments, and data collection.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009).

Research Questions

Central Research Question

What strategies do community emergency response team (CERT) program managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning)?

Subquestions

1. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through making naming elephants in the room the norm?
2. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization?
3. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through encouraging independent judgment?
4. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?
5. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?

Research Design

The research design provides an overarching approach to addressing the research purpose and questions researchers use to collect and analyze data. The research design was developed by peer researchers and faculty members who established protocols and procedures to collect and synthesize data to address the study's research question (Creswell, 2014). The approach used in qualitative research provides a deeper understanding of the study. Patton (2015) stated, "Qualitative research aims to generate or test theory and contribute to knowledge" (p. 18). In a qualitative inquiry, the researcher provides a world perspective by identifying and describing the societal phenomena of nature. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument for the study.

Similarly, qualitative research appropriately uses interviews and documentation. The researcher seeks answers to the questions about what strategies by CERT program managers are used to build adaptive leadership by analyzing queries, audio-video, and other artifacts to explain the meaning. However, the process can be time consuming. Patton (2015) stated, "The fruit of qualitative inquiry emerges from the three kinds of qualitative data" (p. 36). The qualitative data guided the answering of the purpose of the study. The core question aimed to identify and describe CERT program managers' perceptions of how they build adaptive capacity through the lens of Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics. The qualitative design used purposive sampling to gain insights into CERT program managers' lived experiences on adaptive leadership. The goal was to understand the CERT program manager's perceptions of adaptive leadership in the organization using interviews and artifacts (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

There are various forms of qualitative inquiry, and the different approaches need to align with the purpose of the research. Explaining and describing the CERT program manager's lived experiences required a phenomenological approach to the study. The approach allows the researcher to collect qualitative data and acquire knowledge about the world through field research (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The interview was conducted upon approval from the University of Massachusetts Global Institutional Review Board (IRB). I conducted 10 virtual interviews via Zoom, using interview questions and a script developed by a team of peer researchers and faculty members. The qualitative research inquiry measures the reactions using information from participants to gather themes that align with the research's purpose (Patton, 2015). The data were collected from 10 experienced CERT program managers using interview transcripts and artifacts. Also, I collected possible revisions and clarification from interviewees after they reviewed the transcript. The review allowed data accuracy. Using Delve (n.d.), I meticulously organized the data from interviews and artifacts and coded themes that emerged.

The study is a nonexperimental design with designated participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The interview inquiries and artifacts provided data to describe the nature of the participants' lived experiences. The research design allowed me to identify and describe CERT program managers' perceptions of strategies used to build adaptive capacity within the organization.

Research Method

The nine peer researchers and three faculty members deliberated regarding the research methods possible and agreed upon a phenomenological qualitative study as the

method that would align with the purpose and research questions. I used the purpose, research questions, and an interview instrument that were collaboratively created by the team of peer researchers and validated by faculty members experts in qualitative methodology. I used these tools that identified and described 10 CERT program managers' perceptions of strategies to build adaptive capacity within the organization. The participants were purposively selected based on specific criteria and recommendations of the population who possess a good source of information (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The qualitative study explored CERT program managers' lived experiences trends. The study identified key strategies contributing to existing theories. The phenomenological approach describes the meaning of lived experiences (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) and identifies the problems associated with the experience to enhance knowledge. The gained knowledge can be used to guide changes in policies and assist other CERT program managers experiencing similar outcomes. Information gathering used the content of analysis based on the frequency of themes to alleviate bias and provide transparency about the study to support the findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, "A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research" (p. 129). For this study, the population of CERT program managers provides oversight of CERT programs. CERT programs are located in all 50 states, including tribal and U.S. territories. There are over

600,000 people who have trained in CERT and over 2,700 CERT programs nationwide (FEMA, 2022c). The nationwide population was too large to practically access for the study; therefore, I narrowed the population to arrive at a sampling frame.

Sampling Frame

The FEMA (n.d.-b) database identified 71 approved CERT program managers in Washington state. The sample frame for this study provided approximately 15% of CERT program managers in Washington state municipalities. The oversight typically indicates CERT program managers are serving in dual roles. Acknowledging the dual positions proved beneficial when selecting a sample of participants. The population helped determine the sampling frame; however, the national number of possible participants was too large, and the Washington state number, although more manageable, did not meet all the specified thematic criteria. Therefore, a sample of participants was selected to interview and answer research questions. The following section discusses the research sample.

Sample

According to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), “Sampling is the process of selecting some individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected” (p. 147). The research used purposive sampling and specific criteria to select 10 CERT program managers to constitute the study sample. Literature has suggested that criterion-based sampling identifies a particular set of requirements that are relevant, articulate, and possess a system review, and study of the participants who meet specific criteria in a population, sample frame, or sample size (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patten & Newhart, 2018; Patton, 2015).

I used a purposive sampling nonprobability method for all participants. The use of criterion-based sampling identifies potential weaknesses in the study that may require improvements. In this study, purposive sampling was used as an opportunity to sample the population with information relevant to the research topic who met the established criteria of the study (Patton, 2015). Therefore, peer researchers used predetermined criteria for participants, creating a purposive sampling approach. The strategy for using predetermined criteria allows for an in-depth analysis of participants' lived experiences with similar characteristics because the peer researchers work in diverse industries with diverse skills. A purposive sample uses elements of the population that are key to the study and represent the research topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patten & Newhart, 2018). Given the available time and resources, the purposive sample was most appropriate for selection. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the selected population for the study. In addition, nonprobability does not guarantee each person has an equal chance to participate in the selection process.

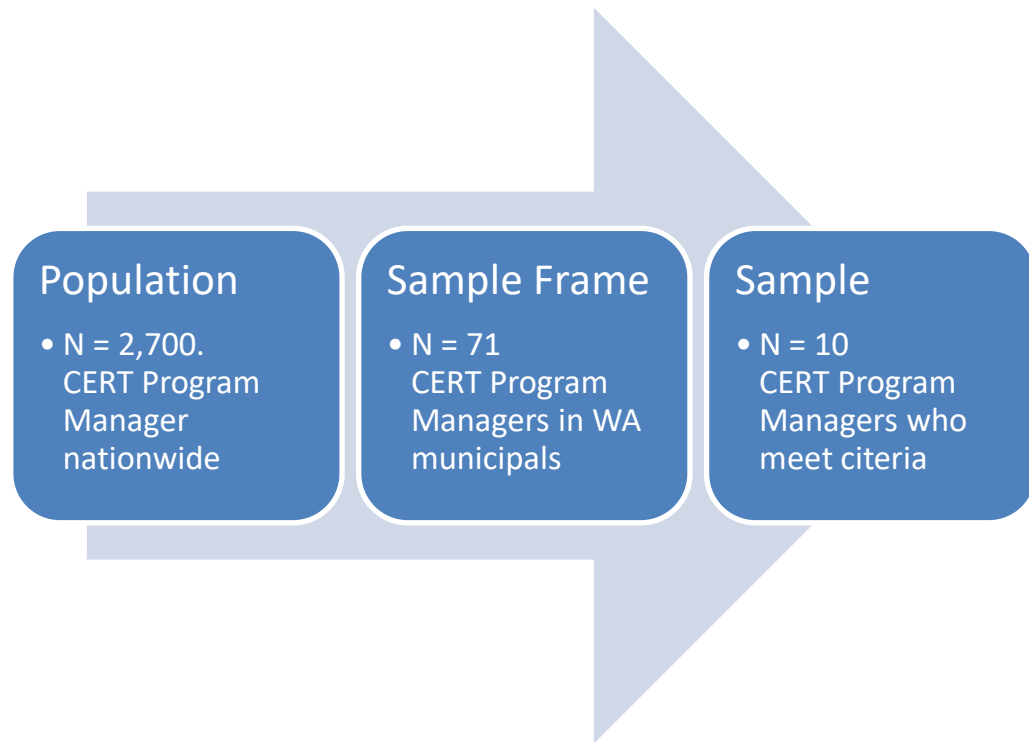
The peer researchers developed a list of criteria to identify adaptive leaders for this study. This study was delimited to 10 CERT program managers in Washington who met four of the six following criteria:

- evidence of successful relationships with stakeholders
- evidence of breaking through conflict to achieve organizational success
- five or more years of experience in that profession or field
- evidence of having written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings
- recognition by their peers

- membership in associations of groups focused on their field

Figure 1

Population, Sample Frame, and Sample of CERT Program Managers



Sample Selection

The sample selection took place upon the approval of the IRB. I consolidated a list of 71 approved CERT program managers who reside in Washington state municipalities. I solicited the aid of an expert panel member to identify CERT program managers in Washington state municipalities who meet the criteria for the study. An expert panel has extensive knowledge and experience in the CERT program manager field. The expert panel member is well-known throughout Washington and has 17 years of experience in emergency services that would impart advice, recommendations, and participants selected for the study (Patton, 2015).

I contacted the participants who met the criteria for the study. The sampling selected produced 10 participants to interview to support the protocols identified by peer researchers and three faculty members. Upon selection, an email was sent to each of the potential participants to obtain their willingness to participate in the study (Appendix B). The first 10 CERT program managers to respond were contacted via a follow-up phone call. The context of the telephone call with each CERT program manager included a review of the purpose of the study, discussed any concerns or questions, and provided reassurance of confidentiality given the nature of the study and the relevance of their positions. A letter of introduction and explanation (Appendix C) was emailed to participants, plus an interview protocol (Appendix D), the informed consent and audio recording release (Appendix E), and the University of Massachusetts Global Participant Bill of Rights (Appendix F). I scheduled the Zoom interviews at a time of the participant's choosing. Each interview took approximately 60 min to complete. The interviews were recorded using the embedded recording function in the Zoom platform. Each interview included the participant providing verbal consent of having received and read the informed consent document and for the interview to be recorded.

Instrumentation

The researcher is an extension of the data collection, and the environment was created for participants to be open and express their opinions. The researcher sets the tone for the interview process and data collection. Patton (2015) stated that interviews contain “open-ended questions and probes yield in-depth responses about people’s experiences, perceptions, options, feelings, and knowledge” (p. 14). The process encouraged participants to speak freely and lengthily about the topic. For this study, participants were

given semistructured, open-ended interview questions to reveal the CERT program manager's perceptions and experiences based on the five characteristics of Heifetz et al.'s (2009) *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* (making naming the elephant in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning) within the respective municipals. The interview questions provided an opportunity to examine the participants' responses to the purpose of the research study. In particular, how does a model like adaptive leadership interact with specific site characteristics (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010)?

Qualitative Interviews

Designing interview question protocols that align with the research purpose and research questions is a method used to collect data that guide insights into the theme of the research topic. Structured protocols provide directions for conducting interviews and consistency on questions for all participants (Patten & Newhart, 2018). I collaborated with nine peer researchers and three University of Massachusetts Global faculty members to develop 10 interview questions to identify and describe the CERT program manager's perceptions of Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership during a time of great change and opportunity within the organization.

Researcher as an Instrument of the Study

As the instrument, the researcher collects data using semistructured, open-ended interview questions and artifacts to obtain a deeper understanding (Patton, 2015). I have over 7 years of experience serving in CERT programs and a master's in business administration (MBA), am a member of the Thurston County Disaster Assistance

Response Team (TCDART), and provide emergency response training to local schools and community members. In these roles, I used feedback from peer researchers and conducted a self-reflection to identify potential research biases that could influence the data. By implementing the interview protocols, I focused on the lived experiences of CERT program managers using semistructured, open-ended interview questions on their perceptions of Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership and the five characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning).

Artifacts

Artifacts are tangible documents and relics used in a qualitative research design to capture participants' experiences, actions, and beliefs (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The artifacts were a method used to collect data from participants and organizations that align with the research study inquiries and design. For this study, I obtained artifacts such as emails, meeting minutes and agenda, and online documents representing the five characteristics of Heifetz's (2009) adaptive leadership in the respective organizations. The triangulation broadened the understanding of the data to product credibility to the study's research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The triangulation of data uses more than one data analysis technique as a source. I used interviews developed by peer researchers, artifacts, and an extensive literature review. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) suggested the triangulation method increases a study's reliability and validity as it decreases the limitations of a singular focus.

Field-Testing

Salkind and Frey (2020) mentioned that internal consistency in reliability determines whether the study measures one aspect of the research construct. In response to the consistency concerns, a field test was conducted by the peer researchers of this thematic study. The field test gave researchers recommendations on potential biases and ambiguity in the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The field tests were performed by each peer researcher of the thematic study with a participant who fit the exemplary criteria of the study, and an experienced interviewer conducted oversight of the session to serve as an observer. The observer possessed knowledge and skills in qualitative research and provided suggestions on the feedback form (Appendix G). Though the field-test participant was not part of the study, they were asked to provide an assessment of the questions to address the gap in reliability and validity (Appendix H).

The assessment included peer researchers and faculty members in developing the research study to minimize potential biases. Participants were allowed to review transcripts of the interview to ensure accuracy. Adjustments were made to interview protocols. The process ensured the validity and reliability of data.

Validity and Reliability

Validity

Proving validity in a qualitative research study can be challenging; however, methods can be applied to strengthen the study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, “The validity of inferences made through this process is strengthened by identifying limitations and biases, estimating uncertainty and error, and systematically ruling out other plausible explanations in a rational, convincing way” (p. 7). Therefore, I applied

rigor testing, which allowed participants to review results and comment on data accuracy and reliability to maximize the validity of the research study. Carr (2014) stated, “Participants were asked to verify trends observed throughout the course of this research to ensure their consistency” (p. 38). The rigor test allows the researcher to have self-awareness of biases not previously identified in the study. Carr added, “This test not only rules out the possibility of misinterpretation but can also make the researcher aware of a bias they had not previously considered” (p. 38).

Reliability

Patten and Newhart (2018) contended that reliability measures the consistency of the study using varying aspects measurements. Therefore, the semistructured interview questions were designed by peer research and faculty members of the thematic team. The design was specific to leaders in various organizations who possess varying skills.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) wrote, “Locally devised instruments, which have no history of use or reviews by others, need to be evaluated with more care” (p. 179). Their study questioned the validity of the research instruments. The uncertainty creates a gap among the research questions, which can affect the outcome of the research design.

Therefore, the researcher must apply careful considerations when assessing the study results (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The questions were scrutinized by those with experience in their respective fields. Therefore, the locally administered questions underwent screening and testing to determine validity. The peer researchers conducted a field test to determine the validity of the research questions. Similarly, the field-test results identified the inconsistency in research questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated,

By examining the results of similar previous studies, you will get an idea of the variability that can be expected, and a pilot test, with participants similar to what you use, will give you a trial run to be confident about the expected variability. (p. 104)

External Reliability

The goal was to ensure reliability and validity in the test results for the research study. Goss (2017) suggested that findings may identify strengths and weaknesses in a research study of the organization. The field test helped to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the research study. Upon successful completion of the field test and approval from peer researchers, faculty team members, and IRB, the participants were contacted for a formal interview.

Intercoder Reliability

Lombard et al. (2004) defined intercoder reliability as a “widely used term for the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion” (p. 2). The intercoder reliability was used to measure the consistency required in analyzing the research content. Although the approach does not guarantee validity, the goal was to reduce researcher biases by ensuring themes and codes were the opinion and experiences of the participants. A peer researcher coded at least 10% of the data with 80% or higher agreement to ensure intercoder reliability.

The reliability and validity test aimed to predict whether the results were a guide to improving the conditions in the future state. In comparison, the reliability test identified the stability and consistency of the research data. The approach guided the

research to identify gaps that would hinder the reliability of the research results. The next section encompasses data collection.

Data Collection

Data collection is a strategy used to gather information from participants, analyze, and interpret results to draw a conclusion (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The process of collecting data began after approval by the University of Massachusetts Global IRB; I contacted all participants via email about the research to begin the study. A Letter of Informed Consent (LIC; Appendix E) with details about the research study, Research Participants' Bill of Rights (Appendix F), interview questions, operational definitions (Appendix I), a summary of adaptive leadership (Appendix J), and digital form with demographics listed in the interview protocol (Appendix D) was sent to participants. Upon receipt of the LIC, a sample of participants received a date and time to conduct the interview inquiry (Appendix K) via Zoom technology. The LIC acknowledged participants being recorded during the interview process.

A reminder email was sent out a week prior with a Zoom invite to participants in the study. The LIC was distributed and collected via email. The email consent forms were assigned by catalog numbers and downloaded on a thumb drive. The thumb drive was located in a secure lockbox to protect the confidentiality of participants.

The question design foreshadows the research problem. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), "The foreshadowed problem is like a central question. It is a general problem that will frame the initial data collection process" (p. 64). The interview questions contained modifications in response to the expert panel member's assessment

and recommendations. Further details about the interview questions can be found in the instrument section of the research study.

The data were transposed onto a Word document and uploaded to Delve (n.d.) to produce themes and coding of findings. The design used the data to determine the differences and similarities in participants' perceptions of the interview questions. The findings are in the data analysis section. Also, the interview asked about the CERT program managers' demographic data such as age, gender, educational level, years of experience, number of years in the position, number of years in the field, and ethnicity. The demographic data with a confidentiality statement ensured the safeguarding of the participants' information.

Data Analysis

The aim of the qualitative data analysis was to identify themes and patterns associated with the findings of the data collected from participants. The research sought to clarify the data and transform findings, not to deceive the readers (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). I explored the data's inductive logic to understand the meaning of the findings obtained from participant interviews. Patton (2015) stated, "Inductive analysis is generating new concepts, explanations, results, and theories from specific data of a qualitative study" (p. 541). I conducted an inductive data analysis to generate codes by categorizing themes and patterns from the data collected from participants' responses. The data were collected from 10 CERT program managers' responses to interview questions and artifacts. The data analysis indicated adaptive leadership from the interview question and probes from participants' lived experiences. The second analysis indicated leaders building adaptive capacity during great change and opportunity from the same

inquiries. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) provided the following “five sources that researchers can use to get started” (p. 369):

1. The research questions and foreshadowed problems or subquestions
2. The research instrument
3. Themes, concepts, and categories used by other researchers
4. Prior knowledge of the researcher or personal experience
5. The data themselves. (p. 369)

The participants provided feedback and clarification from the transcribed audio recordings. The process provided accuracy and reliability in data. I uploaded the synthesized data to Delve (n.d.) software to obtain coded and organized findings to determine the frequency of data. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, “Delve is a computerized software program that is user-friendly and easy to retrieve data” (p. 369). In addition, ethical considerations are put in place to ensure the confidentiality of the participants’ data.

Limitations

In qualitative research, an empirical method uses data to describe, analyze and interpret the information’s meaning. The approach to this study was interviews and a review of documentation to determine outcomes. However, the study can be subjective based on the researcher’s perception and the inability to remove themselves entirely from the data. The behavior is known as the Hawthorne effect, which threatens the data’s internal validity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). These preconceived notions can undermine the researcher’s integrity and create a research bias. The subjective bias can be an implicitly or explicitly misleading view of the study’s reality, affecting the research

findings' authenticity and dependability (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Nevertheless, the behavior is unfair to the person or group studied and can potentially create an ethical dilemma for the researcher. Therefore, researchers must be aware of intentional and unintentional biases and address the findings in the study.

There are various biases to be aware of in a research study; however, the focus addressed participant and researcher bias. Participant bias is identified when respondents answer interview questions with opinions versus feeling that would lead participants to answer the remaining questions similarly. Holroyd (2015) believed that people should not be blamed for implicit bias if they are cognitively unaware; however, they should be educated about bias to have introspective, inferential, and observational awareness. Therefore, the researcher must be aware of their personal biases to avoid self-deceptions, remain objective, and have self-discipline in research procedures. In short, knowing oneself provides researchers with an indication of the design and methods to use. As a result, safeguards are put in place to avoid participant and researcher bias.

Keeping safeguards against research bias can be challenging for researchers. According to Mehra (2002), "Research bias enters into the picture even if the researcher tries to stay out of it" (p. 11). The researcher can create safeguards for participants by having open-end questions that preclude agreement or disagreement. The safeguards help participants feel socially accepted, share their opinions, and be forthcoming with their answers.

While conducting a biased self-assessment, the results implied I had a slight implicit bias in how the categories were viewed. Implicit bias implies a person can react or respond based on discrimination or typecast without deliberately doing so

(Brownstein, 2019). Lacking awareness of the researcher's questions and participant responses could imply bias, which poses limitations to the study. As a result, I used self-reflection and journaled the ethical dilemma that created the bias to justify findings from data collection and analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Limitations of a study include aspects of the research design that can hinder the study's validity and reliability in the data results (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). The study has limitations on the participants' perspective for the research that could not capture the entire population. Therefore, I identified three limitations to the study, which are the sample size, research instrument, and time.

Sample Size

This study's sample size was 10 participants for each peer researcher on the thematic team. The sample size created the first limitation of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling used a sample of the population in which the chosen group's average values are approximate to the average population's known characteristics (Patton, 2015). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) noted that "a qualitative sample can range from 1 to 40" (p. 328). With this understanding, the thematic identified sample of 10 per peer researcher as being within an acceptable range (Patton, 2015).

Researcher as Instrument

The second limitation that might have created bias was that I relied on past experiences with the CERT program training and exercise. A study can be subjective based on a researcher's metacognitive perception and the inability to remove themselves entirely from the data. My experience in CERT programs, training, and exercises might have led to preconceived notions that might have undermined my integrity and created a

bias (Carr, 2014; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Research bias is a predisposition for or against a person or group. Mehra (2002) stated, “A researcher’s personal beliefs and values are reflected not only in the choice of methodology and interpretation of findings but also in the choice of a research topic” (p. 8). A researcher strengthens the study by identifying this as a possible influence within the study.

Time

I conducted the data collection for this study across 2 months. Interviews were conducted with an approximate length of 60 min per interview. A possible limitation may be that the time frame for holding interviews and the time allotted for each interview was time bound.

Summary

Chapter III detailed the purpose statement and research questions that this study aimed to focus on using the research methodology. Based on the findings, I provided a congruent study between the purpose of the research and the research question. The research was conducted using a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of the CERT program manager’s adaptive leadership. The peer researchers and faculty members developed research instruments and data collection protocols. The details of the data analysis process and limitations were provided in the study. Chapter IV provides the research findings, and Chapter V finalizes the study with a summary of significant findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

This phenomenological qualitative study was conducted to identify and describe the strategies used by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers to build an adaptive capacity using Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics of adaptive leadership. Chapter IV begins with an overview of the study, including the purpose statement, research questions, methodology, data collection procedures, and sampling protocol. This chapter concludes with a summary and analysis of the collected data as they align with the research questions of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009).

Research Questions

Central Research Question

What strategies do Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning)?

Subquestions

1. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through making naming elephants in the room the norm?
2. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through nurturing shared responsibility for the organization?
3. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through encouraging independent judgment?
4. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?
5. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

The research design provides an overarching approach to addressing the research purpose and questions researchers use to collect and analyze data. The research design was developed by peer researchers and faculty members who established protocols and procedures to collect and synthesize data to address the study's research question (Creswell, 2014). The approach used in qualitative research provides a deeper understanding of the study. Patton (2015) stated, "Qualitative research aims to generate or test theory and contribute to knowledge" (p. 18). In a qualitative inquiry, the researcher provides a world perspective by identifying and describing the societal phenomena of nature. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument for the study.

Similarly, qualitative research appropriately uses interviews and documentation. I sought answers to the questions about what strategies are used by CERT program managers to build adaptive leadership by analyzing queries, audio videos, and other artifacts to explain the meaning. However, the process can be time-consuming. Patton (2015) stated, “The fruit of qualitative inquiry emerges from the three kinds of qualitative data” (p. 36). The qualitative data guided the answering of the purpose of the study. The core question aimed to identify and describe CERT program managers’ perceptions of how they build adaptive capacity through the lens of Heifetz et al.’s (2009) five key characteristics. The qualitative design used purposive sampling to gain insights into CERT program managers’ lived experiences on adaptive leadership. The goal was to understand the CERT program manager’s perceptions of adaptive leadership in the organization using interviews and artifacts (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

There are various forms of qualitative inquiry, and the different approaches need to align with the purpose of the research. Explaining and describing the CERT program manager’s lived experiences required a phenomenological approach to the study. The approach allows a researcher to collect qualitative data and acquire knowledge about the world through field research (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The interviews were conducted upon approval from the University of Massachusetts Global Institutional Review Board (IRB). I conducted 10 virtual interviews via Zoom using interview questions and a script developed by a team of peer researchers and faculty members. The qualitative research inquiry measures the responses from participants to gather themes that align with the research’s purpose (Patton, 2015). The data were collected from 10 experienced CERT program managers using interview

transcripts and artifacts. To ensure data accuracy, I collected possible revisions and clarification from interviewees after they reviewed their transcript. Using the software Delve, I meticulously organized the data from interviews and artifacts and coded the themes that emerged.

The nine peer researchers and three faculty members deliberated regarding the research methods possible and agreed upon a phenomenological qualitative study as the method that would align with the purpose and research questions. I used the purpose, research questions, and an interview instrument that were collaboratively created by the team of peer researchers and validated by faculty members experts in qualitative methodology. The tools were used to identify and describe 10 CERT program managers' perceptions of strategies to build adaptive capacity within the organization. The participants were purposively selected based on specific criteria and recommendations of the population who possess a good source of information (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The qualitative study explored CERT program managers' lived experience through the lens of adaptive leadership. The phenomenological approach describes the meaning of lived experiences (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) to enhance and build on current knowledge. The gained knowledge can be used to guide changes in policies and assist other CERT program managers experiencing similar outcomes.

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, "A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research" (p. 129). For this study, the population of CERT program managers provides oversight of CERT programs. CERT

programs are located in all 50 states, including tribal and U.S. territories. There are over 600,000 people who have trained in CERT and over 2,700 CERT programs nationwide (FEMA, 2022c). The nationwide population was too large to practically access for the study; therefore, I narrowed the population to arrive at a sampling frame.

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Sample

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In this study, purposive sampling was used as an opportunity to sample the population with information relevant to the research topic who met the established criteria of the study (Patton, 2015). Therefore, peer researchers used predetermined criteria for participants, creating a purposive sampling approach. The strategy for using predetermined criteria allows for an in-depth analysis of participants’ lived experiences

with similar characteristics because the peer researchers work in diverse industries with diverse skills. A purposive sample uses elements of the population that are key to the study and represent the research topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patten & Newhart, 2018). This study was delimited to 10 CERT program managers in Washington who met four of six specific criteria. The data illustrate that all participants in fact met at least five of the criteria. Table 4 shows a breakdown as to how the participants met the requirements.

Table 4

Study Participant Criteria

Criteria	Participant									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Has shown evidence of successful relationships with stakeholders	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Has shown evidence of breaking through conflict to achieve organizational success	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
3. Has 5 or more years of experience in that profession or field	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Has shown evidence of written articles, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5. Is recognition by his or her peers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6. Has held membership in associations of groups focused on their field	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Demographic Data

The study identified 10 CERT program managers who met four of the six established criteria for the study. I used pseudonyms such as Participant 1 through Participant 10 and chose to extract all identifiable information to protect the confidentiality of the participants. The participants were asked to self-identify by gender, years in the organization, years in the position, years in the field, highest level of education, age, and ethnicity. The ages of the participants ranged 36 and above. However, 90% of the participants fell into the 46 and above age range. There were 60% male and 40% female participants. The ethnicity of the participants was 70% White and 1% each for Asian, Native American, and multiracial. Table 5 shows a breakdown of the demographic data.

Table 5

Participant Demographic Data

Participant	Gender	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Years in organization	Years in position	Years in the field	Highest level of education
1	Male	56-65	African American/ Black, Hispanic/ Latinx, and Native American	4-8	4-8	9-15	Other
2	Female	66+	White/Caucasian	4-8	4-8	4-8	CC
3	Male	46-55	White/Caucasian	16+	4-9	16+	AA
4	Male	56-65	White/Caucasian	4-8	1-3	4-8	MA
5	Female	46-55	White/Caucasian	4-8	1-3	4-8	BA
6	Male	66+	White/Caucasian	16+	16+	16+	MA
7	Female	46-55	White/Caucasian	9-15	4-8	9-15	BA
8	Female	36-45	White/Caucasian	9-15	9-15	9-15	BA
9	Male	46-55	Asian	9-15	4-8	9-15	BA
10	Male	56-65	Native American	16+	1-3	16+	Other

Presentation and Analysis of Data

I used a qualitative research design to collect data through semistructured interviews conducted via Zoom and electronic artifacts collected from participants in the study. The data were extracted to identify and describe CERT program managers' perceptions of building adaptive capacity based on the practices of Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership framework. The interview questions were designed to obtain the lived experiences of the participants' strategies to build adaptive capacity. The collected data were arranged and coded to find emerging themes from the research questions and align with the theoretical framework of the study.

Analysis of Data

The qualitative data analysis was to identify themes and patterns associated with the findings of the data collected from participants. I sought to clarify the data and transform findings, not to deceive the readers (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). I explored the data's inductive logic to understand the meaning of the findings obtained from participant interviews. Patton (2015) stated, "Inductive analysis is generating new concepts, explanations, results, and theories from specific data of a qualitative study" (p. 541). I conducted an inductive data analysis using the Delve tool to generate codes by categorizing themes and patterns from the data collected from participants' responses. The data were collected from 10 CERT program managers' responses to interview questions and artifacts. The transcripts were uploaded into Delve, and the data were coded from the interview questions and probes based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership: (a) making naming elephants in the room the norm, (b) nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, (c) encouraging independent judgment,

(d) developing leadership capacity, and (e) institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. The data produced themes and frequency tables that were relative to the five key characteristics and research questions.

Intercoder Reliability

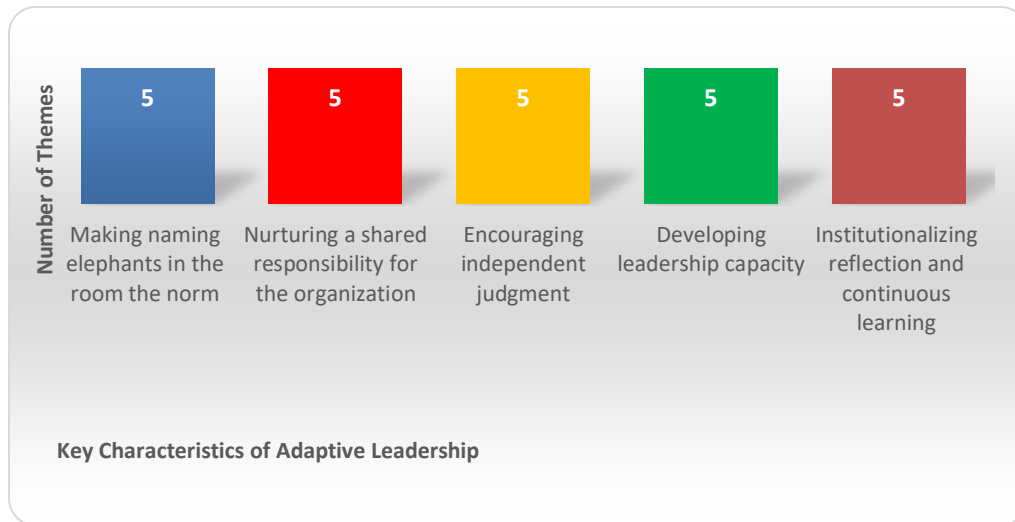
Lombard et al. (2004) defined intercoder reliability as a “widely used term for the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion” (p. 2). I used the intercoder reality to measure the consistency required in analyzing the research content. In addition, the intercoder reliability was used with a peer researcher who has experience in qualitative data coding. Although the approach does not guarantee validity, the goal was to reduce researcher biases by ensuring themes and codes are the opinions and experiences of the participants. A peer researcher coded at least 10% of the data with 80% or higher agreement to ensure intercoder reliability. The reliability and validity test aims to predict whether the results are a guide to improving the conditions in the future state. In comparison, the reliability test identified the stability and consistency of the research data. The approach guided me to identify gaps that would hinder the reliability of the research results.

Research Data

A total of 955 coded entries were found in the 10 interviews and 35 artifacts collected. There were 866 interview question frequencies and 89 artifact frequencies. It is important to note that the artifacts are noted in total frequencies and not as unique disparate artifacts. The data produced 25 themes. Figure 2 provides a chart with the themes that are associated with the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership.

Figure 2

Distribution of Themes for Key Characteristics of Adaptive Leadership



The 25 themes produced five emergent themes each from the five key characteristics. Table 6 provides a breakdown of the coded data from this study that aligns with the research questions. Figure 3 shows a visual representation of the coded frequencies and the percentage of codes for each of the characteristics being in alignment with the research questions.

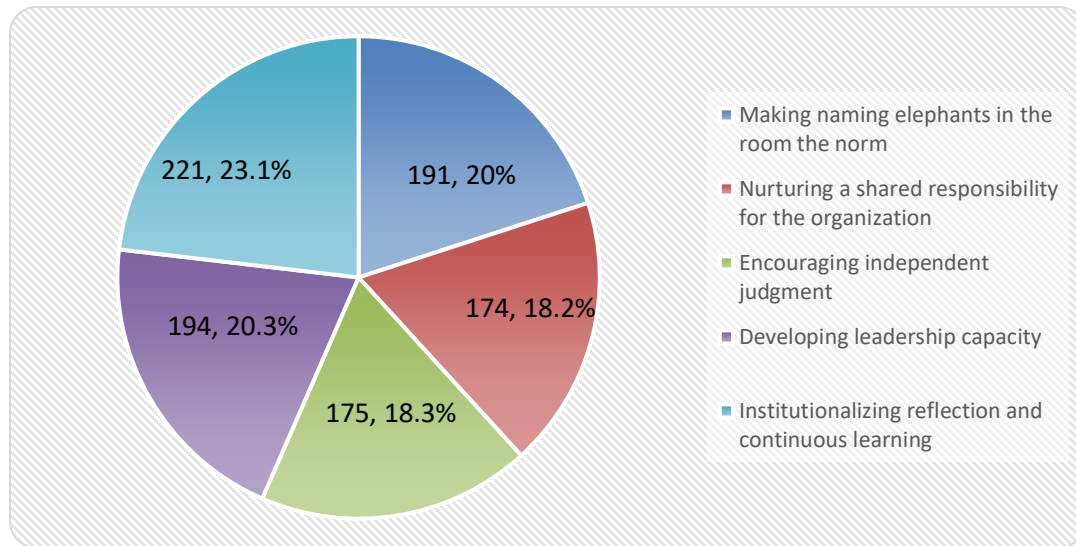
Table 6

Coded Data of the Key Characteristics

Key characteristic of adaptive leadership	Research question	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	Frequency %
Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning	5	221	20	221	23.1
Developing leadership capacity	4	176	18	194	20.3
Making naming elephants in the room the norm	1	178	13	191	20.0
Encouraging independent judgment	3	162	13	175	18.3
Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization	2	149	25	174	18.2

Figure 3

Frequencies and Percentages: Research Question Data



Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning had the highest overall frequency count of 221, producing 23.1% of the data. Developing leadership capacity had the second highest, producing 20.3% of the data. Making naming the elephant in the room the norm had a frequency of 191, producing 20%. Encouraging independent judgment and nurturing a shared responsibility were nearly equal with a frequency of 175 and 174, producing 18.3% and 18.2% of the data, respectively. The following sections provide an analysis of data by research question related to themes and produced by the frequency of data.

Research Subquestion 1

Research Subquestion 1 asked, “How do CERT program managers build an organization’s adaptive capacity by making naming elephants in the room the norm?” For this study, making naming elephants in the room the norm was defined as the act of openly addressing sensitive underlying issues, or undiscussables, to resolve potential

barriers that interfere with an organization realizing its full potential (A. C. Baker, 2004; Heifetz et al., 2009; Toegel & Barsoux, 2019).

The participants were asked two interview questions and probes (Appendix L) to collect data for the study and to gain insights into making naming the elephants in the room the norm within the organization for building adaptive capacity. The first question sought to understand the practices participants use to address sensitive underlying issues. The second question sought to obtain an in-depth study as to how leaders create an environment that addresses the barriers to organizational success.

I systematized the data into five themes that respond to the study's first subquestion. These five themes contained a total of 191 frequencies from the 10 interviews delivered 178 frequencies and the artifacts had 13 frequencies. The themes identified were establishing a safe physical and psychological environment, addressing barriers to organizational potential, actively listening engaging in open and honest communication, engaging stakeholders in conversation, and developing an understanding of individual behaviors. This study describes the participant's experiences with the themes. Table 7 provides a synopsis of the coded data for addressing Making Naming Elephants in the Room a Norm.

Addressing Barriers to Organizational Potential

The theme with the highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to make naming elephants in the room the norm was addressing barriers to organizational potential. The entries for this theme comprised 43 interview frequencies and four artifact frequencies, totaling 47 frequencies which accounted for 24.6% of the coded data for this variable. Eight of the 10 participants perceived that

addressing barriers is critical to an organization’s potential. A. C. Baker (2004) suggested that discussing the undiscussables is a difficult and challenging conversation that is underused. However, addressing the barriers can lead to a learning environment.

Table 7

Research Question 1: Themes for Making Naming Elephants in the Room a Norm

Theme	Sources	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	Frequency %
Addressing barriers to organizational potential	8	43	4	47	24.6
Actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication	9	43	3	46	24.1
Establishing a safe physical and psychological environment	7	35	4	39	20.4
Engaging stakeholders in a conversation	9	30	1	31	16.2
Developing an understanding of individual behaviors	7	27	1	28	14.7

CERT program managers indicated that the organization must address the sensitive issues, age and physical abilities of members, and work–life balance to build the organization’s adaptive capacity by making naming the elephant in the room the norm while it aligns with addressing barriers to organizational potential.

Participant 1 and Participant 5 described addressing issues as being political and academic, variables as separate underlying issues. Participant 1 believed that the following statement applies to the organization:

There are different kinds of variables that we need to address. One is political and the other one is academic. And so, there’s the sensitive underlying issues with

those organizations. It involves addressing them individually. But I look at it as a whole community type of approach.

Participant 5 also discussed barriers:

The political arena on this campus is very sensitive to absolutely everything. I had to go through literally 10 different sets of organizations and present for every single one of them before I could even have the approval to bring a CERT program onto this campus. And they each had a completely different set of questions. If we can break all the barriers down and make sure that there are no walls, there's no everybody's blind to the process, but still recognizing all the differences but good with it because they see it as an advantage to have all this diversity.

Participant 2 and Participant 4 suggested that the age of the volunteers can present barriers. Participant 2 stated, "I think the biggest barrier for us is the age of the population. The average age of the CERT members is probably 65, maybe even 70 on average. So the biggest barrier we have is our ability to physically lift heavy objects and people." Participant 4 mentioned, "We're going to have to continually bring new people in and it would be helpful to have some younger, more able-bodied people."

Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 6, and Participant 7 all agreed that the work-life balance of the volunteer presents challenges for the organization. Participant 2 stated, "The younger folks are working, and it's hard for them to get away, to come to meetings and get involved. We do have some, but not enough. And that's a big barrier for us." Participant 4 commented,

How do you get somebody who has to work for a living to take time out to participate in CERT? Other people are either working and they're overcommitted, some of them. One of them is a grandparent who's always flying off and going away for months at a time to take care of the grandkids.

Participant 6 mentioned, "But some of the CERT team members work full-time, they have kids, and they're going to grad school. It's also based on availability." Participant 7 stated, "There is a wide range of professionals that also have very busy schedules."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for addressing unique challenges and capabilities that can hinder the potential of organizations and the community. Artifacts were collected by Participant 2 and Participant 5. Participant 1 provided the Office of Emergency Management website, Participant 2 provided the CERT 6 PrePlan, Participant 5 provided the CERT manual, and Participant 7 provided forms to conduct a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is used to address the four elements of an organization which are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organization (Harvey et al. (1997). Multiple frequencies were noted in the artifacts. Each of these had specific components to address this theme, particularly referencing processes used to identify and address barriers.

Actively Listening and Engaging in Open and Honest Communication

The theme with the second highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to make naming elephants in the room the norm was actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication. The entries for this theme comprised 43 interview frequencies and three artifact frequencies, totaling 46 frequencies that accounted for 24.1% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants

perceived that actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication is an essential practice for an organization to reach its fullest potential. Toegel and Barsoux (2019) mentioned that teams' ability to have open discussions is what drives the organization's effectiveness.

CERT program managers indicated that the organization must address the sensitive issues related to worldview, open lines of communication, and efficiency to build the organization's adaptive capacity by making naming the elephant in the room the norm as it aligns with addressing actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication.

Participant 1 stated, "So, it's one of the practices is to listen to them as an individual and then also understand what their worldview has been as it relates to resilience, emergency management, and CERT teams as a whole." Participant 3 mentioned, "I try to maintain a friendly and open line of communication with all my volunteers." Participant 7 commented, "Communication breakdown breaks down efficiency. And this opens the door to finger-pointing. I don't know how that strategy would work in other organizations, but open honesty and being not just one-sided, being willing to communicate."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for addressing actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant 10. The three artifact frequencies were noted as Participant 1 organization's online website, a portion of the CERT 6 Communication Plan Mission provided by Participant 2, and a section in the Northwest Tribal Emergency Management Council (NWTEMC) website provided by Participant 10.

Establishing a Safe Physical and Psychological Environment

The theme with the third highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to make naming elephants in the room the norm was establishing a safe physical and psychological environment. The entries for this theme comprised 35 interview frequencies and four artifact frequencies, totaling 39 frequencies that accounted for 20.4% of the coded data for this variable. Seven of the 10 participants perceived that establishing a safe physical and psychological environment is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers identified physical and psychological safety policies and a neutral environment so that members feel comfortable addressing personal and professional issues. Participant 7 shared, "This creates a psychologically safe validation environment so that when there is an issue individuals bring that to me. This provides a baseline that can be referred to in future conversations because we talked about this briefly." To ensure the members are physically safe, Participant 3 mentioned, "Our goal is to not put a CERT team in a position where they would be physically endangered. I've shared this with the CERT team multiple times, 'You risk a lot to save a lot.'" Building a safe environment includes stakeholders of the organization. Participant 5 stated, "We have a strict policy on safety. Safety comes first, individual safety, team safety, and community safety. Because if the individual isn't safe, nobody else is going to be safe either." Participant 9 emphasized,

Because if we're just doing a tabletop or just live exercise, at any point in time, we can call, stop, and say, okay, this is dangerous and we give you the guardrails and we bring you back into where it's safe.

The artifacts collected for this theme were supportive of identified protocols for keeping the physical and emotional safety of members so that the organization reaches its fullest potential. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1, Participant 4, Participant 5, and Participant 9 with an artifact frequency of four. Participant 1 provided their organization's online website, Participant 4 provided the CERT Manual, Participant 5 organization's online website, and Participant 9 provided the Exercise Planning Worksheet that addressed specifics of a Safety Time Out procedure and spoke of differences between Time Out and a training time out.

Engaging Stakeholders in a Conversation

The theme with the least frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to make naming elephants in the room the norm was engaging stakeholders in a conversation. The entries for this theme comprised 30 interview frequencies and one artifact frequency, totaling 31 frequencies that accounted for 16.2% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants perceived that engaging stakeholders in a conversation is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described engaging stakeholders in conversation as a means to build rapport in a meaningful way, to tell their stories, and to foster inclusion. Participant 2 shared, "Engage people in a way that's going to be meaningful for them and meaningful for the organization." Participant 5 commented, "Talking, communicating, telling stories like the writer Holly Stark says, 'If you don't communicate and you're not a storyteller, then no one's going to be engaged in what you have to say.'" Participant 7 emphasized, "We engaged students and drew them into the muscle memory learning of those skills. This strategy fosters inclusion and equality."

The artifact collected identified protocols for engaging stakeholders in conversation that rely on community engagement strategies. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1. Participant 1 provided the Office of Emergency Management website that addressed strategies for inclusivity of all members to focus on the organization's mission and engaging the community.

Developing an Understanding of Individual Behaviors

The theme with the lowest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to make naming elephants in the room the norm was developing an understanding of individual behaviors. The entries for this theme comprised 27 interview frequencies and one artifact frequency, totaling 28 frequencies that accounted for 14.7% of the coded data for this variable. Seven of the 10 participants perceived that establishing a safe physical and psychological environment was the least important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers' experiences with developing an understanding of individual behaviors were described as understanding the person, knowing personalities, and learning about behaviors. Participant 1 and Participant 10 agreed that understanding the person helps in developing inner growth Participant 1 shared,

Understanding where they are coming from is important for me to understand where we can utilize them and how best to utilize their skill sets. I think that if you understand the individual, you can nurture the individual and their inner growth.

Participant 10 commented, "When I see the role of counsel come into play where they played a good role of understanding." Participant 5, Participant 7, and Participant 9

emphasized that understanding individual personalities is the key to success. Participant 5 suggested, “Hopefully knowing the individual personalities that are here, will help them be more successful.” Participant 7 stated, “We have a lot of alpha personalities that come into the organization. They are such incredible assets because they have high contributions, but they also want their perspective to be the idea that is chosen.” Participant 8 mentioned, “In the past, we’ve had issues where we’ve had very strong personalities in our group.” However, Participant 8 believed that awareness of behaviors is beneficial. Participant 8 responded, “So that also helps outline, behavioral things and what the expectation is as an extension of our department.”

The artifact collected identified protocols for developing an understanding of individual behaviors by addressing the acts of violence. The related artifact was provided by Participant 1. Participant 1 provided the artifact of their organization website, which had specific language to this theme.

Research Subquestion 2

Research Subquestion 2 asked, “How do CERT program managers build an organization’s adaptive capacity through nurturing shared responsibility for the organization?” For this study, nurturing a shared responsibility is the collective ownership across team member roles for the decision making of operational goals and outcomes of the organization’s future. (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Northouse, 2016; Tremblay et al., 2016).

Two interview questions were asked to collect data on the participants’ perceptions of shared goals. The first looked at the CERT program managers’ ability to build the organization’s adaptive capacity. The second question sought to determine what

practices leaders use to nurture shared responsibilities. I systematized the data into five themes that relate to the second subquestion in the study. These five themes contained a total of 174 frequencies from the 10 interviews delivered 149 frequencies, and the artifacts had 25 frequencies. Table 8 provides a breakdown of the coded data for nurturing shared responsibilities for the organization. The coded themes are shown along with their frequencies in Table 8, which encompasses building trusting relationships, promoting a collaborative mindset, fostering reliance and commitment, creating opportunities for shared goals, and forming internal and external connections.

Table 8

Research Question 2: Themes for Nurturing Shared Responsibilities for the Organization

Theme	Sources	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	Frequency %
Forming internal and external connections	8	39	5	44	25.3
Promoting a collaborative mindset	8	36	6	42	24.1
Creating opportunities for shared goals	8	32	6	38	21.8
Fostering reliance and commitment	9	25	3	28	16.1
Building trusting relationships	7	17	5	22	12.6

Forming Internal and External Connections

The theme with the highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers for nurturing shared responsibilities for the organization was forming internal and external connections. The entries for this theme comprised 39 interview frequencies and five artifact frequencies, totaling 44 frequencies that accounted for

25.3% of the coded data for this variable. Eight of the 10 participants perceived that forming internal and external connections is critical to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described forming internal and external connections as a means of interaction, building community connections, and benefiting the community. Participant 5 stated, "I feel so strongly about the CERT program because it brings different groups from different departments together to work together allowing them to interact. They are building that team connection up on a grand scale." Participant 7 commented, "I've let staff have permission to make some of those community connections because our purpose is to get community members access to this curriculum." Participant 8 stressed,

They're not just another number or a statistic that I need to check the box for how many volunteer hours I get. But they're individuals that are taking their time to come and do something to benefit our community. It's really about that human connection is important.

The artifacts collected identified protocols for forming internal and external connections inside and outside of the organization. Artifacts were provided by Participant 2, Participant 5, Participant 7, Participant 8, and Participant 10 with a noted total frequency of five. Participant 2 provided their CERT 6 PrePlan History, Participant 5 provided the online Emergency Management Preparedness and Response Guide, Participant 7 provided a multiagency Instructor Worksheet, Participant 8 provided the CERT 2023 Calendar of Events, and Participant 10 used an online website for the NWTEMC that underscored the theme.

Promoting a Collaborative Mindset

The theme with the second highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to nurture shared responsibilities for the organization was promoting a collaborative mindset. The entries for this theme comprised 36 interview frequencies and six artifact frequencies, totaling 42 frequencies that accounted for 24.1% of the coded data for this variable. Eight of the 10 participants perceived that promoting a collaborative mindset is essential to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described promoting a collaborative mindset as a means of working with groups inside and outside the organization. Participant 2 shared, "Everyone is there for one reason, and that is to help their neighbors and themselves." Participant 3 emphasized, "The effort worked for our CERT team and we were able to roll that into a real positive outcome for all the people who needed to face recovery efforts." Participant 4 stated, "Part of this training event was to serve the public and make them aware of some public safety issues, including Cascadia, and what they could do about it." Participant 8 said, "So, getting together and talking about how we can help one another and sharing strategies has always been successful."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for promoting a collaborative mindset that relies on team members coming together to support the communities and mission of the organization. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and Participant 8 which yielded a frequency of six. Participant 1 provided their organization website, Participant 2 provided their Cert 6 PrePlan, Participant 3 provided a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), and Participant 8 provided their Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) that align with the theme.

Creating Opportunities for Shared Goals

The theme with the third highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to nurture shared responsibilities for the organization was creating opportunities for shared goals. The entries for this theme comprised 32 interview frequencies and six artifact frequencies, totaling 38 frequencies that accounted for 21.8% of the coded data for this variable. Eight of the 10 participants perceived that creating opportunities for shared goals is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described creating opportunities for shared goals as a means of sharing information among members. Participant 3 stated, "The best way, in my opinion, that I try to share with our people, the best way to pass that information along, and that idea along is through the chain of command." Participant 5 commented, "When it comes to classes everybody trains together. If we don't learn together and we don't take notes together, then we don't know what we're doing. The shared goal is preparedness." Participant 7 emphasized, "Anything a person has studied is shared with the group when we get together. Our organizational goal has always been focused on bringing the CERT curriculum to organizations and individuals."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for sharing information to strengthen an organization's potential. Artifacts were provided by Participant 2, Participant 5, and Participant 10 which yielded a frequency of six. Participant 2 provided their CERT 6 PrePlan and website, Participant 5 provided the Emergency Management Preparedness and Response Guide, and Participant 10 provided specifics in their website that spoke to this theme.

Fostering Reliance and Commitment

The fourth theme in descending order of total frequency associated with strategies used by the CERT program to nurture shared responsibilities for the organization was fostering reliance and commitment. The entries for this theme comprised 35 interview frequencies and three artifact frequencies, totaling 38 frequencies that accounted for 16.1% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants perceived that fostering reliance and commitment is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described fostering reliance and commitment as a means of depending on team support. Participant 3 shared,

We activated our CERT team and ended up making approximately tens of thousands of face covers. And then again, using this same CERT team, we set up points of distribution using city parks where then we established drive-through distribution sites where people receive face covers, free of charge.

Participant 4 stated,

The whole CERT organization stepped up, pulled together, and organized the fair. Not everybody from my team was able to attend, but most of the people on my team were able to attend and a lot, came to help out. We had, I'm going to say 30 or 40 CERT members from various teams who were the primary players in running the event.

Participant 6 emphasized, "You will invest in them and give them your time. That starts to build loyalty and commitment. I'm looking for people who are loyal and reliable. They are reliable, knowledgeable, and well trained."

The artifacts collected identified various protocols for fostering reliance and commitment that rely on communities maintaining resilience. Artifacts were provided by Participant 4, Participant 5, and Participant 8. Participant 4 provided an Emergency Management (EM) Guide, Participant 5 provided their website, and Participant 8 provided their EM Guide all of which had evidence of this theme.

Building Trusting Relationships

The theme with the least frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to nurture shared responsibilities was building trusting relationships. The entries for this theme comprised 17 interview frequencies and five artifact frequencies, totaling 22 frequencies that accounted for 12.6% of the coded data for this variable. Seven of the 10 participants perceived that building trusting relationships was important to an organization's reaching its potential.

CERT program managers described building trusting relationships as a means of transparency, community bonds, and alleviating conflicts. Participant 1 stated, "Well, as the importance of that individual in our relationship, a personal relationship as a team, individual in our community. It comes down to transparency." Participant 5 commented, "People building trust and relationships with each other creates an amazing community bond. So, it's helping to build trust between all the different entities at this facility." Participant 7 emphasized,

As people join the leadership team, they feel connected and able to bring people together and feel unity within the group, this approach evolves. This helps minimize conflict when they're trying to bring up difficult situations or contribute with strategies.

The artifacts collected identified protocols for building trusting relationships that rely on loyalty and partnerships. Artifacts were provided by Participant 2, Participant 5, and Participant 10 to yield an artifact frequency of five. Participant 2 provided their CERT 6 Preplan, Participant 5 provided an Emergency Management Preparedness and Response Guide, and Participant 10 provided the NWTEMC website.

Research Subquestion 3

Research Subquestion 3 asked, “How do CERT program managers build an organization’s adaptive capacity by encouraging independent judgment?” For this study, a leader’s capacity to provide an opportunity for team members to make choices based on personal and professional experience regardless of the position held within the organization (Casavant et al., 1995; Heifetz et al., 2009; Shanbhag, 2002).

Two interview questions were asked to collect data on the participants’ ability to inspire members to comment on issues that hinder the organization’s productivity. The second question sought to understand team members’ ability to make choices regardless of their roles. Table 9 provides a breakdown of the coded data for encouraging independent judgment for the organization. The coded subthemes found within the themes are shown along with their frequencies in Table 9, which encompasses encouraging shared decision making, empowering autonomy through problem solving, using innovative strategies to attract interest, recognizing individual achievements, and building individual confidence.

Encouraging Shared Decision Making

The theme with the highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to encourage independent judgment was encouraging shared decision

making. The entries for this theme comprised 41 interview frequencies and four artifact frequencies, totaling 45 frequencies that accounted for 25.7% of the coded data for this variable. Ten of the 10 participants perceived that encouraging shared decision making is crucial to an organization’s potential.

Table 9

Research Question 3: Themes for Encouraging Independent Judgment

Theme	Sources	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	Frequency %
Encouraging shared decision making	10	41	4	45	25.7
Empowering autonomy through problem solving	10	38	2	40	22.9
Using innovative strategies to attract interest	10	29	5	34	19.4
Recognizing individual achievements	8	32	2	34	19.4
Building individual confidence	7	22	0	22	12.6

CERT program managers described engaging in shared decision making as a means for allowing different perspectives and thinking about training sessions. Participant 1 stated, “So, it allows us to have a decision-making process with these actions that we bring in with policies and procedures, and the actions allow them to be able to bring a different perspective.” Participant 3 emphasized, “The exercises helped to shape the decision-making process for our CERT Regional Coordinator.” Participant 10 commented, “I’ve always made sure that they are always in step with the lead person or they know personally they can make that decision.”

The artifacts collected identified protocols for encouraging shared decision making by making the best safety decisions. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1 and Participant 2 with a total frequency of four. The artifacts included Participant 1's organization website and Participant 2 provided the CERT 6 Preplan.

Empowering Autonomy Through Problem Solving

The theme with the second highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to encourage independent judgment was empowering autonomy through problem solving. The entries for this theme comprised 38 interview frequencies and two artifact frequencies, totaling 31 frequencies that accounted for 22.9% of the coded data for this variable. Ten of the 10 participants perceived that empowering autonomy through problem solving is essential to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described empowering autonomy through problem solving as a means to brainstorm what is important for the team, exercise good judgment, and function independently. Participant 2 shared, "So, they are empowered to design what's most important to them as a squad. They are given the power to make those decisions within the guidelines that we gave them." Participant 3 commented, "The team members are empowered to make decisions and exercise judgment on a nonissue. And so that was a really good opportunity for them to exercise their judgment." Participant 5 emphasized, "The team members are empowered to make decisions and exercise judgment on a nonissue."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for empowering autonomy through problem solving. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1 and Participant 9 with a noted

frequency of two. The artifacts included Participant 1's website, and Participant 9 provided the Exercise Planning Worksheet.

Using Innovative Strategies to Attract Interest

The theme with the third highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to encourage independent judgment was using innovative strategies to attract interest. The entries for this theme comprised 29 interview frequencies and five artifact frequencies, totaling 34 frequencies that accounted for 19.4% of the coded data for this variable. Ten of the 10 participants perceived that using innovative strategies to attract interest is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described using innovative strategies to attract interest as a means of outreach, influencing people to join the team, and recruiting. Participant 1 shared, "Having some hand-outs to attract people. So, it may present some interest in individuals who may want to now be a part." Participant 4 commented,

We keep using training and strategies to attract because we hope that we will slowly, over time, build up our teams to the point where we can cover all areas.

Part of the outreach program is a strategy to recruit new potential CERT people. Participant 5 emphasized,

It's a matter of tone and content and what you say to people if you're enthusiastic and you present it as an opportunity rather than a training series. It is accepted faster if they want to do it. You don't have to make people want to learn how to do basic skills.

The artifacts collected identified protocols for using innovative strategies to attract interest and recruit new members. Artifacts were provided by Participant 2,

Participant 5, and Participant 8 with a noted frequency of five. Participant 2 provided 2023 Meeting Notes, Participant 5 provided sections of the organization's website, and Participant 8 provided the 2023 CERT Volunteer Tracking Report.

Recognizing Individual Achievements

The fourth theme in descending order of total frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to encourage independent judgment was recognizing individual achievements. The entries for this theme comprised 32 interview frequencies and two artifact frequencies, totaling 34 frequencies that accounted for 19.4% of the coded data for this variable. Eight of the 10 participants perceived that recognizing individual achievements is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described recognizing individual achievements as a means to acknowledge those who went above and beyond, added value to the organization, and were rewarded for their efforts. Participant 1 stated, "The encouragement there is that we recognize those individuals who have gone above and beyond. But at the same time, the nurturing portion is being responsible and proactive and saying this individual adds value to the team." Participant 3 commented, "We have conducted annual awards banquets where we acknowledge the members. Some people have put in hundreds of hours a year and that's where they recognize and that members feel appreciated." Participant 7 mentioned, "I recognized the value of validation and inclusion and how it could benefit my program." Participant 8 stated, "So, showing personal appreciation for that individual volunteer I think is key, especially when it comes to managing volunteers, because that's what they're doing, they are volunteering their time."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for recognizing individual achievements that rely on email messages, thank you cards, and appreciation ceremonies to recognize members. Artifacts were provided by Participant 8 and Participant 10 with a noted frequency of two. Participant 8 provided their Volunteer Track Report, and Participant 10 provided a portion of their website.

Building Individual Confidence

The theme next to the least frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to encourage independent judgment was building individual confidence. The entries for this theme comprised 22 interview frequencies and zero artifact frequency, totaling 22 frequencies that accounted for 12.6% of the coded data for this variable. Seven of the 10 participants perceived that building individual confidence is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described building individual confidence as a means to build certainty and self-assurance. Participant 5 mentioned, "CERT is about building confidence and skills. If we can build up enough confidence in all of these students, staff, and faculty." Participant 5 commented, "Talking, communicating, telling stories like the writer Holly Stark says, 'If you don't communicate and you're not a storyteller, then no one's going to be engaged in what you have to say.'" Participant 7 stated, "We support the success of each team member because as each team member achieves a personal goal, it builds confidence, strength, and credibility for the program." Participant 9 suggested, "Giving the individuals the ability to expose themselves and see if they can try to build confidence." There were no artifacts collected or identified protocols for building individual confidence.

Research Subquestion 4

Research Subquestion 4 asked, “How do CERT program managers build an organization’s adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?” For this study developing leadership capacity is defined as the systemic focus on expanding competencies and resources, and intentionally motivating groups or individuals to increase leadership potential proactively (Eade, 1997, 2007; Carnoy et al., 2003; Eyben et al., 2006; Harris, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009; Sharratt & Fullan, 2009).

Two interview questions were asked to collect data on the participants’ ability to develop leadership skills within the organization. The first question sought to understand the leader’s involvement with increasing leadership potential. The second question looked at resources in place to enhance leadership competencies. Table 10 provides a breakdown of the coded data for developing leadership capacity for the organization. The coded themes are shown along with their frequencies in Table 10, which encompasses providing access to professional training and development, providing leadership opportunities, creating opportunities for growth, enhancing individual skill sets, and setting a professional example.

Providing Access to Professional Training and Development

The theme with the highest frequencies associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to develop leadership capacity was providing access to professional training and development. This theme comprised 50 interview frequencies and four artifact frequencies, totaling 54 frequencies that accounted for 27.8% of the coded data for this characteristic. Ten of the 10 participants perceived that access to professional training and development is critical to an organization’s potential.

Table 10

Research Question 4: Themes for Developing Leadership Capacity

Theme	Sources	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	Frequency %
Providing access to professional training and development	10	50	4	54	27.8
Providing leadership opportunities	10	39	3	42	21.6
Creating opportunities for growth	10	39	1	40	20.6
Enhancing individual skill sets	9	30	7	37	19.1
Setting a professional example	6	18	3	21	10.8

CERT program managers described access to professional training and development as a means of making training and development available for all. Participant 4 shared,

In our jurisdiction, we train our people. We have monthly trainings. I'm not taking credit for this. This is what our local CERT leaders have asked of us. We have started to create our training library on the website and provide updates to training.

Participant 5 commented, "I schedule everything as regularly as possible and I try to do different days and different times so as many people as possible." Participant 9 emphasized, "So, there's a lot of coursework that's available. We always point them to the sites for that, especially the Incident Command System [ICS] courses, and then for the in-person ones." Participant 10 mentioned,

I let them know, team we're here to help develop this for all those who played a role in this tribe, from the baby, from the elder, from the worker down. We are here to make this happen for all.

The artifacts collected identified protocols that rely on access to training manuals, guides, and other agencies to assist in the training and development of members. Artifacts were provided by Participant 3, Participant 7, Participant 8, and Participant 10 with an artifact frequency of four. Participant 3 provided the CEMP, Participant 7 provided Instructor Schedule Worksheets and CERT Basic Manuals for accessing training, Participant 8 provided the CERT SOGs, and Participant 10 provided their mission noted on their website.

Providing Leadership Opportunities

The theme with the second highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to develop leadership capacity was providing leadership opportunities. The entries for this theme comprised 39 interview frequencies and three artifact frequencies, totaling 42 frequencies that accounted for 21.6% of the coded data for this variable. Ten of the 10 participants perceived that providing leadership opportunities is essential to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described providing leadership opportunities as a means to get people to step into leadership roles, enhance member potential, and encourage the youth to leadership positions. Participant 1 shared, "One of the biggest problems in any organization is getting somebody to step up to a leadership role. And most people don't think of themselves as leaders." Participant 4 contended, "We do cross-training, when

possible, so all team members can perform most or all team roles. This gives adaptability and flexibility.” Participant 5 commented,

So now, instead of not just having leadership from the educator’s point of view, we have leadership that has gone ahead and created their groups so that they can question what the leader is doing and have more information from them that can be utilized and then relate it to what they’re doing in the classroom on a whole another level.

Participant 7 emphasized,

If I’m taken out, I certainly don’t want everything to collapse. I want there to be redundancy that can just step in. Everyone already knows how to move things forward. That’s another quality I would want them to have, to step up.

Participant 10 mentioned,

In this leadership role. A lot of the things that, the one we in the way, we’ve been pushing a lot of our young ones into is when it comes to this administrative development is not forgetting the culture for one but with that administrative drive how we are to take that.

The artifacts collected identified protocols for providing leadership opportunities.

Artifacts were provided by Participant 2 and Participant 5 with a frequency of three.

Participant 2 provided an artifact summary and the 2023 Training Calendar, and

Participant 5 provided their online website, specifically a section called Our Learning Approach.

Creating Opportunities for Growth

The theme with the third highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to develop leadership capacity was creating an opportunity for growth. The entries for this theme comprised 39 interview frequencies and one artifact frequency, totaling 40 frequencies that accounted for 20.6% of the coded data for this variable. Ten of the 10 participants perceived that creating an opportunity for growth is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described creating an opportunity for growth as a means to strengthen the organization and avail their time to mentor members. Participant 1 shared,

It's availing the members the opportunity to grow. Then later on take them aside and recommend things. Sometimes I recommended them to read something, look at a Ted Talk, or anything like that that I feel might help them to grow.

Participant 2 stated, "Pushing leadership into the ranks as far down into the ranks as you can strengthens the organization." Participant 5 emphasized, "And allow someone else to take the leadership position so that they can learn and develop as a leader."

The artifacts collected identified protocols for creating an opportunity for growth. The artifacts were provided by Participant 2 with a frequency of one. Participant 2 provided the 2023 CERT 6 Plan that aligns with the theme.

Enhancing Individual Skill Sets

The fourth theme in descending order of total frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to develop leadership capacity was enhancing individual skill sets. The entries for this theme comprised 30 interview frequencies and

seven artifact frequencies, totaling 37 frequencies that accounted for 19.1% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants perceived that enhancing individual skill sets is the second least important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described enhancing individual skill sets as a means to nurture the individual skill set and bring productivity to the individual and organization. Participant 1 shared, "So how can I best utilize these particular individuals' skills and nurture them to understand that they are important to the program no matter what those restrictions are?" Participant 5 commented, "So, I tend to get people a little bit excited about the opportunities if it's not presented as an opportunity to learn to get these preparedness skills to be ready for anything." Participant 7 mentioned, "I had a couple that have gone through the mass casualty classes, others addressing pediatrics and hospital surge capacity situations, and the volcanic event classes to enhance their skills." Participant 9 stated, "The fact that members show up for these function exercises and drills tells me that they want to do something to enhance their skills."

The collected artifacts identified protocols for enhancing individual skill sets. Artifacts were provided by Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 8, and Participant 9 with a total frequency of seven. Participant 2 provided the 2023 Training Calendar, CERT 6 PrePlan and Artifact Summary, Participant 4 provided the CEMP, Participant 8 provided the SOGs, and Participant 9 provided the Exercise Planning Worksheet that aligned with the theme. As with other artifacts, certain artifacts held multiple frequencies that spoke to the theme.

Setting a Professional Example

The theme with the least frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to develop leadership capacity was setting a professional example. The entries for this theme comprised 18 interview frequencies and three artifact frequencies, totaling 21 that accounted for 10.8% of the coded data for this variable. Six of the 10 participants perceived that setting a professional example is least important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described setting a professional example as a means to instill values, being a servant leader, and being a role model. Participant 4 stated, "I am very definitely taking an attitude of servant leadership. I'm here to serve." Participant 5 committed, "I'm trying to instill these values and these beneficial programs are so important because they benefit everybody on the campus." Participant 7 emphasized, "We engaged students and drew them into the muscle memory learning of those skills. This strategy fosters inclusion and equality." Participant 6 shared,

When you're working with a pool of volunteers, stuff comes up and you need to set the example. It does begin with the leader and the example set. And I always thought it was my job to be a role model. I think, generally speaking, you just have to be a good role model.

The artifacts collected identified protocols for setting a professional example. Artifacts provided by Participants 8 and 10 with a total artifact frequency of three. Participant 8 provided the CERT SOGs outlining the competence of members and Participant 10 provided the NWTEMC website with multiple mentions of the theme.

Research Subquestion 5

Research Subquestion 5 asked, “How do CERT program managers build an organization’s adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?” For this study, institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning provide a culture conducive to the safe exploration of new ideas and sharing of lessons learned both from an individual and organizational perspective and creating a sustainable learning culture driven by a willingness to overcome engrained mental models across all levels of the organization (Cojocar, 2008; Pearson & Smith, 1986; Ramalingam et al., 2020; Senge et al., 2015; Veldsman & Johnson, 2016; Vera & Crossan, 2004).

Two interview questions were asked to collect data on the participants’ approaches to creating a culture of reflection and learning opportunities within the organization. The first question looked at the participants’ ability to use reflection in building the organization’s capacity. The second question was akin to the first in that it identified strategies from lessons learned to build adaptive capacity. The coded themes found within the data for Research Question 5 are shown along with their frequencies in Table 11, which encompasses embracing failure as a learning opportunity, aligning organizational processes to policies, reflecting on meeting and training practices as leaders, creating opportunities for opinions and feedback, and identifying shared resources.

Embracing Failure as a Learning Opportunity

The theme with the highest frequencies associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to institutionalize reflection and continuous learning was embracing failure as a learning opportunity. The entries for this theme comprised 50 interview

frequencies and five artifact frequencies, totaling 55 frequencies that accounted for 24.9% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants perceived that embracing failure as a learning opportunity is crucial to an organization’s potential.

Table 11

Research Question 5: Themes for Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning

Theme	Sources	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	Frequency %
Embracing failure as a learning opportunity	9	50	5	55	24.9
Aligning organizational processes to policies	10	51	3	54	24.4
Reflecting on meeting and training practices as leaders	9	49	5	54	24.4
Creating opportunities for opinions and feedback	8	29	4	33	14.9
Identifying shared resources	7	22	3	25	11.3

CERT program managers described embracing failure as a learning opportunity as a means of acquiring new approaches, continuous learning, and staying relevant.

Participant 1 shared, “We are constantly talking about what are we learning and what are we changing based on what we have learned.” Participant 3 commented,

I want everyone to be learning from the past so we don’t make those same mistakes. Grasping the lessons learned to make things better, to make them safer, and to make them more efficient. Continuous learning is such a key element to staying relevant and moving forward.

Participant 8 emphasized,

This is a learning environment. Always reminding all of our volunteers that this is a learning world. We're here to learn so that if something does happen, all the mistakes that we made during this drill hopefully will not happen when the real event does occur. We want our volunteers to operate and make that continuous learning, going to those trainings a part of remaining within the program on that active level.

The artifacts collected identified protocols for failure as a learning opportunity that relies on the application of lessons learned. Artifacts were provided by Participant 1, Participant 5, and Participant 9 yielding a total frequency of five with some artifacts having more than one frequency. Participant 1 provided notations from their website, Participant 5 provided the EM Guide, and Participant 9 provided the CERT Incident Command System (ICS).

Aligning Organizational Processes to Policies

The theme with the second highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to institutionalize reflection and continuous learning was aligning organizational processes to policies. The entries for this theme comprised 30 interview frequencies and one artifact frequency, totaling 31 that accounted for 16.2% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants perceived that aligning organizational processes to policies is essential to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described aligning organizational processes to policies as a means to improve system processes and align mission requirements. Participant 1 shared, "We utilize both our CERT team and our Incident Management [IM] team specifically for the academic setting of the university and to look at all of the plans that

we have in place, all of the policies, and procedures.” Participant 5 commented, “There are regulations to keep members safe and we explain these to them constantly by saying, ‘You can’t do this because it’s not in the CERT purview.’” Participant 7 emphasized, “As this was growing beyond the scope of what our organization was revisiting what our mission was and bringing the CERT curriculum to organizations and individuals.”

The artifacts collected identified protocols for aligning organizational processes to policies that rely on communities maintaining resilience. Artifacts provided by Participant 3, Participant 4, and Participant 8 yielded a frequency of three. Participant 3 provided a CEMP, specifically the Volunteer Management Plan, Participant 4 provided the EM Guide, and Participant 8 provided the CERT SOGs on governance and policies.

Reflecting on Meeting and Training Practices as Leaders

The theme with the third highest frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to institutionalize reflection and continuous learning was reflecting on meeting and training practices as leaders. The entries for this theme comprised 49 interview frequencies and five artifact frequencies, totaling 54 that accounted for 24.4% of the coded data for this variable. Nine of the 10 participants perceived that reflecting on meeting and training practices as leaders is important to an organization’s potential.

CERT program managers described reflecting on meetings and training practices as a means to review past events and briefs to brainstorm ideas for improvement.

Participant 1 shared,

So, in meetings and training, adapting that after-action mentality of how do we improve? So, in every meeting, every exercise, stepping back and doing a hot

wash and saying, how did we do? So, it allows the hot washes to be our correction allowing those individuals in the room that participated to be able to have some input.

Participant 2 commented, “The most important part of that practice is the debrief, always making sure that we have a debrief where we can reflect on one of the things we did right, wrong, and how would we do differently?” Participant 3 emphasized, “We do hot washes and critiques of any exercises, drills, or activations and believe that ‘History doesn’t repeat, but it sure does rhyme.’” Participant 3 further explained, “Disasters will come but how we respond will determine the outcome.” Participant 4 stated, “The debriefs can cover how we organize the exercise or how the team performed in the exercise.” Participant 6 emphasized,

That goes into details of what went well and areas in need of improvement and out of the after-action report. So, we capture what went well and areas in need of improvement. In the end, we take what needs to be improved and formalize them in what’s known as an improvement plan.

Participant 7 stated, “Ultimately, team ideas generated from past efforts were still implemented for future trainings or events.”

The artifacts collected identified protocols for reflecting on meetings and training practices by using a learning approach for future planning strategies. Artifacts were provided by Participant, 4, Participant 8, Participant 9, and Participant 10, which yielded five total artifact frequencies with some artifacts having more than one frequency.

Participant 4 provided the EM Manual, Participant 8 provided the 2023 CERT

Newsletter, Participant 9 provided the CERT ICS 201 to conduct briefs, and Participant 10 provided their organization's mission statement.

Creating Opportunities For Opinions and Feedback

The fourth theme in descending order of total frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to institutionalize reflection and continuous learning was creating opportunities for opinions and feedback. The entries for this theme comprised 29 interview frequencies and four artifact frequencies, totaling 33 that accounted for 14.9% of the coded data for this variable. Eight of the 10 participants perceived that creating opportunities for opinions and feedback is important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described creating opportunities for opinions and feedback as a means to address issues that can potentially affect the organization and create improvement plans. Participant 6 provided the following comments:

We're going to have a hot wash and an after-action report (AAR). Which goes beyond initial impressions. That goes into details of what went well and areas in need of improvement and out of the after-action report. In the end, we take what needs to be improved and formalize them in what's known as an improvement plan.

Participant 7 stated, "I emphasize the viability and critical elements each perspective brings. Whatever their background is, they're an expert in those observations, and uniquely positioned to recognize gaps so questions can be voiced." Participant 9 shared, "When we're teaching or when we're either doing exercises or even steering

committee meetings, it's that we're trying to make a point that everyone has an equal voice.”

The artifacts collected identified protocols for creating opportunities for opinions and feedback. Artifacts were provided by Participant 2, Participant 5, and Participant 7 with a total artifact frequency of four, and some artifacts had more than one frequency. Participant 2 provided an artifact summary that encapsulated feedback and post-training through a hot-wash exercise, Participant 5 organization website, specifically the section regarding Our Learning Approach, and Participant 7 provided the Instructor Schedule Worksheet that spoke to how feedback and suggestions were gathered post-CERT Basic Course.

Identifying Shared Resources

The theme with the least frequency associated with strategies used by CERT program managers to institutionalize reflection and continuous learning was identifying shared resources. The entries for this theme comprised 22 interview frequencies and three artifact frequencies, totaling 25 frequencies that accounted for 11.3% of the coded data for this variable. Seven of the 10 participants perceived that identifying shared resources is the least important to an organization's potential.

CERT program managers described identifying shared resources as a means to allocate resources such as equipment and supplies, funding, personnel, and from other agencies. Participant 3 mentioned, “I provided the supplies and equipment, and CERT provided all the labor and expertise and were very successful.” Participant 6 commented, “We get help from the Army National Guard, and some other resources at the state level.” Participant 7 emphasized, “If the questions relate to a resource acquisition, you

make connections in the community ahead of time.” Participant 9 stated, “And if that is too dangerous for the team to proceed, then we stop and call in additional resources.”

The artifacts collected provided protocols for identifying shared resources that rely on instruction guides to obtain training and support. Artifacts were provided by Participant 4, Participant, 8, and Participant 9 with a total artifact frequency of three. Participant 4 provided the EM Manual listing resources, Participant 8 provided the CERT SOGs, and Participant 9 provided the ICS 201 briefs that aligned with the theme.

Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by CERT program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009). The 10 CERT program managers from Washington municipals met the criteria for the study and were identified by an expert panel member. The qualitative data were collected through semistructured interviews and artifacts associated with research questions in this study.

The data collection yielded 955 individual frequencies, which encompasses 866 frequencies from interview questions and 89 frequencies from artifacts. The coded data were placed in descending order from themes and patterns from the research questions. All five characteristics consisted of five themes each. An analysis of the data revealed 25 themes from the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership. The characteristic most referenced was institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning; with 221 total frequencies arose from 201 interview frequencies, and 20 artifact frequencies accounted for 23.1% of the data. The second most referenced characteristic was developing leadership capacity with 194 total frequencies from 176 interview frequencies and 18

artifact frequencies accounting for 20.3% of the data. The third most referenced characteristic was naming the elephant in the room the norm with 191 themes from 178 interview frequencies and 18 artifacts accounting for 20% of the data. Fourth in descending order of total frequency was encouraging independent judgment; 175 frequencies from 162 interview frequencies and 13 artifact frequencies accounted for 18.3% of the data. The least referenced characteristic was nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization; 174 frequencies from 149 interview frequencies and 25 artifact frequencies accounted for 18.2% of the data. Table 12 dives further into the total themes that emerged and provides an overview of the total frequencies and percentages from interviews and artifacts across the 25 themes from the study.

The table illustrates the distribution of the themes and provides a visual context of differences in frequency per theme. Of note is that in the top four themes, three are in response to Research Question 5, and one is a theme in Research Question 4. The frequencies for the top four themes are within one occurrence of each other with scores of 55, 54, 54, and 54, respectively. The data from the 10 themes highest in frequency yielded two themes for each of Research Questions 1 and 2, one theme for Research Question 3, two themes for Research Question 2, and three themes for Research Question 5. Table 13 provides a breakdown of the key findings.

This chapter explored the study's purpose, research questions, methodology, population, sample frame, sample, data collection and analysis process, and an overview and narrative of the data collected. The overview of data collected was presented with the findings from the 10 semistructured interviews conducted with CERT program managers and collected artifacts. The data analysis was guided by the central research question and

Table 12*Overview of Frequencies for All Identified Themes*

Theme	Research question	Characteristic	Frequency total	Frequency %
Embracing failure as a learning opportunity	5	Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning	55	5.8
Aligning organizational processes to policies	5	Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning	54	5.7
Providing access to professional training and development	4	Developing leadership capacity	54	5.7
Reflecting on meeting and training practices as leaders	5	Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning	54	5.7
Addressing barriers to organizational potential	1	Making elephants in the Room the Norm	47	4.9
Actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication	1	Making elephants in the room the norm	46	4.8
Encouraging shared decision making	3	Encouraging independent judgment	45	4.7
Forming internal and external connections	2	Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization	44	4.6
Providing leadership opportunities	4	Developing leadership capacity	42	4.4
Promoting a collaborative mindset	2	Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization	42	4.4
Creating opportunities for growth	4	Developing leadership capacity	40	4.2
Empowering autonomy through problem solving	3	Encouraging independent judgment	40	4.2
Establishing a safe physical and psychological environment	1	Making elephants in the Room the Norm	39	4.1

Table 12 (continued)

Theme	Research question	Characteristic	Frequency total	Frequency %
Creating opportunities for shared goals	2	Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization	38	4.0
Enhancing individual skill sets	4	Developing leadership capacity	37	3.9
Using innovative strategies to attract interest	3	Encouraging independent judgment	34	3.6
Recognizing individual achievements	3	Encouraging independent judgment	34	3.6
Creating opportunities for opinions and feedback	5	Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning	33	3.5
Engaging stakeholders in conversation	1	Making elephants in the room the norm	31	3.2
Fostering reliance and commitment	2	Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization	28	2.9
Developing an understanding of individual behaviors	1	Making elephants in the room the norm	28	2.9
Identifying shared resources	5	Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning	25	2.6
Building individual confidence	3	Encouraging independent judgment	22	2.3
Building trusting relationships	2	Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization	22	2.3
Setting a professional example	4	Developing leadership capacity	21	2.2

five subquestions related to Heifetz et al.'s (2009) adaptive leadership key characteristics: making elephants in the room the norm, nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning.

Table 13*Key Findings*

Theme	Research question alignment	Total frequency	Frequency %
Embracing failure as a learning opportunity	5	55	5.8
Aligning organizational processes to policies	5	54	5.7
Providing access to professional training and development	4	54	5.7
Reflecting on meeting and training practices as leaders	5	54	5.7
Addressing barriers to organizational potential	1	47	4.9
Actively listening and engaging in open and honest communication	1	46	4.8
Encouraging shared decision making	3	45	4.7
Forming internal and external connections	2	44	4.6
Promoting a collaborative mindset	2	42	4.4
Creating opportunities for growth	4	40	4.2

Chapter IV addressed the findings of the data and how they connect to the research question and emergent themes identified through the study. The 10 CERT program managers' perceptions of Heifetz et al. (2009) adaptive leadership represented descriptions and frequency tables as a means to building adaptive capacity within the organization. Chapter V provides a summary of major findings in the study and unexpected findings and presents the conclusions, implications for future actions, and recommendations for future studies. Chapter V concludes with reflections and closing remarks.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This phenomenological qualitative study was conducted to identify and describe strategies used by leaders to build an adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics of adaptive leadership. This study was part of a thematic team conducted by nine peer researchers and supported by three faculty members. The nine researchers studied a variety of leader populations in different industries. The population for this study was CERT program managers. Additionally, this study explored the lived experiences and perceptions of CERT program managers on adaptive leadership. This chapter summarizes and discusses the results of this qualitative study to answer the research question, "What strategies do community emergency response team (CERT) program managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics?"

This qualitative study collected data from 10 semistructured, open-ended interview questions, and coding yielded 899 interview frequencies and 89 artifact frequencies. The data were summarized in Chapter IV. Chapter V begins by restating the purpose statement, research questions, methodology, data collection, population, and sample of the study. Chapter V includes the findings of the results, unexpected findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future research. Finally, the chapter concludes with closing remarks and reflection.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers to

build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009).

Research Questions

Central Research Question

What strategies do community emergency response team (CERT) program managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning)?

Research Subquestions

1. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through making naming elephants in the room the norm?
2. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through nurturing shared responsibility for the organization?
3. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through encouraging independent judgment?
4. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?
5. How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

The research design was developed by peer researchers and faculty members who established protocols and procedures to collect and synthesize data to address the study's

research question (Creswell, 2014). The approach used in qualitative research provides a deeper understanding of the study. Patton (2015) stated, “Qualitative research aims to generate or test theory and contribute to knowledge” (p. 18). In a qualitative inquiry, the researcher provides a world perspective by identifying and describing the societal phenomena of nature. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument for the study.

Similarly, qualitative research appropriately uses interviews and documentation. Using the phenomenological approach, I sought answers to the questions about what strategies CERT program managers use to build adaptive leadership by analyzing audio videos and transcripts and other artifacts to understand the CERT program managers lived experiences. However, the process can be time-consuming. Patton (2015) stated, “The fruit of qualitative inquiry emerges from the three kinds of qualitative data” (p. 36). The qualitative data guided the answering of the purpose of the study. The core question aimed to identify and describe CERT program managers’ perceptions of how they build adaptive capacity through the lens of Heifetz et al.’s (2009) five key characteristics. The qualitative design used purposive criterion-based sampling to select participant CERT program managers and semistructured, open-ended interviews to explore their lived experiences on adaptive leadership. The goal was to understand the CERT program manager’s perceptions of adaptive leadership in the organization using interviews and artifacts; the approach allowed me to collect qualitative data and acquire knowledge about the world through field research (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The interview was conducted upon approval from the University of Massachusetts Global Institutional Review Board (IRB). I conducted 10 virtual interviews via Zoom,

using semistructured, open-ended interview questions and a script developed by a team of thematic peer researchers and three faculty members. The qualitative research inquiry measures the reactions using information from participants to gather themes that align with the research's purpose (Patton, 2015). The data were collected from 10 experienced CERT program managers using interview transcripts and artifacts. Also, I collected possible revisions and clarification from interviewees after they reviewed their interview transcripts. The review ensures data accuracy. Using Delve online technology, I meticulously organized the data from interviews and artifacts and coded the themes that emerged.

The qualitative study explored CERT program managers' lived experience regarding adaptive leadership strategies. The gained knowledge can be used to guide changes in policies and assist other CERT program managers experiencing similar outcomes. Information gathering used the content of analysis based on the frequency of themes to alleviate bias and provide transparency about the study to support the findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Artifacts were collected to add further validation to the interview data. Intercoder reliability was used to ensure a minimum agreement of 80%.

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, "A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research" (p. 129). For this study, the population of CERT program managers provided oversight of CERT programs. CERT programs are located in all 50 states, including tribal and U.S. territories. There are over 600,000 people who have trained in CERT and over 2,700 CERT programs nationwide

(FEMA, 2022d). The nationwide population was too large to practically access for the study; therefore, I narrowed the population to arrive at a sampling frame.

Sampling Frame

The FEMA (n.d.-b) database identified 71 approved CERT program managers in Washington state. The sample frame for this study provided approximately 15% of CERT program managers in Washington state municipalities. The oversight typically indicates CERT program managers are serving in dual roles. Acknowledging the dual positions proved beneficial when I selected a sample of participants. The population helped determine the sampling frame; however, the national number of possible participants was too large, and the Washington state number, although more manageable, was still too cumbersome a number to interview with integrity.

Sample

According to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), “Sampling is the process of selecting some individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected” (p. 147). The research used purposive sampling and specific criteria to select 10 CERT program managers to constitute the study sample.

In this study, purposive sampling was used as an opportunity to sample the population with information relevant to the research topic who met the established criteria of the study (Patton, 2015). Therefore, peer researchers used predetermined criteria for participants, creating a purposive sampling approach. The strategy for using predetermined criteria allows for an in-depth analysis of participants’ lived experiences with similar characteristics because the peer researchers work in diverse industries with diverse skills. A purposive sample uses elements of the population that are key to the

study and represent the research topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patten & Newhart, 2018).

To identify the sample of CERT program managers meeting the specified study criteria, an expert panel member was used. Upon selection, an email was sent to each of the potential participants to obtain their willingness to participate in the study (Appendix B). The first 10 CERT program managers to respond were contacted via a follow-up phone call. The context of the telephone call with each CERT program manager included a review of the purpose of the study, discussed any concerns or questions, and provided reassurance of confidentiality given the nature of the study and the relevance of their positions. A letter of introduction and explanation (Appendix C) was emailed to participants, plus an interview protocol (Appendix D), the informed consent and audio recording release (Appendix E), and the University of Massachusetts Global Participant Bill of Rights (Appendix F). I scheduled the Zoom interviews at a time of the participants' choosing. Each interview took approximately 60 min to complete. The interviews were recorded using the embedded recording function in the Zoom platform.

This study was delimited to 10 CERT program managers in Washington who met four of six specific criteria. The peer researchers developed a list of criteria to identify adaptive leaders for this study. Four of the six criteria was the required minimum number of criteria, and in fact all participants met at least five of the criteria. This study was delimited to 10 CERT program managers in Washington who met minimally four of the six following criteria:

- evidence of successful relationships with stakeholders
- evidence of breaking through conflict to achieve organizational success

- five or more years of experience in that profession or field
- evidence of having written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings
- recognition by their peers
- membership in associations of groups focused on their field

Major Findings

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by CERT program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009). The research subquestions were aligned to the five characteristics: making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. An analysis of the data collected from interviews and artifacts in Chapter IV revealed 25 themes and 10 key findings based on 10 CERT program managers' responses. The data from the findings revealed an alignment based on prior research and a review of the literature. Next are the five major findings given from the data collected.

Major Finding 1 for Research Subquestion 1

Research Subquestion 1: *How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through making naming elephants in the room the norm?*

Major Finding 1: CERT program managers make naming elephants in the room the norm by improving barriers to organizational potential through the aligning of organizational processes to policies.

CERT program managers described aligning organizational processes to policies as a means to improve system processes to align with mission requirements. Eight of the 10 CERT program managers provided examples of addressing sensitive underlying issues through a political and academic setting; keeping members safe, using different perspectives; open-door policies; and providing self-reliance; and responsibility. To address these barriers to the organization's potential, all believed that giving members the responsibility of creating policies that are beneficial to the community creates avenues for decision making, collaboration, and shared vision. The practice aligns with the organization's mission to provide support for the community. A. C. Baker (2004) mentioned that discussing the undiscussables is a difficult and challenging conversation that is underused.

Toegel and Barsoux (2019) suggested that teams' ability to have open discussions is what drives the organization's effectiveness. Heifetz et al. (2009) contended that grasping political relationships is essential to viewing the organization working as a system. However, there were limitations based on federal, state, and local guidelines. There were no protocols in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic and reach across the county for external support. The COVID-19 crisis exposed the organization's vulnerability and caused teams to cease operations (Boin et al., 2010; Brooks et al., 2019; Christensen et al., 2016; Khin Khin Oo & Rakthin, 2022).

By understanding the system processes as a major function in aligning policies and procedures to mission requirements, CERT program managers designed protocols that work best for their community and address barriers that can potentially hinder organizational efficiency. These leaders discussed working across the county with emergency response stakeholders as being beneficial for all. The lack of systems at all levels did not address the various encounters CERT program managers would face with the virus and reaching outside externally for support that impacts members (Cerullo, 2020). The changing policies to incorporate external support can be complex for CERT program managers in an academic setting. Both Participant 1 and Participant 5 spoke to the political nature and structure of the academic setting and the related sensitive underlying issues.

The findings support the issues dealing with the complexity of organizational systems identified in Chapter II of this study (Boin et al., 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2013; Fairholm, 2009; Moline et al., 2019) and align with the debate over public laws in a crisis (Boin et al., 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2013; Karin, 2015; Pecujlija & Cosic, 2019). An analysis of the data suggested that eight of the 10 participants perceived that addressing barriers through aligning organizational processes and policies was critical to the organization reaching its fullest potential.

Major Finding 2 for Research Subquestion 2

Research Subquestion 2: *How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through nurturing shared responsibility for the organization?*

Major Finding 2: CERT program managers nurture a shared responsibility for the organization by promoting a collaborative mindset that supports internal and external connections as a basis for adaptive capacity.

CERT program managers described promoting a collaborative mindset that supports internal and external connections through interaction with stakeholders to build adaptive capacity. These strategies have fostered resilience by bringing the departments and communities together to create avenues for a shared responsibility that supports the community and organization's mission during a crisis. Eight of the 10 program managers provided examples of building an organization's adaptive capacity as a means for engaging, interacting, and connecting with internal and external stakeholders.

The findings support the CERT program manager's ability to engage teams and community members. CERT program managers are taught to organize teams, provide support, and respond to emergencies within their local community (EMI, 2020; FEMA, n.d.-a, 2017, 2020a, 2021a, 2021b, 2022d, 2023b). An analysis of the data suggested that eight of the 10 participants perceived that promoting a collaborative mindset by supporting internal and external connections is essential to an organization's potential.

Major Finding 3 for Research Subquestion 3

Research Subquestion 3: *How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through encouraging independent judgment?*

Major Findings 3: CERT program managers encourage independent judgment by creating opportunities for the team to provide input and perspective, problem-solve, and make decisions within provided guidelines.

CERT program managers described reflecting on meetings and training practices as a means to review past events and briefs to brainstorm ideas for improvement. Nine of the 10 CERT program managers provided examples of reflecting on meetings and training practices as a leader by adopting an after-action mentality to improve: allowing hot washes to course correct, conducting debriefs, encouraging members to critique exercise and drills, providing different perspectives on performance, and team ideas helping to implement future training. The practice aligns with the organization's ability to encourage members to take initiative during training and meeting sessions to create innovative ideas for future events. Heifetz et al. (2009) mentioned that leaders who encourage independent judgment provide an opportunity to expand members' capacity for critical thinking.

Godzyk (2008) suggested that critical thinkers are prudent in judgment, well-informed, and persistent in obtaining solutions. Similarly, Epps (2021) contended that critical thinkers possess the ability to assess information and provide informed results. However, CERT program managers design reflection in training, and meeting practices that work best are limited to their particular community. Scheid (2015) emphasized critical thinking by top-level leaders is ineffective for the organization and should be integrated at all levels to encourage members to provide judgment and feedback.

The findings support the issues identified in Chapter II of this study dealing with organizations providing members opportunities for critical thinking, innovation, and creative ideas during meetings and training sessions at the lowest level. Studies have shown that integrating critical thinking in CERT training programs improves effectiveness (Brooks et al., 2019; Epps, 2021; Scheid, 2015). An analysis of the data

suggested that nine of the 10 participants perceived that creating opportunities for the team to provide input and perspective, problem-solve, and make decisions within provided guidelines is important to an organization's potential.

Major Finding 4 for Research Subquestion 4

Research Subquestion 4: *How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?*

Major Findings 4: CERT program managers develop leadership capacity by providing access to professional training and development and growing people by providing leadership opportunities.

CERT program managers described leadership development as an opportunity to get people to step into leadership roles, enhance member potential, and encourage the youth to leadership positions. All 10 of the CERT program managers provided examples of providing leadership opportunities by conducting cross-levels to performance in all roles, allowing leaders to form teams, and encouraging young members to take the initiative of leading. To address this barrier to the organization's potential, all believed in conducting redundant training so that others can step into the position. DeForest (2021) and Khin Khin Oo and Rakthin (2022) suggested that the practice of developing leadership capacity provides an opportunity to expand leadership competencies for future leaders. Eade (1997) mentioned that capacity building helps leaders recognize their values and priorities to improve the development of members.

The findings support the issues identified in Chapter II of this study dealing with the CERT leadership skills when responding to disasters (Adagba, 2018; Avila, 2019; Carr, 2014; Collins, 2017; Epps, 2021; FEMA, 2022b). Developing leadership capacity

requires leaders to have the necessary skills to evaluate a crisis and provide sound solutions in challenging situations (Avila, 2019). An analysis of the data suggested that 10 of the 10 participants perceived that providing leadership opportunities is essential to an organization's potential. The practice aligns with the CERT mission to provide community emergency response training for its teams and local municipals. The EMI (2020) noted that CERT program managers are skilled in leading CERT programs. Scholarly writers contend that members gain effective performance, added value, and organizational efficiency through training and development (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Bell & Martin, 2019; Heifetz, 1994; Tisdale, 2022). In comparison, adaptive functions are one of the core beliefs suggesting that leaders can be taught to perform (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Major Finding 5 for Research Subquestion 5

Research Subquestion 5: How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?

Major Findings 5: CERT program managers institutionalize reflection and continuous learning by embracing failure as an opportunity to reflect and learn to ensure the organization's potential is met.

CERT program managers described embracing failure as a learning opportunity, a means of acquiring new approaches, encouraging continuous learning, and staying relevant. Nine of the 10 CERT program managers provided examples of embracing failure as a learning opportunity by making changes to what managers learned, allowing members to learn from the past and not make the same mistakes, creating a learning environment, and not making similar mistakes during an actual deployment. To address

these failures, CERT leaders believe in creating a learning environment for team members. Bouman et al. (2021) and Ramalingam et al. (2020) mentioned that challenges create learning opportunities and mitigate future responses in a crisis.

Several scholarly writers mentioned that leaders build adaptive capacity by motivating members in challenging times to learn and to lead change (Bright, 2011; Hayes et al., 2021; Heifetz et al., 2009; Norman & Binka, 2015; Roth, 2022). Leading an adaptive learning environment in a crisis requires confidence, openness, and skills (Garibaldi, 2016; Ramalingam et al., 2020).

By addressing the learning opportunity, CERT program managers possess the necessary prerequisite to enhance skills and develop and manage CERT team members (EMI, 2020; FEMA, n.d.-a, 2020a, 2021a, 2022d, 2023b). The findings identified in this study deal with CERT program managers creating an environment and tools for learning (E. L. Baker et al., 2020; Bell & Martin, 2019; Heifetz, 1994; Tisdale, 2022). The participants mentioned that online training sites, training exercises, and hot washes are tools used for continuous learning and enhancing skills. An analysis of the data suggested that nine of the 10 participants perceived that embracing failure as a learning opportunity is crucial to an organization's potential.

Unexpected Findings

The study identified two unexpected findings. The first unexpected finding was among the participants' responses to Research Question 1, which explored adaptive leadership for making naming the elephant in the room the norm. The question asked participants to address sensitive underlying issues as an organizational norm. Bright (2011), Heifetz et al. (2009), and Klonsky (2010) mentioned that addressing the elephant

in the room is an effective intervention process to mobilize teams to surface and address challenging issues that create opportunities for adaptive solutions. In this study, participants openly shared the sensitive underlying issues dealing with the limitations of volunteers. The limitations mentioned by participants for addressing sensitive issues are the following:

- Participant 1 mentioned having different age demographics, physical limitations to assisting the community, working two jobs and attending school, younger demographics not wanting to volunteer, mental health, stress, and language barriers.
- Participant 2 mentioned the aging population (the average age 65, maybe 70) and physical ability.
- Participant 3 mentioned CERT training starts at age 14 and physical health.
- Participant 4 mentioned the aging population, having younger abled-bodied people, and stressful situations.
- Participant 5 mentioned physical and mental health and stress.
- Participant 6 mentioned emotional and behavioral issues.
- Participant 7 mentioned emotionally charged.
- Participant 8 mentioned physical capabilities.
- Participant 9 mentioned physical and emotional limitations and mental triggers.
- Participant 10 mentioned adults have made it impossible for people aged 17 to get jobs.

The second unexpected finding was among the participants' responses related to resources to support CERT programs. Research Question 5 focused on the characteristics

of institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. The theme with the lowest frequency for this research question was identifying shared resources. Participant 1 stated, “There’s a lot of factors that are impacting, such as supply chain issues.” Participant 5 mentioned, “In a state facility, you can’t fundraise without doing grants. And it’s a very delicate process. I had to borrow from three different departments, and I’m still waiting on funding.”

Given the resources provided by the federal government, I was surprised to learn that some participants are having issues with obtaining government grants or the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program for nonfinancial assistance. However, their resources were allocated from within the local agencies, fundraisers, and donations. FEMA established CERT programs nationwide and provided support to individuals and communities during disasters. The design of the programs was to collaborate, teach, and integrate resources into the local communities during a crisis (FEMA, 2022b). The BRIC program provides grants to various municipalities in the state and is designed to improve the capacity, capabilities, and resilience of the communities (BRIC, 2022a). A crisis is most likely to occur when leaders have a lack of information, time constraints, and lack of resources to make critical decisions (Alvintzi & Eder, 2010). An analysis of the data suggested that seven of the 10 participants perceived that identifying shared resources is least important to an organization’s potential.

Conclusions

The major findings of this study along with supporting literature were used to conclude the strategies used by CERT program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al.

(2009). The five key characteristics comprised making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. The seven conclusions are discussed in the following sections.

Conclusion 1

Based on the study findings and the review of literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers who address barriers to relevant information on sensitive issues in policies and procedures to align with the organization's mission build their organization's adaptive capacity. These leaders use open-door policies and engagement to address underlying issues that directly impact their teams and organizations.

This study's conclusion is supported by eight of the 10 participants and four artifacts collected in this study. The design was to examine the inconsistency between government regulations and executing guidance in the field. Each participant connected guidelines, policies, and procedures that work best for the needs of the community. The Revised Code of Washington RCW 38.52.040 and 38.52.590 shows the convening of the emergency management council, from state and local municipals, to address improvements in disaster response policies, practices, and procedures (Washington State Legislature, 2023). The council members have a direct line to the governor's office where CERT program managers can attend meetings to address policies that do not meet the concerns of the community resiliency program.

Conclusion 2

Based on the study findings and the review of the literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers must promote a collaborative mindset within a structure of

internal and external connections to build the organization's adaptive capacity. CERT program managers described promoting a collaborative mindset as a means of interaction, building community connections, and benefiting the community. Harris and Spillane (2008) believed that having a shared viewpoint on leadership recognizes all working together in leadership practices no matter their position. A collaborative mindset helps to support the interaction between team members and to provide support for the community. Each of the participants identified protocols for forming internal and external connections by promoting a collaborative mindset that aligns with the organization's mission.

This study's conclusion is supported by eight of the 10 participants and five artifacts collected in this study. Each participant conducted monthly training sessions, outreach services, working across agencies, and public service announcements to communicate with stakeholders. The internal and external shared responsibilities provide added value to the team, organization, and community as a whole.

Conclusion 3

Based on the study findings and the review of literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers who use team members' input and perspectives expand their members' capacity for problem solving and decision making within their roles. Lattimer (2023) mentioned, "Agile leaders empower their members to make decisions and take ownership of their work" (p. 4). These leaders practice adaptive and agile leadership by encouraging independent judgment in sound decision making during a crisis.

This study's conclusion is supported by all 10 participants and four artifacts collected in this study. Each participant consistently used after-action reports, meeting minutes, and hot washes to assess team members' training to align with their established

protocols. CERT program managers provide members with an opportunity to reflect on past challenges, collaborate, and brainstorm ideas to increase efficiency and productivity by assessing the organization's goals.

Conclusion 4

Based on the study findings and review of literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers who provide access to training and development increase members' area of responsibility while enhancing competencies to lead teams during a crisis. These leaders provide members with access to in-person training or online training. Lattimer (2023) stated, "Agile leadership training can help aspiring leaders develop the skills and mindset to excel in this dynamic management style" (p. 3). Leaders' ability to coach and mentor members is an added value to the organization and increases the capacity to make sound decisions during a crisis. Heifetz (1994) mentioned that in a crisis, one tends to look for the wrong leader. Therefore, CERT program managers provide leadership opportunities to those who are willing to face challenges.

This study's conclusion is supported by all 10 participants and four artifacts collected in this study. Each participant consistently mentioned team leads, getting members to run team meetings, and cross-training to align with their established protocols. CERT program managers who share leadership roles help to both strengthen initiative and build personal relationships (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). CERT program managers help members grow and develop their skills by providing access to professional training and development.

Conclusion 5

Based on the study findings and the review of the literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers who establish structures to embrace failures and provide opportunities for continuous learning build adaptive capacity for their members and the organization. Participants used after-action reports, evaluations, exercises, drills, and hot washes to identify lessons learned and provide strategies for improving team and organization outcomes. Lattimer (2023) suggested that agile leaders learn from failures to enhance leadership knowledge and team performance to build adaptive capacity for continuous learning and growth. CERT program managers provide members with an opportunity to reflect on past challenges, collaborate, and brainstorm ideas to increase efficiency and productivity by assessing the organization's goals.

This study's conclusion is supported by nine of the 10 participants and five artifacts collected in this study. Each participant mentioned discussing lessons learned, maintaining a learning environment, and continuous learning being relevant to moving forward. Vera and Crossan (2004) mentioned that strategic leaders can affect the environment of a learning system.

Conclusion 6

Based on the study findings and the review of the literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers who implement a strategic recruitment plan to obtain volunteers and retain current members provide avenues for building adaptive capacity. The strategy would provide a strong argument for leaders to create a compelling and committed organization. Similarly, changing the culture from its past state must start with the members before expanding outward (D. Anderson & Anderson, 2010). The focus is

on the culture's core values and norms to align with the visions and mission that effected change. The change in members' perceptions addressed the unspoken norms that created the culture barrier while being aware of the stakeholder concerns. However, this would require buy-in from the leadership team to ensure support for adaptive leadership.

This study's conclusion is supported by six of the 10 participants and four artifacts collected in this study. The primary goal is to increase the number of volunteers while retaining current members using training models. *The Practical Decision Maker: A Handbook for Decision-Making and Problem Solving in Organizations* by Harvey et al. (1997) provides training strategies including leadership development, decision-making modeling, and team-building exercises for member engagement. The goal is to open avenues of communication and collaboration by conducting training on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging as the team expands into diverse communities. The training would provide best practices to engage people of different cultures in a meaningful way that attracts and recruits potential volunteers. Volunteers are a valuable resource for nonprofit organizations. The ability to connect with motivated individuals and inspire them to sign up to support the community is what enables CERT program managers to fulfill the overall mission.

Conclusion 7

Based on the study findings and the review of the literature, it is concluded that CERT program managers who address underlying issues with leaders at the local, state, and federal levels open up avenues of discussion among leaders to mitigate hindrances to disaster response. For this study, the researcher had direct access to the state coordinator who oversees CERT programs for Washington state. The objective is to bring situational

awareness of the challenges that CERT program managers face and solicit opportunities for change at each level of leadership. The collaborative session is a means to pursue the building of adaptive CERT programs. The goal is to obtain an unwavering commitment from FEMA, state, and local leaders to champion CERT program managers in remaining steadfast in its mission to foster resilient communities. Leaders at all levels could provide the tools needed to promote healthy communications and cultivate a culture of respect, understanding, and commitment.

Implications for Action

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by CERT program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009). Based on the findings, there were strategies used to support the building of adaptive leadership with the various municipalities. Studies have shown that adaptive leadership is essential to a leader's effecting a change organization (L. Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). The implications for action in this phenomenological study were conceived from the findings and conclusions. The next section provides implications for action to support CERT program managers in building adaptive organizations for future success.

Implication 1

Future research should be conducted by FEMA policymakers to explore the impact of volunteers before, during, and after a disaster. These assessments would provide CERT program managers guidance to determine the need for additional members and funding to manage volunteers and donation programs. The results of the research

must be used by CERT program managers to inform and influence the federal, state, and local entities in matters of adequate staffing and funding. The Stafford Act is a national response framework under the federal government that is designed to assist programs and provide funds during an emergency (EMI, 2013; FEMA, 2011). Volunteers play a key role in providing support and maintaining an emergency operations center during a crisis. Federal, state, and local agencies must begin to review and change policies that hinder CERT program managers in achieving their objectives. Also, CERT program managers in all municipalities must take full advantage of the federal preparedness grant associated with building, sustaining, and improving response capabilities during disasters and emergencies (FEMA, 2023c).

Additionally, CERT program managers must explore planning, organizing, and including diverse members of the community in disaster response. Based on the demographic data from the study, there was minimal representation from diverse groups, in particular females. Engaging with diverse members of the community, including those with disabilities, can help guide members in understanding the community's needs by integrating them into the response and recovery phase of a disaster (Perry & Lindell, 2003).

Implication 2

The CERT program managers in this study spoke of their concern with the physical and mental health of volunteers. CERT program managers mentioned that it is a challenge for members to be available because of work–life balance, and being a volunteer places physical and emotional stress on individuals. Most are stressed with work, attending school, family life, and trying to volunteer. The majority of volunteers in

the study ranged in age from 56 and above. The demands of lifting and moving people during a disaster place a physical strain on the body of elder volunteers. To meet these expectations, volunteers must have clear expectations as to what is required of them before joining the team. A work group should be formed by CERT program managers and coordinators at all levels of emergency management to create documents that clearly address the job breadth and expectations. Prospective volunteers would have to show proof of successful review of the modules on the website. Additionally, training and remediation should be created to be prescribed should volunteers need further certification to meet the requirements.

Regarding the mental health of volunteers, CERT program managers must have continual engagement with team members, conduct follow-up psychological training before an event, and have counselors available to assist with the mental health of volunteers. One significant example of this need is the impact on the mental health of volunteers who come across a dismembered or dead body and have no outlet to address these concerns. The medical, police, and fire departments have mental health counsel to help them cope with these challenges, but not for volunteers. Federal, state, and local governments must collaborate to provide mental health counseling to affect disaster response members. According to Mind Share Partners' (2023) findings, "Psychological safety declined amidst perceptions of diminishing support from employers. Less than 40% said their employers prioritized mental health" (p. 1). Volunteers are given physiological training; however, this training for some may be conducted once. It is imperative that this training be mandated annually to support these critical volunteer roles.

Implication 3

Federal, state, and local policymakers must revisit their governance to address future pandemics and other crises. In the study, there was little information given about the CERT program managers' ability to maintain organizational capacity during a pandemic. Studies have shown that during the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses closed down and communities went without food. CERT program managers can deploy resources to address food insecurity during a crisis by shifting priorities to local food banks and other community outreach services. The food banks assist communities with food insecurities. According to Sethi (2020), "In 2019, 14 million American households had difficulty during the year providing enough food for all their members due to a lack of resources" (p. 1) It was projected that this number would increase. The U.S. Census Bureau (2021) provided information on the social and economic impact of COVID-19 the ongoing virus, and 27 million homes did not have enough food to eat. Shifting the mission of the CERT program provides team engagement and organization relevance for a better outcome during a pandemic and alleviates shutting the doors to assist the community.

Implication 4

The findings of this study must be used as the core information to develop a course curriculum for CERT program managers that incorporates leadership strategies that align with Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five characteristics of adaptive leadership. The course would be provided within critical collaboration conferences such as the FEMA Incident Command System (ICS) and Washington State Leadership Summit. The course would provide strategies for CERT program managers at the federal, state, and local

municipals with practical principles for building adaptive capacity within their organizations. The interactive training would focus on enhancing leadership skills and building relationships among CERT program stakeholders nationally and across Washington state municipals.

Implication 5

The lengthy list of perceived barriers to addressing the elephant in the room must be seen as shining the light for CERT program managers to further leadership competency training. Unexpected Finding 1 provided answers by all 10 CERT managers of perceived barriers to addressing sensitive issues. The inability to address sensitive issues may create risks to the success of crisis response, depending on the impact of the unaddressed issue. FEMA and state coordinators must include required annual training for CERT program managers using the highly acclaimed book and training curriculum of *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* by Grenny et al. (2022). The practical tools learned would assist CERT managers during times of training and preparation to practice the skills and ensure that there are no barriers to addressing any issues during a crisis that may effect a positive outcome for all involved.

Implication 6

The rapidly evolving political landscape with the dynamics of society are shaped by individual perspectives, differences of opinion, and unique personalities that influence how business is conducted. However, not all CERT organizations have the experience to be politically astute. Participants from the academic perspective believe that politics plays a key role in obtaining human, financial, and material resources during a crisis. During these polarizing times, leaders at all levels of emergency management must address the

political barriers that hinder comprehensive services and management of crisis, particularly volunteerism and resource procurement and allocations for the CERT programs. Therefore, FEMA and state coordinators should conduct trainings for CERT program managers to build their political awareness, skills, thinking, and actions. The basis for the training would come from the book *Leadership PQ: How Political Intelligence Sets Successful Leaders Apart* by Reffo and Wark (2014) and the book *The Politically Intelligent Leader: Dealing with the Dilemmas of a High Stakes Educational Environment* by White et al. (2016). Although the latter book is specific to the educational environment, it holds many useful universal tools and concepts related to political leadership. The tools are designed to help CERT program managers lead the organization, be a catalyst for direction, and shape meaningful results in pursuing commitment while considering the demands, principles, enthusiasms, and feelings of internal and external stakeholders.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study described the strategies used by CERT program managers to build adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics of adaptive leadership. The major findings affirmed that key common strategies were used among the participants to support building adaptive capacity within their respective CERT programs. Adaptive leadership strategies are critical to support a leader's effective response to disasters and organizing team members toward shared ownership of outcomes (Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). The implications for action in this phenomenological study are based on the findings and conclusions. The following recommendation for further research has the potential to inform the field and CERT

program managers more broadly on how to build organizational adaptive capacity and practice adaptive leadership.

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the research studies of the nine peer researchers be combined into a metaresearch study. The sample size of 90 across nine different fields and industries would provide a further understanding of the strategies that build adaptive capacity.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that this research study be replicated with CERT program managers in other states and/or geographic regions. It would be beneficial to see whether the strategies, findings, and conclusions remain consistent across regions.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended that a mixed methods study be conducted with all the CERT program managers, taking a survey to apply their perception of importance to the 25 identified themes. Follow-up interviews with five CERT managers would use the survey as a jumping-off point to go deeper into the identified themes and their importance.

Recommendation 4

It is recommended that a replication of this study be conducted that focuses on a population of CERT program managers who have been in the role for at least 10 years and have led through the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of this more homogenous group would add value to the field and inform future leadership through a pandemic.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that a qualitative case study be conducted with a population of three to five CERT program managers whom experts deem to be exemplars. The study would delve deeply into interviews and artifacts that support the specific adaptive leadership practices of professional training and development and practices that grow leaders within CERT teams.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and describe the strategies used by CERT program managers to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz et al. (2009). This study was one of limited qualitative studies to understand the perspectives of CERT program managers building adaptive capacity during times of great change and opportunities. The qualitative study provided an approach that examined the theoretical framework of adaptive leadership and how it pertains to disaster response by capturing the perspectives of CERT program managers to mitigate preparedness and response by examining the emergent themes: addressing barriers to organizational potential, promoting a collaborative mindset, creating opportunities for team input and decision making, growing people by providing leadership opportunities, and learning and reflecting and learning to ensure the organization's potential is met. "How do CERT program managers build an organization's adaptive capacity?" The response to the question was identified in the following research findings.

The findings of the study were supported by current literature; however, there was minimal literature on how CERT program managers apply adaptive leadership within the

various teams. The data collected provided the leaders with experiences in policies, training, and after-action assessments. Because the adaptive leadership approach is fairly new, examining how CERT program managers incorporate practice may lead to an improvement in disaster response strategies to volunteer engagement and commitment. CERT program managers seeking to improve their programs may find this research worthwhile.

CERT program managers have been impacted by challenges and changes within their organizations. Buck (2018) and Enchil (2020) believed that those who effect adaptive leadership practices are drastically impacted by leading people within the organization. However, those leaders who engage members create an environment that supports adaptive functions (Bright, 2011; Buck, 2018; Cahill, 2021; Cojocar, 2008; Heifetz et al., 2009). By envisioning the future state of assisting community members, CERT program managers desire to sustain their programs by making a continual effort to meet the needs of the community before, during, and after a disaster.

Exploring the various functions of the CERT program during the duration of this study and learning about the practices of adaptive leadership, literature review, the data collection process, and data analysis allowed me to reflect upon my experiences as a CERT volunteer and instructor to teach the community on preparedness. I can confirm the complexity that CERT program managers go through to keep members trained and ready to deploy at any given moment. My years spent in the CERT program field can be challenging because this is an all-volunteer team that may or may not be committed to the task of serving the community. However, the CERT program can be rewarding by allowing me to enhance my skill sets, engage community members, and an understanding

of the nuances dealing with decision making associated with training programs. The new perspective can help to guide the future state of the organization's potential.

Having the opportunity to be a member of a CERT volunteer team, I have had the pleasure of serving in many roles as a fundraiser, outreach, and instructor. Each position provided creative ways to expand my knowledge and professional development in the field. The positions held allowed me to engage people from diverse demographics and organizations. In doing so, I have had the opportunity to meet community members and leaders inside and outside the field.

The findings from this study will be instrumental in supporting these leaders. I hope that the strategies to build adaptive capacity acknowledged in this study will inspire CERT program managers to continue to grow and develop professionals in the field. The participants in the study shared the challenges they faced and how they transformed them into opportunities. I have learned from the various stories of these leaders on how they work through challenges and change. What inspired them to be in the field has shown their capacity for adaptive leadership.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Literature Review Synthesis Matrix

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Adagba (2018)																								
Alfonseca (2023)								X			X	X	X					X					X	X		
Alvintzi, P. & Eder, H.		X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X				X	X	X	X	X		
Anderson, D. L. (2017)							X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X										
Anderson, D., & Anderson, L., & Anderson, Andre, S. (2020)		X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				X				
Arango & Schell (2023)								X			X	X	X					X					X	X		
Armstrong, J. I. (2021)					X						X	X	X				X	X								
Associated Press [AP]											X	X	X					X					X	X		
Avila, H. (2019)		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X					X	X		
Baker, A. C. (2004)		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X					X	X		
Baker, E. L. et al. (2020)			X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X						X	
Bandura, A. (2000)						X			X			X	X			X										
Bass & Riggio (1985)			X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X			X							
Bass, B.M. & Stogdill, R.M. (1990)			X		X							X				X			X							
Bass, B. M. & Avolio, B. J. (1993)								X		X		X				X			X	X						
Bass, B. (1997)												X														
Bass, B. (2008)							X	X		X	X	X		X		X			X					X		
Bennis, & Nanus (1985)												X				X			X							
Bell, R. L. & Martin, J. S. (2010)				X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X					X			
Beerel, A. (2009)		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X					X			
Bible (KJV) 2017					X				X			X	X											X		
Bisel, R. S. (2018)		X	X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X						
Boin et al.. (2010)				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Boleman & Deal (2013)						X			X	X	X			X		X		X		X		X	X			

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES																									
		Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
Crowley, M. (2011)									X	X	X		X		X											
Culberhouse, D. (2016)				X	X	X	X	X		X		X									X					
Deforest, J. (2021)				X		X	X	X			X	X			X											
Devitt & Borodzicz (2008)			X					X	X																X	
Disraelly, D. S. (2012)									X	X		X	X				X		X		X	X	X			
Drennan, A. D. (2020)					X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X											
Eade (1997)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X								X			
Eade (2007)					X			X																		
Early, G. (2017)					X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X			X		X			
Egsegian, R. (2013)					X				X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X			
Elmore (2003) Mentioned in Carnoy, M. (2003)					X				X																	
EMI (2013) IS 224b		X				X						X	X							X			X		X	
EMI (2017)																										
EMI (2018) IS 120c						X						X	X		X							X	X		X	
EMI (2020) IS K0427		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Enchil, R. (2020)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Epps, D. (2021)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Erwin, D. G. & Garman, A. N. (2010)						X		X		X					X							X				
Eyben et al. (2006)		X	X	X	X	X		X			X				X											
Fairholm, G. W. (2009)			X	X	X			X		X		X			X							X	X	X		

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		FEMA (2023a) About: Region 10		X	X										X	X				X				X	X	
FEMA (2023b) K0427		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		
FEMA (2023c) Yourh Preparedness Council																										
Fernandez, L. S. (2007)																									X	
Ferris, G. R., Perrewé, P. L., & Douglas, C. (2002)					X				X	X	X	X	X			X			X	X		X	X	X		X
Franke, M. E. & Simpson, D. M. (2004)		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X		
Freud (1956)												X														
Garibaldi, G. (2016)		X	X	X					X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X			
Gergen, D. (2006)			X									X				X			X							
Godzyk, K. E. (2008)		X		X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X						
Goss, T. (2017)								X			X	X				X		X							X	X
Graham, J. W. (1991)		X										X				X			X							
Greenleaf, R.K. (2008)		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X					X		
Grenny et al. (2022)		X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X				X		X	
Hague, S. (2016)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		
Handy, C. (1996)		X	X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X					X							
Hardy, M. (2022)		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X			X	X		
Harris & Spillane (2008)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X			X	X			

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Harris (2011)			X	X					X		X		X						X		X			
Harvey & Drolet (2006)			X			X			X	X	X		X	X		X		X		X		X		X		
Hayes et al. (2021)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X	X	X	
Heckler, M.A. (2011)			X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X			
Heifetz, R. A. (1994)		X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X			
Heifetz, R. A. & Linsky, M. (2002)			X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				X		X		
Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Heifetz, R. A. & Linsky, M. (2017).			X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X				X
Hemphill (1949)								X				X				X			X							
Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. (1969)				X	X			X	X		X	X				X			X							
Hogan, T. J. (2008)			X	X	X		X		X		X	X		X		X		X				X		X		
Holroyd, J (2015)						X	X						X			X										X
House (1976)						X						X	X	X		X			X							
Jayne, B. S. (2018)		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		X		X	X							
Johnson, F. K. & Uwaoma, C. C. (2023)										X	X		X	X						X			X	X	X	
Jordan, A (2021)												X				X			X							
Kantur, D. & Iseri-Say (2012)				X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X		

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Kapucu, N & Van-Mart, M. (2006)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X			X	X
Karin (2015)	X		X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X		
Kegan, R. & Lahey, L. I.	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X		X	X	
Kesetovic & Toth, 2012	X	X		X				X	X	X	X		X	X									X	X		
Khan et. al. (2016)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X			X				X	X		
Khin Oo, N. C. & Rakthin (2022)		X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X		
Kilpatrick & Locke (1991)							X					X				X			X							
Klaus, T. & Blanton, J. E. (2000)			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X		X		
Klonsky, M F. (2010)	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Kouzes & Posner (2017)												X														
Lattimer, C. (2023)					X				X	X										X						
Leaders Excellence (n.d.)			X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X		X	X	X			
Lencioni, P. (2002)		X	X		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X		
Lian, L.K. & Tui L. G. (2000)					X		X																			X
Lin et al., (2023)								X			X		X					X					X	X		
Lindell, M. K. et al. (2006)			X				X		X				X	X				X				X	X	X		
Lindsay-Law, S. A. (2019)		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X					
Lombard et al. (2004)							X																			X
Lorange, P. (2010)			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X		X	X	X		
Lowe et al. (1996)									X	X		X				X			X							

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Mann, R. (2021)		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X		X	X	X
Mann, S. (2012)				X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X		X	X	X		
Marion, R. & Uhl-Bien, M. (2011)					X	X					X	X				X			X							
Maslanka (2004)		X							X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X					
Maxwell, J. C. (1991)																										
Maxwell, J. C. (2021)						X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X				
Maxwell, J. C. (2002)												X							X							
McKegney, D. A. (2014)				X	X		X		X	X		X	X			X										
McMillan & Schumacher (2010)						X																				X
Mehra (2002)																X										X
Mittleton-Kelley, E. (2011)			X		X	X	X		X			X				X		X								
Moore, B. V. (1927)								X		X	X	X							X			X		X		
Morris, B. (2019) An investigation			X	X			X		X														X			
Murphy, J. H. (2018)				X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X	X	X		X
Naradko, R. A. (2017)					X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X				X	X		
NASA (2023)			X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X	X	X		
National Fire Academy (NFA) (2023)			X						X		X	X		X					X			X				
NOAA (2022)		X		X			X		X		X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Norman & Binka (2015)			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X							X	X	
Northouse, P. G. (2016)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
OCD (n.d.)		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X				X	X	X		
O'Reilly et al. (2020)						X	X		X		X	X				X										
Parks, S.D. (2005)		X	X	X		X			X		X	X		X		X								X		
Patten & Newhart (2018)																										X
Patton (2015)																										X
Pecujlija et al., 2015			X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Pecujlija & Cosic (2019)		X				X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Pink (2006)			X			X	X				X			X		X		X								
Poulin (2009)		X				X	X		X	X		X	X	X						X		X				
Pyle, A. S. (2014)										X	X		X	X				X		X			X			
Queen, J. Y. (2011)		X			X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			
Raetze, S. et al. (2022)		X									X											X		X		
Ramalingam et al. (2020)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		
Richardson, M. E. J. (2004)					X				X	X	X	X	X	X				X				X		X		
Riscica (2022)						X					X	X									X	X	X			
Roberts & Hyatt (2019)											X	X														X
Roth, O. D. (2022)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Salkind & Frey (2020)																								
Sauer et al. (2014)																									X	
Schwartz, S. (1999)				X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X							
Scheid, T. Sr. (2015)				X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X				X			
Seeman (1960)		X										X				X			X							
Senge & Sterman (1992)		X		X	X		X		X		X	X		X				X			X	X				
Senge, P. M., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C. Ross, R.B., Senge, P. M. (2004)				X																						
Senge, P. M. (2006)																										
Senge et al. (2015)					X	X	X		X																	
ServWA (2022)				X			X		X		X	X		X		X		X		X		X	X	X		
Shanbhag (2002)				X	X			X	X	X	X			X		X				X		X	X			
Sharratt, I. & Fullan, M. (2009)			X		X		X		X	X	X		X	X		X		X		X		X	X			
Simpson, D. M. (2001)				X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	
Sladowski et al. (2013)								X		X			X	X												
Smith, S. (2019)		X			X		X		X		X		X	X		X	X	X				X	X			
Spears (2002)		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X			X		X			X		
Sridharan, M. (2023)			X	X	X				X							X			X							
Stauffer & Maxwell (2020)				X			X		X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X				X		
Stogdill, R. M. (1948)				X	X				X	X		X		X		X			X			X	X			

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		Sweetman, D (2010)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
Thomas & Woodruff (1999)			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X		X				
Thompson, R. J. (2020)			X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X				X		
Thurmond, V. A. (2001)																										X
Tisdale, V. (2022)	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X			
Toegel & Barsoux (2019)	X				X	X				X	X	X	X	X				X			X					
Traylor, B. L. (2022)		X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X		X		X		
Tremblay et al. (2016)		X	X	X		X	X		X	X				X				X								
Tzu, S (2012)												X									X			X		
Uhi-Bien et al., (2007)				X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X			X				
Umezurike, J. A. (2011)		X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X		X		
VanOverschelde, K. (2017)					X				X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X				X		
Veldsman & Madonsela (2016)		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X										
Vera & Crossan (2004)					X	X																	X			

Synthesis Matrix	THEMES	Undiscussables	Shared Responsibilities	Critical Thinking	Adaptive Leadership	Self-Awareness	Continuous Improvement	Managers	Adaptive Capacity	Relationship Management	Leadership Challenges	Leadership Styles	Social Awareness	Engagement	Commitment	Attributes	Retention	Collaboration	Theories	Trust	Systems Theory	Resilience	Crisis	Politics	CERT	Validity
		WA SOG (2020)			X							X	X	X	X	X				X		X			X	X
Weber (1999)																										
Wells, K. B. et al. (2013)		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	
Williams, V. E. (2009)									X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X	X				
Winkler, A. M. (2012)				X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X		X		X				X		X		
Woods, J. T. (2013)		X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X		X		
Woolard, N. A. (2018)		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X		X		
World Health Organization (WHO). 2023a About				X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X		
World Health Organization	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
World Health Organization		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		X	X	X		
Zamoum, K. & Gorpe, T. S.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		
Zigami, L. & Diamond, J.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X						

APPENDIX B

Email Request to Participate

Dear Prospective Study Participant-

I would like to invite you to participate in a qualitative research study to identify what strategies Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning)?

The main researcher of this study is Ramona Gresham, a Doctoral Candidate in the University of Massachusetts Global Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership program. You were chosen to participate in this study because you are a CERT program manager within Washington municipal who met the criteria for this study because of your known expertise as a CERT program manager who has experienced extraordinary results. Ten CERT program managers from Washington will participate in this study using demographic data and interview questions. The demographic data should take 5-10 minutes and the interview questions should take 45 minutes to an hour via Zoom and audio recorded. Both are entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researcher. The possible benefit of this study to you is that your input may help add to the research regarding the lived experiences of CERT program managers that build adaptive capacity. The findings will be available to you at the conclusion of the study. You will not be compensated for my participation.

I realize how incredibly busy you are and thank you in advance for considering participating in the study. If you would like to participate or have additional questions please do not hesitate to email or call me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,
Ramona Gresham

APPENDIX C

Introduction Email

Dear Study Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take time out of your incredibly busy schedule to participate in this research study to identify and describe what strategies Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) Program Managers use to build an organization's adaptive capacity based on Heifetz et al.'s (2009) five key characteristics (making naming elephants in the room the norm, nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization, encouraging independent judgment, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning) to build adaptive capacity within their organization. We are seeking to better understand the leader's perceptions of adaptive leadership during times of great change and opportunities.

As was previously shared, there will be two parts to the research study. The first phase consists of a short demographic study that should take 5-10 minutes to complete. If you prefer to complete the demographic data by hand I have attached a PDF version of the Thematic Adaptive Leadership Interview Protocol for your convenience.

The second phase is a 45-minute to one-hour Zoom interview. To make sure that you have as much information at your disposal as possible, I have attached the Participant's Bill of Rights for you to review before our time together on Zoom.

I am looking forward to meeting with you. If you would have additional questions please do not hesitate to email or call me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,
Ramona Gresham

APPENDIX D

Adaptive Leadership Thematic Interview Protocol

My name is Ramona Gresham, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts Global in the area of Organizational Leadership. I am a part of a team researching to identify and describe the strategies used by organizational leaders to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) as perceived by on-site property managers in Southern California.

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview on Adaptive Leadership. The information you give, along with the others participating in this study, hopefully, will provide a clear picture of how organizational leaders build an adaptive capacity. I provided the interview questions and five key characteristic definitions for adaptive leadership before the interview to help you understand the aims of the study and the concepts related to the interview questions I will be asking. The questions I will be asking are the same for everyone participating in the study. The reason for this is to try to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interviews with all participating Community Emergency Response Team Program Managers will be conducted in the same manner.

Informed Consent

I would like to remind you that any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. All the data will be reported without reference to any individual(s) or any institution(s). For ease of our discussion and accuracy, I will record our conversation as indicated in the Informed Consent sent to you via email. I will have the recording transcribed to a Word document and will send it to you via electronic mail so that you can check to make sure that I have accurately captured your thoughts and ideas. The digital recording will be erased.

Did you receive the Informed Consent and UMass Global Bill of Rights I sent you via email? Do you have any questions or need clarification about either document? Do you consent to move forward with the interview?

We have scheduled an hour for the interview. At any point during the interview, you may ask that I skip a particular question or stop the interview altogether.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Okay, let's get started, and thanks so much for your time.

First, I have some demographic questions to ask you. The input gained from these questions helps to better understand the background of the participants and to provide context to the results. Per the informed consent, your participation in this study will remain confidential and comments made or demographic information will only be presented in summary format to maintain confidentiality. You are not required to answer any question that would be uncomfortable.

Demographic

Please indicate your gender

Male

Female

Non-binary

Other

Please indicate the years of experience in your organization

1-3, 4-8, 9-15, 16+

Please indicate the number of years in this position

1-3, 4-8, 9-15, 16+

Please indicate the number of years in this field

1-3, 4-8, 9-15, 16+

Please indicate your highest level of education

CC, BA, MA, MBA, DOCTORATE

Other earned degrees:

Please select your age from the list below

25-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, 66+

Please indicate the ethnicity(s) with which you identify.

African American

Asian/Asian American

Filipino

Hispanic/Latinx

Native American/Alaskan Native

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

White

APPENDIX E

Letter of Informed Consent

INFORMATION ABOUT: Adaptive Leadership During Times of Great Change and Opportunity as Perceived by Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Managers.

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Ramona Gresham, M.B.A.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Ramona Gresham, a doctoral student from the University of Massachusetts Global School of Education. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to identify and describe the strategies used by organizational leaders to build an adaptive capacity based on the five key characteristics of adaptive leadership identified by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) as perceived by Washington State Municipals CERT program managers.

The interview(s) will last approximately 60 minutes and will be conducted in a one-on-one virtual interview setting using Zoom technology.

I understand that:

- a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researcher.
b) I understand that the interview will be audio recorded. The recordings will be available only to the researcher. The audio recordings will be used to capture the interview dialogue as a text document and to ensure the accuracy of the information collected during the interview. All information will be identifier-redacted, and my confidentiality will be maintained. Upon completion of the study, all recordings will be destroyed. All other data and consents will be securely stored for three years after completion of data collection and confidentially shredded or fully deleted.
c) The possible benefit of this study is that my input may add to the research regarding adaptive leadership and its impact on the perceptions of CERT program managers. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study and will provide new insights about this study in which I participated. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.
d) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx or by phone at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or Dr. Cindy Petersen (Chair) at xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx.
e) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study, and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the Investigator may stop the study at any time.
f) No information identifying me will be released without my separate consent, and all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be informed, and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMass Global, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the "Research Participant's Bill of Rights." I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

Signature of Participant:

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

Research Participants Bill of Rights



UMASS GLOBAL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the UMASS GLOBAL Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The UMass Global Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS GLOBAL, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

APPENDIX G

Interview Observer Feedback Reflection Questions

Conducting interviews is a learned skill set/experience. Gaining valuable insight about your interview skills and the effect of the interview will support your data gathering when interviewing the actual participants. As the researcher, you should reflect on the questions below after completing the interview. You should also discuss the following reflection questions with your 'observer' after completing the interview field test. The questions are written from your perspective as the interviewer. Provide your observer with a copy of these reflective questions prior to the field-test interview. Then you can verbalize your thoughts with the observer and they can add valuable insight from their observation. After completing this process you may have edits or changes to recommend for the interview protocol before finalizing.

1. How long did the interview take? Did the time seem to be appropriate?
2. Were the questions clear or were there places when the interviewee was unclear?
3. Are there any words or terms used during the interview that were unclear or confusing?
4. How did you feel during the interview? Comfortable? Nervous? For the observer: how did you perceive the interviewer regarding the preceding descriptors?
5. Did you feel prepared to conduct the interview? Is there something you could have done to be better prepared? For the observer: how did you perceive the interviewer regarding the preceding descriptors?
6. What parts of the interview went the most smoothly and why do you think that was the case?
7. Are there parts of the interview that seemed to be awkward and why do you think that was the case?
8. If you were to change any part of the interview, what would it be and how would you change it?
9. What suggestions do you have for improving the overall process?

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APPENDIX H

Field-Test Interviewee Feedback Questions

While conducting the interview you should take notes of their clarification request or comments about not being clear about the question. After you complete the interview ask your field-test interviewee the following clarifying questions. **Try not to make it another interview; just have a friendly conversation.** Either script or record their feedback so you can compare it with the other two members of your team to develop your feedback report on how to improve the interview questions.

1. How did you feel about the interview? Do you think you had ample opportunities to describe what you do as a leader when working with your team or staff?
2. Did you feel the amount of time for the interview was ok?
3. Were the questions by and large clear or were there places where you were uncertain what was being asked?
4. Can you recall any words or terms being asked about during the interview that were confusing?
5. And finally, did I appear comfortable during the interview?

APPENDIX I

Operational Definitions

Adaptive Capacity: CERT program managers maintain an organization's ability to adapt and thrive over time by identifying and addressing the challenges they are currently facing.

Adaptive Leadership: CERT program managers use practices of mobilizing people to overcome tough challenges and thrive

CERT Program Manager(s): CERT program manager who oversees and manages the functions of CERT Teams. The leader possesses the necessary certifications to serve in the position and is proficient in managing and training volunteer teams in disaster preparedness.

Collaborative: CERT program managers create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations to encourage trust, advocate a team atmosphere, build consensus, and facilitate communication.

Comprehensive: CERT program managers consider all threats/hazards, all phases, all stakeholders, and all impacts relevant to disasters.

Constructive Conflict: CERT program managers communicate our desires and interests to others and share the rationales behind those interests

Coordinated: CERT program managers synchronize the activities of all relevant stakeholders to achieve a common purpose.

Credentialing: CERT Program managers provide documentation that identifies personnel and authenticates and verifies their qualifications for a particular position.

Crisis Management. CERT program managers provide relevant crisis management principles specific to preventing, preparing, responding, and recovering from disasters.

Emergency Support Function: CERT program managers ensure the grouping of governmental and certain private sector capabilities into an organizational structure to provide capabilities and services most likely needed to manage domestic incidents.

Flexible: CERT program managers use creative and innovative approaches in solving disaster challenges.

Institutionalization: CERT program managers provide a culture conducive to the safe exploring of new ideas and sharing lessons learned.

Integrated: CERT program managers ensure unity of effort among all levels of government and community elements.

Professional: CERT program managers value a science- and knowledge-based approach based on education, training, experience, ethical practice, public stewardship, and continuous improvement.

Progressive: CERT program managers anticipate future disasters and take protective, preventive, and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities.

Response: CERT program managers possess the capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident.

Risk-Driven: CERT program managers use sound risk management principles (threat/hazard identification, risk analysis, and impact analysis) in assigning priorities and resources.

Whole Community: CERT program managers create an environment that focuses on enabling the participation in incident management activities of a wide range of players from the private and nonprofit sectors, including NGOs and the general public, in conjunction with the participation of all levels of government, to foster better coordination and working relationships.

APPENDIX J

Five Adaptive Leadership Characteristic Definitions

Making naming elephants in the room the norm. The act of openly addressing sensitive underlying issues, or undiscussables, to resolve potential barriers that interfere with an organization realizing its full potential.

Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization. The collective ownership across team member roles for the decision making of operational goals and outcomes of the organization's future.

Encouraging independent judgment. A leader's capacity to provide an opportunity for team members to make choices based on personal and professional experience, regardless of the position held within the organization.

Developing leadership capacity. The systemic focuses on expanding competencies and resources, and intentionally motivating groups or individuals to increase leadership potential proactively.

Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning. Providing a culture conducive to the safe exploration of new ideas and sharing of lessons learned both from an individual and organizational perspective and creating a sustainable learning culture driven by a willingness to overcome engrained mental models across all levels of the organization.

APPENDIX K

Interview Questions

IQ#1

What practices do you use as a leader in your organization to make addressing sensitive underlying issues an organizational norm?

IQ#2

How does your organization create an environment for individuals and groups to resolve potential barriers that prevent the organization from reaching its potential?

IQ#3

Can you describe a time (in your current role) when you facilitated shared ownership of organizational goals amongst team members?

IQ#4

As a leader, how do you provide opportunities for members to comment on and raise issues that are not within their area of responsibility?

IQ#5

Describe a situation where you encouraged employees to make choices based on personal and professional experience.

IQ#6

What are some systems and structures that you have in place for team members to exercise independent judgment and choice?

IQ#7

What core leadership competencies does your organization focus on in developing leaders?

IQ#8

As a leader, how do you motivate individuals and groups to increase their leadership potential?

IQ#9

How do you institutionalize reflection within your organization?

IQ#10

How do you institutionalize continuous learning within your organization?

APPENDIX L

Interview Questions and Probes Alignment Table

Research Question	Variable	Definition	Interview Question and Prompt	Literature Support
<p>#1. How do <i>leaders</i>* build an organization's adaptive capacity through making naming elephants in the room the norm?</p>	<p>Making naming elephants in the room the norm.</p>	<p>The act of openly addressing sensitive underlying issues, or undiscussables, to resolve potential barriers that interfere with an organization realizing its full potential (Heifetz et al, 2009; Toegel & Barsoux, 2019; Baker, 2004).</p>	<p>IQ#1 What practices do you use as a leader in your organization to make addressing sensitive underlying issues an organizational norm?</p> <p>How do these practices facilitate adaptive leadership development? Can you give an example?</p> <p>IQ#2 How does your organization create an environment for individuals and groups to resolve potential barriers that prevent the organization from reaching its potential?</p> <p>Prompt Can you provide some examples of how you create an environment for individuals and groups to identify barriers to the organization reaching its potential?</p>	<p>Baker, A. C. (2004). Seizing the moment: Talking about the “undiscussables.” <i>Journal of Management Education</i>, 28(6), 693-706. https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562903252661</p> <p>Toegel, G., & Barsoux, J.-L. (2019). It's time to tackle your team's undiscussables. <i>MIT Sloan management review</i>, 61(1), 37-46.</p> <p>Klonsky, M. F. (2010). <i>Discussing undiscussables: Exercising adaptive leadership</i> (Publication Number 3426112) [Ph.D., Fielding Graduate University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Ann Arbor. http://UMassGlobal.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/discussing-undiscussables-exercising-adaptive/docview/761367319/se-2?accountid=207169</p> <p>Schlaerth, A., Ensari, N., & Christian, J. (2013). A meta-analytical review of the relationship between emotional intelligence and leaders' constructive conflict management. <i>Group Processes & Intergroup Relations</i>, 16(1), 126-136. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430212439907</p>

Research Question	Variable	Definition	Interview Question and Prompt	Literature Support
<p>#2. How do <i>leaders</i> build an organization's adaptive capacity through nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization?</p>	<p>Nurturing a shared responsibility for the organization.</p>	<p>The collective ownership across team member roles for the decision-making of operational goals and outcomes of the organization's future. (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Heifetz et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016; Tremblay et al., 2016).</p>	<p>IQ#3 Can you describe a time (in your current role) when you facilitated shared ownership of organizational goals amongst team members?</p> <p>Prompt: How would you describe the outcome and its relation to the organization's future?</p> <p>IQ#4 As a leader, how do you provide opportunities for members to comment on and raise issues that are not within their area of responsibility?</p> <p>Prompt: How do you encourage participation across teams and roles throughout the organization?</p>	<p>Harris, A., & Spillane, J. (2008). Distributed leadership through the looking Glass. <i>Management in Education</i>, 22(1), 31–34. https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020607085623</p> <p>Heifetz, R. & Linsky, R. (2002). <i>Leadership on the line</i>. Harvard Business School Press.</p> <p>Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). <i>The practice of adaptive leadership</i>. Harvard Business Review Press.</p> <p>Northouse, P. (2016). <i>Leadership theory and practice</i> (7th edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.</p> <p>Tremblay, D., Latreille, J., Bilodeau, K., Samson, A., Roy, L., L'Italien, M.-F., & Mimeault, C. (2016). Improving the transition from oncology to primary care teams: A case for shared leadership. <i>Journal of Oncology Practice</i>, 12(11), 1012-1019. https://doi.org/10.1200/jop.2016.013771</p>

Research Question	Variable	Definition	Interview Question and Prompt	Literature Support
<p>#3. How do <i>leaders</i> build an organization's adaptive capacity through encouraging independent judgment?</p>	<p>Encouraging independent judgment.</p>	<p>A leader's capacity to provide an opportunity for team members to make choices based on personal and professional experience, regardless of the position held within the organization (Heifetz et al., 2009; Shanbhag, 2002; Casavant et al., 1995).</p>	<p>IQ#5 Describe a situation where you encouraged employees to make choices based on personal and professional experience?</p> <p>IQ#6 What are some systems and structures that you have in place for team members to exercise independent judgment and choice?</p> <p>Prompt Could you give me a specific example of teams exercising choice in those structures? What was the result of that? situation? Was the result for one of those examples when the teams exercised choice using the structures?</p>	<p>Moustakas, C. (1994). <i>Phenomenological research methods</i>. Sage publications.</p> <p>Vagle, M. D. (2018). <i>Crafting phenomenological research</i>. Routledge.</p>

Research Question	Variable	Definition	Interview Question and Prompt	Literature Support
<p>#4. How do <i>leaders</i> build an organization's adaptive capacity through developing leadership capacity?</p>	<p>Developing Leadership Capacity.</p>	<p>The systemic focus on expanding competencies and resources, and intentionally motivating groups or individuals to increase leadership potential proactively (Eade, 1997; Eade, 2007; Carnoy et al, 2003; Eyben et al., 2006; Harris, 2011; Heifetz et al., 2009; Sharratt & Fullan, 2009).</p>	<p>IQ#7 What are the important leadership competencies that your organization focuses on in developing leaders?</p> <p>Prompt Can you give some examples of activities that are encouraged to develop these leadership competencies?</p> <p>IQ#8 As a leader, how do you motivate individuals and groups to increase their leadership potential?</p> <p>Prompt Can you provide some examples of when your strategies to motivate leaders to develop have been effective?</p>	<p><i>Wicked leadership competencies for sustainability professionals ...</i> (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <u>https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/sus.2018.0008</u></p>

Research Question	Variable	Definition	Interview Question and Prompt	Literature Support
<p>#5. How do <i>leaders</i> build an organization's adaptive capacity through institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning?</p>	<p>Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning.</p>	<p>Providing a culture conducive to the safe exploration of new ideas and sharing of lessons learned both from an individual and organizational perspective and creating a sustainable learning culture driven by a willingness to overcome engrained mental models across all levels of the organization (Cojocar, 2008; Pearson & Smith, 1986; Ramalingam et al., 2020; Senge et al., 2015; Vera & Crossan, 2004; Veldsman & Madonsela, 2016).</p>	<p>IQ#9 How do you institutionalize or make reflection a permanent part of your organizational culture?</p> <p>Prompt How is reflection used to facilitate adaptive capacity? Can you give an example?</p> <p>IQ#10 How do you institutionalize or make continuous learning a permanent part of your organizational culture?</p> <p>Prompt How is continuous learning used to facilitate adaptive capacity? Can you give an example?</p>	<p>Cojocar, 2008; Pearson & Smith, 1986; Ramalingam et al., 2020; Senge et al., 2015; Vera & Crossan, 2004; Veldsman & Madonsela, 2016</p>